

Borders College



Corporate Parenting Plan 2022-2025

#KeepthePromise



The Promise



supporting
student carers in
further education



Regionally Focused – Globally Engaged

Foreword

Welcome to Borders College, Corporate Parenting Plan for 2022-2025

Borders College is a focal point for Education and Training and is the smallest of the 13 college regions in Scotland with Borders College its main provider of further education and a significant provider of higher education to HND level. It is the largest provider of post-compulsory education in the Scottish Borders. The rural nature of the region, with its sparse population, while providing a pleasant environment for families and many vibrant local communities, also has issues with low wages, poverty and isolation. The college recognises that these economic and social issues do prevail in the region and can be contributory factors in presenting significant additional barriers to young people reaching their full potential.

We pride ourselves in being an inclusive organisation that welcomes applications from young people from a wide range of backgrounds. We are keen to ensure that all students who face additional barriers to learning whether care experienced, student carer, estranged or living with a disability or learning need get the opportunities and support to make a success of their time at college. We will ensure that we recognise the additional barriers that many young people face in sustaining a positive learning journey and will make the necessary adjustments to give these learners the chances they need to succeed.

The College's strategic ambition to provide innovative, life-changing learning opportunities that prepare our students for global citizenship will be achieved by ensuring we meet our objectives:



Introduction

1.1 What is Corporate Parenting?

The College is identified 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.”

[\(https://www.gov.scot/publications/statutory-guidance-part-9-corporate-parenting-children-young-people-scotland/pages/3/\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/statutory-guidance-part-9-corporate-parenting-children-young-people-scotland/pages/3/)

1.2 Duties and Responsibilities

As part of our Corporate Parenting Responsibilities, we must show how we are meeting the requirements in Sections 58 to 61 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; this plan indicates how we will meet these. Corporate Parenting is not a task that can be delegated to an individual or team. The whole organisation is responsible for fulfilling its corporate parenting duties.

- ✚ Being alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers;
- ✚ Assessing the needs of those children and young people for services and support they provide;
- ✚ Promoting the interests of those children and young people;
- ✚ Seeking to provide looked after children and care leavers with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing;
- ✚ Taking action to help looked after children and care leavers:
 - Access opportunities to improve wellbeing and
 - Make use of services, and access the support, which they provide; and
- ✚ Taking any other action to improve the way in which it exercises the Corporate Parenting functions.

1.3 Our Care-Experienced Students

The College recognises that learner success for this group is considerably lower than the general population, it commits to finding an appropriate place at college for all those wishing to study, wherever this is possible, and accepts a young person may have a number of failed attempts at college before finding the skills to persevere and make the most of their abilities and achieve success.

What do we know?

