



University of the  
Highlands and Islands  
Inverness College

# Corporate Parenting Plan



2020-2023

# Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Our Approach](#)

- [Professional Practice](#)
- [Happy, Healthy & Secure](#)

[The National Picture](#)

[Our Picture so Far](#)

[Our Future Focus 2020-23](#)

[2020-23 Action Plan](#)

[Key Documents](#)

## Introduction

### What is Corporate Parenting?

Inverness College UHI is a Corporate Parent as defined by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. As a Corporate Parent, the college has specific duties and responsibilities for care experienced learners to ensure that the support and opportunities, provided by any parent to their child, are offered by the college to students who are care experienced.

Inverness College UHI is proud to be a Corporate Parent and acknowledges this as a great privilege with significant responsibilities. We have made a firm commitment to make our college accessible and inclusive to all learners. The college has established a positive declaration environment and recognises individuals with lived care experienced as a priority learner group in both strategic and operational planning.

Our organisation's values define who we are, our expectations of ourselves and of each other. They describe how we interact with one another and how we interact with our students and partners. The values that underpin the culture of Inverness College UHI are:

- **Respect**
- **Integrity**
- **Accountability**
- **Passion**

These values underpin our behaviours at work and the commitments we make to ourselves and one another.

Inverness College UHI recognises the strength, determination and resilience of our care experienced learners but also some of the additional challenges they experience. As Corporate Parents we are continually working to enhance the services available to our care experienced learners through feedback from them and prospective applicants, from the various partner agencies whom we engage with, and by responding to local and national reviews.

Our three-year action plan takes account of the progress the college has achieved to date and is underpinned by The Scottish Funding Council's [National Ambition for Care Experienced Students](#) to achieve equity of outcomes by 2030. Our plan provides a structured approach to continual improvement across the learner journey and the need to create early connections with our prospective learners by further enhancing the relationships with external partners who have supported their journey so far.



## Our Approach

Whilst Inverness College UHI gained early external recognition for our work with care experienced learners (Buttle UK Quality Mark), we recognise the need to continually strive for excellence in providing the care our learners are entitled to. Our approach is ever evolving and is founded on:

- Research to inform our practice, including attachment theory
- A clear understanding of the developmental process and the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
- The principles of trauma informed practice
- The application of children's rights

To ensure the continuous enhancement of provision for care experienced learners, we regularly review:

- The Corporate Parenting Action Plan
- Transition planning processes
- The quality and responsiveness of student support services

We involve care experienced learners in all discussions about our provision and seek their feedback on how we can make further improvements. Across the entirety of the student journey, we have taken steps to ensure that individuals feel supported through our positive declaration environment and are further supported by the processes which follow.

Placing the learner at the centre of all we do is the overarching principle which guides our work and helps us to encourage learners to take an active role in their learning.

Our student support teams, in conjunction with curriculum colleagues and external agencies, work together to provide holistic support and to find solutions to any barriers which may exist.



## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023

Working in partnership with partner agencies, the college has developed a robust transition planning process to encourage applications. The college has simplified the application process and has clear wording around declaring care experience to ensure declarations are supported at the earliest point. Funding processes have been updated to ensure those with care experience are prioritised.

The Access and Transitions Co-ordinator role enables support to be coordinated according to the needs of the individual. The Access and Transitions Co-ordinator role also ensures that the college continuously seeks to develop professional relationships and collaborative activity with a wide range of external partners in support of care experienced learners.

Ref: Image available from [www.celcis.org](http://www.celcis.org)



In ensuring that we first and foremost meet our legislative duties, we have developed and improved our systems, processes and support services to uphold the rights of, and safeguard the wellbeing of care experienced learners in line with the eight wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI).

Our focus will continue to be aligned to staying alert and responsive to matters which may adversely affect the wellbeing of our care experienced learners.

We continue to actively listen to the student voice and encourage regular engagement and feedback from

individuals on their college experience. We continually encourage our all teams to be reflective and responsive to feedback, identify areas for improvement and take the appropriate actions to implement change.

## Professional Practice

The college recognises that people have the greatest influence on our success and that of our learners and as such we remain focussed on the professional development of staff. We support our staff to understand the needs of care experienced learners and their extended role as corporate parents. We now include an information session on corporate parenting as part of our staff inductions and follow this up with an online mandatory training module. The college also has additional opt in professional development on corporate parenting which is held bi-annually to ensure professional knowledge is relevant and up to date.

