



Fife College



**Fife College Corporate
Parenting Plan
2021-2024**



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Welcome - Meet the Care Experience Team

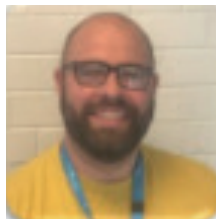


My name is Dawn Clark and I am the Manager in Fife College responsible for Corporate Parenting. I have worked with Care Experienced students for many years and improving the outcomes for our Care Experienced students is at the heart of the strategies we have embedded. Fife College are proud corporate parents and in launching our new plan we hope to continue with the excellent work and support implemented and we will embrace the challenges of the future. The Corporate Parenting Plan sets out clear objectives for the College to work towards ensuring that care experienced students attending college receive the support they need to reach their full potential.



Let me introduce myself, my name is Susan McGuire and I am the Care Experience Co-ordinator for Fife College. This is a new role that was established in August 2020 to ensure that Fife College is meeting and promoting their Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

My role within Fife College is to provide extra support for Care Experienced students and to liaise with support workers, Carers and agencies to make sure we are providing our Care Experienced students with the best service we can. The role is diverse and challenging and I am privileged to hold this position, allowing me to work with our amazing Care Experienced students.



Hi my name is Steven Smyth. My job title is the Access and Participation Assistant, this role was created in 2021 to support the great work that our Care Experience Co-ordinator does. I have a passion for seeing people plant their feet on the road to achieving their goals, whatever they may be.

Care Experienced definition

What is Care Experienced?

The term 'care-experienced' refers to anyone who has been or is currently in care or from a looked-after background at any stage in their life, no matter how short, including adopted children who were previously looked-after.

Examples of looked after:

- Looked after at home through a Compulsory Supervision Order (CSO)
- Looked after away from home in a residential children's house, in a foster placement or in a kinship placement
- Previously looked after, where at some point in their lives they have had any of the above experiences
- People who are Carers are not care experienced

Responsibilities

Fife College as a Corporate Parent and in accordance with Section 58 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 must focus on the safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of care-experienced students through its corporate responsibilities which are as follows:

- Be **ALERT** to matters which or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of an eligible young person
- **ASSESS** the needs of eligible children and young people for any services or support provided
- **PROMOTE** the interest of eligible children or young people
- Seek to provide children and young people access to those **OPPORTUNITIES**
- Take appropriate action to help eligible young people **ACCESS** those opportunities
- Keep their approach to corporate parenting under constant review, seeking out **IMPROVEMENT** wherever possible

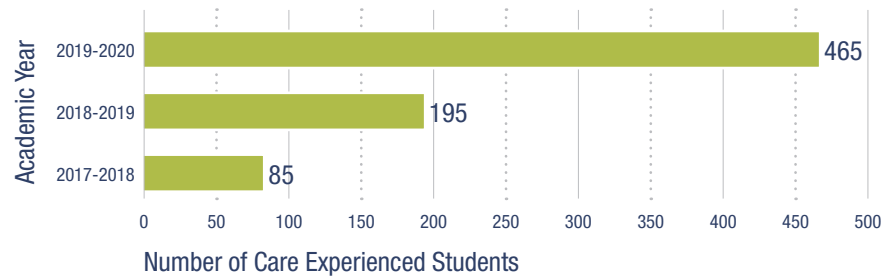


Student comparisons from 2018- 2020

Our aim in our 2018-2021 Corporate Parenting Plan was to develop the effectiveness of current Fife College management systems to collect and use data on care experienced students.

