**Borough of Waltham Forest**

**The Transition of Young Carers to Adult Social Care or Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND):**

**Policy and Protocol**

**Policy**

Young Carers should be identified, assessed and their families supported regardless of which service is contacted in the first place. Adult Social Services, SEND and Young Carers support services (Early Help 0-18 or Children’s Services) will work together locally, adopting a whole system, whole council, whole family approach to providing support for Young Carers and their families under our Think Family Strategy and Life Chances for Young People.

Sections 63 - 64 of the Care Act (2014) introduced duties towards Young Carers making the transition to adulthood. The Act requires local authorities to seek the agreement of the Young Carer to undertake an assessment if they are likely to have needs for support when they reach eighteen, and if the timing of the assessment offers ’significant benefit’.

This document sets out the principles and protocol by which this statutory responsibility will be met by the London Borough of Waltham Forest Council.

**Principles**

Adult Social Care Services, when assessing adults for social care needs where a child is present within the family, should routinely ensure that any caring input from the child, or children, is simultaneously assessed (Our Family Journey or Child and Family Assessment). A referral should be made to MASH (Multi Agency Support Hub) so that the child, or children in the position of providing care can be assessed for their own needs and support put in place through the relevant services.

Transition for Young Carers to Adult Social Care / SEND will be a managed process that will start as a Young Carer, and will continue through to their eighteenth birthday and beyond.

This will be achieved through multidisciplinary working in partnership across health, education, housing and voluntary sector organisations. Adult Social Services will work together to fulfil statutory duties and ensure that the following key principles underpin our practice:

* The presence of a Young Carer in the family should always constitute an appearance of need and should trigger either an assessment or the offer of an assessment to the person needing care.
* The starting point will be the assessment of needs of the adult being cared for, and their eligibility for adult social care and support. Following this, the priority will be to determine if support is required for the child, or children in that family.
* A whole family approach is key when assessing an adult needing care where there are children in the family providing care to the adult or undertaking wider caring responsibilities.
* The adult’s assessment and eligibility for support should take into account their parenting responsibilities and the functioning of the family.
* Assessments should be completed to ascertain why a child is caring and what needs to change in order to prevent them from undertaking excessive or inappropriate caring responsibilities which could impact adversely on their welfare, education or social development. The views of both adults and children within the family should be sought separately where appropriate.
* Consideration must be given to whether a Young Carer is a ‘child in need’ under the Children Act 1989, and whether their welfare or development may suffer if support is not provided to them and/or their family.

These principles apply equally to all children up to the age of 18, recognising that Young Carers may require more focused support during the period they will be making the transition to adulthood.

**Protocol**

**Part One: Transitional Assessment for Young Carers**

The timing of any assessment should be discussed with the Young Carer and their family. Transition assessments for Young Carers must also specifically consider whether the carer is able to care now and whether they are prepared and willing to continue to be a carer after they reach adulthood at eighteen.

Transitions assessments must place the needs of the young person at the centre and focus on their future hopes, wishes, feelings and ambitions.

The matters that should be included as part of this assessment could helpfully include:

* ***Family relationships*:** including the potential and capacity of their family network, parents, siblings, other relatives and friends, to help and encourage the young person to make a positive transition;
* ***Social support*:** including the young person’s relationship with friends and involvement in support networks – e.g. groups for young carers/ young adult carers;
* ***Education, training and employment:***arrangements for young people to complete their secondary education and move on to higher education, training or employment;
* ***Accommodation and independent living*:** including the young person’s future plans and any intentions they may have to live independently. These plans may link to their ambitions to go to university or pursue other education and training or employment opportunities away from their home area;
* ***Health, development and general wellbeing:***including recognition of the young person’s physical emotional and mental health needs and an evaluation of their capacity to obtain access to health care in the same way as other young people who do not have caring responsibilities;
* ***“Financial literacy” and skills in financial management*:** including information about how it is expected a young person will support themselves financially in the future.

**Section Two: Provision of support to Young Carers**

**Aged 16:**

1. **EH/ CSC to start discussion with Young Carer for their post 18 needs *(long term planning & options to be considered)*** Does the Young Carer wish to continue providing care? Change of needs to the person being cared for (sibling, adult or family friend) which impacts the Young Carer should be identified and shared with relevant team supporting the "cared for".
2. **EH/ CSC to complete Pre-Carers Assessment *(Carers Assessment)*** to help establish what type and level of support may be available for the Young Carer post 18th birthday. Young Carers decision to be shared with lead service for one being "cared for".