Ongoing help and advice are offered by the Access and Transitions Co-ordinator to staff who are supporting learners with their transition and regular reviews with our learners ensure that we are meeting their ongoing and changing needs.

## Happy, Healthy and Secure

We understand that having financial security and a safe and welcoming place to study reduces the additional pressures faced by care experienced learners. In September 2016, the University of the Highlands and Islands opened its halls of residence on the Inverness Campus. Through negotiation with City Heart and UHI, the college have been instrumental in securing a 365 day lease for care experienced learners to ensure that no one will find themselves without accommodation during the summer period when students traditionally go home to their families.



We have also established a designated contact in the Student Funding Team to ensure care experienced students have their bursaries or SAAS funding in place at the earliest point possible and to act as a personal contact should students experience financial difficulties during their studies. Managing the Care Experienced Bursary has proved to be challenging for some learners so the College have financial planning and budgeting advice available by means of support with this.

The college also provides a wide range of wellbeing and support services, both on campus and online, to help our learners keep fit, healthy and active. A dedicated referral system provides access to relevant services at any point throughout the learning journey.

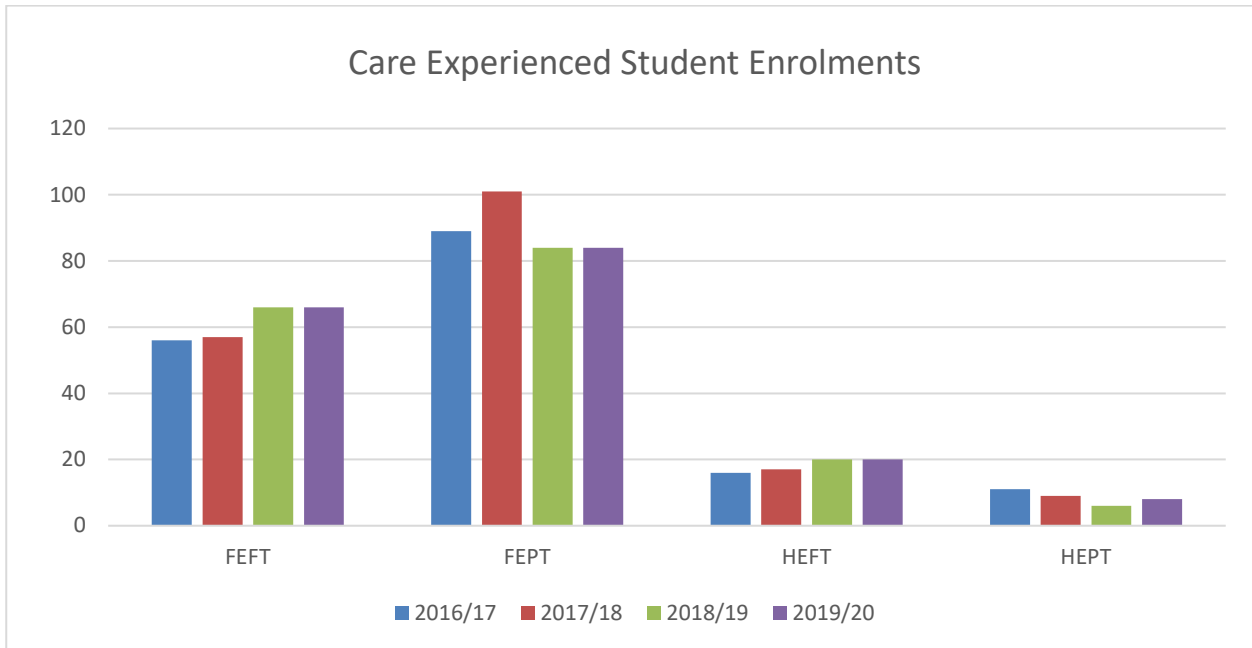
## The National Picture

Despite efforts to close the opportunity and attainment gap, care experienced young people do not have the same life chances as their peers and studies have shown that this group are more likely to become vulnerable to a range of socioeconomic disadvantages including offending behaviour and health problems. Research from 'Who Cares? Scotland,' (2020) indicates that:

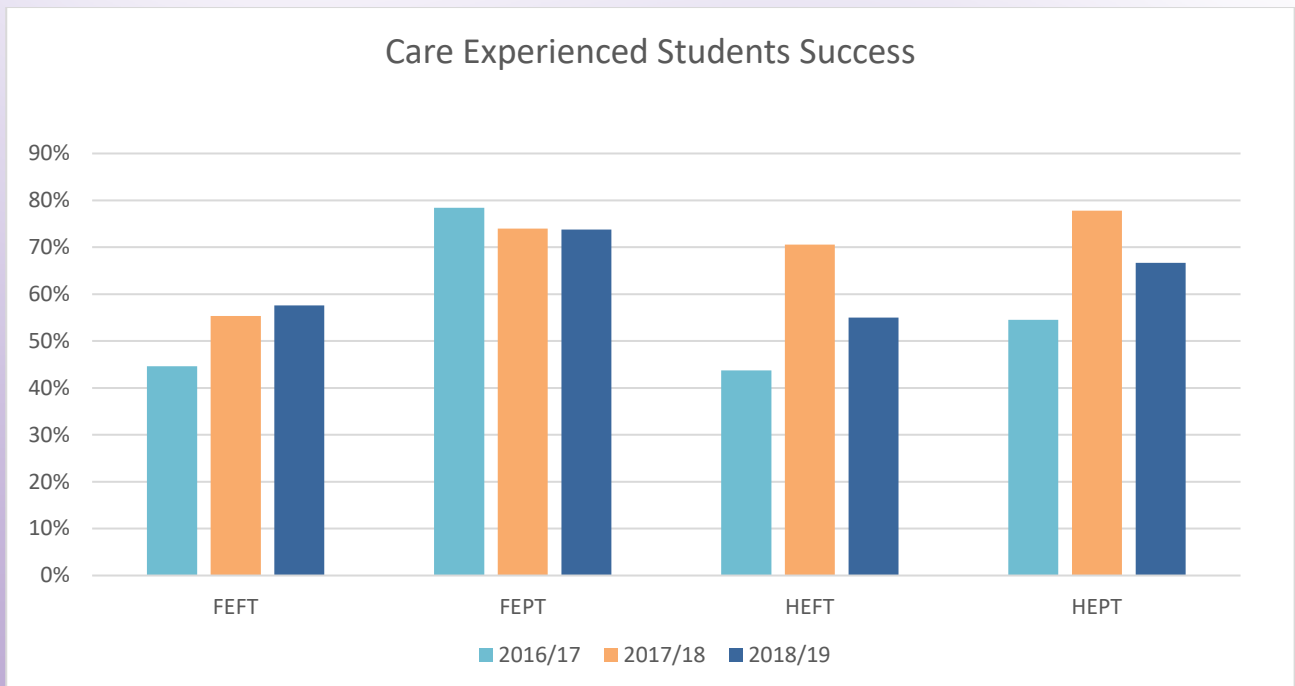
- Care Experienced young people are **less likely to be in positive destinations** nine months after leaving school
- **Participation and retention rates in post compulsory education are very low** with only 4% of Scottish care experienced young people engaging in Higher Education (Children and Young People's Commissioner, Scotland, 2019).
- At all levels, Care Experienced learners have **lower rates of completing courses compared to all learners at university and college**
- There is a **15.6% gap in successful outcomes** for full-time further education courses between care experienced learners and their non-care peers (SFC, 2019)

Such poor educational outcomes also correlate to other socioeconomic issues experienced by this learner group including higher unemployment, homelessness, criminalisation, and health.