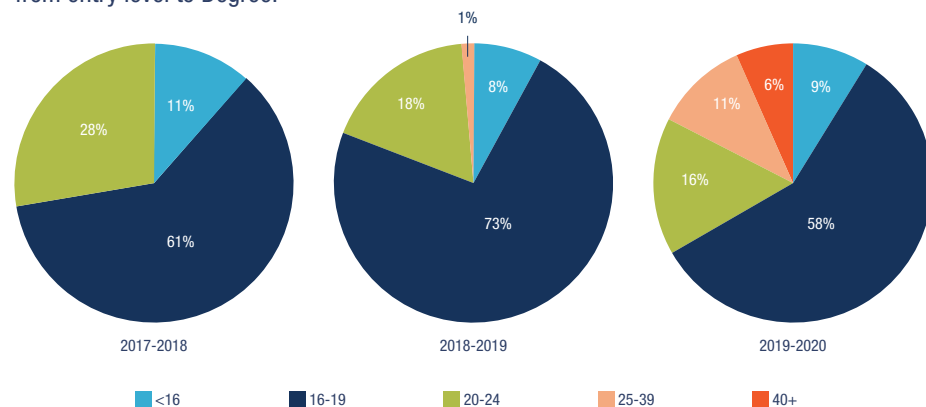
The figures below indicate the effectiveness of this as students are declaring their Care Experienced status more readily and reporting is reflecting this trend.

Care Experienced Students



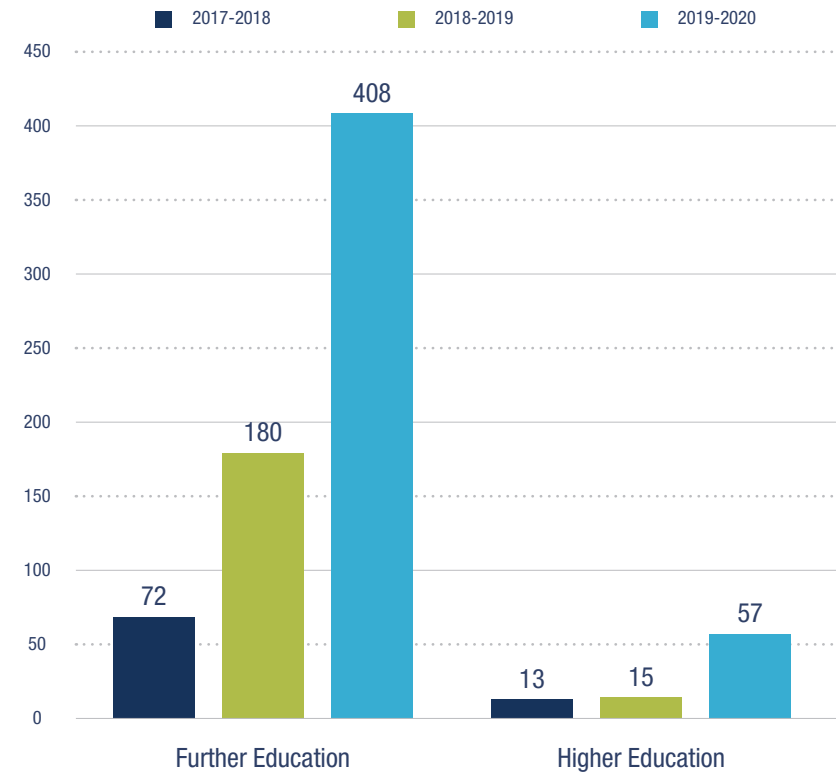
Reports show a marked increase in mature students since 2017/18.

We could attribute that to changes in the Scottish Funding Council policy on the Care Experience Bursary, increased levels of support, as well as having a wide range of courses from entry level to Degree.



Further Education and Higher Education statistics

FE/HE Study



College gives me something to do that gets me up every morning which is good. I didn't go to school, but this course makes me want to get up. My Prince's Trust course builds confidence and my teamwork skills. The Care Experience Bursary will help me to learn how to drive, get a car and will help when I get a job in Construction.