**Aged 17:**

1. **EH/ CSC to complete "Transitional Carers Assessment"**- Current needs of care and how they impact on wellbeing? Whether the Young Carer is likely to have needs post 18? What those needs are? and which ones are eligible for support? the outcomes the Young Carer wishes to achieve in their day to day activities (long term plan).
2. **Transitional Assessment and Family Review/ Plan (Our Family Journey or Child and Family Assessment) to be sent to ASC/ SEND -** Include objectives of the Young Carer and outcomes of the pre-carer’s assessment (26 weeks before 18th birthday).
3. **ASC/ SEND to complete "Carers Assessment"**- Assessment to be completed within the 26-week window before the young adult carer turns 18, depending on their situation. Assessor to confirm eligible support in writing. Assessment to be undertaken by ASC/ SEND team that has case responsibility for the cared-for person. If the cared-for person is not known, services will arrange assessments for both the cared-for and carer.
4. Where it is identified that the Young Adult Carer has significant “needs” or they decide to continue providing care, and there are delays in completing the “Carers Assessment” (setting a plan for the Young Carer), EH/ CSC must retain the case and continue providing support until ASC/ SEND services have completed the adult assessment process and confirmed the outcome/start date for the support. This will ensure there is no gap in the provision of support during this transition period.
5. NEWLY identified Young Carers at this point to be referred to the Contact Resolution Centre (ASC Contact Centre) by emailing WFDLiaison@walthamforest.gov.uk.

**Aged 18:**

1. **ASC/ SEND to take lead on the needs of the Young Adult Carer -** Payments (once an assessment has been completed), IAG, Carers Support Service, Respite Breaks - written confirmation to be provided to the Young Adult Carer and family.

If a decision is made not to carry out a transitional assessment or an adult carer’s assessment, a written explanation of the reasons for this must be provided to the Young Carer and to their parents/ family. This could include information about whether this decision will be reviewed in the future, alongside information about support available in the community post their 18th birthday, such as Carers Support Service.

**Section 3: Adult/ SEND Services Responsibilities**

1. Adults/ SEND services will ensure that identifying and responding to the presence of Young Carers is incorporated into the assessment of adult social care/ SEND needs.
2. Adult/ SEND Social Care workers will seek to identify the type of care provided and the impact this is having on the Young Carer. They will identify areas of excessive and inappropriate levels of caring responsibilities that can be reduced through increasing provision of support to the person being cared for through support services, networks and family members. This should be evidenced when adults/ children are being assessed for their own care needs.
3. Where Young Carers are identified as supporting adults/ children who are not eligible for social care support, the child, or children should be referred to MASH (Multi Agency Support Hub) so that relevant services (EH/ CSC) can be assigned to support the child, or children. ASC/ SEND will need to seek consent from the family before making the referral, unless there are safeguarding concerns for the child or children.
4. In the case where family refuse consent, and do not wish to be referred for additional support, information, advice and guidance should be provided to the family where they can seek additional support (Carers Support Service/ Young Carers Project) as and when they feel the need or wish to do so.
5. The relevant Children’s team need to ensure appropriate steps have been taken to allow for a smooth transition in accordance with the ASC/ SEND Transfer Policy. This would typically include work with the young person and their family to ensure they are appraised of the services available to them as adults. This approach requires collaboration with the ASC/ SEND service and should begin by age 17 at the latest. Good practice dictates the case stays with the referring team until the referred to team accepts it. Any disagreements should be escalated to the Head of Service.
6. If, following the completion of the assessment for the person being cared for, risk and vulnerabilities are identified that need support from a range of agencies or raises concern that the child/young person (Young Carer) may suffer harm/ be at risk, then a referral will be completed by the Adult/ SEND social worker to MASH (Multi Agency Support Hub) for consideration of appropriate support through Early Help 0-18 Services (Our Family Journey) or Children Social Care (Child and Family Assessment).
7. Where Young Carers are identified late (17th birthday onwards), and EH/ CSC are unable to fulfil the commitments in this protocol (transitional assessment, pre carers assessment/ long term planning), the Contact Resolution Centre will accept referrals for a carer’s assessment for Young Carers. This would only apply to Young Carers who have been identified late; post 17th birthday.
8. Following completion of a carer’s assessment, Young Adult Carers who are determined to be eligible for adult carers support will have the necessary arrangements made for this to be available on or following their 18th birthday. Once their support plan has been completed, written confirmation will be provided by ASC/ SEND team to the Young Adult Carer and their family.
9. **Where the cared-for person is not known to ASC (i.e., no ASC-funded services for the cared-for person are in place):**
* A referral from Children’s Early Help / CSC will arrive in a screening folder on Mosaic that is managed by WPUR Team (Wellbeing, Prevention and Urgent Response Team).
* Once the referral has been screened, the case will be assigned to a worker in WPUR Team for the young adult carer’s assessment to be completed.
* If the cared-for person also needs an assessment, the team will ask the Adult Front Door Team to raise a referral on the cared-for person’s records, and the young adult carer’s assessment and the cared-for person’s assessment will be completed at the same time by the same worker.
1. **Where the cared-for person is known to ASC (i.e., they are in receipt of ASC-funded support):**
* A referral from Children’s Early Help / CSC will arrive in the screening folder on Mosaic that is managed by WPUR Team (Wellbeing, Prevention and Urgent Response Team).
* Once the referral has been screened, the case will be passed to the Adult Care Management Team (ACMT) via their team Incoming Work folder on Mosaic.
* ACMT will then arrange for the cared-for person’s annual review to be brought forward, so that the young adult carer’s assessment and the cared-for person’s review can be aligned. ACMT will need to agree this approach with the Adult Review Team (ART). All the annual reviews for cared-for residents sit with ART.
1. **Where the cared-for person is known to SEND:**
* A referral from Children’s Early Help / CSC will arrive in the screening folder on Mosaic that is managed by WPUR Team (Wellbeing, Prevention and Urgent Response Team).
* Once the referral has been screened, the case will be passed to SEND via their virtual worker folder on Mosaic called “Disability Enablement DES Duty Manager”.
* If the cared-for person is unknown, an assessment will be arranged for both; the cared-for and the young adult carer.
* If the cared-for is known to SEND, then the review for the cared-for person will be brought forward to align with the assessment for the young adult carer.