## Our Picture so Far

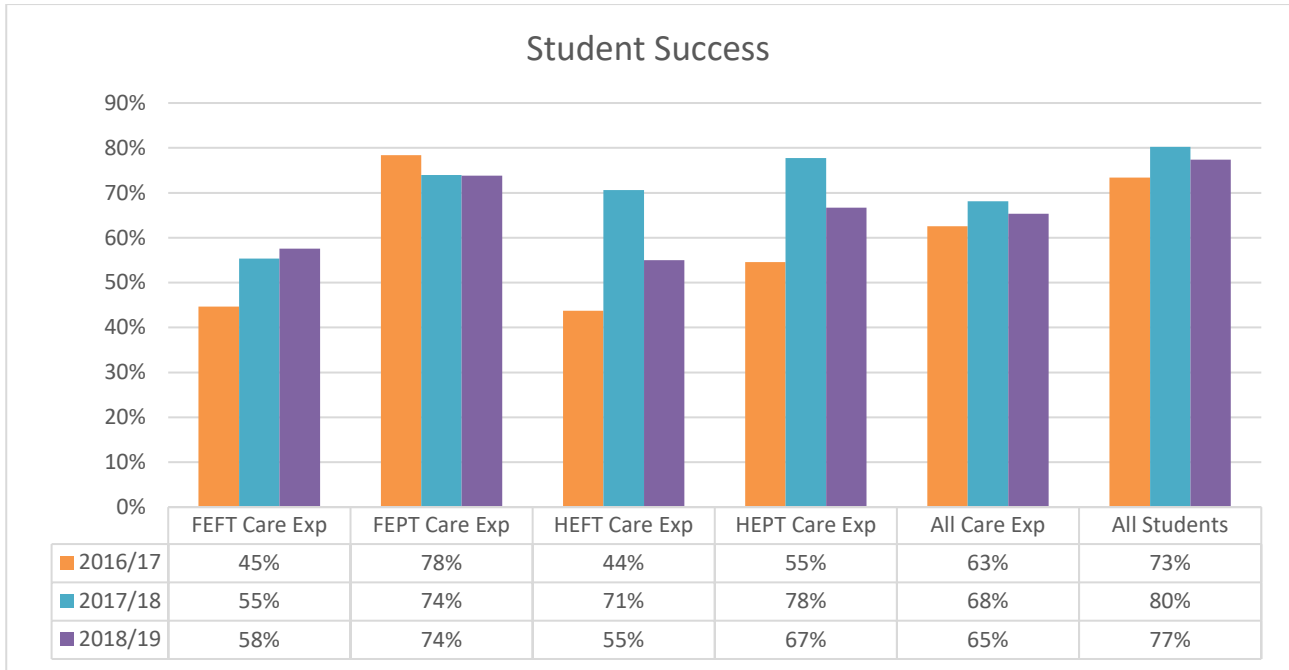


The college and the wider UHI partnership have placed a significant focus on the experience and outcomes of care experienced learners since the conception of corporate parenting legislation in 2014. We continually achieve our recruitment target for this learner group, as set in the Regional Outcome Agreement, and we have experienced a marginal increase in the number of care experienced learners who engage in FT FE and FT HE. We are well ahead of the SFC ambition of 1.5% of college headcount being care experienced learners and local intelligence tells us that we do well in attracting this learner group.

