

**Corporate Parenting progress report  
NHS Education for Scotland (NES)**

**August 2024**

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# 1. Corporate Parenting

## 1.1. Introduction and legislation

1.1.1. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014<sup>1</sup>, came into force on 01 April 2015. Part nine of the said Act outlines the role of “Corporate Parents”, with section 58 describing the responsibilities of Corporate Parents towards the wellbeing of care-experienced (“looked-after”) children and young people<sup>2</sup>.

1.1.2. As per the Act, it is the duty of every Corporate Parent to:

- Be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of applicable children and young people.
- Assess the needs of those children and young people.
- Promote the interests of those children and young people.
- Seek to provide those children and young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing.
- Take action to help those children and young people to access appropriate opportunities and services.
- Take other action, as required, for the purposes of improving the way the Corporate Parenting function is delivered.

1.1.3. Part 18 (section 96) of the said Act defines the wellbeing of children and young people as those who are (or would be): safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included (commonly referred to as ‘SHANARRI’; the eight wellbeing indicators).

1.1.4. The Scottish Government describes Corporate Parenting 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*”<sup>3</sup>.

1.1.5. As an organisation, we do not typically deliver any direct services to children. However, as a Corporate Parent, we have an opportunity – and responsibility – to shape the lives of care-experienced children and young people. As outlined in our new Strategy 2023-2026, we are committed to supporting care-experienced children and young people, and look forward to continue working with our extensive range of partners and stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> Crown Copyright (2014) ‘Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014’. Norwich: The Stationery Office. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents> (Accessed: 2 July 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Young people in this context are defined as those being at least 16 years old but under the age of 26 and are no longer being looked after by a local authority (i.e., on their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday or at any subsequent time, they were previously looked after by their local authority).

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Government (2015) ‘Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014: Statutory Guidance on Part 9: Corporate Parenting’. Edinburgh: Scottish Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/statutory-guidance-part-9-corporate-parenting-children-young-people-scotland/documents/> (Accessed: 16 November 2021).

## 1.2. Report outline

1.2.1. In this report, our activities are aligned with the following six Corporate Parenting responsibilities:

- **R1:** being **alert** to the wellbeing of care-experienced children and young people.
- **R2: assess** the needs of care-experienced children and young people for the services and support we provide.
- **R3: promote** the interests of care-experienced children and young people.
- **R4:** provide care-experienced children and young people with **opportunities** to promote their wellbeing.
- **R5:** help care-experienced children and young people to **access** our opportunities, services, and support.
- **R6: improve** the way our Corporate Parenting function is delivered.

1.2.2. It is however, acknowledged that overlaps do exist.

1.2.3. This report is presented as follows:

- A summary of activities delivered in 2018-2021 (p. 5).
- Activities delivered over 2021-2024 (p. 8).

## 2. Summary of 2018-2021 activities

### 2.1. R1: being alert to the wellbeing of care-experienced children and young people

- 2.1.1. We continued to raise awareness of our Corporate Parenting role and promoted learning opportunities for staff, including to our Board and the then Senior Leadership and Management Team.
- 2.1.2. We worked with 'Who Cares? Scotland' to embed the views of care-experienced children and young people in our plans and to develop a Corporate Parenting e-Learning module for NHS staff. This included content that explained how young people felt about NHS services, some of the challenges they faced, and how NHS staff can help improve outcomes for this group.



- 2.1.3. We also hosted a workshop with 'Who Cares? Scotland', which considered areas around workforce diversification, and recruitment and employment practices. This also included an assessment of barriers that may exist in gaining and sustaining employment for care-experienced people.

### 2.2. R2: assess the needs of care-experienced children and young people for the services and support we provide

- 2.2.1. Our work afforded us the opportunity to reflect on the needs of care-experienced young people in our educational resources and initiatives. We promoted staff awareness of the needs of care-experienced young people through educational resources within dental care, general practice, and mental health services. Initial feedback indicated that our initiatives improved understanding and awareness of the needs of care-experienced children and young people.

### **2.3. R3: promote the interests of care-experienced children and young people**

- 2.3.1. Care-experienced week (23-31 October 2020) was an opportunity to celebrate the care-experienced community. We welcomed 'Who Cares? Scotland' to deliver a workshop for those involved in recruitment practice, workforce development and in promoting equality and diversity:
- Employing care-experienced people and diversifying the workforce.
  - Unconscious bias and stigma in recruitment and employment practices.
  - Barriers that exist in gaining and sustaining employment for care-experienced people.
  - Positive working relationships within a diverse workforce.
- 2.3.2. Care-experienced week also afforded us the opportunity to promote the Corporate Parenting online learning module. We continued to promote awareness raising to our Board, senior managers, and staff on our organisational Corporate Parenting role, as well as to relevant partners across health and social care.
- 2.3.3. We engaged with equality and diversity leads across NHS Scotland to consider how equality and diversity educational resources at local, regional and national levels could contribute to raising awareness of the needs of care-experienced young people.

### **2.4. R4: provide care-experienced children and young people with opportunities to promote their wellbeing**

- 2.4.1. We worked with the NHS Scotland Employability and Apprenticeship Network (and key partners) to support further development opportunities (including qualifications) and more flexible career pathways for care-experienced young people joining the workforce. We also worked with the Prince's Trust to promote their 'Get into Healthcare' Programme across NHS Scotland.
- 2.4.2. We made NHS Scotland boards aware of funding streams for Apprenticeship programmes which were targeted at young people. Again, our aim was to increase awareness across the service of the needs of care-experienced young people.

