

Ayrshire  
College 

# CORPORATE PARENTING REPORT

2016-2018



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## CONTEXT

### Ambitious for Ayrshire

The vision of Ayrshire College is to raise aspirations, inspire achievement and increase opportunities. Raising the aspirations of our students and staff to set ambitious goals for their learning and future careers, complemented with the right support to enable them to achieve these, is a key aspect of our vision.

### Mission

The College's mission is to:

*\\ Inspire learners to achieve their full potential by playing a lead role in the development of skills, the economy and community life. //*

### Values

These values underpin the ethos of the College and promote its culture:

- Respectful
- Supportive
- Open and Honest

# Introduction

Ayrshire College’s Corporate Parenting Plan was developed in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders including the Student Association and Who Cares? Scotland, and through consultation with care experienced young people and other Corporate Parents including the three Ayrshire local authorities, CELCIS and the College Development Network. The College published its Corporate Parenting Plan 2016-18 in November 2016.

The aims outlined in the Corporate Parenting Plan reflect the College’s key strategic objectives, which are detailed in the Strategic Plan 2017-2020, the Ayrshire Outcome Agreement 2017-2020 and the Equality Outcomes 2017-2021.

Furthermore, the aims of the Corporate Parenting Plan also take into account the following targets, which were set out for colleges in the Scottish Funding Council’s National Ambition for Care Experienced Students:

In 2016-17 the National Ambition was to:

- Increase intake from 613 in AY 2013-14 in the College sector to 673
- Increase the FTHE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 54% to 60%.
- Increase the FTFE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 53% to 57%.

In 2017-18 the National Ambition is to:

- Increase intake from 673 in the College sector to 733.
- Increase the FTHE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 60% to within 66%.
- Increase the FTFE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 57% to 61%.

In 2018-19 the National Ambition is to:

- Increase intake from 733 in the College sector to 800.
- Increase the FTHE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 66% to 71%.
- Increase the FTFE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 61% to 66%.

The Ayrshire Outcome Agreement 2017-2020 states that we will continue to improve our support for care experienced students, young carers and other young people at risk. It also emphasises that we will continue to work closely with schools, local authorities and Skills Development Scotland to engage with these young people before they enrol at college to improve transitions and help them to sustain positive destinations. It states that throughout 2017-20, we will continue to develop and deliver our Corporate Parenting Plan, building on considerable success in the number of care experienced young people choosing to share their status with us.

The Ayrshire Outcome Agreement summarises some of the achievements of the College as a Corporate Parent. It recognises that the College has already made significant progress with the three local authorities in Ayrshire to share information at the earliest possible opportunity about young people moving onto a college course who are care experienced, who have additional support needs or who are registered as young carers. It highlights the fact that the number of students who declared that they were care experienced increased significantly to 211 in 2016-17. It also states that this figure is expected to increase further as data sharing arrangements with partners improve and the College continues to meet regularly with local authorities and SDS to ensure that data is used appropriately and effectively.

The Outcome Agreement mentions that the Student Association appointed a care experienced officer in 2016-17 who works with Inclusive Learning and Student Services to improve support for care experienced young people in the College. It also outlines some of the key aims from the Corporate Parenting Plan and states that in partnership with the Student Association we will establish and support a Care Experienced Forum. Furthermore, we will build on our success in developing relationships with, and establishing a pan-Ayrshire network of, other corporate parents by hosting an annual partnership event. Importantly, we will also continue to develop further corporate parenting training for staff.

The section below provides details of how Ayrshire College has responded to its corporate parenting duties in the reporting period 2016-18, and outlines some of the key future priorities which will be included in the College’s Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2020.



# Fulfilling our Corporate Parenting Responsibilities

Ayrshire College's Corporate Parenting Plan 2016-18 set out an ambitious and detailed action plan in response to the duties outlined in Part 9 (Section 58) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. A link to the Plan can be found here: <http://www1.ayrshire.ac.uk/media/6439/corporate-parenting-plan-draft-3.pdf>

The duties are:

- To be alert to matters which might adversely affect the wellbeing of looked after young people and care leavers.
- To assess the needs of these children and young people for services and support we provide.
- To promote the interests of these children and young people.
- To seek to provide opportunities for these children and young people to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing.
- To take action to help these children and young people access opportunities, make use of services and access support.
- To take action to improve as a Corporate Parent.

