



South
Lanarkshire
College

East Kilbride

CARING FOR OUR CARE EXPERIENCED STUDENTS

Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-23

CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN 2020-2023

Foreword by Principal and Chief Executive

As College Principal, I am personally committed to ensuring our care experienced students have the best possible chance at achieving their qualification and receive the necessary care, nurture, and support to help them do this. At South Lanarkshire College, we are proud to put our students first. We want our care experienced students to have a warm, positive learning experience in a caring environment and atmosphere of respect and encouragement.

This Plan provides details of our new commitments for 2020-23. These will help to ensure that South Lanarkshire College continues to support care experienced students achieve their full potential.

We are fully committed to fulfilling our legislative duty outlined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and support the vision of the Scottish Government to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up. This means that children grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their maximum potential, and that they are well educated, skilled and able to fully contribute to society. In this, we firmly believe that all young people in Scotland should have the same equal access to opportunities to achieve and succeed irrespective of their background. Care experienced young people and adults are some of society's most vulnerable and disadvantaged, and the College works tirelessly to achieve its ambition "for there to be no difference in the outcomes of care experienced students comparative to their peers".

We welcome the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) National Ambition for Care-Experienced Students vision of having "equal outcomes between care-experienced students and their peers by 2030" and the recommendations outlined in the Commission on Widening Access (COWA) and CELCIS publication 'Being a student with care experience is very daunting' in June 2019. We fully endorse all the recommendations and commitments alongside the SFC's National Ambition to achieve equal outcomes for care experienced students.

At South Lanarkshire College, we are particularly proud that our care experienced students consistently achieve outstandingly well in our college. In the 2017-18 academic year we were the best performing college in Scotland for students who were care experienced and, in this particular year, our care experienced students performed even better than their peers. As such, in 2017-18, the College is delighted to have achieved the SFC's future vision for care experienced students. This success continued in the 2018-19 academic year, where the College was the second top performing college in Scotland for care experienced student attainment. These achievements outline the importance we place on equality of access and success for our care experienced students.

Equality, access, and inclusion are at the heart of all aspects of our college activity, as is demonstrated by our key core value of promoting equality and diversity. Our Access & Inclusion Strategy outlines the actions we have taken and plan to take to ensure that equalities remain an integral part of college life and, that care experienced students continue to have equal access to opportunity and are able to succeed. We are also committed to a regular review of our priorities to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our care experienced students.

We work closely with our students and Students' Association to shape all aspects of college life and seek to ensure that care experienced students have a strong voice and have no barriers to entitlement or success at South Lanarkshire College. The College plays an important role in listening, valuing, and upholding the rights of care experienced students, and by supporting them to gain access to education and services provided by the College, free from any form of bias or difficulties.

We look forward to working with our care experienced students, and other corporate parents, to ensure that the commitments outlined in this updated plan deliver improved outcomes and positive change. We want all our care experienced students to succeed in their course, progress in their chosen career to make a sustainable, positive difference in their life.

Aileen McKechnie, MA (Hons), MBA
Principal and Chief Executive



Our Vision is to be Scotland's leading college: delivering excellence.

We achieve this through the key Strategic Priorities:

- **Successful Students**
- **Highest-Quality Education**
- **Support Sustainable Behaviours**

Our Corporate Parenting Plan is aligned to these three strategic priorities.

[Click here to view the Strategic Framework](#)

It is our ambition:

“for there to be no difference in the outcomes of care experienced learners compared to their peers”

LEGISLATION AND CORPORATE PARENTING

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Part 9 (Corporate Parenting) identifies colleges as a Corporate Parent and sets out duties and responsibilities for them to support care leavers and care experienced young people. These needs have been formally recognised by Sections 58 to 65 of the Act and, in particular, Section 58: Part 9. This legislation came into effect on 1 April 2015.