### **2.5. R5: help care-experienced children and young people to access our opportunities, services and support**

- 2.5.1. We acknowledge that we do not provide any direct services to children. However, our role and remit are centred around upskilling the workforce who do. We indirectly supported this area through our educational resources and, for example, through our employability and apprenticeship work with NHS Scotland boards (section 2.4).

**2.6. R6: improve the way our Corporate Parenting function is delivered**

- 2.6.1. To update new colleagues about the then relatively new arrangements, we highlighted our role as a Corporate Parent in our corporate induction materials.
- 2.6.2. In September 2019, we updated our Board on our Corporate Parenting activities and progress. As of July 2019, these included the provision of Multi-systemic Therapy consultancy, a refresh of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services' (CAMHS) resources to include material focussed on care-experienced children and young people), a refresh of the Corporate Parenting communications plan, and information on the NHS Scotland Employability and Apprenticeship Network and other partners.
- 2.6.3. Our Corporate Parenting action plan was newly integrated into the annual operational planning process, in which we reported our performance quarterly. The action plan was also monitored by our then Person-Centred Care, Participation, and Equality & Diversity Leads Network (PEDLN).
- 2.6.4. In December 2020, we produced a draft Corporate Parenting action plan for 2021-2022, which was shared with the then PEDLN group. This plan focussed on four main activities, namely:
- Educational materials for health and care professionals.
  - Educational materials for 'Who Cares? Scotland' staff.
  - Improving employability for care-experienced people.
  - Representing the needs of care-experienced people in the trauma training programme.
- 2.6.5. In December 2020, we started planning for the national Corporate Parenting Report to Parliament 2021 (as per the Scottish Government's request for the reporting period 01 April 2018 to 31 March 2021). (This update was provided to the Scottish Government in April 2021, as noted section 3.7.1).

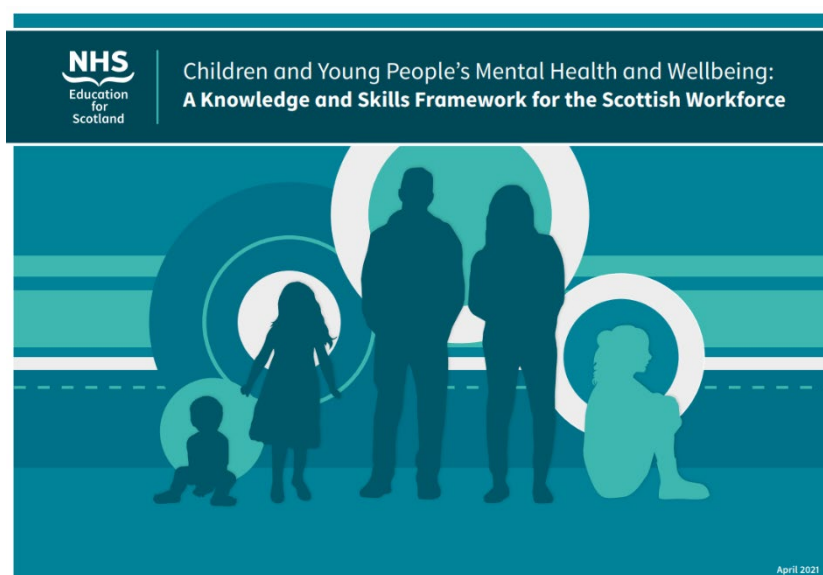
### 3. NES activities – 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

#### 3.1. Introduction

- 3.1.1. This section of the report presents our Corporate Parenting activities delivered during 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. This is part of the third three-year reporting cycle since the implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 in 2015.
- 3.1.2. Our activities are aligned with the six responsibilities of Corporate Parents. However, it is acknowledged that overlaps exist across the categories.

#### 3.2. R1: being alert to the wellbeing of care-experienced children and young people

- 3.2.1. In April 2021, we published a [Knowledge and Skills Framework for the Scottish Workforce working with children and young people](#). This framework sets out the levels of knowledge and skills required by staff, across agencies, to deliver wellbeing and mental health support and interventions within the framework of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC). It takes a rights-respecting approach in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as well as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).



- **Informed** Practice Level describes the baseline knowledge and skills required by everyone who works with children and young people.
- **Skilled** Practice Level describes the knowledge and skills required by all workers who have direct and/or substantial contact with children and young people who may be experiencing mental health challenges.
- **Enhanced** Practice Level details the knowledge and skills required by workers who have more regular and intense contact with children and young people who are known to have difficulties with their mental health. This workforce usually provides specific support or interventions and can direct or manage services.
- **Specialist** Practice Level details the knowledge and skills required by staff who, by virtue of their pre-registration specialist training, job role and practice setting, play a specialist role in directly providing specialist neurodevelopmental assessments, mental state examinations or interventions, including medical interventions, and evidence-based psychological interventions to children and young people.



- 3.2.2. We developed high-volume training at trauma-skilled level as part of our trauma training portfolio for some of the workforces that support children and young people with care experience. In progressing this work, we collaborated with the Professional Social Work Advisor for trauma (Office of the Chief Social Worker, Scottish Government). The priority was to support the ambition of 'The Promise' for a trauma-informed workforce.



- 3.2.3. The trauma skilled e-module in [TURAS Learn](#) is mapped to the trauma Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) for children and young people generally. However, we have used care-experienced examples to highlight some of their specific needs in terms of trauma.