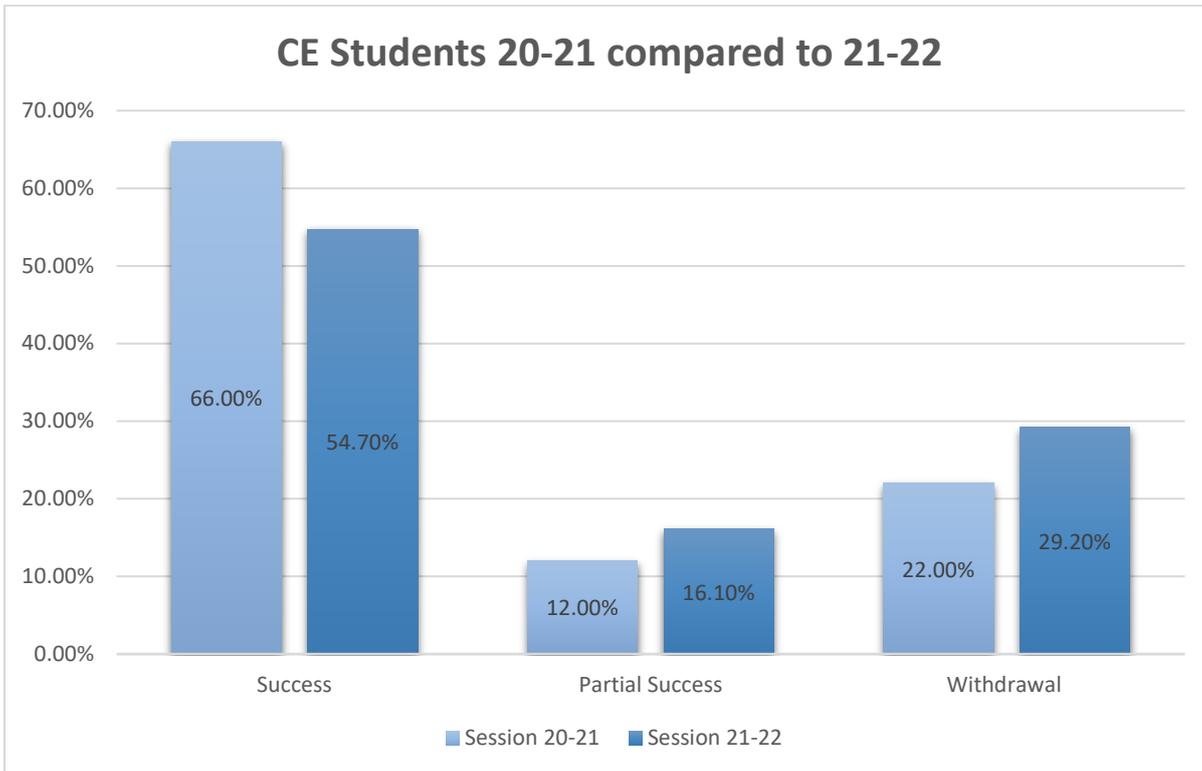
Who Cares? Scotland tell us that Care Experienced learners are;

- Almost twice as likely to have poor mental health
- More than twice as likely to have experienced homelessness
- Over one and a half times more likely to have financial difficulties
- Almost twice as likely to have no internet at home

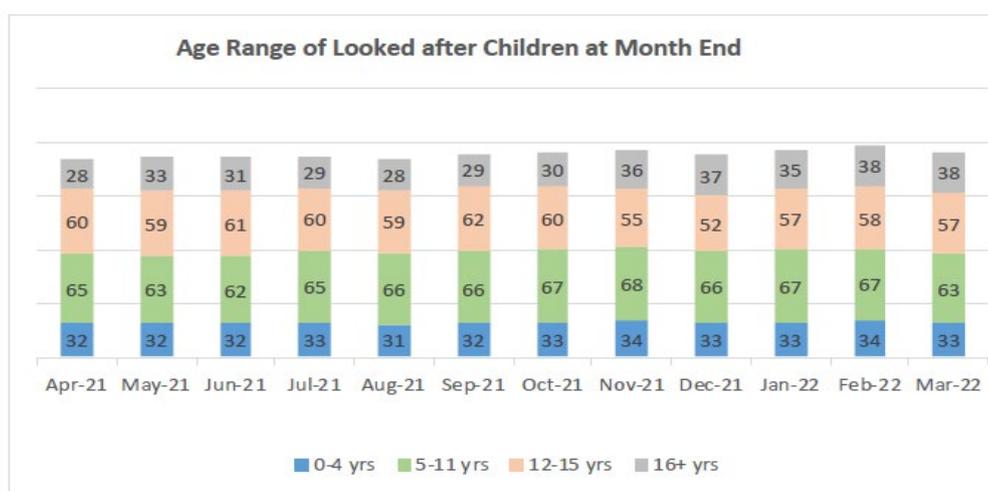
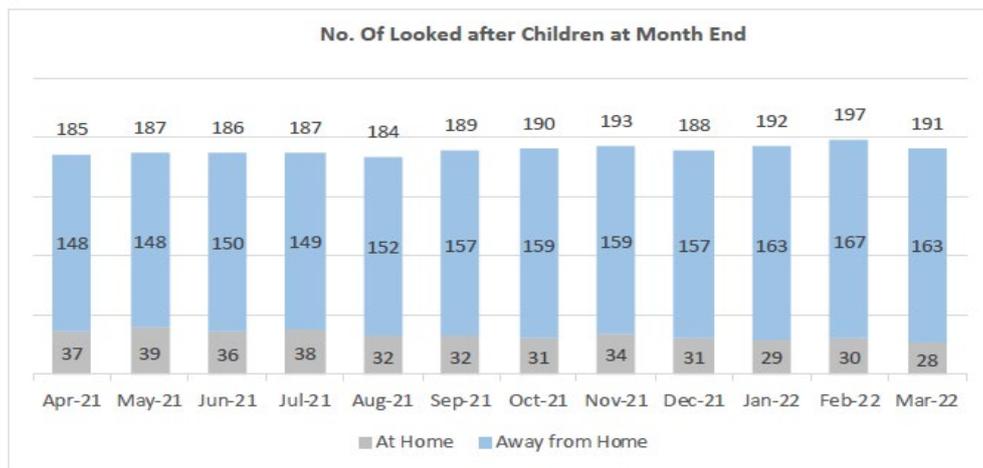
- Over one and a half times more likely to experience multiple disadvantage