The Act provides a legislative framework to support care leavers and those who are care experienced. Corporate Parents are required to:

- Be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of a young person.
- Assess the needs of children and young people for any services or support provided.
- Promote the interests of those children and young people.
- Seek to provide children and young people with opportunities to promote their wellbeing.
- Take appropriate action to help young people access opportunities it provides.
- Keep our approach to corporate parenting under continuous review, making improvement wherever possible.
- Prepare, publish, and keep under review complete corporate parenting plans, collaborate with other corporate parents, follow directions and guidance, and provide relevant information to Scottish Ministers.

These duties are not the responsibility of a single named individual, post holder or unit, and should be delivered jointly as an organisation, embedded into the way we work.¹

This legislation sits firmly within the Scottish Government's GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) Framework. It outlines the duties which should be undertaken by Scotland's Corporate Parents who are expected to "uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of a looked after child or care leaver and, through which physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational development is promoted".²

The term 'wellbeing' within the Act is defined using eight 'SHANARRI' indicators of being Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included.³

Using this Framework, we will strive to build on the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) and to work closely with other Corporate Parents and agencies to deliver a holistic, person-centred approach in the safeguarding and health and wellbeing of those who are care experienced. In this, the College plays an important role in listening, valuing, and upholding the rights to improve the life chances of all of Scotland's care experienced people.

[1. Children and Young People Act \(Scotland\) 2014](#)

[2. Getting It Right For Every Child](#)

[3. Shanarri Indicators](#)

THE KEY FACTS

Care-experienced children and young people are those who are or have been looked-after by their local authority due to concerns about their wellbeing or protection, including parents being unable to provide appropriate care. There are an estimated 14,738 children and young people who were looked-after in Scotland on 31st July 2018. This figure represents 14 in 1,000 children under 18 years that were looked-after in 2017-18, or 1.4%.

Young people in care live in many different placement types or care settings:

- Foster care (living with another family): 34%
- Kinship care (with friends or relatives): 28%
- Looked-after at home (living with birth parents but with social work involvement under a supervision order): 26%
- Residential care (living in a children's unit/house/secure): 10%
- With prospective adopters: 1% ⁴

Published data show that many looked-after children and care experienced people often have poorer life experiences in comparison to their peers. They may struggle to engage with education and attain qualifications, which would allow them to progress to meaningful employment or further study. And, although education outcomes for looked after children have improved over the last 5 years, there are still large gaps compared with all pupils. Scottish Government 2019 data indicates:

- 44% of looked-after left school at age 16 or earlier compared with 11% of all school leavers leaving school aged 16 or younger in 2017-18.
- 39% of looked-after children have one or more qualifications at National 5 (SCQF level 5), compared with 86% of all pupils.
- Only 12% of school leavers who were looked-after left school in 2017-18 with a Higher (SQCF 6) level qualification, compared with 62% of their peers.
- Only 76% of looked-after children (full year) and 69% (part year) progress to 'positive follow up destinations' nine months after leaving school (including employment or further or higher education) compared with 93% of all pupils.
- A lower proportion of looked-after children achieve the Curriculum for Excellence level relevant to their stage than all pupils ⁵

Educational attainment is strongly linked to health and economic outcomes, such that, the disadvantage faced by care experienced young people in receiving a disrupted education can profoundly shape their adult lives. At South Lanarkshire College (SLC), we recognise this, and know that many of our care experienced students face multiple barriers and challenges that need to be specifically addressed.

These barriers can prevent them from accessing college or from successfully completing their qualification and can be due to barriers including for example: personal stability, financial and housing issues, caring responsibilities, disability or learning support needs, emotional resilience or poor health and wellbeing.

The College understands the complex support needs of care experienced students and has provided a named staff contact who will provide tailored one-to-one support before, during and after college. This, along with a range of wraparound support services all give students the best opportunity to achieve their course of study and future goals. It is therefore of vital importance that we identify our care experienced students to ensure they receive that essential one-to-one support and can access support services which give them the best opportunity to succeed.