### 3.3. R2: assess the needs of care-experienced children and young people for the services and support we provide

- 3.3.1. To help ensure that the needs of care-experienced young people were understood and appropriately taken into consideration, our NES Women, Children, Young People and Families (NES WCYPF) group reviewed our educational materials (September 2021). The review highlighted that resources may be implicit, i.e., not focussed on care-experienced people only. The exercise raised awareness of strengthening the focus of relevant resources through examples and scenarios. The resources identified were:

- 'Child protection: it's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright.'
- Learning disabilities.
- Consultation skills: consulting with children and young people.
- Sexual Health for Community Pharmacy: Emergency Contraception.
- Essential Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

- Trauma Skilled Practice (two-day workshop for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) clinicians).
- 'Opening Doors: Trauma Informed Practice for the Workforce' animation.



- '[Sowing Seeds](#)': Trauma-informed practice for anyone working with children and young people' animation.



- Four trauma modules as part of the work of the Training in Psychological Skills Early Intervention Workstream.
- The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP): FNP education offers resources for family nurses to promote how we talk and learn about care-experienced children and young people.
- Speech, language and communication: giving children the best start in life.
- Health Visiting and School Nursing Community of Practice.

- Part of the '[Childsmile Learning Programme](#)' in TURAS: training involves Family Case studies and scenarios (involving communication methods and behaviour change techniques) which aim to improve oral health. Learners are encouraged to develop engagement skills and reflection using 'compassionate connections' scenarios.

The screenshot shows a web page titled 'Reducing Inequalities' with a search bar and a navigation menu. The 'Childsmile' section is highlighted, showing a welcome message and a video player for 'Childsmile Course Information'.

- 3.3.2. In September 2021, we also recommended that it would be more meaningful to health and care professionals (who provide services to those care-experienced individuals) for Corporate Parenting resources to be 'threaded' within all resources. It was, however, noted that a resource directed specifically towards educators would raise awareness and engage staff.

### 3.4. R3: promote the interests of care-experienced children and young people

- 3.4.1. During Care-experienced week (25-29 October 2021), we delivered a programme of all-staff online learning sessions, which included topics on education and employment, *The Promise* and mentoring. We considered the links between experiences of care and educational outcomes, the challenges of seeking and securing employment, and the support that can make a difference. We also discussed the benefits of mentoring for care-experienced young people.



### A programme of lunchtime learning starting 25<sup>th</sup> October

- 3.4.2. Despite limitations due to the pandemic, we worked with the 'Who Cares? Scotland' team to signpost and promote our existing educational materials. We provided guest speaker input on trauma-informed practice and this was warmly received.

### 3.5. R4: provide care-experienced children and young people with opportunities to promote their wellbeing

- 3.5.1. In July 2021, we published a staff video on volunteering as a mentor to care-experienced young people. This highlighted the role of a volunteer, what it involves and how it helps a young person.



#### Staff Video: Volunteering as a mentor to care-experienced young people

Claire Cameron, Principal Lead with the Healthcare Science team talks about her volunteer work with a Scottish charity that helps disadvantaged young people.

### 3.6. R5: help care-experienced children and young people to access our opportunities, services and support

- 3.6.1. In support of promoting the care-experienced voice, 'Who Cares? Scotland' took part in a national workshop on employability. They have also contributed to our Employability and Apprenticeships Action Group to review current recruitment processes, providing expert input and constructive feedback.

### 3.7. R6: improve the way our Corporate Parenting function is delivered

- 3.7.1. In April 2021 we provided the Scottish Government with an update on our 2018-2021 activities. This return was provided in the form of a completed survey (which all NHS Scotland boards, and other public sector organisations, were asked to complete).
- 3.7.2. In March 2022, we appointed our first Director of Social Care, which amongst other activities, allowed us to plan developments with *The Promise*.
- 3.7.3. We continued to attend training sessions offered by 'Who Cares? Scotland' to help keep up to date with the Corporate Parenting agenda and to share experiences with other groups.

## 4. NES activities – 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

### 4.1. Introduction

- 4.1.1. This section of the report presents our Corporate Parenting activities delivered during 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. This is part of the third three-year reporting cycle since the implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 in 2015.
- 4.1.2. Our activities are aligned with the six responsibilities of Corporate Parents. However, it is once again acknowledged that activities may span across more than one category.

### 4.2. R1: being alert to the wellbeing of care-experienced children and young people

- 4.2.1. We proactively raised awareness of children and young people's wellbeing through educational activities. For example, we collaborated with Education Scotland to promote [inter-professional learning on children's rights](#) and health and wellbeing in school communities. Through a children's rights lens, educational sessions explored the context of health and wellbeing for children and young people. A variety of evidence, including the resources and actions within *The Promise*, 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), was used to inform this work.



- 4.2.2. We delivered a series of webinars for the school nursing workforce, which included sessions on children's rights through the UNCRC and GIRFEC, inclusive of awareness on wellbeing indicators.
- 4.2.3. We fostered links with a professional panel to help develop a skills and knowledge framework for the UNCRC implementation. Led by a collective of third sector organisations, the project included a children and families panel to ensure that resources are co-designed. This partnership work contributed to an increased understanding of the wellbeing of children and young people, including children and young people who have been care-experienced.
- 4.2.4. We continue to explore partnerships with the third sector and other colleagues and organisations to ensure that the voices and experiences of children and young people are integral to our work. This will be actioned through the NES Women, Children, Young People and Families group.