In a survey by NUS Scotland, 75% of care experienced students worried about their finances frequently or all the time.

44% of care experienced students were unable to pay their rent in full at some point (compared to 26% students overall) 70% of students with care experience indicated that their mental health was impacted by worrying about money (compared to 64% of students overall), with 50% even having considered leaving their course due to financial struggles at some point (compared to 33% overall) (NUS Scotland 2022).



1.3.1 Who are our Care-Experienced children and young people in the Scottish Borders?



Data/Information extracted from the Scottish Borders ‘The Promise and Corporate Parenting Annual Report for 2021-22’ -

Local Authority Aftercare Services Comparison

Young people eligible for aftercare services, percentage receiving aftercare and percentage in employment, education or training, by local authority, 31 July 2021

Local authority area	Young people eligible for aftercare services	Number receiving aftercare services	Percent receiving aftercare services	Percentage of those receiving aftercare services with an unknown economic activity	In employment, education or training	
					As percentage of those receiving aftercare with known economic activity	As percentage of all eligible for aftercare services
Scottish Borders	102	36	35%	3%	43%	15%
Dumfries and Galloway	365	110	30%	8%	56%	16%

East Lothian	114	41	36%	2%	55%	19%
Midlothian	113	62	55%	0%	68%	37%
Scotland	7,323	3,931	54%	20%	54%	23%

Taken from - [Supporting documents - Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2020-21 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

1.4 'The Promise'

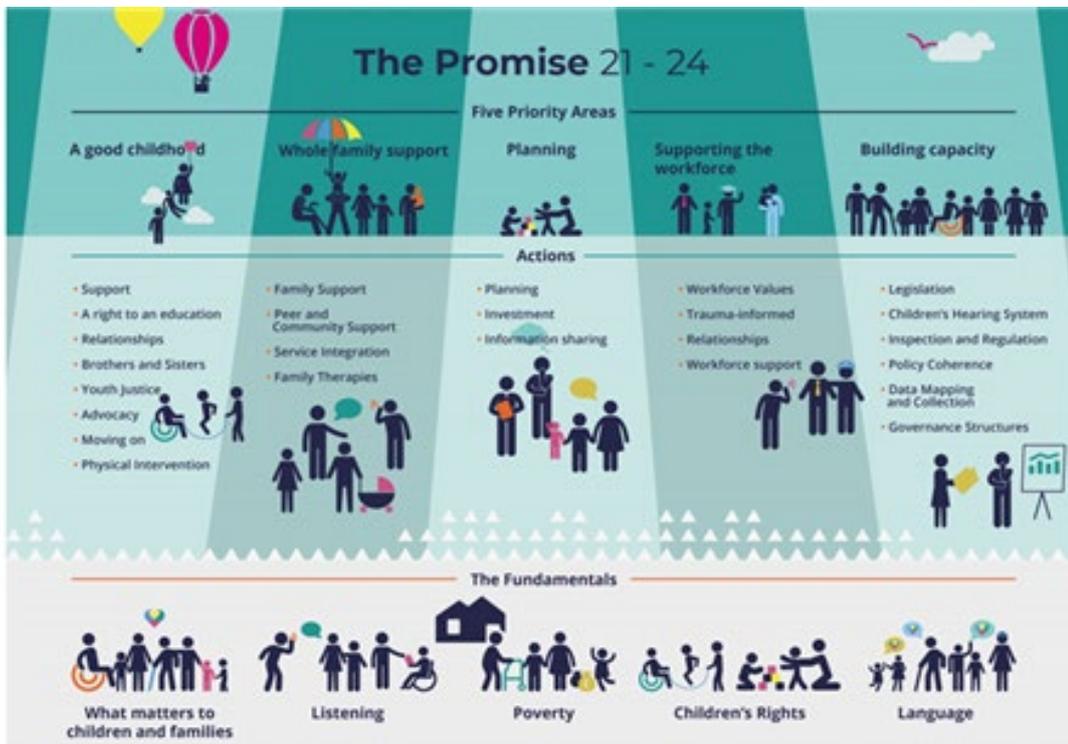
In February 2020 The Independent Care Review's 'Promise' was launched which gives corporate parents a very clear message and direction to improve services and supports available to Care-Experienced young people. The Promise Plan 2021-24 states 'This is immediate and urgent work – what can change now must change now.