[4. Scottish Government, Childrens Social Work Statistics 2017-18](#)

[5. Scottish Government, Education Outcomes 2017-18](#)

COLLEGE AMBITION

SLC is committed to maintaining, developing, and implementing services, policies and procedures with a positive focus on supporting care experienced students across all areas of the College (teaching and non-teaching). This plan is a review and update of our 2016 and 2017-2020 Corporate Parenting Plan which aims to ensure the College continues to review and improve care experienced student outcomes. The Action Plan is our working document, updated throughout the session and reported through the Safeguarding Group at quarterly meetings.

It is the ambition of SLC:

*“for there to be **no difference in the outcomes** of care experienced learners compared to their peers”*

What makes a makes a good Corporate Parent?

“Care experienced people are often told they need a hero, but it’s not a hero we need, it’s support, it’s guidance, it’s structure. Whatever kind of corporate parent you are, just listen, show them you care, believe in them, encourage them – that’s all we’re asking for”

SLC SA Care Experienced Student Officer – Andrew, 22

Students & Students’ Association as co-designers

We seek to work closely with students and the Students’ Association (SA) to shape all aspects of college life. We want to ensure that care experienced students have a strong voice in the development of services, policies, and procedures and, that no barriers exist for entitlement or success at SLC. The SA take an active approach and a formal review of the 2017-20 Corporate Parenting Plan was undertaken by the SA Executive Committee with a number of actions suggested for improvement.

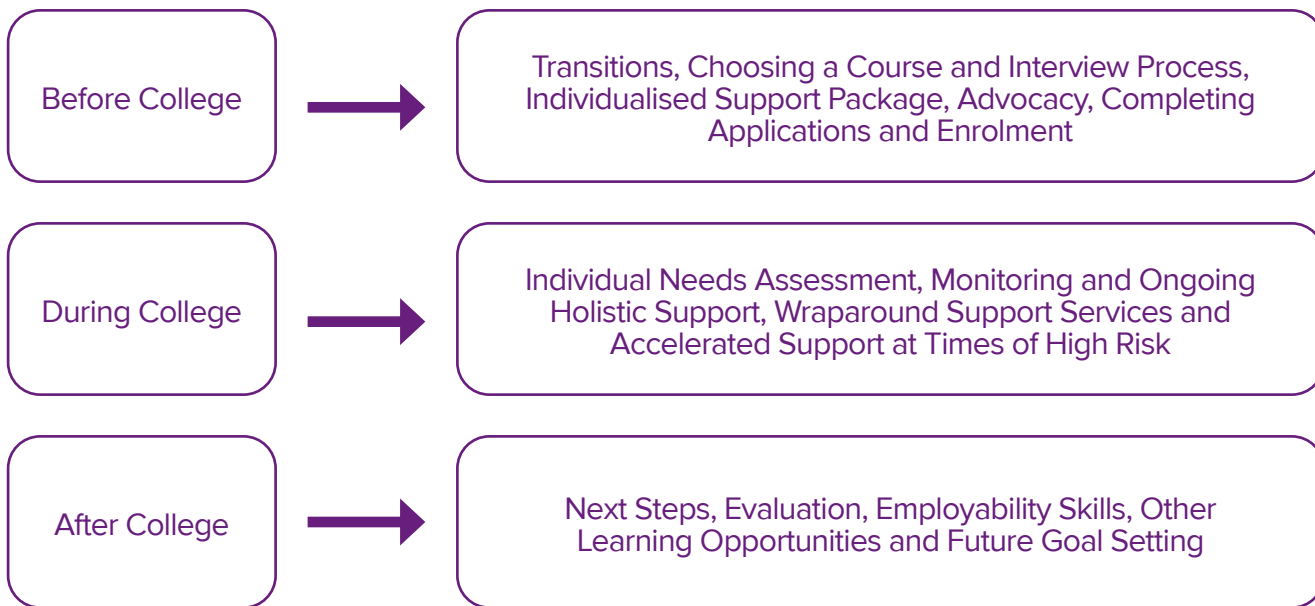


“As part of the SA Operational Plan the Student Association wanted to treat our care experienced students, taking them for dinner and arranging ongoing social events for them. It was fantastic to see the students enjoying themselves and sharing positive experiences with each other. I am really proud of all the support the College provides for our care experienced students and it was great opportunity to bring people together – so that we can support one another”