**Young Carers (EH/ CSC) to Young Adult Carers (ASC/ SEND)**

**Summarised Support Stages**

**Support Pathway/Map**

**(Identification – EH/CSC to Adult/ SEND)**

**Identified & Self Referred YC & Family Referred to CSC MASH**

**Young Carers Project**

**Clubs, YCiS, Tuition, Grants, Workshops, Trips, Residential, DOE and Volunteering**

*(Safe, Well, Resilient & Independent)*

**REFFER**

**EH/ CSC Whole Family Support**

**(OFJ/ CFA)**

***“Risks”* and *“Vulnerabilities”* of the Young Carer to be identified and shared with lead service providing support for the one being *“Cared for”***

**Does this make the Young Carer a Child in Need?**

**Does the one being *“Cared for”* have a support or care package?**

**(ASC, SEND, CSC)**

**YES**

**NO**

**“Continued-Support to 18”**

**EH 0-18/ CSC will support YC & Family up to 18th birthday**

***(CSC to step down to***

***EH 0-18 when CIN & CP plan met)***

**NO**

**YES**

**Young Adult Carer aged 18:**

**ASC/ SEND to lead on the needs of the Young Adult Carer**

**(Carers Assessment Complete)**

**Young Adult Carer to close to EH/ CSC and Young Carers Project**

**Lead service for *“Cared for”* (ASC, SEND, CSC) to ensure impact on Young Carer is reduced/ minimised**

**(addressed in “Cared for” assessment/plan)**

**EH/ CSC to inform lead service for the one being *“Cared for”* of the Young Carers decision**

**EH/ CSC to refer Young Carer to Carers Support Service for IAG**

**EH/ CSC to continue support up to 18th birthday**

**Young Carer aged 17/ 26 wks:**

**ASC/ SEND to make contact and arrange a carer’s assessment within the 26-week window before the young carer turns 18**

**EH/ CSC plans to prepare Young Carer for Adulthood (post 18); Further Education, Training, Employment, Benefits, Housing, Independence, Finance etc.**

**Young Carer aged 17:**

**EH/ CSC to complete "Transitional Assessment"**

**Transitional Assessment and Family Review/ Plan to be forwarded to ASC/ SEND 26 weeks before 18th birthday**

**Does the Young Carer wish to continue providing Care? and/ or likely to have needs post 18?**

**Young Carer aged 16:**

**EH/ CSC to start discussion with Young Carer for their post 18 needs and complete “Pre-Carers Assessment”**

**(Carers Assessment)**