**Corporate Parenting Plan 2024-2027**

**sport**scotland

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## Chief Executive’s Foreword

I am delighted to introduce our 2024-27 Corporate Parenting plan. This sets out how we intend to support the needs of Care Experienced young people taking part in sport in Scotland.

We are clear that our duties as a Corporate Parent contribute to our overall vision of an active Scotland, where everyone benefits from sport. Our duties fundamentally support our commitment to inclusion underpinning everything we do.

Our commitment to inclusion means we want you, Scotland’s Care Experienced young people, to feel welcome and involved in sport. It means we value you as individuals, giving you the same access and opportunities as everyone else. It also means we want to remove any discrimination or barriers to involvement you may encounter.

While we have made progress in our last two plans, we recognise there is more we can do. I hope the actions detailed in this plan, demonstrate how we can support Care Experienced young people across Scotland to benefit from sport.

Forbes Dunlop, Chief Executive, **sport**scotland

# About sportscotland

You might not know us, but we are the national agency for sport. Our vision is for an active Scotland where everyone benefits from sport. We do this by helping the people of Scotland get the most from the sporting system.

We work with partners across the country who deliver sport and physical activity opportunities. This could be in a school, club, community or performance-sport setting. We want to make sure everyone can take part in and get the most from these opportunities.

We became a proud Corporate Parent in 2015 and since then have worked to improve the lives of Care Experienced young people in sport. You can read more about what we do and our previous progress at:

[Corporate Parenting - sportscotland the national agency for sport (sportscotland.org.uk)](https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/corporate-parenting)

[Sport for Life and our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (sportscotland.org.uk)](https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/).

# What is Corporate Parenting?

A Corporate Parent is an organisation or person who has special responsibilities to Care Experienced young people. A Corporate Parent must work to:

1. uphold Care Experienced young peoples’ rights,
2. safeguard their wellbeing,
3. promote their physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational development.

As a Corporate Parent, **sport**scotland should understand and respond to your needs as any parent should. We should do as much as we can to make sure you feel in control of your life and able to overcome any barriers you face. We have outlined the six duties[[1]](#footnote-2) that Corporate Parents must meet in figure one below:

**Figure one: Corporate Parenting Duties**

A diagram of the 6 corporate parenting statutory duties:
1. be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of an eligible child or young person.   
2. assess the needs of eligible child or young people for services and support we provide. 
3. promote the interests of eligible children and young people. 
4. seek to provide eligible children and young people with opportunities  to participate in sporting activities designed to promote their wellbeing. 
5. take  appropriate action to help those children and young people  access those opportunities. 
6. continually review our approach to corporate parenting and seek ways to improve wherever possible.  

We must also publish detailed Corporate Parenting plans and progress reports, collaborate with other Corporate Parents, and follow direction from Scottish Ministers.

## Defining Care Experience

We know there are legal definitions for the terms ‘looked-after’ and ‘care-leaver’[[2]](#footnote-3). Throughout this plan we will use the term ‘Care Experienced’. We have heard that this is more inclusive language which many in the Care Experienced community prefer as it speaks to the diverse range of experiences and the lifelong impact of Care Experience. This term can mean those looked after at home, or away from home in kinship, foster, residential or secure care.

## The Promise

This is a picture of the logo for The Promise Scotland. 
 *‘Scotland has made a promise to every child and young person: that you should grow up being safe, loved and respected. What that means is that you and your family should get the support you need, when it's needed. It also means you should be supported, cared for and loved if it turns out you have to live elsewhere. It's a promise that care experienced children and young people deserve to have kept, just like everyone else.*’ [[3]](#footnote-4)

Work to #KeepThePromise between 2021 and 2030 will be shaped by a series of three plans. These each last for three years and outline the priorities and action across that period. At **sport**scotland we are committed in our role to #KeepThePromise will continue to align the actions in our Corporate Parenting plan to the priorities in that period.

You can find out more about the work of The Promise by visiting <https://thepromise.scot/>

## Children’s Rights

The United Nations Children’s Rights Charter (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that covers all aspects of children’s lives. It encompasses civil, political, economic and cultural rights.

The foreword of the UNCRC highlights the importance of: “*recognising that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding[[4]](#footnote-5).”*

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill was unanimously passed by the Scottish Parliament in December 2023, which means that after the completion of all procedures the UNCRC will become part of Scottish law.