Elizabeth, SA President

At SLC, we fully recognise that a holistic approach is needed when supporting care experienced students and have provided a named staff contact who will provide tailored one-to-one support before, during and after college. This flexible service will seek to support each student in line with their unique needs, issues, and circumstances. Having this point of contact ensures students can access support at the point they need it and lets them know there is always someone to turn to if they experience difficulties or issues. The College’s ‘open door’ policy will ensure the right support is available at the right time.

CARING FOR OUR CARE EXPERIENCED STUDENTS



We acknowledge the importance of understanding the additional and intersectional barriers that many care experienced students may experience including for example those who also have a disability or learning support need, caring responsibilities, are a lone parent, those who are LGBT+ or non-binary, or from ethnic backgrounds, with many potentially living in the most disadvantaged datazones - SIMD 10/ SIMD 20 (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation). In this, staff work effectively across all areas of the College (teaching and non-teaching) to provide a tailored support package.



“SLC isn’t just a place to develop your skills, it’s a place where you’re respected, encouraged and constantly supported whenever you may need it. Because of SLC, I have managed to grow in confidence and become passionate about Hospitality. College has equipped me with the knowledge and skillset for me to take on anything new life may throw at me!”

Andrew, Care Experienced student - Faculty of Business

“I found the support for being care experienced outstanding – and very different to my previous experience of going to college. I also enjoyed meeting other people from a similar background as we could share opportunities that might also be helpful to me. Attending the organised events really helped my confidence and was a good way to find out what help was available”



Natasha, Care Experienced student - Faculty of Care

PERFORMANCE AGAINST OUR COMMITMENT

At SLC, we are particularly proud that our care experienced students consistently achieve outstandingly well in our college. In the 2017-18 academic year we were the best performing college in Scotland for students who were care experienced and, in this particular year, our care experienced students performed even better than their peers. In this, we are already exceeding future SFC targets for care experienced learners with attainment levels well above the Scottish average. In the 2018-19 academic year, the College was the second top performing college in Scotland for care experienced student attainment.

| Academic Year | Students enrolled who indicated they were care experienced | Attainment/Completed successful at SLC | Scottish average |
|---------------|--|--|------------------|
| 2016-17 | 154 | 67.5% | 57.2% |
| 2017-18 | 69 | 78.3% | 55% |
| 2018-19 | 104 | 67.3% | 58.7% |

Based on the available data for academic session 2018-19 and using attainment as the measure of the impact of current support services offered to various groups, this is what we know about our support services:

| Group | Number of enrolments | Attainment/Completed successful at SLC | Scottish average |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|--|------------------|
| 10% most deprived datazones | 622 | 74.6% | 65.6% |
| 20% most deprived datazones | 1080 | 73.7% | 66% |
| Care experienced | 104 | 67.3% | 58.7% |
| Carers | 162 | 83% | * |
| Ethnic minority | 182 | 80.2% | 69.9% |
| Disability | 291 | 72.5% | 65.5% |
| All enrolments over 160 hours | 3,760 | 76.2% | 68.7% |
| FEFT | 1,361 | 71.7% | 65.2% |
| FEPT | 1,741 | 84.7% | 79.7% |
| HEFT | 977 | 75% | 69.8% |
| HEPT | 365 | 83% | 78.9% |

*SFC have not published this data

The data demonstrates that the College consistently excels beyond the Scottish Average in all these groups.

In 2018/19, SLC was the highest performing college in Scotland for Full-time HE attainment at 75% and first for Full-time FE attainment at 71.7% both of which are well above the Scottish average.

In 2018-19, 98.5% of our students have a positive destination at the end of their course (based on the number completing and achieving their programmes).

