



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Argyll College

Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd
agus nan Eilean
Colaiste Earra-Ghàidheil

Argyll College UHI

Corporate Parenting Plan

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Introduction

Argyll College UHI provides further and higher education in one of the most geographically fragmented areas of Scotland. The college first opened in 2000 and has grown to serve more than 1700 learners in the communities of Argyll and Bute and Arran, through a network of 10 learning centres. The College mission is to “... provide high quality innovative education opportunities, act as an economic driver to enhance the skills and development of the local economy and develop a reputation for excellence which will encourage students to study in the communities we serve.” The College values are to be:

- Inclusive – giving an opportunity of education for all
- Of our Community – be engaged and responsive
- Providing individualised learning – be innovative
- Student centred – respect for the whole student (nurturing, supporting, personalisation)
- A valued contributor to education and economic development in Argyll and the Isles
- Good partners – to widen opportunities

Our responsibilities as a Corporate Parent

Argyll College has identified that it has a responsibility as a “Corporate Parent” under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Corporate parenting is defined as “An organisation's performance of actions necessary 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.” Argyll College UHI recognises that every individual within the organisation has a responsibility towards meeting the corporate parenting duties. However collectively the College, as a corporate parent, must make sure the rights of any students or potential students that are care-experienced are respected by taking the following actions:

- considering their wellbeing
- assessing their needs
- promoting their best interests
- making sure their voices and opinions are heard
- providing opportunities for them
- providing advice and assistance when they're needed
- making sure services are easy to access for them.
- collaborate with other corporate parents
- develop a plan to specifically support care-experienced students
- report on what we are doing every 3 years.

(Children & Young People's Commissioner Scotland).

Argyll College UHI will support every young person under the age of 26 who is in Looked After care or is a Care Leaver. A Looked After child can be defined as one who is in the care of the local authority (be it foster care, kinship care or residential care). A Care Leaver is any young person who was in care on or any time after their 16th birthday but is no longer looked after by a local authority. For the purposes of this plan either group will be referred to as Care Experienced.

The Scottish Government acknowledges that care experienced young people often have low levels of educational engagement and attainment, leading to poorer life experience, impacting on health and wellbeing. Many factors can contribute to this, such as lack of stability in home life or care

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arrangements, the absence in some cases of positive guidance and much more. Through corporate parenting the aim is to improve the outcomes for care experienced young people.

Our Corporate Parenting plan

Argyll College UHI's Corporate Parenting plan will detail how the college will deliver its corporate parenting responsibilities. It has been developed in consultation and collaboration with Who Cares? Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council, North Ayrshire Council, local Through Care and Aftercare groups, SDS, UHI Care Leavers group and of course our own care experienced students.

Argyll College UHI Corporate Parenting Action Plan

Area	Criteria	Current Activities	Actions	Owner	Time scale	Projected Outcomes	Corporate Parenting duty
Management and Delivery of plan/outcomes	Continuous enhancement of provision for care experienced students	Argyll College will develop a local Corporate Parenting plan for our FE students but will also work with partners in UHI to develop and implement the UHI Corporate Parenting Plan for HE students. Argyll College will contribute to the review and processes across the Partnership through the UHI Care Leavers Group. Through this group the college will also link with external agencies, including Who Cares? Scotland, CELCIS, College Development Network(CDN), and appropriate local agencies to ensure we keep up to date with current best practice and training.	Attendance on the cross-partnership Care Leavers Group and associated activities. This includes sharing of best practice, discussion of issues affecting care experienced students, and relevant staff training. The group meet on a bi-annual basis.	Head of Student Services	Dec 2017	Enhancement of the student experience and improved retention rates for care experienced students	58:1 (a) to be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of children and young people to whom this Part applies 58:1 (f) to take action to improve as a corporate parent
			Sharing of best practice within Argyll College and across the partnership (via UHI Care Leavers Group)	Head of Student Services	Ongoing	Improved cross partnership working and communication to ensure equivalence for care experienced students	58:1 (f) to take action to improve as a corporate parent 60:2 (a,b,c) to share information, provide advice or assistance, and coordinate activities
			Develop an internal reporting system and procedures to analyse application, retention and outcome data for care experienced students.	Head of Student Services	Dec 2017	Enhancement of the student experience and improved retention rates for care experienced students	58:1 (c) to promote the interests of children and young people to whom this Part applies