- 4.2.5. As part of the performance enhancement review process with Higher Education providers of school nursing education, the care-experienced children and young people cohort has been a priority area. The way in which learning is incorporated into the school nursing curriculum has provided evidence for these reviews, where significant enhancements have been noted during the past two years. As a result, we have promoted examples of good practice of local projects with national interest – which contribute to the wellbeing of children and young people in Scotland.
- 4.2.6. To support the best outcomes for babies, children and young people, and alternative caregivers (adoptive, fostering, kinship, residential care and guardians) who provide parental care, we were commissioned by the Scottish Government to complete an evidence review. This will inform planning, on a national approach to provision of training on the impact of trauma, for alternative caregivers.
- 4.2.7. We continue to engage with key partners, including the Office of the Chief Social Worker, Social Work Scotland, and the Children’s Hearing System. We have been building bi-directional relationships with ‘Who Cares? Scotland’, which has supported the development of our trauma skilled practice resource: trauma in children and young people. Our Trauma Team has also offered ‘Who Cares? Scotland’ places in the Scottish Trauma-Informed Leaders Training (STILT), with follow up specialist coaching (by a Principal Educator who provides specific care-experienced leadership in the team). The training team also prioritised the development and delivery of training for trainers, to sustain high-volume delivery and implementation going forward.
- 4.2.8. One of our training teams focussed on the priority groups identified by the Children, Young People and Families Collective leadership group. These priority groups include the Children’s Hearing System, Health Visitors, Looked After and Accommodated Children, school nurses, and secure care settings. In 2022-2023, the 500 training places offered for the trauma skilled ‘Transforming Connections’ course (including follow-up coaching) were highly sought after by the services. The course was adapted for the workforce delivering services for care-experienced individuals, with excellent feedback received from participants. Attendance was 91% of places offered because of service pressures leading to some short notice cancellations and withdrawals.
- 4.2.9. Although our [Multi-Systemic Therapy \(MST\) work](#) is more related to preventing family breakdown and from young people becoming care-experienced in the first place, there are some points that may be relevant to the care-experienced cohort. Fife Council has worked on a ‘Home to Fife’ approach, which sought to bring Fife Children and Young People in care out-with the area, back into the Local Authority. MST has been an integral part of this policy, and as part of reunification plans, a number of children and young people have returned to the care of their families. One of our consultants has been part of the discussions with the Professional Social Work Advisor for Trauma (Office of the Chief Social Worker, Scottish Government) to increase awareness of MST; including discussions about our existing infrastructure.
- 4.2.10. From the perspectives of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the [Enhanced Psychological Practice \(EPP\)](#) programme, we continue to reflect on the experiences of care-experienced children and young people in our education and training offerings. Examples include:
- The Knowledge and Skills Framework for Children and Young People Mental Health and Wellbeing.
  - Essential CAMHS modules one to three, which are open to the entire children and young people workforce. Themes about care-experienced children and young people are included throughout the learning resources; as information, as well as reflective exercises.

- The learning module 'CAMHS: Introduction to working with children and young people who have experienced trauma' includes a case study that involves a care-experienced young person.
- As part of the EPP children and young people programme, Module one – Context and Values – explicitly discusses care-experienced children and young people.

4.2.11. Whilst not specifically targeted to those working with care-experienced families, our [Perinatal and Infant Mental Health \(IMH\)](#) offerings are still relevant for such families (including foster parents, adoptive parents and birth parents), as they involve attachment and relationship-focussed approaches. These education and training resources aim to improve the parent-child relationship and support the emotional, social and behavioural development of children. They are early intervention and prevention approaches to strengthen families and help parents raise their children in ways that are known to optimise child development and family relationships.

4.2.12. We continue to promote our existing psychology resources to relevant workforces. Although not targeted specifically to the workforce supporting those care-experienced, they remain relevant to those working with care-experienced families:


- The [Psychology of Parenting Programme \(PoPP\)](#): this involves evidence-based parenting interventions for children aged 3-12 years, where there are concerns about their emotional, social and behavioural development (which are more likely to be elevated in care-experienced children), as well as potentially for typically developing teenagers.
- Solihull Approach Foundation Level training: this aims to help parents understand their child's behaviour in the context of their development and the parent-child relationship. It focuses on developing nurturing and supportive relationships between children and their carer by promoting reflective, sensitive and effective parenting.
- Connecting with Parent's Motivations: this is a strength-based communication skills training system for professionals, to help engage families into evidence-based parent-child relationship focussed interventions.
- [Early Intervention Framework](#): this database of evidence-based early intervention and prevention approaches to supporting children's mental health and wellbeing is appropriate for care-experienced children and their families.



Education for Scotland

Search Interventions

### Early Intervention Framework for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing



Children's mental health and wellbeing is rooted in their relationships with those most significant to them, both at home and in their wider world. Relationships shape children's experience of emotional safety and their resilience as they move through times of adversity. However, additional early support may be needed for their mental health and wellbeing. Children and families need the right help at the right time. The Early Intervention Framework provides a database of evidence-based prevention and early intervention approaches designed to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. This

- We fund training in Psychology Skills' programmes for staff across agencies (including health, social care, education and the third sector) to promote psychologically informed practices and interventions to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.
  - [Early interventions for children and young people with elevated levels of distress.](#)
  - [Supporting children and young people who have long-term health conditions.](#)
- We worked with the Children's Hearing System (CHS) to develop a trauma-informed training and implementation package for staff and volunteers.
- We worked with the 'Looked-After and Accommodated Children (LAAC) Nurse' and supported the dissemination of trauma training in school nurses and Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAHMS). Other work included secure care and kinship carers (coordinated via the Kinship Collaborative).

