Careers by design: Ensuring the needs of care experienced learners are at the heart of Scotland's career services

Well, good morning everyone, and are very warm welcome to our second Education Forum meeting of 2022. My name is Linda O'Neill, and I'm the Education Lead at CELCIS. And it's lovely to see some of our regular forum members here. But it's also really nice to see some new members. So if this is your first meeting, we really hope that you enjoy it. And we're looking forward to getting the chance to meet with you face to face again, hopefully very soon. I'm really pleased today to be able to welcome along Pauline Stratford, who is the National Careers Information Advice and Guidance manager from Skills Development, Scotland (SDS), and Pauline is going to be talking to us today about the recent Career Review, and helping us to think about what this means for our children and young people with care experience. I'd also like to say a big thank you to Greg Hiddleston, from SDS, who isn't able to join us today. But he's been a really big part in the planning and prep for today's session. So just to acknowledge that. You will get the

chance to meet in Pauline properly soon. But I'll just ask Pauline to see a quick hello before we get started.

Hi, folks, looking forward to chatting to you today. And yet, thank you, Linda, for getting my title so very correct.

That feels like the biggest test of the morning. Thank you very much. Before we move on to today's theme, I thought it'd be helpful just to run through the agenda and cover a wee bit of housekeeping. So we're just about to have an input from Pauline about the Career Review and to help us think about why this is particularly important for care experienced children and young people. This will be followed by a wee bit of time for some question and answers before we get into some beak-out rooms to discuss some questions that Pauline and Greg have posed for us, We will then come back together to share some of the themes in the break-out rooms. And we'll aim to finish up about 11 o'clock. You'll see up in the top left hand corner that we will be recording the formal input for the session. And we'll make the videos in any of the materials that we produce available on our website. We will only be recording the main session and the question and answer. We won't be recording the break-out rooms. As you'll see, we can use our videos and turn on our Mics using this platform. But we're just asking people during the main input to keep your cameras and Mics off as it is less distracting and then please turn them on during the during the break-out room so you can take part in the in the discussion. And the chat function is also open. So as I go through the intro and Pauline does her input, please feel free to post questions or insights or reflections into that. And we'll have the chance to come to that just after Pauline's input during the Q&A session.

So just by way of introduction, I thought it would be helpful to talk a little bit about how you've chosen the recent Career Review as our theme today. We know how important it is that everyone has equity of access to fulfilling and meaningful career opportunities throughout life, but we wanted to think about what that means for care experienced children and young people. At past Education Forums we've had the chance to think together about poor school destinations for care experience children and young people. But I think the reason the Career Review and Pauline's and input will help us think about careers advice, information, guidance, and access in the context of a person's whole life journey from early years right through to post school destinations. I'm not going to talk too much about the recent reviews. We've invited Pauline along to do that. But I do think it would be helpful for us to start thinking about the contexts that care experience children and young people are loving and learning in. And we know that data is one of the tools that can help give us an insight into how children and young people experience aspects of their life and learning. And I think what is important to flag though, as that data isn't the only tool and shouldn't ever be used in isolation. Qualitative data in particular is often a snapshot of a single moment in time. And it can't ever reflect the depths and breadths and nuance of people's experience. And there's also a recognition that the data that we collect needs to improve, to help us understand more about things that really matter in a

holistic sense to people's lives. The Promise has asked the care, education and health sectors to work together to think about what data we collect and when to make sure that any data that we do collect is meaningful for children, young people and their families, but also useful in the planning and delivery of services. Crucially, I think, The Promise has said that people with care experience should be included in the process of designing any new data collection, to make sure that people's voices are at the heart of any new ways of doing this. With all that said, though, I'm going to talk about some stats, which I think can act as quite a helpful starting point for understanding how particular areas may impact cuare experienced children, young people's experiences, and access to careers, advice, information, and guidance.