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			Consider care experienced students during strategic and operational planning	Senior Management Team (SMT)	Ongoing	Enhancement of the student experience and improved retention rates for care experienced students	58:1 (c) to promote the interests of children and young people to whom this Part applies
			Organisation of relevant training for staff	Head of Student Services , Staff Development Committee	2017/18	Enhancement of the student experience and improved retention rates for care experienced students through greater awareness amongst all staff	58:1 (a) to be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of children and young people to whom this Part applies 58:1 (f) to take action to improve as a corporate parent
Raising aspirations and improving pre-entry guidance	Further strengthen links with relevant external agencies, stakeholders and partners to ensure comprehensive information and advice is available to care leavers at an early stage	Continue to develop our established relationships with our local partners in Schools and other local authority services. Argyll College is strongly represented at the local Opportunities for All groups, Through Care and After Care Forums and has close links with local SDS.		Head of Student Services , Centre Managers	Ongoing	Increase in the number of care experienced young people applying for our courses	58: 1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services 58:1 (f) take action to improve as a corporate parent.
		Information regarding student support and funding support is made available to local schools guidance teachers. Care experienced students are	Review all published information available to care experienced students to ensure it remains current.	Head of Student Services	Dec 2017	Applicants from care experienced backgrounds are aware of benefits and support to them.	58: 1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services 58: 1 (f) take action to improve as a corporate parent.

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		encouraged to make contact early on with college support staff for extra support to make course applications and funding applications.	Improve relevant care leaver information on the college website, ensuring it is easy to locate.	Head of Student Services	Dec 2017	Applicants from care experienced backgrounds are aware of benefits and support to them.	58: 1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services 58:1 (f) take action to improve as a corporate parent.
Application	Establish admissions processes that offer increased opportunities for care leavers across all our college courses and levels	Application forms have space to allow applicants to declare they are care experienced	Ensure that care experience declarations are monitored and followed up to offer relevant support	Admissions team	March 2017	Admissions processes that allow us to track and identify care experienced applicants at the earliest opportunity and to offer support throughout the application and interview process.	58:1 (c) to promote the interests of children and young people to whom this Part applies
		Care experienced applicants guaranteed an interview	Interviewers trained to encourage disclosure of care experience	Head of student Services	March 2017	Admissions processes that allow us to track and identify care experienced applicants at the earliest opportunity and to offer support throughout the application and interview process.	58:1 (c) to promote the interests of children and young people to whom this Part applies
Pre-entry	Provide timely information re funding for HE and FE courses.	Funding information sent to student, also available on website	Funding information and guidance packs reviewed to ensure currency, then sent to students	Admissions team, Head of Student Services	Ongoing	Enhancement of the student experience, easier transition into college	58:1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing
		Students offered support to make funding applications	Centre staff and other support staff offer individual support	Centre Staff, Head of Student Services	Ongoing	Enhancement of the student experience, easier transition into college	58:1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing
On course support	Provide impartial progression guidance relating	FE students wishing to progress to a higher level of education are	Maintain information available to ensure it remains	Head of Student Support	Ongoing	Enhancement of the student experience	58:1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services

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	to further study (e.g. FE to HE), or progression routes into employment and where relevant to support transition to higher education or employment.	supported by the Course team leaders, named centre staff link and student support team. HE students are supported by their PAT and course team leaders. For students wishing to move into employment or apply to study outside UHI they will be supported by the student support team and their course team leader.	relevant and useful and train frontline staff to ensure appropriate signposting				
	Provision of a Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) at HE level study and named centre staff contact for FE level students to provide additional support for care experienced students.		Provide a named person to support all care experienced applicants and students	Admissions Team, Head of Student Services	Sept 2017	Improved retention rates for care experienced students and enhancement of the student experience	58:1 (b) to assess the needs of those children and young people for services and support it provides 58:1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services
	Access to a counselling service	UHI provide an online counselling service, which may be accessed by students from across the partnership. This provides additional support for care experienced students, wherever they are located.	Increase awareness of the UHI on-line counselling service to all students and staff across Argyll College.	Head of Student Services	Ongoing	Improved retention rates for care experienced students and enhancement of the student experience	58:1 (b) to assess the needs of those children and young people for services and support it provides 58:1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services and participate in activities

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							designed to promote their wellbeing
	Additional academic support provision if required	Creation of a PLSP to provide enhanced academic and organisational support if required	Ensure that teaching staff are aware that care experienced students can benefit from additional support	Head of Student Services	Ongoing	Improved retention and success rates for care experienced students	58:1 (b) to assess the needs of those children and young people for services and support it provides 58:1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services
Communication	Raise awareness of the duties in relation to Corporate Parenting and arrange staff training	Training to be delivered to teaching, support and frontline staff.	Promote access to the UHI online training modules	Head of Student Support, Staff Development Committee	March 2018	Enhancement of the student experience and improved retention rates for care experienced students through greater awareness amongst all staff.	58:1 (f) to take action to improve as a corporate parent
Monitoring of Plan and Outcomes	Meet Government requirements for reporting on Corporate Parenting Plans/Actions	The college will produce a report every three years which will provide information regarding the Corporate Parenting Plan and the actions within it.	Establish a monitoring and reporting system to comply with legislative requirements	Head of Student Services	April 2018	Adherence to legislative requirements	59:1 to prepare, and keep plan under review 59:3 to publish plan