- Kenzie (17 years)

What we aimed to achieve 2018/2021 and what we did achieve

What we aimed to achieve	What we did achieve
Develop within the College means for engaging directly with students as a group to co-produce new approaches to corporate parenting.	<p>In 2020 a post was created for a Care Experience Co-ordinator to oversee all aspects of our Corporate Parenting responsibilities and to support the Corporate Parenting Plan. The role provides extra support for Care Experienced students and to liaise with support workers, Carers and agencies to make sure we are providing our Care Experienced students with the best service we can.</p> <p>Another post was created in 2021 which supports the excellent work of the Care Experience Co-ordinator.</p> <p>Both roles allow students to engage directly through various means of communication, as well as having the opportunity for face to face interaction.</p>
Develop effectiveness of current College data management systems to collect and use data on care-experienced students.	<p>College data management systems have been updated to collate specific Care Experience data to alert us to any trends such as withdrawal and retention rates.</p> <p>Attendance register data is filtered and sent to the Care Experience Co-ordinator to allow for early intervention if students are not attending.</p> <p>A new process is in place where students are clearly identified on Registers as being Care Experienced.</p>
We will work with partners, especially Skills Development Scotland (SDS), to develop and deliver employability and skills development to ensure care-experienced students gain access to positive opportunities.	<p>Skills Development Scotland have been working with the Care Experience and Employability teams to deliver Employability workshops specifically for Care Experienced students.</p> <p>Projects have been established with Fife Council Social Work department and all Fife Council High schools to share information on new students coming into college, this enables early intervention and can alert staff of any support issues.</p>

What we aimed to achieve	What we did achieve
Develop staff training in conjunction with partner organisations to increase staff knowledge, skills and awareness of issues and responsibilities for Care Experienced students.	<p>Mandatory Corporate Parenting training has been updated to make staff more aware of barriers to learning that may impact the wellbeing of our students.</p> <p>Staff training was arranged through Who Cares Scotland which increased staff knowledge, skills and awareness of issues and responsibilities for Care Experienced students.</p> <p>College Development Network training was uploaded to our staff training site.</p>
<p>Increase communication channels to current and future Care Experienced students of corporate parenting support at College.</p> <p>Develop a communication plan that ties in with monthly Community and Champions days and staff training days.</p>	<p>A welcome email is now sent from the Care Experience team to all Care Experienced students, the email is sent from a specially set up mail box which also functions as a point of contact for Care Experienced students. This mail box is also used to communicate information about updates and upcoming events.</p> <p>Having the Action and Champion groups means that there is support on hand to help with events and promoting activities for Care Experienced students as well as raising awareness of Care Experience across all faculties. The Champions group met four times a year and were instrumental in the planning of these events.</p>
Develop within the College means for engaging directly with students as a group to co-produce new approaches to corporate parenting.	<p>We have developed our Social Media sites to reflect the needs of our Care Experienced students by having specific Care Experienced sites. We use Facebook, Twitter and the college website to promote services and events to make them accessible to all. Communication is also done through various channels such as email on personal and college emails, phone calls and texts to ensure that no one is excluded from accessing information.</p>
Work in partnership with College staff and external partners to ensure funding is in place pre-induction as far as possible for care-experienced students.	<p>In partnership with the Fife College funding team we have held one to one sessions where we can support and advise Care Experienced students with their funding applications. Changes to the Scottish Funding Council's age cap has meant that this is now more accessible.</p>

Projects

We said we would - Work with community partner organisations to identify additional leisure and work experience opportunities outwith the College, including Skills Development Scotland, Fife Sport and Leisure Trust, Fife Cultural Trust, and identify funding sources to support students to participate.

Here are some of our projects:

Connecting Scotland

Along with Digital Services, we applied to Connecting Scotland for Chromebooks and Dongles to support Care Experienced students affected by digital poverty. Our bid was successful and we received 67 Chromebooks and 40 Wi-Fi dongles for allocation to those students in most need. These devices belong to the students whether they continue in college or not.



Children's Hearing Panel

Fife College partnered with Children's Hearings Scotland to recruit, train and support the volunteer panel members who make legal decisions in Children's Hearings. As part of their recruitment campaign they were looking for students with lived experience to be at the heart of their campaign. Students helped with the design of the recruitment campaign, what they should be looking for in a panel member, to being involved in the interview process.