Throughout the reporting period, the College continued to review and update its Corporate Parenting Plan and to monitor progress towards the targets set out against each of the duties listed above. At the end of session 2016-17, the College created a video review of the first year of its Corporate Parenting Journey. This provided an overview of some of the key achievements from the first 12 months of the reporting period. The video has been shared with other Corporate Parents including colleges across the FE sector and the three Ayrshire local authorities.

The link below provides access to this video summary of the College's Corporate Parenting Journey in 2016-17. <https://youtu.be/xZdOChE1MwU>

The College's Corporate Parenting Plan also recorded the following highlights and achievements in relation to each of the specific corporate parenting duties:

## 1. To be alert to matters which might adversely affect the wellbeing of looked after young people and care leavers.

- The Principal of Ayrshire College signed WhoCares? Scotland's "Pledge to Listen" and the College signed up to the Scottish Care Leavers' Covenant.
- Information for care experienced students is now included in the online student induction and there is now a designated area for care experienced students on the college website. This has helped to raise awareness of the College's commitment as a Corporate Parent.
- College application, enrolment and online bursary forms have been updated to include specific questions for care experienced students. This has meant that the number of disclosures increased to 211 in 2016-17 and 278 in 2017-18. Please note this figure was accurate at the time of writing.

- Student Funding prioritise funding applications from care experienced students and information regarding disclosures is shared more effectively between Student Funding and Inclusive Learning. As a result care experienced students can now expect to have their funding and learning support in place before the start of their course. This has had a positive impact on retention and has contributed to a 2% improvement in early withdrawal rates from 2016-17 to 2017-18.
- The College established a key contact for care experienced students on each campus, which has made it easier for students and staff to access information and support.
- College staff have established good links with colleagues in social work, Throughcare, schools and children’s houses across the three local authorities. This has resulted in better transitions and support for care experienced students, and has contributed to an increase in the number of students declaring their care experienced status.
- WhoCares? Scotland provided training for over forty managers. The College has also included information on Corporate Parenting in the Corporate Induction for new members of staff and the mandatory online “Prevent, Protect and Parent” module. This has resulted in a better understanding of Corporate Parenting and the needs of care experienced students amongst staff.
- The Business Intelligence Team have integrated data from Skills Development Scotland into the College’s Qlikview data analytics system, which has made it easier to analyse and monitor KPIs for care experienced students. Improved information sharing between MIS and Inclusive Learning has resulted in more accurate reporting in relation to care experienced students.
- Staff from Student Funding, Inclusive Learning, Student Services and curriculum have improved information sharing and collaborative working. As a result, staff are more alert and responsive to the needs of care experienced students.

## 2. To assess the needs of these children and young people for services and support it provides.

- The Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP) used by Inclusive Learning staff to assess the needs of students with additional support needs has been updated to include a wider range of wellbeing factors. This ensures that the needs assessment gathers all relevant information.
- All care experienced students are given the opportunity to complete an initial needs assessment with a member of staff from Inclusive Learning. The number of students who have engaged with Inclusive Learning has increased from 72 in 2016-17 to 76 in 2017-18. Please note that this figure may increase by the end of the session.
- Staff from Inclusive Learning, Quality and the School College Partnership Team have developed a new process for gathering evidence of additional support needs from schools. This has resulted in the needs assessment process being carried out much more quickly and PLSPs being in place sooner. There is also less duplication of needs assessment.

- Inclusive Learning staff regularly attend school transition meetings for care experienced pupils which ensures that appropriate support is in place prior to the young person starting their college course.
- Student Funding provide individualised funding advice to ensure that support is tailored to the needs of each individual student. Student Funding share information with Inclusive Learning, which means that an increased number of care experienced students are identified and supported at an earlier stage.
- There has been an improvement in the internal referral process for care experienced students as a result of increased knowledge and awareness of Corporate Parenting across the College. Student Services and curriculum staff regularly refer students to Inclusive Learning for an initial needs assessment. The number of student referrals to Inclusive Learning has increased from 153 in 2016-17 to 174 in 2017-18 so far. Please note that not all students will require support from Inclusive Learning but all students are given the opportunity to complete a needs assessment.