4.2.13. Our 'Transforming Connections' Trauma skilled training for the workforce supporting care-experienced children and young people, was delivered to 456 staff. In total, 18 participants completed a train the trainer event in 2022-2023.

4.2.14. As part of our work with the NHS Scotland Youth Academy, we worked with partners in Grampian to develop a project to give young people the opportunity to understand the roles, careers, and pathways into health and social care jobs. Partners included Grampian colleges and universities, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils, the Scottish Funding Council, Skills Development Scotland, the Digital Health & Care Innovation Centre (DHI Scotland), and the Wood Foundation.

4.2.15. We attended and supported an event on unpaid carers. This enabled contact with the Shared Care Scotland Chief Executive, Coalition of Carers in Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, and representatives from Carers Trust Scotland and others. Since the event we have continued to strengthen partnership working with carer organisations (see 5.2.6 for further developments in 2023-2024). Our working arrangements included the development of a learning resource on 'short breaks' (developed with input from Shared Care Scotland and Healthcare Improvement Scotland). We also scoped and planned a community of practice with Shared Care Scotland and the Carers Trust Scotland. To mark Carers' Rights day, we planned a young carers online seminar.

4.2.16. We met with a Virtual School Team at Stirling Council to explore potential collaborative working arrangements on improving attainment through employer interventions. Work is underway with Heriot Watt University to explore potential funding for a joint research project, to ensure maximum learning from any pilot initiative. There are clear links between educational participation and children's wellbeing so any exploratory work to address inequalities in educational outcomes would provide a positive impact in this area.

### **4.3. R2: assess the needs of care-experienced children and young people for the services and support we provide**

4.3.1. We planned a digital resource to support the school nursing pathway implementation. The aim behind this was to support the refreshed role of the school nurse in Scotland, and the service they provide to care-experienced children and young people.

4.3.2. Work was underway to develop an Equality Impact Assessment for a project commissioned by the Scottish Government for the Centre for Workforce Supply to support international recruitment into adult social care. This assessment reflected that children of international recruits may apply to join their parents.



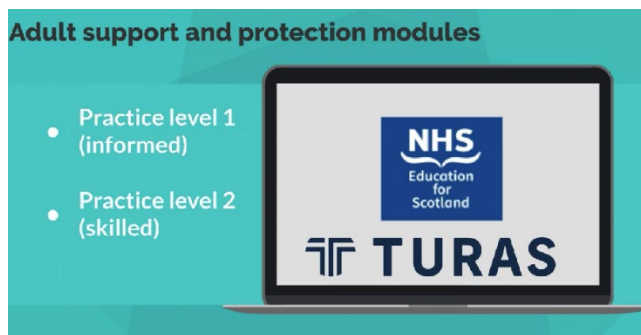
- 4.3.3. Our Director of Social Care is a member of the Women, Children, Young People and Families workstream and through the group, has input to work on *The Promise*, and adult and child protection learning resources (including work with the Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS)).
- 4.3.4. Our Director of Social Care established an internal group on Health and Social inequalities. This group was convened to explore how we can support the delivery of the recommendations from the National Primary Care Health Inequalities development group led by the Scottish Government. The group will also identify other work which considers the impact of health inequalities in people with protected characteristics, including those care-experienced children and young people.

#### 4.4. R3: promote the interests of care-experienced children and young people

- 4.4.1. As part of our work with *The Promise* and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Task and Finish Group, we produced a ['sway' resource](#), which summarised our mental health and wellbeing professional learning and training resources relevant to the workforce supporting infants, children, and care-experienced young people, as well as their families, carers, and supporters.
- 4.4.2. We continue to promote the [trauma skilled e-module](#) resource, which was designed specifically with care-experienced children and young people in mind, as well as the ['Sowing Seeds'](#) animation, to the children's workforce and other relevant networks.
- 4.4.3. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are included in our maternity 'pathfinder' project to embed trauma informed care into maternity services. The project focus includes screening/routine enquiry on ACEs and traumatic events and the impact on psychological trauma. The project is informed by focus groups, voices of those with lived experience and workforce development activities. The project outcomes will influence national delivery and service delivery models, in addition to workforce education and embedding feedback to integrate lived experience. We recognise the needs of individuals and families accessing maternity services who have been care-experienced or may have child protection plans in place for their new-born baby.
- 4.4.4. During Learning at Work week (May 2022), we delivered an online seminar to raise awareness of the 'Each and Every Child' initiative. This initiative aims to reframe and promote a new, more positive narrative when discussing care experience.
- 4.4.5. Once again, we contributed to Care-experienced week, which was held between 24 and 28 October 2022. We held a series of all-staff online learning sessions, which included a children's rights approach at work, the role of a mentor, humanity and leadership, and trauma skilled practice for the workforce supporting care-experienced children and young people.



- 4.4.6. We led the development and publication of [e-Learning modules](#) on child protection, and adult support and protection (available at informed and skilled levels). The e-Learning modules are reflective of national guidance to support the workforce to recognise their responsibilities in relation to public protection – integrating adverse childhood experiences, children’s rights, human rights and trauma informed practice.