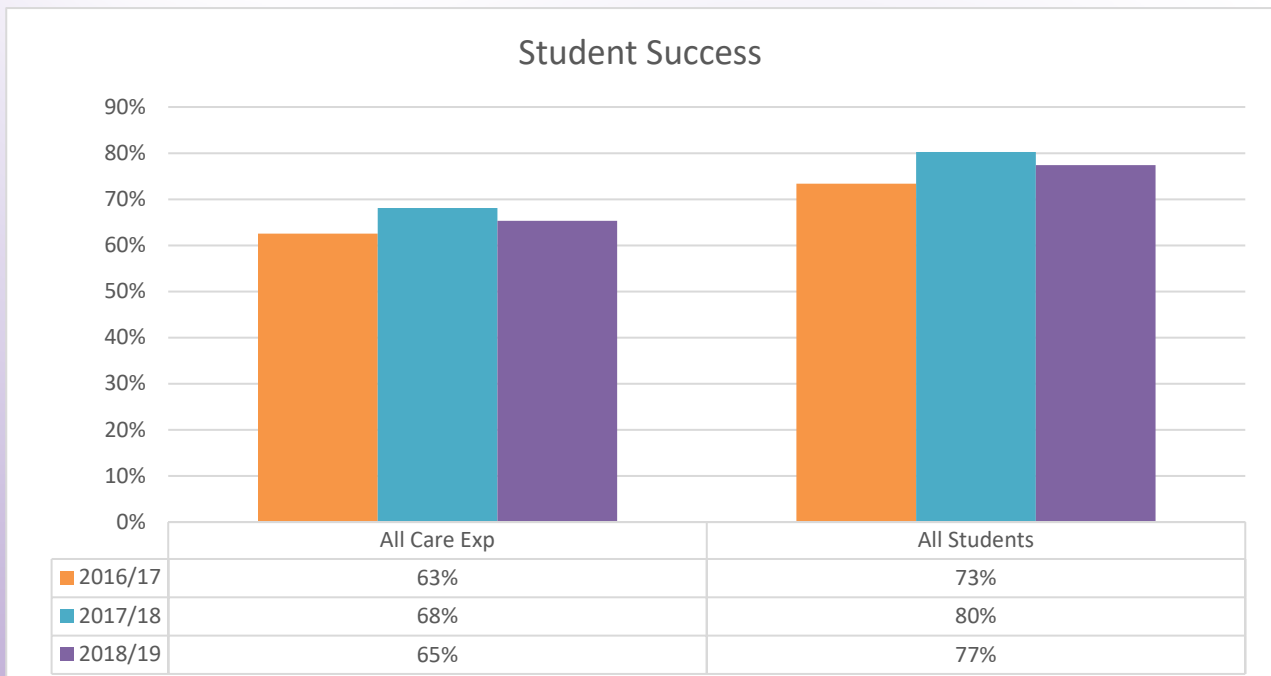




## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023



The college has seen a sustained improvement in the outcomes of care experienced learners on FT FE programmes with outcomes improving by 13pp in the period 2016-17 to 2018-19. However, despite efforts to provide tailored and personalised support to care experienced learners, and data showing we perform above sector norm for this learner group, we have not seen a sustained and consistent improvement in outcomes across *all* levels and modes of study.



Outcomes for care experienced learners across all modes of study have remained lower than those of their non-care experienced peers and across the sector the gap in the outcomes of care experienced learners has widened.

## Our Future Focus 2020-23

As we introduce our new Corporate Parenting Plan for 2020 - 2023, our aims and objectives continue to be grounded by our legislative duties. However, the sector has seen a wealth of new research on care experienced learners since the conception of Corporate Parenting in 2014. Our 2020–23 plan not only builds on our previous work but also responds to the recommendations as set out in:

- [‘Being a Student with Care Experience is Very Daunting’, Celcis 2019](#)
- [National Statement of Ambition for Care Experienced Learners, Scottish Funding Council 2020](#)
- [The Care Review 2020](#)
- [Principles of Good Transition 3](#)
- [The Learner Journey Review 2019](#)

Our ambition moving forward is to encourage a relationship-focussed approach to the care and support of care experienced learners, where we seek to further enhance our systems and processes to be person-centred and not process centred and ensure they are free from jargon, inequity and difficulty.

We embrace Scotland’s ambition for children and young people to achieve equity of opportunity and outcomes and will commit to further improvements across the learner journey to support this. As set out in the Care Review 2020, through the identification of the five founding principles, we will strive to further enhance the learner voice and will continue to create an environment where our care experienced learners can achieve their full potential through being able to form relationships which are *‘nurturing, patient, kind, compassionate, trusting and respectful’*. The Care Review (2020)

**The Foundations**  
**The Promise is built on Five Foundations.**

**Voice:** Children and young people must be listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care, with all those involved properly listening and responding to what they want and need. There must be a compassionate and caring decision-making culture focussed on children and those they trust.

**Family:** Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together, to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way.

**Care:** Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so, and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.

**People:** The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to listen and be compassionate in their decision-making and care.

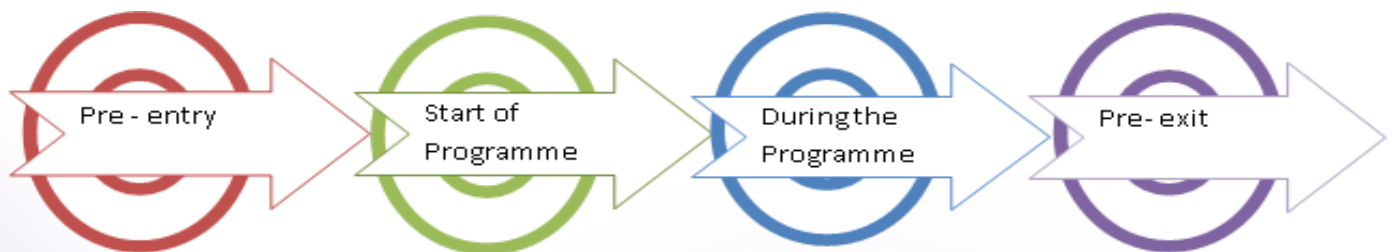
**Scaffolding:** Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.



Extract from the Care Review 2020

## Part 2: The Action Plan

The second part of this document contains our action plan which takes account of the entirety of the learner journey from pre-entry. An overview of the current status is provided alongside our future focus and specific actions for each stage. An annual update and review of the action plan will be provided to take account of progress made each academic year.



# 2020-23 ACTION PLAN

## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023



The college operates a positive declaration environment and encourages declarations of care experience at the earliest point to enable timely and appropriate support. At the earliest possible point, we work with partner agencies and schools to support the transition of care experienced learners to college. Care experienced learners are invited to discuss their requirements for an effective transition and the college creates a person centred Transition Plan based on the needs of each individual. This draws together any relevant support needed both from the college and from external partners.