[SFC College Performance Indicators](#)

CORPORATE PARENT PARTNERS

The College works in close partnership with a wide range of Corporate Parents including the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS), Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), South Lanarkshire Council Social Work, Family Support Workers, SDS, local authorities, schools, colleges and universities. The College is a member of the Care Experienced, Estranged & Carers West of Scotland Forum. This forum provides an opportunity to network and share good practice with other Corporate Parents within the FE/HE sector. The group has representation from Who Cares? Scotland who advocate on behalf of care experienced individuals.

MONITORING OUR CORPORATE PARENTING RESPONSIBILITY

The College's corporate parenting duties and responsibilities are subsumed within the remit of the College Safeguarding Group. This group has cross-college representation with both staff and student membership. This includes both the named staff contact for care experienced students and the SA Student President. The group also consists of representatives at senior level who have decision-making capacity. By having this form part of the work of the Safeguarding Group, this visible commitment conveys a strong message that the welfare and outcomes for care experienced students will be taken seriously and be continually monitored. Progress of the Action Plan will be reviewed by this Group.

OUR CORPORATE PARENTING JOURNEY

Since 2015, SLC was preparing for adopting its corporate parenting responsibilities. During this period there was intense staff training and engagement with a wide range of external agencies. We took account of the corporate parenting statutory guidance in helping to shape thinking on how to respond to our new statutory duties under the 'Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014). Following this, the College produced a Corporate Parenting Plan in 2016 and subsequent update plan in 2017-20. Partnership work with other corporate parents was also progressing both locally and nationally.

Our progress can be reviewed in line with statutory key principles to:

- **Be alert**
- **Assess needs**
- **Promote interests**
- **Provide opportunities**
- **Make sure services are easy to access**
- **Look for ways to improve**

BEING ALERT

Corporate Parents must be **ALERT** to matters which might affect the wellbeing of care experienced young people.

How we do this at SLC:

- We have a named staff contact who provides holistic, individualised one-to-one support.
- Staff training to improve our understanding of legislative responsibilities.
- Attendance at conferences and sector forums.
- We identify our care experienced students in our interview checklist, enrolment, and funding applications.
- Improved definition of 'care experienced' and clear explanation of why we ask this.
- Funding applications are fast-tracked for care experienced students.
- Regular communications sent to care experienced students.
- Designated webpage and services/support widely promoted through leaflets/posters, digital screens and on social media platforms.
- Care experienced 'notification' on the class register which allows tutors to identify and support students who are care experienced.
- Forever button on the Student Portal which allows students to alert us that they are care experienced at any point during their course.

ASSESSING NEEDS

Corporate Parents need to **ASSESS** the needs of care experienced young people in line with the services they provide.

How we do this at SLC:

- Named staff contact will meet to assess needs and discuss any additional support requirements. This will include practical and emotional support.
- The Learning Development team assess learning needs and provide any required additional learning support through personal support plans, core skills workshops and additional learning tools/aids.
- Following assessment care experienced students may be referred to internal/external specialist support services including for example Student Counselling Service, mindfulness classes, NHS Services, Health & Social Care Partnerships.
- Immediate access to financial support through the Discretionary Crisis Support Fund.



“The student Chit Chat session was a great event with students coming from lots of different courses to get involved. There was a real positive vibe on the day with lots of great feedback from the students saying it was fantastic to meet and talk to people you would never normally meet”

Student Chit-Chat Sessions - SLC SA

PROMOTING INTERESTS

Corporate Parents have a legal duty to **PROMOTE** the interests of care experienced children and young people.

How we do this at SLC:

- Named staff contact provides guidance and support from pre-application stage through to post-graduation.
- Students' Association (SA) participation and promoting the wellbeing of care experienced students.
- Care experienced support video by named staff contact as part of the learner induction process.
- Care experienced support information in the Guide for Applicants and Student Handbook.
- Care Experienced Student Officer part of the SA Executive Committee – representing the voice of care experienced students.
- Student President member of the College Safeguarding Group which has Corporate Parenting responsibility.
- Partnership with care experienced champion groups including for example Who Cares. Scotland, Centre for Excellence for Looked after Children (CELCIS).
- Strong links with Social Work, local authorities, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and other agencies.
- Events and activities organised throughout the year to promote and support students who are care experienced.
- Organised support sessions through the SA.