Having experience of care and itself isn't a predictor of poor outcomes. But what the data does tell us is that care experience can be an additional vulnerability for children and young people, which we do need to be attuned to. The most recent pre-pandemic educational outcome indicators for looked after children, and I think those are the most robust for direct comparison, to previous year's data. So they show us that the average attendance for looked after children is 89.5%. And that's compared to 93% for all school children. So this is really helpful for helping us think about how educational content and experiences might be interrupted. Lower attendance means that children and young people won't be accessing the same amount of educational content and experiences as all children. And well 85% of all school leavers leave school with one or more qualification at level five or more, only 37% of looked after children do. And this is important because we know that most post school destinations have quite specific academic entry requirements to be considered for a place. There's also a difference in school leaving age, so 42% of looked after children who left school in 2018 and 19, where age 16 or under. And that's compared with only 12% of all school leavers. So that helps us to think about skill and experience development, because we know that the longer that people that are at school, the more time that people have to acquire and develop quite specific skills and capacities that are important for the world of work and post school learning and opportunities. And it's as important to know, I think that for some children leaving school at 16 might be the appropriate choice and helpful for their career journey. But we need to make sure that this is always the case, and that young people aren't leaving school at an earlier age for other reasons, which may in result in inhibiting their future career choices. We also know that the exclusion rate for looked after children is over five times that for all children. And that gives us an insight into not only the interrupted learning experience that some care experienced children can face, but also the wider impact on aspects like inclusion in extracurricular activities, widening participation initiatives and in making and sustaining friendships. And these are all areas that we know are really important, and the acquisition or the practising of skills that are important when formal schooling is finished. Finally, 76% of looked after children were in a positive destination, nine months after leaving school, compared to 93% of all children. So that means that there are almost 25%, that care experienced school leavers that we either don't know about in terms of their end

destinations after school, or haven't been able to sustain that initial positive destination. There is some really encouraging data and research developing in this area, though. Recent stats on the care experience bursary in higher education indicates that people in receipt of the care experience bursary may have higher initial retention rates than students that aren't in receipt of the bursary. And there's some really interesting research coming through England that shows that if care experienced students can access and sustain higher education, then those who graduate can go into more positive destinations than all other students. It is very early research though, and we do know that more is needed, but the initial phases are promising and show the importance of ensuring that people have access to post school learning opportunities. What all this does tell us though, is that there is a significant amount of complexity that care experienced children and young people and students are navigating through their life and learning journey. There's vulnerabilities in a range of areas that care experience people might face that others don't. And that makes them more at risk of missing out on opportunities that can be available to other people. So it's for that reason that I'm really glad to be welcome Pauline along today to talk about the recent Career Review, and to help us think together about what the recommendations mean for care experience people and what we can do individually in our own roles, but collectively across the sector to ensure that the recommendations are fully implemented, so that everyone has equity of access to career, education, advice, guidance and support. Just before I hand over to Pauline, I wanted to say that we know that everyone in the room has different experiences in this area and different levels of comfort discussing this theme. If you do need to step out and away for a few minutes, please feel free to do that. Please keep yourself and children, young people that you know, and we're safe, in your break-out room discussions. And if there's anything that you want to talk more about in detail after the session, then please don't hesitate to get in touch with me or the contributors. So without further ado, I will hand over to Paul. And just as everyone's mic and camera is muted during the presentation.

So Pauline, I will hand over to you.