The Children's Panel - life changing.

Nine Fife College students were involved in this project with some applying to become panel members themselves. This was a great opportunity for the students and they thoroughly enjoyed the process whilst learning new skills along the way.

Skills Development Scotland partnership project

Funding was available from Skills Development Scotland to work with Care Experienced students. Fife College matched the funding and a local artist (Katie Fowlie) delivered a project where Care Experienced students made their own camera obscuras. The work was displayed in the college and the community. Working along the lines of "Focus" the sessions tied in with Skills Development Scotland's focus on education/the future etc. Fife College Employability team were also on board to support the project and help students develop their employability skills whilst being creative.



Madlug



Care Experienced students received rucksacks containing advice and free items to help them in their studies. The bags were prepared as part of the College's drive to provide students from a care or looked-after background with as much support as possible, especially given that fewer of them had been on campus due to the Coronavirus restrictions.

The rucksacks themselves were donated by Madlug (Make A Difference Luggage), a company who sell rucksacks and luggage with a policy of donating one bag to a care-experienced person for every item sold.

Madlug donated 430 bags in total to the College. The bags were filled with items such as note pads, pens, post-its and sanitary products for female students.

NHS Fife also donated toothbrushes and toothpaste for the bags and the Prince's Trust designed brochures with insights from other Care Experienced students and links to where they could receive more advice and support.



The Royal Bank of Scotland also donated pens and trolley tokens, the bags were then made available to students to pick-up from College campuses across the region in a Covid-secure manner.



We Care Days

Fife College took the decision to include Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic in 2016 to increase awareness of its importance in all College policies.

We hold regular 'We Care Day' events throughout the year, to encourage, support and provide Care Experienced students with opportunities to meet other people and try different activities.

Fife College currently have over 420 Care Experienced Students enrolled for the academic year 2021-2022



Our vision for 2021-2024

PRIORITY AREA 1

We will be alert to matters which may, or may not, adversely affect the wellbeing of care-experienced young people and care leavers.

How will we achieve this?	Expected outcomes
<p>Covid 19</p> <p>Digital skills are an integral part of how we live and work and with the shift to hybrid learning and working, we will equip our students with the necessary skills, tools and confidence they need in order to learn and work anytime, anywhere. Care Experienced students are provided with additional support, the option to borrow Fife College devices and one to one sessions, if required, to use digital technology.</p> <p>Maintain reports and management systems to ensure accurate reporting on attendance and achievements of Care Experienced students.</p>	<p>Digital inclusiveness for all students.</p> <p>Increased engagement and productivity.</p> <p>Curriculum better-informed of status at interview improving uptake and retention.</p>
<p>Liaise with current Fife projects, including fostering networks and Social Work, as informed through the Fife Corporate Parent Board.</p>	<p>A deeper understanding of where and when students require support.</p> <p>Being better-informed regarding current issues that may be affecting the Care Experienced students.</p>
<p>Work with the Developing the Young Workforce co-ordinator in Fife High Schools and Fife Council Social Work team to promote College to school leavers and harder to reach Care Experienced individuals. Monitor engagement through transition. Care Experience status is included on transition forms which are stored on REMS.</p>	<p>Up to date information from the schools on support needs to enhance transitions.</p> <p>Smooth transition and additional support in place for students before they start college. Expect increase in retention rates.</p>

School was terrible, College is better. Classes are different, tutors are more relaxed, the times are better for me than school and I think I will do well at college.
- anonymous (18 years)

How will we achieve this?	Expected outcomes
Secure students' permission to share information with Fife College staff through consent forms.	Improved knowledge of issues which may adversely affect the wellbeing of the Care Experienced student.
Monitor the new Request to Share Information box on the new funding forms.	A more efficient service to make funding as fast as possible to ensure it is in place for start of courses in order to remove financial barriers.
Hold events where students are encouraged to bring their Parents/Guardians/Carers along.	Building connections and communication to help students overcome their fear of entering college buildings by being supported by someone familiar to them.
Continue to produce monitoring reports to ensure Care Experienced students are being fully funded and supported during their College journey.	More Care Experienced students benefiting from the Care Experience Bursary.
Survey all Care Experienced students on a regular basis to identify needs.	Improved knowledge, awareness and engagement with care-experienced students in College will allow us to adapt our service to the needs of the students.