As a public body, we play a role in supporting the Scottish Government to embed children’s rights and wellbeing. As a Corporate Parent, we must ensure our everyday decisions are grounded in these rights.

# Why being a Corporate Parent is important to us

***Never underestimate the value of sporting opportunities to care experienced young people – they can be life changing***

– Ian, Care Experienced young person

As the quote above says, we know that sport and physical activity can have a positive and powerful impact on people’s lives. Being active isn’t just good for our physical health; it’s also proven to have a positive effect on our mental health and wellbeing. Sport and physical activity can help us unwind and feel more relaxed. It can be a way of making friends and social connections. It can give us energy and confidence to think clearly. It can also help us develop a stronger body and combat health issues.

Putting aside our legal duties, we want to help Care Experienced young people access these benefits. As inclusion underpins everything we do, we will continue to provide leadership to the sporting sector, to influence and drive the changes needed to address inequalities and ensure everyone can take part.

# Our progress so far

We have highlighted some examples of how we made progress in supporting Care Experienced young people, through our previous plan below:

* We worked with Who Cares? Scotland to develop and deliver a range of training to staff and partners. This helped bring to life the barriers Care Experienced young people can face to take part in sport and how we can work to reduce these.
* We undertook research to better how Care Experienced young people take part in sport as well as people in the sport sectors understanding of Care Experience: [Equality and Sport Research 2020 (sportscotland.org.uk)](https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/our-publications/archive/equality-and-sport-research-2020/#:~:text=sportscotland%20commissioned%20Counsel%20Ltd.%20to,take%20action%20to%20reduce%20inequalities.). We used shared this insight with our partners.
* We helped Active Schools teams share best practice for making Active Schools more inclusive for Care Experienced young people.
* We worked with local authority partners to host residentials for Care Experienced young people and their families at our National Training Centre Inverclyde in Largs.
* We made it easier for Care Experienced young people to access coaching qualifications.

More detailed examples can be found in our Corporate Parenting progress reports: [Corporate Parenting - sportscotland the national agency for sport in Scotland](https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/corporate-parenting/)

# Developing our new Corporate Parenting plan

We set up an internal group to develop our 2024-27 Corporate Parenting plan. Theis group had colleagues across all departments in **sport**scotland. We were also privileged to be joined by a previous member of our [Young People's Sport Panel](https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/the-young-peoples-sport-panel/), who is Care Experienced. Their input has been invaluable. We are incredibly grateful for their time and support in the development of our new plan.

As a group we reviewed progress against our previous plan to identify areas for improvement. We also developed a consultation plan to seek the opinions of Care Experienced young people, ensuring your voice was at the centre of our decision making. We also sought views from our staff, our partners, other Corporate Parents and the wider young people’s sport panel.

# Our consultation with Care Experienced young people

We consulted with some incredible Care Experienced young people in North Ayrshire and Stirling. We are extremely grateful for their warm welcome, their valuable time and for sharing their experiences with us. We hope to build on the relationships we made going forward. We are also hugely grateful to the staff and partners who helped us with our consultation.

In Stirling, we engaged with the Young People’s Champion’s Board. We initially met with the Champions Board Development Officer to ensure we could add value to their experience. To get to know the group, we initially one of their weekly meetings, taking part in pre-planned activities and sharing a meal with the young people. This allowed the Champions Board members to get to know us in their own space and decide if they wanted to continue.

We then lead a second session which was focused on sharing their experiences in sport. We were joined by a Care Experienced member of our Young People’s Sport panel. They shared some of their experiences in the sporting system as a Care Experienced person, their highlights as well as some of the challenges and barriers faced. They also discussed how they engaged in different **sport**scotland programmes. Their input was extremely valuable and generated a lot of positive discussion with the group.

In North Ayrshire, we worked closely with our partners in the local Active Schools team. They directly delivered the consultation on our behalf given their existing relationship the young people.

In both areas, we wanted to better understand if and how they take part in sport, what barriers they face and what support would help them to take part more. We have used their feedback to help shape the commitments and actions in our new plan. You can read more about the consultation responses here: (Note: link to consultation report when published on website).