### 3. To promote the interests of these children and young people.

- The Student Association now has a dedicated Care Experienced Officer whose role is to promote the specific interests of care experienced students across the College.
- The College’s Equality Impact Assessment guidelines have been updated to include care experienced young people. This ensures that the interests of care experienced students are considered during the development of college policies and procedures.
- During the reporting period 2016-18, the College made a considerable contribution to National Care Leavers’ Week celebrations. During National Care Leavers’ Week 2016 the College hosted events in both Kilmarnock and Kilwinning Campuses which provided more than sixty care experienced young people and their carers with an opportunity to visit the College and try out a range of fun activities. In October 2017, the College further extended these celebration events to include all three main campuses. The College also hosted a Care Experienced Football Tournament in Kilmarnock Campus. The events were organised and delivered in collaboration with colleagues from the three local authorities and were attended and supported by a range of external partners including a number of Elected Members. The aim of these events was to promote the interests of care experienced young people, to raise awareness of opportunities and to provide a positive experience of college.

The links below contain a press release from October 2017 and photographs from the Care Leavers’ Week events which took place across the three campuses in October 2017.

<http://www1.ayrshire.ac.uk/news-events/news/2017/national-care-leavers-week-celebrations/>  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ayrshirecollege/albums/72157686803341262>

#### 4. To seek to provide opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing.

- The College offers a range of support services for students including pastoral support, counselling and CAMHS referrals, a Mental Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officer, a Campus Police Officer and a Drug and Alcohol Liaison Officer. These services are now well embedded within the College and all staff actively promote these services and encourage students, including care experienced students, to engage with these supports where appropriate.
- The College has developed an online Wellbeing Hub which offers a range of self-care resources to support the social and emotional wellbeing of all students including care experienced students.
- The College has now established a Promoting Wellbeing Group and developed a three year Promoting Wellbeing Action Plan. One of the key aims of the Action Plan is to support the wellbeing of all staff and students through providing staff training and wellbeing activities. All staff and students will be encouraged to participate in these activities.
- The College provides a venue to support other Corporate Parents and Care experienced young people. Who Cares? Scotland deliver a Care to Create group in Kilmarnock Campus every three weeks. The group provides an opportunity for care experienced children aged 6-10 years old to “be creative”. The College also provides a meeting place for Glasgow Social Work Department’s Ayrshire Foster Carers Support Group. Again, this underlines the College’s commitment as a Corporate Parent.

#### 5. To take action to help these children and young people access opportunities, make use of services and access support.

- The College website now includes a designated area for care experienced students which highlights the services available to students and the contact details of relevant staff. This has helped to increase awareness of the support available to care experienced students.
- The College has also delivered a number of presentations to external agencies including social work, schools, Ayrshire Foster Carers Support Group, East Ayrshire’s Corporate Parenting Network and College Development Network to raise awareness of the services and support available to care experienced students at Ayrshire College.
- Student Services and the Student Funding Team have supported a number of students to apply for the SAAS Care Leavers’ Grant.
- Student Services and Inclusive Learning work closely with social work colleagues and staff have cited several examples of social workers contacting teams directly to discuss support for individual students.
- College staff regularly attend school and social work transition and review meetings to support young people including care experienced young people to attend college.

## 6. To take action to improve as a Corporate Parent.

- The College has been proactive in taking steps to improve as a Corporate Parent and to share best practice through attending relevant forums, participating in Corporate Parenting events and contributing to local authority Corporate Parenting Plans throughout the reporting period.
- Specifically, college staff attended a number of events at College Development Network relating to Corporate Parenting. The College's Head of Inclusive Learning regularly attends Access and Inclusion Network events which often focus on issues relevant to care experienced students. These events provide an excellent opportunity to share good practice with colleagues across the FE sector.
- The College has established a Corporate Parenting Steering Group to identify potential barriers to participation amongst care experienced young people and to work with external partners to address these.
- The College has developed an online mandatory training module for staff which provides an overview of the College's Corporate Parenting responsibilities and outlines the key aims of our Corporate Parenting Plan.