<https://thepromise.scot/>

Successful corporate parenting requires passion, commitment, partnership working and engagement across all agencies. It requires everyone, from the head of organisations to front line staff, to take a proactive approach to better understand their corporate parenting responsibilities and improve their practice accordingly. We need to work together to enable looked after children, young people, care leavers and their families to be, and feel, nurtured, listened to and supported to achieve their individual potential.

The report has identified five foundations for change, with over 80 specific changes that must be made to transform how Scotland cares for children and families. The five foundations for change detailed in The Promise are:

1. Voice - voice of the children must be heard at all stages;
2. Family - what all families need to thrive;
3. Care - care that builds childhoods for children who Scotland has responsibility
4. People - people with a relentless focus on the importance of relationships, and
5. Scaffolding - scaffolding, so that the structure is there to support children and families when needed.



The clarity of message and demand for change detailed in the Promise provides a firm, evidential base for the future of corporate parenting in Scotland and, helps shape the focus of development of corporate parenting and improve the lives of looked after and care experienced children and young people across the Scottish Borders.

Corporate Parenting, our journey so far

2.1 Where are we now?

2.1.1 Established Support initiative

We established and embedded our Care Aware support service when Corporate Parenting was launched. It provides an opportunity for all Care-Experienced students (regardless of age) to a dedicated adviser who will support them with any advice/guidance they require throughout their educational journey, this includes matters relating to their wellbeing. This service is invaluable for some of our CE students who don't have that support network.

Quote from a student – “sorry for wasting the college's time but I thought that this was the start of something good for me I was obviously wrong I just need to keep going and thank you so much for all the support you have showing me over the duration of me being at college you have really helped me through it all”

2.1.2 Single Point of Contact

We have in place our single point of contact for Care-Experienced and Corporate Parenting; this is a key role within the College to ensure that there is a personal contact available to students and stakeholders who has a knowledge of Corporate Parenting.

2.1.3 Support from Application

Our support starts from the point of application, we offer CE students the opportunity a discussion to determine individual pastoral and/or learning support requirements. We offer visits to campus, where appropriate, so we can put in place the required support prior to them commencing their chosen course of study, this includes discussions around finances to ensure we are maximising what they are entitled too, providing assistive technologies, digital devices and transport where required.

Feedback from a student indicates how they felt we were a good Corporate Parent - I was very lucky to have individuals that communicated with all services involved in my care and develop a plan to support myself whilst knowing my needs and my downfalls and when to exercising "harsh love" to help me achieve my personal goals without procrastinating

2.1.4 How do we Track our Students

We have developed processes to allow us to track, monitor and report on our CE students from the application. This has provided us with opportunities to allow support to commence at the application stage; we offer all students the opportunity at application for an initial discussion around any identified barriers to their learning which allows us to optimise the support available to improve their wellbeing.

Having these processes in place means that we know who our CE students are, we can ensure they are monitored closely and where there are concerns we can be take appropriate action to support them. Early Intervention is important to inform lecturing and others who are involved in their learner journey.

Corporate Parenting is a Standing Item on our Equality and Inclusion Committee and we have piloted a Working Group to allow for a more focused discussion on our more vulnerable student groups and how as a College we can ensure we are staying alert to matters that impact on Wellbeing. COVID impacted the operation of this and we are now reviewing the development of this for the future.

