Argyll College UHI
Corporate Parenting Plan

Liz Richardson
Head of Student Services
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
AC Corporate Parenting Plan

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

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Current Activities</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Projected Outcomes</th>
<th>Corporate Parenting duty</th>
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<tr>
<td>Management and Delivery of plan/outcomes</td>
<td>Continuous enhancement of provision for care experienced students</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Head of Student Services</td>
<td>Dec 2017</td>
<td>Enhancement of the student experience and improved retention rates for care experienced students</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>Sharing of best practice within Argyll College and across the partnership (via UHI Care Leavers Group)</td>
<td>Head of Student Services</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Improved cross partnership working and communication to ensure equivalence for care experienced students</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>Develop an internal reporting system and procedures to analyse application, retention and outcome data for care experienced students.</td>
<td>Head of Student Services</td>
<td>Dec 2017</td>
<td>Enhancement of the student experience and improved retention rates for care experienced students</td>
<td>58:1 (c) to promote the interests of children and young people to whom this Part applies</td>
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<td>AC Corporate Parenting Plan</td>
<td>Consider care experienced students during strategic and operational planning</td>
<td>Senior Management Team (SMT)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Enhancement of the student experience and improved retention rates for care experienced students</td>
<td>58:1 (c) to promote the interests of children and young people to whom this Part applies</td>
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<td>Organisation of relevant training for staff</td>
<td>Head of Student Services , Staff Development Committee</td>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>Enhancement of the student experience and improved retention rates for care experienced students through greater awareness amongst all staff</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>Raising aspirations and improving pre-entry guidance</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Head of Student Services , Centre Managers</td>
<td>Increase in the number of care experienced young people applying for our courses</td>
<td>58: 1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services 58: 1 (f) take action to improve as a corporate parent.</td>
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<td>Information regarding student support and funding support is made available to local schools guidance teachers. CARE experienced students are</td>
<td>Review all published information available to care experienced students to ensure it remains current.</td>
<td>Head of Student Services</td>
<td>Applicants from care experienced backgrounds are aware of benefits and support to them.</td>
<td>58: 1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services 58: 1 (f) take action to improve as a corporate parent.</td>
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<td>AC Corporate Parenting Plan</td>
<td>encouraged to make contact early on with college support staff for extra support to make course applications and funding applications.</td>
<td>Improve relevant care leaver information on the college website, ensuring it is easy to locate.</td>
<td>Head of Student Services</td>
<td>Dec 2017</td>
<td>Applicants from care experienced backgrounds are aware of benefits and support to them.</td>
<td>58: 1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services. 58:1 (f) take action to improve as a corporate parent.</td>
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<td>Application</td>
<td>Application forms have space to allow applicants to declare they are care experienced</td>
<td>Ensure that care experience declarations are monitored and followed up to offer relevant support</td>
<td>Admissions team</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>58:1 (c) to promote the interests of children and young people to whom this Part applies.</td>
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<td>Care experienced applicants guaranteed an interview</td>
<td>Interviewers trained to encourage disclosure of care experience</td>
<td>Head of student Services</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>58:1 (c) to promote the interests of children and young people to whom this Part applies.</td>
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<td>Pre-entry</td>
<td>Provide timely information re funding for HE and FE courses.</td>
<td>Funding information sent to student, also available on website</td>
<td>Admissions team, Head of Student Services</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Enhancement of the student experience, easier transition into college.</td>
<td>58:1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing.</td>
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<td>Funding information and guidance packs reviewed to ensure currency, then sent to students</td>
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<td>Students offered support to make funding applications</td>
<td>Centre staff and other support staff offer individual support</td>
<td>Centre Staff, Head of Student Services</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Enhancement of the student experience, easier transition into college.</td>
<td>58:1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing.</td>
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<td>On course support</td>
<td>Provide impartial progression guidance relating</td>
<td>FE students wishing to progress to a higher level of education are</td>
<td>Head of Student Support</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Enhancement of the student experience</td>
<td>58:1 (e) access opportunities and make use of services.</td>
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<td>Maintain information available to ensure it remains</td>
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<td>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.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>relevant and useful and train frontline staff to ensure appropriate signposting</td>
<td>Sept 2017</td>
<td>Improved retention rates for care experienced students and enhancement of the student experience</td>
<td>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</td>
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<p>| 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. | 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 |</p>
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<td><strong>AC Corporate Parenting Plan</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Additional academic support provision if required</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Monitoring of Plan and Outcomes</strong></td>
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