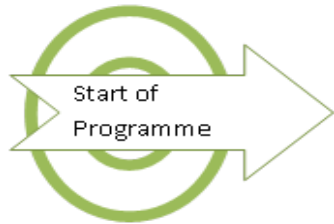
Prior to applying for college, care experienced learners are provided with preparatory support such as help in identifying suitable routes of study, completing application forms, writing personal statements, preparing for interview and tours of the campus setting. The college applies contextualised admissions for all applicants with care experience to ensure a guaranteed interview and a guaranteed offer of place on the course of choice, or a suitable alternative.

Over the summer months, the college offers a tailored programme to support transition to college including advice around funding and accommodation, budgeting and financial planning, and ongoing support arrangements are put in place prior to enrolment.

## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>In response to:</b>
1.1	Seek feedback from care experienced learners on the new Transition Plan through a focus group ensuring the language and content meets their needs and expectations	Access & Progression Manager	By April 2021	<b>Principles of Good Transitions 3 Principle 1</b> <i>Planning and decision making should be carried out in a person-centred way</i>
1.2	Work collaboratively with current care experienced learners and the Student Engagement Officer to design and produce a video detailing their experience at college / services available to support care experienced learners. <i>(This can be used at transition events, meetings with third sector agencies and schools and will also be placed on the College website)</i>	Access and Transitions Co-ordinator	By June 2021	<b>Principles of Good Transitions 3 Principle 3:</b> <i>Planning should start early and continue up to age 25</i>  <b>Learner Journey Review</b> <b>Key Priority 2: Recommendation 7</b> <i>Raise aspirations and improve offer of support for looked after young people</i>
1.3	Create a point of contact with every Highland Council secondary to enhance information sharing prior to support early identification of individuals.	Access and Transitions Co-ordinator	August 2021	<b>Principles of Good Transitions 3 Principle 3:</b> <i>Planning should start early and continue up to age 25</i>
1.4	Work collaboratively with Highland Council to develop professional learning opportunities for teachers to cascade best practice in transitions planning.	Access and Progression Manager	Nov 20 – June 21	<b>SFC Ambition 1: Intake of care-experienced students</b> <i>To continue to increase the number of care experienced learners engaging in post-compulsory education</i>  <b>Key Priority 2: Recommendation 7</b> <i>Raise aspirations and improve offer of support for...looked after young people</i>
1.5	Continue to promote prioritisation of places for care experienced learners on Senior Phase programmes	Access & Progression Manager	Nov 20 -March 21	<b>Key Priority 2: Recommendation 7</b> <i>Raise aspirations and improve offer of support for looked after young people</i>  <b>SFC Ambition 1: Intake of care-experienced students</b> <i>To continue to increase the number of care experienced learners engaging in post-compulsory education</i>

## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023



Declarations of care experience are encouraged during enrolment and at the start of the course. Care experienced individuals, alongside those from other priority groups, are flagged to the Personal Development Adviser / Personal Academic Tutor through the Student Hub and on INSIGHT for FE and HN programmes. A referral system is in place to pass on any 'on course' declarations to the Access and Transitions Co-ordinator who can offer support to learners. Ongoing support is provided by the Access and Transitions Co-ordinator in addition to the assigned Personal Development Adviser / Personal Academic Tutor and any relevant Support Team.

Ongoing means of support is highlighted via the college website, including a directory of local services, and also on our Student Support Brightspace hub, '*The Bothy*'. Care experienced learners can continue to gain support from the Access and Transitions Co-ordinator to secure accommodation, including in halls of residence for 365 days a year, and for any financial support they may require early into the course.

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>In response to:</b>
<b>2.1</b>	Establish a data sharing agreement between UHI and IC UHI that allows for information sharing relating to the wellbeing and safety of any care experienced students that reside in the halls of residence	Access and Transitions Co-ordinator	August 2021	<p><b>Principles of Good Transitions 3</b></p> <p><b>Principle 2:</b> <i>Support should be coordinated across all services</i></p> <p><b>Principle 4:</b> <i>Young people should get the support they need</i></p>

## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023



During the academic year care experienced learners, along with their peers on FE programmes, have timetabled weekly pastoral support with their Personal Development Adviser and additional 1:1 support as required. HN / HE learners have their Personal Academic Tutor as a point of contact throughout the year and additional access to the Student Support Team and the Access and Transitions Co-ordinator.