I am at Fife College because I want to get qualifications, my dream job is to be a sign language interpreter working in the courts or for school. My best friend is deaf. I like my course because it has boosted my confidence and I've met new people. I didn't know anyone and now I speak to everyone in class. I like being a student.
- anonymous (19 years)

PRIORITY AREA 2

All Corporate Parent partners will assess the needs of those children and young people for services and support that they provide.

How will we achieve this?	Expected Outcomes
Implement the new procedure on Assessing Students' Personal & Social Support Needs, including Social Support Plans, for Care Experienced students when required.	Improved level of support to Care Experienced (and other 'vulnerable') students to reduce social barriers to education.
Create a survey asking students what support they would like from College.	Student led support in areas they deem necessary.
Hold events where Care Experienced students can come together, perhaps for food, to increase comfort levels and likelihood of attendance at times when we know retention dips.	Highlighting areas of concern and acting, before this has an effect on retention figures.
PLSP offered to every Care Experienced student.	Identifying support needs at the start of the course to increase retention and reduce stress for students at the start of term.
Maintain staff training and promoting awareness levels.	Enhanced awareness of all staff to the barriers that Care Experienced students can face.
Continue to run Who Cares Scotland sessions for staff.	Resulting in more understanding and support for Care Experienced students due to raising staff awareness.
Have links on staff training site to College Development Network - Corporate Parenting training.	

PRIORITY AREA 3

All Corporate Parent partners will promote the interests of care-experienced young people and careleavers.

How will we achieve this?	Expected Outcomes
Continue to deliver an annual communication plan to internal staff and external partners.	Increased awareness of the needs of Care Experienced students and corporate parenting responsibilities.
Produce a quarterly newsletter to be distributed to all internal staff.	Raising awareness of what the Care Experience team are doing and increased engagement from staff.
Care Experienced students will be contacted at the start of the course to advise of services and support available from the Care Experience team and the college.	Increased number of students engaging with support, aiding with retention figures. Improved level of support to Care Experienced (and other 'vulnerable') students to reduce social barriers to education.
Provide follow-up support within the College and with external partners where unmet support needs are identified.	Increase mental health and well-being for Care Experienced students.
Track positive leaving destinations by improving reporting procedures and processes.	Improved positive destination, smoother transitions after leaving College.
Providing exit support to completing students to provide any assistance that may be needed.	More successful outcomes for young people.
Implement a mentoring system with Lecturers to promote University to Level 6 students and above.	Raising aspirations. More students applying to University
We will continue to work with partners, especially Skills Development Scotland (SDS), to develop and deliver employability and skills development to ensure care-experienced students gain access to positive opportunities.	Support and increase awareness of extra-curricular opportunities that are available. Positive leaver destinations, PLDs, measured and advertised on social media and College website.

PRIORITY AREA 4

All Corporate Parent partners will seek to provide care-experienced young people and careleavers with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing.

How will we achieve this?	Expected Outcomes
Work with community partner organisations to identify additional leisure and work experience opportunities out with the College (including SDS, Fife Sport and Leisure Trust and Fife Cultural Trust) and identify funding sources to support students to participate.	Support and increase awareness of extra-curricular opportunities that are available.
We will continue to work with partners, especially Skills Development Scotland (SDS), to develop and deliver employability and skills development to ensure Care Experienced students gain access to positive opportunities.	Number of additional opportunities and partner agencies made available. Number of students finding work with Employability team and/or SDS support. Measurement of positive destinations
New project work with Adoption UK, opportunities for volunteering.	College work experience placements developed.
Building links with transition partners such as: Local Authorities, Prince's Trust Team Programmes and College Transition Teams, to support students' transition through improved communication of the social and education support needs.	New procedures to ensure routine transfer of support information as soon as student's consent secured. Care Experience added to school transition forms. Transition forms placed in accessible areas on REMS.
Continue working relationships with community-based partners* actively engaged with Care Experienced young people to support their transition to College and to encourage disclosure of care status on application/enrolment.	Increased number of partner agencies; increased number of care-experienced students being referred /supported in transition by partner agencies.
*Include 'Em, 2BHeard, Fife Gingerbread, Residential houses in Fife.	
Continue project work with Fife Council Social Work department and Fife High Schools	Increased number of disclosures on application/enrolment, with improved accuracy of data collected.

