



Nottinghamshire
Carers
Association

01773 833 833

info@nottinghamshirecarers.co.uk
www.nottinghamshirecarers.co.uk

School Liaison Case Study



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Diverse Academies Trust - Introduction

Diverse Academies Trust is a multi-academy Trust that consists of 6 Secondary, 6 Primary and 2 Special Schools. These are situated across Nottinghamshire.

On introduction to the Trust's first school (Retford Oaks Academy) in September 2022 there was a member of staff engaged in supporting young carers. This however was limited and working in isolation to some extent within the Academy, and most definitely the Trust. No other Secondary or Primary school within the trust was engaged in supporting young carers as a formal identified group. Some schools were supporting individual students from a more generic pastoral, wellbeing or safeguarding point of view who were young carers.

The Challenge

The Retford Oaks Academy (ROA) challenge was in identifying the full number of young carers within the Academy. Introducing measures to ensuring staff, governors and students have a sound understanding of young carers and their circumstances and providing that support to make a difference.

Initial Work completed

- ROA received NCA young carer lead training
- ROA then identified staff which included part of their Senior Leadership Team to receive young carers awareness training
- A meeting was held with NCA and staff from the Diverse Academies Senior Leadership team (SLT) which included Executive Principals and the Strategic Development Leader. This was part of the strategic plan to support all the Trust's schools from SLT down.
- Young carer training was given to SLT staff at the Trust level.
- It was decided that ROA would initially be the best practice academy within the Trust. At this point The Holgate Academy became the lead academy for Young Carers in the Diverse Trust. A very supportive team from the Executive Principal, Principal and SLT supported an extremely positive and proactive young carer lead.
- School assemblies were delivered to years 7-13 (1100 students+85 staff) in a number of Diverse academy schools.
- The first Diverse academy received the young carer award and a student Young Carer Ambassador was recognised for the commitment he has shown to other young carers which includes presenting to the school staff during twilight training.
- Throughout this time young carers were being identified across the Trust and positive support was put in place.



ROA and Holgate Academy presentation of their Young Carer Schools Awards



'We are very proud and very pleased to accept this award acknowledging and celebrating all the hard work our academy and young carers put in every day. The award will be displayed in the main reception for all visitors to see'
(Adam Cooper, Vice Principal Retford Oak Academy)

'This is an important recognition of the support that the academy provides for young carers, enabling them to make progress in their lives and succeed'.
(Holgate Academy Principal)

Next Steps of progress

- Most of the Trust schools were visited by NCA, Secondary and Primary, to provide initial introduction to leaders on the young carer's agenda, which also included special schools.
- Schools received the young carer awareness training. Replicating the ROA module putting in a place a young carer lead as the first step in supporting the young carers.
- Throughout 2023-24 the Trust were being active in supporting young carers in close liaison with NCA and Tu Vida. The young carer lead at Holgate academy being identified as the likely Trust young carer lead for the Trust.
- Continued support one to one, resources, updates and training packages were sent to the young carers leads in all the Trust schools. This support had to be adapted depending on progress. This training was successfully structured to allow staff in schools to deliver levels of young carer awareness training.

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Outcomes

Visit to Parliament

Raising the profile of young carers has been achieved at both Trust and Academy level with the collective working approach of all concerned. Students have represented and raised the profile of young carers at all levels, Trust, NCA and County. Meetings at the Department of Education in London and have been part of a major launch of the National report on young carers at the House of Parliament and the House of Lords.



Active Notts

Introduction of further collaborative work with Active Notts and other non-Trust Academies resulted in support directly to young carers in a long term project to provide activities that keep our young carers active. Opportunities that most likely would not have been there were it not for the introduction of NCA and the Trust wide links and remains an ongoing project.



Identifying Young Carers

Working with the Trust SLT, an Academy within the trust was identified as needing closer support. NCA met with an Academy SLT staff to help identify a young carer lead. Close support was provided to the lead due to a pending ofsted visit which was critical to both the Academy and the Trust. This successful module had an identified group of 62 young carers being identified and supported through the academy.

Young Carer evening

A Young carer evening for year 6 into 7 are in place with parents/carers and professionals invited.

Extra Support

Following the work put in across all the Trust schools the Trust have decided to attach a TLR (Teacher and Learning Responsibility) which comes with a financial aspect for each member of staff who is the identified young carers Lead which is a significant move forward.

Young Carers Policy

Holgate Academy took the lead along with the Executive Principal on planning a young carer policy which could be used across the Trust settings. This was a major move for any Trust in Nottinghamshire to proactively produce their own detailed young carer policy. A number of the schools in the Trust are awaiting an OFSTED visit and so this policy would very much be part of any visit.

Click here to view:

[Holgate Academy's Young Carers Policy](#)

Impact

We are rightly proud of the work within Diverse Academies Trust. A Trust which has embraced the need to support young carers in all their schools. The progress has been achieved by strong leadership that is open to new working processes. NCA have had a significant impact on helping identify and support a considerable number of young carers across the county.

The work done has shown that working at Trust level and with the schools SLT and pastoral teams followed by support directly to students as a whole can be hugely beneficial for young carers.

Next Steps

This work has taken some time and is no way complete, but the concept of working from Trust level is a sound concept. NCA have shown how the drive towards supporting as many young carers as possible is best supported by a Trust overview and progressive oversight of what that support will look like for each trust.

The young carer awareness to all students and staff opened up a knowledge base that was not available to them previously but one we will continue to deliver for all young people in schools.

Our support is essential for that and moving onto to other Trusts is already in progress. As is the support into Post 16 and the support of young carers options for their Social Mobility.

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