As part of our continued commitment to improving outcomes for care experienced learners, the college regularly monitors the attendance and engagement of all FE FT learners through INSIGHT monitoring and tracking system. Care experienced learners, amongst other priority learner groups, are flagged for additional consideration. Early interventions are made for learners who show signs of poor engagement. Following discussion with the PDA / PAT referrals to various forms of support are made, for example, wellbeing; funding; additional learning support, to try to provide the learner with the necessary support required to get back on track.

Transition Plan Review meetings are held between the Access and Transitions Co-ordinator and individual care experienced learners twice each year. This ties in with the key stages of the learner journey and are designed to review and update any support measures in place. Where care experienced learners do not have an active Transition Plan in place, contact at key stages of the learner journey are in place to check in on wellbeing and remind students of the support available to them.

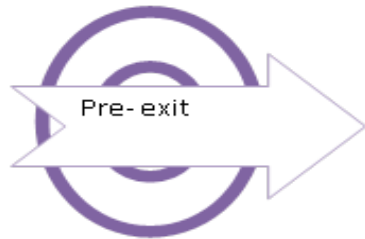
The college welcomes the views of care experienced learners throughout the year and their voice is captured at several points through the academic year including through student surveys and specific focus groups.



## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023

	Action	Owner	Timescale	In response to:
3.1	<p>Establish a peer mentoring scheme to give informal support to fellow care experienced students both within the college and those who are considering college as an option</p>	<p>Access and Transitions Coordinator</p>	<p>December 2021</p>	<p><b>Principles of Good Transitions 3</b>  <b>Principle 4:</b>  <i>Young people should get the support they need</i></p> <p><b>Learner Journey Review</b>  <b>Key Priority 2</b>  <b>Recommendation 7:</b>  <i>Raise aspirations and improve offer of support for...looked after young people</i></p> <p><b>The Care Review</b>          ➤ Scaffolding:  <i>Universities and colleges in Scotland must also act on their responsibilities towards care experienced students, ensuring they are provided with access to mentoring and support throughout their studies.</i></p>
3.2	<p>Work with partner agencies to plan and promote practical activities available during academic holiday periods, particularly holiday periods centred on family experiences.</p> <p>In partnership with external agencies, establish a structured approach to providing support during periods of academic holiday to overcome the additional challenge caused for care experienced learners due to a loss of routine/separation from meaningful relationships.</p>	<p>Access and Transitions Coordinator</p>	<p>March 2020</p>	<p><b>Principles of Good Transitions 3</b>  <b>Principle 2:</b>  <i>Support should be coordinated across all services</i>  <b>Principle 4:</b>  <i>Young people should get the support they need</i></p> <p><b>The Care Review:</b>          ➤ People          ➤ Scaffolding</p> <p><b>CELCIS: Recommendation 9</b>  <i>Consideration should be given to how students can access support during holiday periods to ensure continuity of support services. Particular attention should be given to Christmas and summer holiday periods as students report particular difficulties in relation to both emotional and practical support during these times.</i></p>

## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023



Towards the end of the course of study, Personal Development Advisers / Personal Academic Tutors hold exit interviews to discuss progression opportunities or to provide support in taking the next steps to employment. Learners are supported to create a skills profile and find employment opportunities utilising *'My World of Work'* or *'Future Me'* engagement activities, 1:1 career adviser meetings with SDS coaches, and attendance at careers and employability events organised at both departmental and college level.

The outcomes and destinations of our care experienced learners are carefully monitored and analysed and used to inform future planning.

## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>In response to:</b>
4.1	<p>Establish longitudinal tracking of learner data to better understand learner journeys from pre-entry to exit.</p> <p>Establish a means of gathering on-going qualitative feedback from care experienced learners, particularly at point of early withdrawal, to gain better insight into the student experience to help inform robust evaluation and future planning.</p>	<p>Access and Progression Manager &amp; MIS Manager</p> <p>Access and Progression Manager &amp; Quality Manager</p>	<p>From January 2021</p>	<p><b>Learner Journey Review Key Priority 17: Recommendation 217:</b> <i>Better share data, monitor and track learner journeys more coherently from 15-24 years</i></p> <p><b>CELCIS Recommendation 16:</b> <i>Colleges and universities should try to ascertain the reasons for care experienced students leaving their course early. These reasons should be systematically recorded, and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) should work closely with colleges and universities to use this data to improve completion rates and retention.</i></p> <p><b>SFC Ambition 2: College successful completions</b> <i>To reduce the gap of the successful completion rate of full-time FE care-experienced students from 15.6 percentage points in 2017-18 to 10 percentage points in 2022-23.</i> <i>To reduce the gap of the successful completion rate of full-time HE care-experienced students from 10.5 percentage points in 2017-18 to 6 percentage points by 2022-23.</i></p> <p><b>SFC Ambition 3: University retention</b> <i>To reduce the gap that progress to year 2 of their course from 6.0 percentage points in 2017-18 to 3.5 percentage points by 2022-23.</i></p>

## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023

### Ongoing organisational commitments

Inverness College UHI continues to make an explicit commitment to support care experienced learners and will continue to maintain their status as a priority learner group in operational and strategic plans. In our efforts to expand our knowledge and understanding of the challenges faced by care experienced learners and the support available to them on a local, regional and national level, we will continue to engage in regional and national forums and regularly liaise with other local corporate parent strategic leads to share best practice in support of improved outcomes.

To share understanding of the corporate parenting role, we will continue to disseminate information to all our college community. The college will continue to commit to providing professional development on corporate parenting to all new staff during induction sessions and to the wider staff body at bi-annual staff development days.

## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>In response to:</b>
5.1	Expand the corporate parenting strategic steering group to include all relevant public bodies / local corporate parents	Director of Student Experience		<b>Principles of Good Transitions 3</b> <b>Principle 2:</b> <i>Support should be coordinated across all services</i>
5.2	Work with UHI to update the mandatory training module to include an overview of the impact of adverse childhood experience on learners	Access and Transitions Co-ordinator	August 2022	<b>Principles of Good Transitions 3</b> <b>Principle 4:</b> <i>Young people should get the support they need</i> The Care Review: ➤ Scaffolding
5.2	Establish a 3-year refresher of mandatory training for all staff to complete.  Monitor and record staff engagement.	Professional Development Manager	August 2022	<b>The Care Review:</b> ➤ Scaffolding
5.3	As part of wider plan to improve access to vulnerable groups and adult returners: plan, develop and deliver community-based short courses in collaboration with partner agencies to address gaps in learning and to prepare learners to cope with the academic, emotional and social challenges faced on transition to on campus FE and HE courses.  Courses will also help to raise awareness and understanding of support services provided by Inverness College UHI and to explore available education pathways.	Director of Curriculum  Director of Student Experience  Access and Progression Manager	June 2023	<b>Learner Journey Review</b> <b>Key Priority 2: Recommendation 7</b> <i>Raise aspirations and improve offer of support for...looked after young people</i>  <b>Principles of Good Transitions 3</b> <b>Principle 1:</b> <i>Planning and decision making should be carried out in a person- centred way</i>  <b>The Care Review:</b> ➤ Voice ➤ People ➤ Scaffolding  <b>SFC Ambition 1: Intake of care-experienced students</b>

## Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023

				<p><i>To increase the number of Scottish domiciled care-experienced undergraduate entrants to 1.4% by 2022-23.</i></p> <p><i>Improved progression rates through working with the school and key pupils to raise awareness and aspiration, build confidence and relationships, run workshops and open days, operate summer schools and continued access to professionals.</i></p>
5.4	<p>Establish an internal IC Corporate Parenting Support Group to include care experienced learner representatives and staff from key areas across the college with a clear purpose and remit to drive the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Plan forward and make and implement timely changes identified by learners.</p>	<p>Access and Progression Manager &amp; Access and Transitions Co-ordinator</p>	<p>October 2021</p>	<p><b>Principles of Good Transitions 3</b></p> <p><b>Principle 4:</b> Young people should get the support they need</p> <p><b>The Care Review:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ People</li> <li>➤ Voice</li> <li>➤ Scaffolding</li> </ul> <p><b>CELCIS Recommendation 17</b> <i>Colleges and universities should provide opportunities for care experienced students to give feedback on the support services available, what does not work well for them, or what staff or institutions have done particularly well. This information should be collected alongside other student satisfaction processes and used to inform improvement planning.</i></p>
5.5	<p>Improve our data collection and categorisation to ensure that we have reliable and accurate data to use for multiple purposes</p>	<p>MIS Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

## Key Documents

- ['Being a Student with Care Experience is Very Daunting', Celcis 2019](#)
- [National Statement of Ambition for Care Experienced Learners, Scottish Funding Council 2020](#)
- [The Care Review 2020](#)
- [Principles of Good Transition 3](#)
- [The Learner Journey Review 2019](#)



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