2.1.5 Collaboration

We work very closely with the local network of agencies and organisations, e.g. Through Care After Care teams, Social Work, SBC Virtual School Head Teacher who support CE young people. Being able to connect with other Corporate Parents allows us to also raise awareness of the opportunities available to CE young people which promotes their interests.

2.2 Who is our Corporate Parenting plan for?

Care-Experienced Students

As a Corporate Parent, Borders College will support every young person, under the age of 26*, who is looked after by a local authority through Foster Care Placement, Supervision Order, Kinship Care Order or in Residential care. In addition, those young people who were in care on or any time after their 16th birthday but are no longer looked after by a local authority, known as a 'Care Leaver'.

**Within legislation, Corporate Parenting is defined as for those under the age of 26. Borders College recognises the importance of a committed approach to support and guidance for all students and endeavours to support all Care Experienced students, as well as those who face additional barriers to learning, regardless of age.*

We also recognise that our actions and commitments are critical in supporting not only our care experienced young people, but reflects our ambition and vision for all students who face additional barriers to entering, maintaining and sustaining a successful learning journey.

Although there is no legislative requirement placed upon the College, it is our wish to widen our Corporate Parenting principles to ensure those values are reflected in supporting access and inclusion while enabling attainment and positive outcomes for our wider student community, in particular those who are:

Student Carers

The College has achieved the 'Going Further for Student Carers Recognition Award' an initiative through Carers Trust Scotland. Through this commitment, we work to improve support, services and recognition for young people living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has a mental or other health issue or other additional problems. SFC stats show that 8% of student carers are care experienced across Scottish Colleges. <https://carers.org/college-and-university-work-in-scotland/going-further-for-student-carers-recognition-award>

Estranged Students

We are committed to supporting students who are estranged from their families, in recognition for this we have signed the 'Stand Alone Pledge'. Students are deemed eligible to be considered for independence on the basis of being 'irreconcilably estranged from parents' if they have not had verbal or written contact with both of biological, adoptive parents or only living parent for a significant period of time and this will not change. A significant period of time is usually considered twelve months or longer prior to the start of the course, but this can also depend on circumstances.

<http://www.thestandalonepledge.org.uk/>

2.3 What's next on our Corporate Parenting Journey?

To enable us to identify our priorities to be achieved over the next 3 years we have drawn on evidence from:

-  The Independent Care Review's Promise and the Promise Plan 2021-2024
-  A review of our 2018–2021 corporate parenting plan
-  Views of our CE students
-  Children and Young People Act (Scotland) Act 2014
-  Scottish Governments Review of Corporate Parenting Plans 18-21
-  Considering the Each and Every Child Initiative
-  Scottish Borders Council Corporate Parenting Strategy and Annual Report

Our Aims



AIM 1 - Young People are aware that the College is an inclusive and supportive place to study where they feel safe and nurtured



AIM 2 - All staff are alert and aware of matters that might adversely affect the wellbeing and/or achievement of young people



AIM 3 - The College will ensure that young people who face additional barriers to sustaining engagement and achievement are assessed for specific pastoral and learning support



AIM 4 - The College will seek to promote the interest of all our young people who face additional barriers and provide opportunities designed to support achievement, progression and promote wellbeing



AIM 5 - The College will work to fulfil its role as an inclusive organisation and good corporate parent, working collaboratively with other local and national agencies and corporate parents

We will align our Corporate Parenting Plan around the Scottish Borders Council CP Ambition. Our Plan will be reviewed on an on-going basis by the working group and consultation and participation will take place with our CE students in order to inform policy, service development and delivery.

2.4 Governance

The Corporate Parenting plan will be approved by the Regional Board and progress against the plan will be monitored annually by the Curriculum and Quality Committee.