PRIORITY AREA 5

All Corporate Parent partners will take such action as they consider appropriate to help care-experienced young people and careleavers to access opportunities they provide and to make use of services, and access support, which it provides.

How will we achieve this?	Expected Outcomes
Continue to develop and market targeted guidance and promotional materials for care-experienced applicants, students and those supporting them.	Increases opportunities for Care Experienced students.
Getting Started programmes to aid transition into college.	A reduction in the amount of no shows at start of term as barriers are reduced.
Identify suitable work placement opportunities within the College during term time and over summer.	Offering real life work experience and developing transferable skills. Developing employability skills and pathways.
Continue to find ways to hear Care Experienced students' voices through monthly "We Care" days, engagement with the Care Experience team through Facebook, internet communications as well as email engagement.	Further opportunities for Care Experienced students to meet and connect with one another. Increased participation and ownership of identities. Increased health and wellbeing. Identifying the College as being a safe space. More student voices being heard. Better retention of Care Experienced students.
Employers Champion Project. This project is creating a database of local employers who will provide opportunities for students, there will be a specific Care Experienced strand.	Opportunities for employment, increasing employability skills and work experience, specifically for Care Experienced students.
Promote Strathclyde University's Stand-Alone Project and encourage students to engage in this.	Removing more barriers to University for Care Experienced students.
Continue to develop the UCAS support project designed specifically for Care Experienced students.	Aiming to increase the number of students successfully achieving places at University.

PRIORITY AREA 6

All Corporate Parent partners will take such other action as it considers appropriate for the purposes of improving the way in which it exercises its functions in relation to Care Experienced young people and careleavers.

How will we achieve this?	Expected Outcomes
The College will continue to raise awareness of its responsibilities with key partners through a student co-produced corporate parent guide.	Awareness among key stakeholders of College commitment to fulfilling its duties under the C&YP Act.
Creating opportunities for students to participate in corporate parent development. FCSA are recruiting Care Experienced Officers to represent the Care Experienced students and have input on activities and events relevant to Care Experience.	Young people feel included as part of the process.
We will annually review our CPAG membership with our student representatives and ensure key partners are represented.	Development of CPAG actions, feeding-in to next plan.
We will continue to monitor and evaluate how our Corporate Parenting duties have been met by reviewing progress against actions in this plan at each Action Group meeting.	Revision and/or improvement to CPAG actions.
Produce an annual survey for staff and students.	Increased awareness of corporate parenting and growth of the community and champions family. More avenues of communication created including College website, FCSA blog area, College App and Guidance newsletters.

Our promise

We at Fife College promise to treat Care Experienced students as our own.

As stated in 'The Promise', we want our students to grow up loved, safe and respected and able to realise their full potential.

We will do all we can to ensure we support them do this.

I left school with the bare minimum qualifications because I got really bad anxiety and school was really stressful. One of the Guidance teachers at school did a one to one with me and got me into college, due to a family situation I had to leave my home and move away from the area. I am happy now because I got into Fife College and eventually want to work as a Mechanical Engineer.

- Graham (17 years)

College is amazing. Being in Care is the worst thing you can ever do. College lets me meet lots of people I can talk to and make new friends.

- Jordanleigh (16 years)

0344 248 0115
fife.ac.uk
WeCare@fife.ac.uk



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