# Our commitments and actions

### Commitment 1: Our staff and Board understand the needs of Care Experienced young people and our Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **We Will:** | **Business area** |
| develop the **sport**scotland Board and **sport**scotland Trust Company Board’s awareness of Care Experience and Corporate Parenting with input from a Care Experienced ambassador. | Sports development / Strategic planning |
| Develop and deliver Corporate Parenting awareness e-Learning to be available to all staff. | Human resources / Strategic planning |
| Deliver introduction to Corporate Parenting session to staff to further their understanding of **sport**scotland’s Corporate Parenting duties. | Human resources / Strategic planning |
| Deliver in-depth training to key staff to further their understanding of the needs of Care Experienced individuals and support the delivery of our Corporate Parenting action plan. | Human resources / Strategic planning (support) |
| Ensure corporate staff induction includes refreshed information on Corporate Parenting responsibilities and our Corporate Parenting plan. | Human resources |
| Use internal communication channels to:   * highlight our role as a Corporate Parent * raise awareness about the needs of Care Experienced young people and barriers they face to take part in sport * share stories of Care Experienced young people taking part in sport * raise the profile of Who Cares? Scotland campaigns. | Communications |
| Share good practice and learning from the national Corporate Parenting collaborative group, lead by Who Cares? Scotland. | Strategic planning |
| Continue to utilise our Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) process to evaluate the impact of our policy and practice on individuals who are Care Experienced. Further information on our EQIA processes can be found here: [Equality impact assessments (sportscotland.org.uk)](https://sportscotland.org.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/equality-impact-assessments/) | Strategic planning |
| Explore ways to support Care Experienced colleagues within **sport**scotland. | Human resources / Strategic planning (support) |
| Refresh our online Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) toolbox to share resources, learning and best practice on Care Experience in sport. | Strategic Planning |

### Commitment 2: Key organisations in the sports sector will understand the needs of Care Experienced young people.

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| --- | --- |
| **We Will:** | **Business area** |
| Work with key partners including Who Cares? Scotland to develop training content for coaches and deliverers on the needs of Care Experienced young people. We will promote this to partners through our learning management system. | Coaching and volunteering |
| Connect our local partners with Young Peoples’ Champions Boards. | School and community |
| Deliver training opportunities to the professional sporting workforce on the needs and barriers of Care Experienced young people. This will include:   * Active Schools * Community Sport Hub Officers * Active Campus Co-ordinators * SGB staff | Sports Development |
| Share good practice examples and learning across the national sport professional network which focus on improving opportunities for Care Experienced young people to take part in sport. | Strategic planning / School and community |
| Share and promote stories of Care Experienced young people taking part in sport to our networks through:   * OnTrack – our digital newsletter we share with partners * [Sport First](https://sportfirst.sportscotland.org.uk/) – online stories and articles from across the sporting system | Communications / Strategic planning |
| Share the learning and feedback from our consultation with Care Experienced young people with our partners. | Strategic planning |
| Ensure Care Experience is incorporated in the 2024 Equality and Sport research. Use this to determine whether further specific research is required. | Strategic planning |

### Commitment 3: Care Experienced young people will have improved access to participation, sports coaching and sports leadership opportunities.

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| --- | --- |
| **We Will:** | **Business area** |
| Continue to promote Care Experience as a priority group to receive funding for subsidised coacheducation qualifications | Coaching and volunteering |
| Engage with Champions Boards, WhoCares? Scotland and Corporate Parents to support applications from Care Experienced young people to our Young People as Leaders opportunities. | School and community |
| Provide improved participation opportunities for Care Experienced young people through local Active Schools and Community Sport Hub inclusion projects and incorporate learning and best practice. | School and community |
| Promote local sports leadership and participation opportunities to Care Experienced young people through young people’s Champions Boards. | School and community |
| Promote local Kit for All programmes to Care Experienced young people through young people’s Champions Boards. | School and community |

### Commitment 4: Care Experienced young people will have improved access to career and development opportunities in sportscotland.

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| --- | --- |
| **We Will:** | **Business area** |
| Explore employment opportunities and support that we can provide to Care Experienced young people through the work and education programme. | Human resources |
| Work with other Corporate Parents to share learning and best practice for recruiting and employing Care Experienced young people. | Human resources |
| Work with Who Cares? Scotland to support recruitment of Care Experienced young people. | Human resources |
| Establish new partnerships with the Robertson Trust and other related partners to offer internship opportunities to Care Experienced young people. | Human resources |
| Gather feedback from Care Experienced candidates on their views of our recruitment processes. | Human resources |

1. [Statutory guidance on Part 9 (Corporate Parenting) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/statutory-guidance-part-9-corporate-parenting-children-young-people-scotland/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [About the promise](https://thepromise.scot/what-is-the-promise/about) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNICEF UK](https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)