#### 4.5. R4: provide care-experienced children and young people with opportunities to promote their wellbeing

- 4.5.1. Our Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is an intensive home visiting programme for young first-time parents. In Scotland, over a fifth (22%) of FNP clients are care-experienced or on the child protection register, and FNP education recognises the client’s life course in their transition to parenthood.
- 4.5.2. The three goals of the FNP are to improve:
- Pregnancy and birth outcomes through improved prenatal health behaviours.
  - Child health and development through positive, responsive caregiving.
  - The economic self-sufficiency of the family.
- 4.5.3. In May 2022, we reviewed linkages between our FNP work and Corporate Parenting commitment four (to provide care-experienced children and young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing). Demographic data highlight that most FNP clients in Scotland experience inequalities in health, wellbeing, education and work opportunities. Working from a strength-based perspective enables the family nurse to explore the client’s vision for their future and to plan small steps of change. The family nurse works on the premise that the client is an expert in their own life.

- 4.5.4. Our FNP team periodically undertakes accompanied home visits, in collaboration with NHS board partners, to maintain clinical currency and connection with clients. Feedback from clients is integrated in a variety of ways, such as bringing the client's/partner's voice into the 'classroom' during breastfeeding education and involving fathers in FNP.
- 4.5.5. In March 2023, we initiated planning for a trauma skilled 'training for trainers' resource.

#### **4.6. R5: help care-experienced children and young people to access our opportunities, services and support**

- 4.6.1. Although we do not work directly with children, we upskill and educate the workforce who do. For example, we discussed arrangements around apprenticeship policy and procedures, and how hiring managers should be aware of any enhanced funding available for the training of care-experienced apprenticeships up to the age of 25 (as a priority group).

#### **4.7. R6: improve the way our Corporate Parenting function is delivered**

- 4.7.1. In June 2022, we delivered a 'Hot Topics' Strategic Discussion to the then NES Extended Executive Team. Following this discussion, it was agreed to embed Corporate Parenting/care experience in the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process and to liaise with the NES Board regarding any needs for additional training. The EQIA template was updated in March 2023 (and finalised during 2023-2024).
- 4.7.2. In August 2022, a short Corporate Parenting survey was distributed to staff and other interested stakeholders. It sought to review current knowledge/awareness of the Corporate Parenting agenda, current activities underway, and potential activities to support the work.
- 4.7.3. In August 2022, we discussed Corporate Parenting with our Board (at a Board Development Session). This included what it meant being care-experienced, what Corporate Parenting is about, and what we are doing towards our Corporate Parenting responsibilities.
- 4.7.4. In November 2022, we updated our Executive Team on our Corporate Parenting activities and shared a draft three-year action plan. This high-level action plan was subsequently shared with the Scottish Government.
- 4.7.5. From January 2023, a new committee meeting template was implemented. This included a section on how we meet our Corporate Parenting responsibilities (including meeting the needs of care-experienced children and young people).
- 4.7.6. We continue to link in with the Equality and Human Rights Steering Group (EHRSG) (formerly the Person-Centred Care, Participation, and Equality & Diversity Leads Network (PEDLN) group). In January 2023, we updated the EHRSG on Corporate Parenting activities and commenced a NES-wide overview of work undertaken.
- 4.7.7. During 2022-2023 our new draft Strategy 2023-2026 was developed, which outlined our commitment to *The Promise* and our responsibilities as a Corporate Parent (this Strategy was finalised in May 2023).

## 5. NES activities – 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

### 5.1. Introduction

- 5.1.1. This section of the report presents our Corporate Parenting activities delivered during 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. This is part of the third three-year reporting cycle since the implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 in 2015.
- 5.1.2. Our activities are aligned with the six responsibilities of Corporate Parents. However, once again, activities do span across the categories.

### 5.2. R1: being alert to the wellbeing of care-experienced children and young people

- 5.2.1. We continued to proactively raise awareness of children and young people's wellbeing through a range of educational activities and resources. Throughout 2023-2024, this included alignment with key policy commitments such as *The Promise*, 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC), and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We have continued to engage and work with a range of partner organisations to remain alert to the wellbeing of care-experienced children and young people. This included partnerships with the third sector, and other colleagues, to ensure that the voices and experiences of children and young people are included in our work.
- 5.2.2. In recognition of the increased likelihood that care-experienced children and young people's early experiences may be more likely to have been characterised by adversity and trauma, the Scottish Government commissioned our National Trauma Transformation Programme (NTTP) to complete a literature review to explore the evidence around trauma-informed and trauma-responsive education, training and support for alternative caregivers of children and young people. This was designed to support an evidence-based perspective from which planning for support for alternative caregivers – aligned to the principles of *The Promise* – could be informed. The paper summarises key findings, following a review of the literature, and was augmented by a national stakeholder survey. As part of this evidence review and the ongoing training priority of the workforce supporting care-experienced children and young people, a range of key stakeholders were involved. Representation included:
- Adoption and Fostering Alliance (AFKA).
  - The Kinship Care Advice Service for Scotland (KCASS).
  - The Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS).
  - Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (STAF).
  - 'Who Cares? Scotland'.
  - The Care Inspectorate.
  - The Promise Scotland.
  - The Fostering Network Scotland.
  - Scottish Borders Foster Carer Service Development Group.
  - SWS Community Placement Subgroup.
  - Scottish Government – National Trauma Transformation Programme (NTTP).
  - Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser (OCSWA) and Carer's Policy Team.
  - Improvement Service (IS).