## Collaboration with other Corporate Parents

Ayrshire College hosted its first ever Corporate Parenting Networking event in February 2017. The aim of the event was to create an opportunity for Corporate Parents to share practice and to look at how we could further develop the support we provide to Care Experienced young people across Ayrshire. The event was highlighted by Who Cares? Scotland as an example of Promising Practice. A link to their Promising Practice document is included here: <http://www.corporateparenting.org.uk/learning-hub/guidance-materials/promising-practice-november-2017/> Over 50 partners attended the event including representatives from:

- Police Scotland
- Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
- SQA
- Who Cares? Scotland
- Skills Development Scotland
- CELCIS
- University of West of Scotland
- East Ayrshire Council
- North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
- South Ayrshire Council

The event began with short updates from CELCIS and each of the three Ayrshire local authorities and later in the morning Who Cares? Scotland also delivered a presentation. Joanne Logan, Police Scotland, described the presentations as “informative, thought provoking and interesting.” Following the presentations, there was an opportunity for discussion and collaborative working as participants were asked to consider what they had achieved so far in relation to the Corporate Parenting duties, and what commitments they could make as Corporate Parents moving forward. Some of the key commitments included:

- Better data sharing
- Developing new and existing partnerships
- Continuing to network and share practice

Overall, feedback from partners who attended the event was very positive. Lizzie Morton, Policy Associate, CELCIS summed up the event when she said that “the event is an example of good practice in terms of networking and developing collaboration.” Jane O’Rorke, Senior Widening Participation Development Officer, UWS commented “I made many new contacts and will keep in touch with them to help improve the support at UWS for Care Leavers.”

The link below shows photographs from the event:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ayrshirecollege/albums/72157666648696718>



Following the Corporate Parenting Networking Event, the College also established its own Corporate Parenting Steering Group to oversee the ongoing implementation and review of the Corporate Parenting Plan and to continue to develop collaboration. The Steering Group includes representatives from Who Cares? Scotland, the three Ayrshire local authorities, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue and South Ayrshire Council's Champions for Change.

The College's Director of Student Services is a member of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group in each of the three local authorities, and as such has made a significant contribution to the development and review of the three local authority Corporate Parenting Plans. The Steering Groups and associated events have provided an excellent opportunity for sharing good practice and collaborative working. The Steering Groups enable members to work collectively to gain a better understanding of the needs of care experienced young people and to plan and develop services to meet these needs.

The College is also a member of the West of Scotland Care Leavers' Forum which includes representatives from colleges and universities across the West of Scotland. The Forum provides an excellent opportunity to share practice and to work collectively to promote the interests of care experienced students across the FE and HE sectors. The Forum has also enabled colleges and universities to improve transition support for students.

College staff take part in regular tracking meetings with colleagues from Skills Development Scotland, Social Work and Education in EAC to support the retention and attainment of care experienced students at college and to ensure that care experienced young people receive the necessary support to access a positive destination.

## Engaging with Care Experienced Young People and Carers

In 2016-17, Ayrshire College's Student Association appointed its first Care Experienced Officer whose role is to promote the interests of care experienced students across the College and the wider FE sector. The Care Experienced Officer is a member of the College's Corporate Parenting Steering Group, alongside representatives from South Ayrshire Council's Champions for Change Board. This ensures that the voice of care experienced students is at the centre of all college Corporate Parenting planning and activities.

As previously mentioned the College hosted a number of events for Care Experienced students during the reporting period 2016-18 as part of National Care Leavers' Week celebrations. This has enabled the College to engage with care experienced young people and their carers in a positive way by providing them with an opportunity to visit the College, find out about course options and take part in some interesting and fun taster activities.