Our Plan 22-25

Not started	
Complete	
Some slippage but will be complete by deadline	
In progress – Ongoing	
Will not be complete by deadline	

No.	Action	Evidence/Measures	Characteristic/Drivers	By whom and when	Progress/Update	Status
AIM 1 - Young People are aware that the College is an inclusive and supportive place to study where they feel safe and nurtured						
1.1	Throughout the transitions phase promote the wraparound services available to support the individual with a focus on mitigating the barriers caused by digital poverty, access to transport and mental health.	<p>Use of various platforms to promote the services ie Social Media, Student Portal</p> <p>Named single point of contact.</p> <p>Care Aware Initiative with reporting available on Pro-Solution.</p> <p>Representation at 14+ Transitions and liaison with SBC Equality Lead</p> <p>Positive destination data</p> <p>Under 22 Travel initiative</p> <p>Referrals for MH support</p>	<p><u>External</u></p> <p>CP Duty 58 1(c)</p> <p>GFSC Support</p> <p>Promise – A good childhood, Planning</p> <p><u>Internal</u></p> <p>Future Skills Strategy</p> <p>College Development Plan – Actions 1-4</p> <p>Equality Outcome Action Plan 2 & 3</p>	<p>Director of Student Support Services</p> <p>Student Services Team Lead</p> <p>MIS</p> <p>Curriculum Learning Managers</p>		

No.	Action	Evidence/Measures	Characteristic/Drivers	By whom and when	Progress/Update	Status
1.2	To adopt a proactive approach and ensure we offer all accepted applicants the opportunity to discuss their support requirements.	<p>Welcome emails sent advising support opportunities available.</p> <p>Collaboration/Liaison with key Stakeholders to provide transitional support.</p> <p>Tracking admissions.</p> <p>Representation at 14+ Transitions and liaison with SBC Equality Lead.</p> <p>Referral analysis.</p> <p>BYT Mentoring Support.</p> <p>Allocated Advisers.</p> <p>Quiet Induction.</p>	<p><u>External</u> CP Duty 58 1 (d) GFSC Support, Identify Promise – A good childhood, Planning</p> <p><u>Internal</u> Future Skills Strategy College Development Plan – Action 1-4 Equality Outcome Action Plan 2 & 3</p>	<p>Director of Student Support Services</p> <p>Student Services Team Lead</p> <p>Learning Support Specialist</p> <p>Curriculum Learning Managers</p>		

No.	Action	Evidence/Measures	Characteristic/Drivers	By whom and when	Progress/Update	Status
AIM 2 - All staff are alert and aware of matters that might adversely affect the wellbeing and/or achievement of young people						
2.1	Consider tracking and monitoring data to ensure appropriate scaffolding is in place to support successful outcomes.	Reporting tools available on Pro-Solution to enable identification & tracking. Equality and Inclusion Committee. Regular meetings with the Curricular Teams and key Stakeholders ie SDS/NOLB. Improved Outcomes/KPIs.	<u>External</u> CP Duty 58 1 (a), (b), (c) GFSC Support, Identify Promise – A good childhood, Building Capacity <u>Internal</u> Outcome Agreement Future Skills Strategy College Development Plan – Action 1-4 Equality Outcome Action Plan 2 & 3	Director of Student Support Services Student Services Team Lead Learning Support Specialist Curriculum Learning Managers Equalities Officer		
2.2	Ensure all staff receive relevant CPD to raise awareness and provide appropriate support to learners.	Online Equalities and Corporate Parenting modules available for all Staff and a requirement for staff induction. Key frontline staff will receive relevant CPD. Staff Induction/Staff Awareness sessions available. Support Policies and Procedures.	<u>External</u> CP Duty 58 1 (a), (b), (c) GFSC Support Promise – Supporting the workforce <u>Internal</u> Future Skills Strategy College Development Plan – Action 1-4 Equality Outcome Action Plan 2 & 3	Director of People Services All Line Managers Equalities Officer		

No.	Action	Evidence/Measures	Characteristic/Drivers	By whom and when	Progress/Update	Status
AIM 3 - The College will ensure that young people who face additional barriers to sustaining engagement and achievement are assessed for specific pastoral and learning support						
3.1	Learners who disclose a need for support will have the opportunity to discuss and access the appropriate services to support their learning and progress.	<p>Named Adviser</p> <p>Funding support available from Student Services team to ensure students funding is maximised.</p> <p>Advice/Guidance on Travel to access College.</p> <p>Collaboration/Liaison with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Referral analysis</p> <p>BYT Mentoring</p> <p>Improved Outcomes/KPIs</p>	<p><u>External</u></p> <p>CP Duty 58 1 (a), (b), (c)</p> <p>GFSC Support, Identify Promise – A good childhood</p> <p><u>Internal</u></p> <p>Outcome Agreement</p> <p>Future Skills Strategy</p> <p>College Development Plan – Action 1-4</p> <p>Equality Outcome Action Plan 2 & 3</p>	<p>Director of Student Support Services</p> <p>Student Services Team Lead</p> <p>Learning Support Specialist</p> <p>Curriculum Learning Managers</p> <p>Student Services Teams</p> <p>Achievement Coaches</p>		