- 5.2.3. Through a 'Pathfinders' project, we continue to support NHS Scotland boards to embed trauma informed care in maternity services. During 2023-2024, specific actions have recognised the importance of more specific learning on trauma-informed care, where a child requires to be accommodated, which supported connections with the 'Supporting Birth Parent Project' in Grampian. The commitments to *The Promise* are at the heart of this project and included 'hearing' the voices of parents who have (or previously had) a child in care. In addition, we are in contact with academic colleagues at the University of Stirling who have interest in learning from our work to include in their undergraduate social work education. We will also have the opportunity to learn from their current research 'Permanently Progressing?', focused on care-experienced children and their families in Scotland. We have regular contact with lead Midwives for education and are supporting their work towards embedding skilled level trauma education within their curricula. Our [webinar series](#), targeted towards the workforce in women, children, young people and family services, continues to evolve and develop.
- 5.2.4. In designing and delivering regional learning events for school nurses and health visitors, we were supported by a range of partner organisations, including Children's Hearings Scotland (CHA) and Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), where learning offered was inclusive of the voice and experience of children and young people. NHS Scotland colleagues also shared their own examples from practice and these resources have since been shared more widely. Examples from the shared learning included different methods to promote engagement and participation with children and young people; looked-after child health assessment tools; developing tools to promote health colleagues to consider what they write about children and young people in records and child's planning reviews.
- 5.2.5. We connected with '[Each and Every Child](#)' to support their aim to shift public attitudes towards care experience and the care 'system' in Scotland. (An online seminar was presented in May 2024, which was open to anyone who works with or supports babies, children, young people, and families with experience of the care system.)
- 5.2.6. In partnership with Shared Care Scotland, Carers Trust Scotland, Coalition of Carers in Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, and Carers Scotland, we hosted, attended and supported in-person and virtual learning events on unpaid carers. We were invited to the Young Carers Festival (funded by the Scottish Government and organised by Carers Trust Scotland) where young carers subsequently told us (on 08 August 2024) about their experiences with health and social care, what they hope could be improved, and how they can engage with us on what we hope to achieve for young carers.
- 5.2.7. As part of our NHS Scotland Academy projects, we worked with 'MCR Pathways' and the Prince's Trust:
- MCR Pathways support young people who can be either care-experienced or those considered by the schools to be on the 'edges of care or vulnerable'. The latter include those in informal kinship care, experiencing family bereavement, young carers, asylum seekers or refugees, living in families with the addiction issues, with a family member in prison, or on cusp of social work intervention.
  - The Prince's Trust helps young people from 'disadvantaged' communities, and those facing the greatest adversity, by supporting them to build the confidence and skills to live, learn and earn.

- 5.2.8. Our 'Transforming Connections' Trauma skilled training for the workforce supporting care-experienced children and young people, continued to be delivered across relevant partner organisations (from those originally identified as priority, to new stakeholder groups). These included the Children's Hearing System (CHS), Health Visitors and Looked After and Accommodated Children nurses. Training was also delivered to the Care Inspectorate and 'Who Cares? Scotland', and there is ongoing planning and discussions with the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) and *The Promise* team, in anticipation of offering training dates. Two further multi-agency days were offered, bringing together professionals working across the sector. A virtual training day was offered, with acknowledgement that the training should be accessible to colleagues nationally to offer and deliver *Transforming Connections* in more rural areas across Scotland; one such example included training to practitioners based within Highland, the Western Isles, and NHS and Local Authority staff.
- 5.2.9. During 2023-2024, 223 members of the workforce delivering services with care-experienced children and young people were offered the *Transforming Connections* package. In total, 164 professionals received the training. A further 12 participants attended the 'Train the Trainer' and have either been delivering the package independently or in collaboration with NES within their own organisations. Although team capacity was reduced in 2023-2024 (alongside similar participation issues experienced the previous year), more online training was made available. In addition, a network of local trainers was developed to continue and extend our reach.
- 5.2.10. In collaboration with the Scottish Government and other key partners – including Education Scotland, Early Years Scotland and the Scottish Social Services Council – we developed a new [Mental Health and Wellbeing Learning Resource for Early Years' Professionals](#) (as part of the work of the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Joint Delivery Board). The resource is for all early years' professionals and brings together helpful resources for roles supporting babies, infants and young children's mental health and wellbeing.

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## Helpful Resources

Helpful Resources

### Helpful Resources

**Mental Health & Wellbeing Learning Resource for Early Years Professionals** – This resource is for people who work with babies, infants and young children and help support their mental health and wellbeing. Click on the image below to find out more:

Mental Health & Wellbeing  
Learning Resource for Early  
Years Professionals

Early Years Scotland | Education Scotland | NHS Forth Valley | Scottish Government | Scottish Social Services Council

- 5.2.11. Throughout 2023-2024, we made the resource on 'Understanding your own trauma' available across the Solihull online approach. Whilst this is not specifically targeted towards the care-experienced families, review of its content would support its relevance and helpfulness with these families.
- 5.2.12. Throughout 2023-2024 we provided new Infant Mental Health (IMH) training – Child-Parent Psychotherapy – to a cohort of practitioners. The aim was to upskill practitioners to identify and work with families where there is increased risk of relational breakdown and where the possibilities of being on the fringes of care apply.
- 5.2.13. We have continued to update the [Early Intervention Framework](#) database and continue to welcome nominations for new interventions to be included in the resource.
- 5.2.14. We continue to support Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services' (CAMHS) workers to undertake family therapy training – from Foundation to Master's level. Systemic and Family Therapists work with a range of families, including those care-experienced. The approach encourages reflection on relationships, attachments, communication patterns, and the underlying beliefs that give meaning to people's actions and interactions.
- 5.2.15. In summary, we continue to reflect on the experiences of care-experienced children and young people through our ongoing education and training offerings.

### **5.3. R2: assess the needs of care-experienced children and young people for the services and support we provide**

- 5.3.1. We continue to reflect on opportunities to update the Equality Impact Assessment process and how care-experienced children and young people could be considered when commissioning technology services. We also started refreshing our EQIAs so that they will be inclusive of children's rights and wellbeing.