The College has successfully engaged with children's houses and social work staff across the three local authority areas and has delivered presentations for Ayrshire Foster Carers Support Group, run by Glasgow's Social Work Department. This has resulted in an increased awareness of the support and opportunities available at the College amongst carers and support workers and has led to a number of referrals and requests for information and advice.

One of the key actions in the Corporate Parenting Plan 2016-18 was to establish a Forum for Care Experienced students within Ayrshire College. Initial attempts to set up a Forum were unsuccessful due to lack of engagement with students; therefore, this is an action that will be a key priority in the College's Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-20.



## Impact

The College has set up a number of reports using its Qlikview data analytics tool to establish a baseline and monitor the progress of care experienced students against the KPIs set out by the Scottish Funding Council in their National Ambition for Care Experienced students. The data shows that the number of students at Ayrshire College who disclosed their care experienced status rose to 211 in 2016-17. This was a significant increase on the previous year. This number has increased further to 278 in 2017-18, although the final figure may yet change.

Overall, Ayrshire College made a significant contribution towards the SFC's aim of increasing the intake of care experienced students in the college sector to 673 in 2016-17 and is on track to make a similar contribution towards its aim of increasing the intake to 733 in 2017-18.

In 2016-17, the majority of students who disclosed their care experienced status were aged 16-19 years (65%), whilst only 4.4% of disclosures came from students aged over 25 years. In 2017-18, the number of disclosures from students aged 16-19 years has dropped to 59.3%, whilst disclosures from students aged over 25 have increased to 16.5%. There has been a comparable decrease in the overall number of full time students aged 16-19 years from 2016-17 to 2017-18. However, the considerable increase in disclosures amongst students aged over 25 years is not reflective of the very slight increase in the number of students aged over 25 years across the whole student population. This suggests that older students are more willing to share their care experienced status.

For academic year 2016-17, the College exceeded the SFC's target of 57% successful completion rate for FTFE students by 5.5%. However, the success rate of 62.5% was lower than the successful completion rate for all non-care experienced FTFE students at Ayrshire College, which was 66.8%. In 2017-18 the Early Withdrawal Rate for care experienced students is 7.7% compared with 9.7% in 2016-17. This constitutes a 2% improvement rate. For FTFE care experienced students the rate is 8.5% in 2017-18 compared with 11.7% in 2016-17 which marks a 3.2% improvement. Please note that final figures for academic year 2017-18 may differ slightly.

## Future Priorities

Initial attempts to establish a Forum for care experienced students at Ayrshire College were largely unsuccessful. Therefore, one of the key priorities for the College's Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-20 will be to establish a Care Experienced Forum or similar mechanism for engaging with care experienced students and ensuring that they have a strong voice within Ayrshire College. The College will seek to collaborate with South Ayrshire Council's Champions for Change Board and East Ayrshire Council's Connecting Voices group, which is linked to the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (Staf), and the Student Association to set up the Forum. The College will also explore opportunities to engage with care experienced young people in North Ayrshire.

The College will aim to work collaboratively with these groups to review the information provided to care experienced students via the online student induction and college website and to develop staff training materials that accurately reflect the experiences of care experienced young people.

Another key priority for the College in 2018-20 will be to continue to develop and extend CPD opportunities for staff to ensure that all staff are aware of their corporate parenting responsibilities. The college will aim to work collaboratively with external partners and care experienced students to further develop its online training resources to include an additional Corporate Parenting module.

College staff will continue to contribute to Corporate Parenting Steering Groups across the three Ayrshire local authorities and to take part in relevant corporate parenting events and forums within the FE sector and beyond. The College will also seek to build on the success of its first Corporate Parenting Networking event by working with partners through its Corporate Parenting Steering Group to identify opportunities to reflect collaboratively on achievements from the reporting period 2016-18.

The College will continue to develop its data analytics and information systems to ensure effective and accurate reporting of KPIs in relation to care experienced students and in line with the new GDPR regulations.

The College will seek to enhance internal communication and referral systems to ensure that all care experienced students have the opportunity to access appropriate support and that a greater number of students engage with the support available through Inclusive Learning and Student Services.



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