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES

Corporate Parents are required to provide a wide range of high-quality **OPPORTUNITIES** which improve the wellbeing of care experienced young people.

How we do this at SLC:

- The College organise a wide range of events and activities throughout the academic year to promote opportunities including for example Freshers', UCAS Higher Education, Mental Health Awareness, Health & Wellbeing Week, Volunteering, Sustainability, LGBT History Month, Care Experienced Week & Purple Friday.
- Employability skills training through college careers advisor (SDS) and support to access to employment/training opportunities.
- Promoting the work of Who Cares? Scotland through the Christmas Gift campaigns and The Kiltwalk.
- Who Cares? Scotland networking lunch for employers who could offer placement/employment opportunities for care experienced students.
- Graduation package which includes a ticket for the Graduation Dinner and gown hire.
- UCAS fees are paid for those care experienced students progressing to university.



“The atmosphere on the Kiltwalk was absolutely brilliant and it was great seeing so many different charities being represented. SLC staff were raising money for Who Cares? Scotland and it felt really good knowing that the money raised would be helping care experienced young people in our college and across Scotland”

Kiltwalk in support of Who Cares? Scotland - SLC staff member

MAKE SURE SERVICES ARE EASY TO ACCESS

Making sure young people can **ACCESS** opportunities, services, and support

How we do this at SLC:

- Designated webpage for care experienced students.
- Corporate Parenting forms part of the monitoring/review remit of the College's Safeguarding Group.
- 1:1 tailored support from named staff contact including advocacy support.
- Communication of support and events occurring in the wider community.
- Care experienced information in the Guide for Applicants booklet, Faculty Course Guide and Student Handbook.
- Access to Learning Development team for support and core study skills
- Financial assessment to ensure students are receiving the optimum financial support including for example FE / HE Care Experienced Bursary, Discretionary Hardship and Crisis Support.
- Access to mental health support including for example the College's student counselling service, weekly mindfulness classes, one-to-one emotional support, and referral to external specialist support services.



It was a brilliant event and great to see so many staff and students getting involved to support Who Cares? Scotland and care experienced young people"

Christmas Jumper Day 2018 in support of Who Cares? Scotland - SLC staff member

LOOK FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE

Taking actions to **IMPROVE**

How we do this at SLC:

At SLC, we continually strive to improve the outcomes for care experienced students. We understand that there is always scope for continued improvements in our approach to service delivery, reflecting ever changing needs. We will continue to listen to our students and work in close partnership with the SA to co-design future service delivery alongside other corporate parents and champion groups such as Who Cares? Scotland and CELCIS. We have developed an Action Plan that will outline our continued activity to improve care experienced student outcomes.

- Taking account of feedback some of the suggestions for improvement which has been included in our updated Action Plan are:
- Care experienced students to be offered financial and budgetary skills training.
- Introduce mandatory care experienced training for all staff as part of the staff induction process.
- Care experienced students to be identified at the application stage.
- Care Experienced Week to be embedded into the College Annual Calendar of Events.
- Student friendly Corporate Parenting Plan.
- Include student testimonial and quotes in the Corporate Parenting Plan.
- Provide an employability care experienced support package.

[Click here to view Action Plan](#)

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

[College Care Experienced Student Support Services](#)

[Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)

[Getting It Right For Every Child](#)

[Shanarri Indicators](#)

[SFC National Ambition for Care Experienced Students](#)

[CELCIS Being a student with care experience is very daunting](#)

[South Lanarkshire College Access & Inclusion Strategy](#)

[Commission on Widening Access \(COWA\) 2016. A blueprint for fairness.](#)

[Scottish Government Childrens Social Work Statistics 2017-18](#)

[Scottish Government Childrens Education Outcomes 2017-18](#)

[SFC College Performance Indicators](#)

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