No.	Action	Evidence/Measures	Characteristic/Drivers	By whom and when	Progress/Update	Status
AIM 4 - The College will seek to promote the interest of all our young people who face additional barriers and provide opportunities designed to support achievement, progression and promote wellbeing						
4.1	Using tracking and monitoring data to take appropriate action to provide interventions to support progress.	Reporting tools available on Pro-Solution to enable tracking, monitoring and early identification. Referral Analysis BYT Mentoring. Regular meetings with the Curricular Teams and key Stakeholders ie SDS/NOLB.	<u>External</u> CP Duty 58 1 (a), (b), (c) GFSC Support, Identify Promise – Building Capacity <u>Internal</u> Outcome Agreement Future Skills Strategy College Development Plan – Action 1-4 Equality Outcome Action Plan 2 & 3	Director of Student Support Services Student Services Team Lead Learning Support Specialist Curriculum Learning Managers Student Services Teams Achievement Coaches		
4.2	Provide advice and guidance on progression opportunities including support to make applications, attend open days etc.	HE adviser aware of students. Close liaison with SDS/NOLB Promotion of opportunities using various platforms. Effective collaboration and signposting. Work placement opportunities	<u>External</u> CP Duty 58 1 (a), (b), (c) GFSC Support, Identify Promise – A good childhood <u>Internal</u> Future Skills Strategy College Development Plan – Action 1-4 Equality Outcome Action Plan 2 & 3	Student Services Team Lead HE Adviser Student Services Teams Achievement Coaches		

No.	Action	Evidence/Measures	Characteristic/Drivers	By whom and when	Progress/Update	Status
4.3	Through the Students Association provide opportunities for the learners voice to be heard.	<p>Student Experience Committee</p> <p>BCSA opportunities</p> <p>Collaboration with SBC Champions Board</p>	<p><u>External</u> CP Duty 58 1 (e) Promise – A good childhood</p> <p><u>Internal</u> Future Skills Strategy College Development Plan – Action 1-4 Equality Outcome Action Plan</p>	<p>BCSA Development Officer</p> <p>Equalities Officer</p>		
AIM 5 - The College will work to fulfil its role as an inclusive organisation and good corporate parent, working collaboratively with other local and national agencies and corporate parents						
5.1	Regularly review the Corporate Parenting plan, to ensure it is current and reflects local and national developments.	<p>Representation on local/national forums.</p> <p>Reports to E&I and Curriculum and Quality Committee.</p>	<p><u>External</u> CP Duty 58 1 (f) Promise – Building Capacity</p> <p><u>Internal</u> Future Skills Strategy College Development Plan – Action 1-4 Equality Outcome Action Plan</p>	<p>Director of Student Support Services</p> <p>Student Services Team Lead</p> <p>Equality and Inclusion Committee</p>		

No.	Action	Evidence/Measures	Characteristic/Drivers	By whom and when	Progress/Update	Status
5.2	Continue active engagement with all Corporate Parents to share good practice and deliver on our duties.	Representation on SBC Operational Group, CDN forums, CEECEF, CPP, SFC Governance. Membership with Scottish Mentoring Network. Collaboration with Who Cares? Scotland.	<u>External</u> CP Duty 58 1 (f) Promise – Building Capacity, Planning <u>Internal</u> Future Skills Strategy College Development Plan – Action 1-4 Equality Outcome Action Plan	Director of Student Support Services Student Services Team Lead		

Introducing Scotland's Corporate Parents



* This is the category that includes

- Accountant in Bankruptcy
- Disclosure Scotland
- Education Scotland
- Scottish Prison Service
- Scottish Public Pensions Agency
- Student Awards Agency for Scotland
- Transport Scotland