### **5.4. R3: promote the interests of care-experienced children and young people**

- 5.4.1. We continued to promote our wide range of educational and training resources to the workforce supporting care-experienced children and young people.
- 5.4.2. Aimed at dental nurses and dental health support worker practitioners, our national 'ChildSmile' qualification aims to improve children's oral health and reduce oral health inequalities. There is a strong focus on raising awareness of responsibilities in relation to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 'Getting it Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC), safeguarding, and the requirement to follow child protection procedures if there are any concerns over a child's health and wellbeing.
- 5.4.3. All our staff were mandated to complete the informed level of child and adult protection e-Learning modules (as 'essential learning'). As of 13 August 2024, 84% (889) of our core staff completed the adult support and protection e-Learning module (with 16% (167) yet to complete). For the child protection e-Learning module, compliance was 83% (880) completed and 17% (176) yet to complete (as of 13 August 2024).

- 5.4.4. Once again, we took part in the annual Care-experienced week, which was held between 23 and 27 October 2023. We hosted the following four learning sessions for our staff:
- The value of mentoring.
  - Creative ways to include voice in our work.
  - The importance of language.
  - The importance of the Health and Social care service in implementing *The Promise*.

## **5.5. R4: provide care-experienced children and young people with opportunities to promote their wellbeing**

- 5.5.1. We launched our Equal Partners in Care e-learning modules and resources in January 2024, featuring co-designed materials created in collaboration with young carers and Carers Trust Scotland.
- 5.5.2. Commissioned by the Scottish Government, we worked with – and provided support to – NHS Scotland health boards in relation to their duties towards the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024. Part of this work has involved collaboration with other partners, including Children in Scotland, the Scottish Youth Parliament, ‘Starcatchers’, and Early Years Scotland, to provide [learning sessions](#) across the scope of children’s rights.
- 5.5.3. We initiated the development of informed and skilled-level modules focused on ‘Getting it Right for Every Child’ (GIRFEC). These modules will be published in summer 2024, and are being developed with partners in other sectors, including Police Scotland, Education Scotland, Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Scottish Government. This is a partnership approach to learning development, which is inclusive of the voices of children and young people, with a wide-ranging target audience across the multi-professional workforce.
- 5.5.4. Within the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) curricular content, we are now using [‘Voice of the Infant: Best Practice Guidelines and Infant Pledge’](#) to support and improve sensitive and responsive parenting, in order to promote and positively impact on wellbeing.
- 5.5.5. We continue to deliver learning and education resources for the workforce that supports care-experienced children and young people.

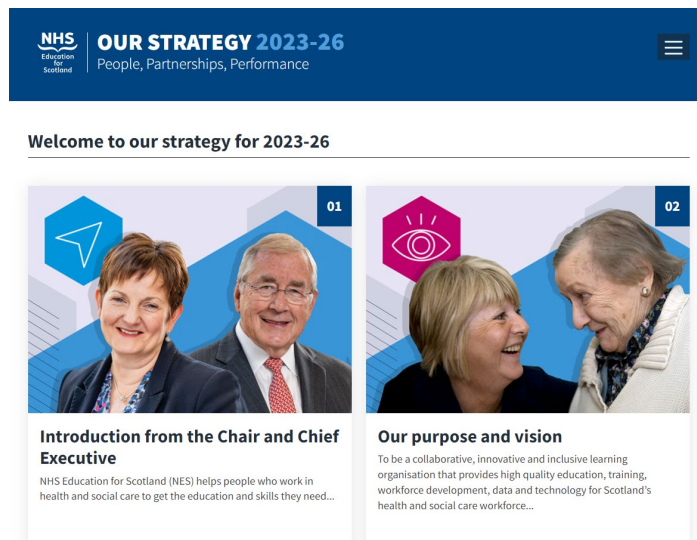
## **5.6. R5: help care-experienced children and young people to access our opportunities, services and support**

- 5.6.1. As an organisation, we do not work directly with children. However, we continue to support the workforce who do, through our ongoing education and training resources.



## 5.7. R6: improve the way our Corporate Parenting function is delivered

- 5.7.1. In May 2023, we published our new corporate [Strategy: People, Partnerships and Performance](#), which included our commitment to support care-experienced children and young people (with our role as a Corporate Parent).



- 5.7.2. Following earlier consultation (during 2022-2023), our EQIA process was finalised to include information on our role of supporting care-experienced children and young people.
- 5.7.3. All our staff are now required to complete the informed level of child and adult protection training (as part of the suite of 'essential learning').
- 5.7.4. In support of our Corporate Parenting activities, we continued to work with the NES Women, Children, Young People and Families (NES WCYPF) group and the NES Equality and Human Rights Steering Group (EHRSG).
- 5.7.5. We continued to plan for the responsibilities arising from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- 5.7.6. We continued working on the development of an 'Involving People and Communities Framework'. The aim behind this is to provide a range of suggested approaches on how best to 'involve people', as well as a decision-making tool to help our staff identify the most appropriate approach for their piece of work. This work is part of the wider Learning and Education Quality Systems project.
- 5.7.7. We continue to reflect on our opportunity and responsibility to shape and influence the lives of care-experienced children and young people. We look forward to continue working with our extensive range of partners and stakeholders in this area.

Nancy El-Faragy  
 NHS Education for Scotland  
*A skilled and sustainable workforce for a healthier Scotland*

Friday 30 August 2024

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