Thanks so much, Linda. And I will just share my presentation in a way that hopefully will. Or somebody could just let me know if that's coming up. That would be ideal. Yeah, we can see it. Yeah. Excellent. Fantastic. Okay, so yeah, thank you for having me along today, I'm really pleased to be able to talk to you about the Career Review. And the final report: Careers by Design, and where we're going next with it. And I thought for particular interest today would be the approach that we took to equality, and an equality impact assessment across the review. And so we'll go through some slides here, I don't want to take up too much of the time, because what I'm really keen to hear about as well as the outcome of all the discussions and thinking about how we further consider the needs of care experienced young people and adults in the review. So just fairly quickly, Greg had asked that we have a think as well about our commitments under our corporate parenting plan in SDS. And just to remind folks of those. So thinking about that, we have

five key commitments, thinking about how we help our colleagues in SDS to build the capacity to be good corporate parents inpractice, thinking about how we continue to collaborate with our partners on the use of data and improve that, just as Linda was talking about there, thinking about how as well as an organisation that we benefit from good experienced talent by making sure we've got good sustainable progression routes through our organisation. And again, linking in with some of what we've just heard there. Improving learning and employment outcomes of care experienced young people through the provision of our services. And that's really going to be key to what we're talking about today, for ourselves in SDS as the same as everybody else. Across the career ecosystem. The next step of the career review is going to be thinking about how we take our recommendations forward. And that outcome there and that commitment for our corporate parenting plan will be informed by that. And very importantly, as well, and again, something we'll touch on later, is just making sure that the voice of care experienced young people remains at the heart of our decision making. So a lot of background and context then on the Career Review.

This started and it's been a very quick process, but it started in February 2020. Where we got Scotland's Career Strategy, and Moving Forward, and we had the opportunity to start to think about how we were going to take an approach to the Career Review. It also is informed by the young person's guarantee that no one's left behind. And then we moved into having a programme board and programme team that started to take forward the review around December 2020. And the report was published in early 2022. So it's been a very quick review, considering the scope and the size of it. Just to think then about the fact that this is really a career ecosystem that we're thinking about here. So although SDS led the Career Review, for the government, and although we are one of the key players, and you can see there from that circle, that we are by no means the only folks delivering career services across the ecosystem. So really, we are thinking there about all of your services, as well as schools, colleges, universities, charities and third sector and also thinking about where developing Scotland's young workforce comes into this as well. So when the recommendations were being developed, they were being developed for all of us. And the idea is to encourage some more consistency across what we're doing and some more cohesion there. Thinking around the drivers of change for the review as well. And there's quite a lot of things popped into this and really thought about, obviously, I think COVID-19 has been a driver of change for everything that we've been doing recently, we do know as well that it did exacerbate long standing inequality. So it's something we do have to think about. But also things like the climate emergency, thinking about the future of work in industry 4.0, thinking about sort of public finances, education reform, and also one of the really key ones there, that was front and centre in the review, was thinking about poverty, and inequality, and inequality and its widest sense rather than simply this protected characteristic under the Equality Act, it was really clear as well, in the quote on the other side of the slide there, is that it really has never been before, more important for really good quality career guidance, and support for people to

navigate these changing landscapes and have the career that will be most fulfilling for them. And that's particularly true for those of our folks that we work with, who need a bit more support, and getting to that place in their lives. So the review approach, then, I'll not go through every point on this. But really, it was around being very comprehensive, it's the most comprehensive review, I think, carried out into Scotland's Career Services for a very long time. And it was thinking really there about leadership from the programme board, and it was very much about consultation, and ensuring that the voice of individuals was at the heart of this. It's about driving meaningful change, as well, and making sure that equality was at the core of the approach, we've now got sets of recommendations, and we'll be moving into the implementation phase at this point. So really, that was where we wanted to sort of just pause as well. And think then about how we addressed inequality in phase one of this and through the consultation. Considering that this was really, as we've pointed out in the last couple of slides, something that was very pivotal to that. So thinking then, around this, I just started to give you a bit of a run through of how we approached the equality impact assessment, to the Career Review, and what came out of it.

So the equality impact assessment at this point; often these are done right at the very beginning of a process like this, and then you will find a review later on at the end. Sometimes it's something that might happen in three years time, we would review it. And obviously this was, as I mentioned, at the start a process that really was very fast paced and took place over the course of a year. To make sure - and it had very many different phases as well - So to make sure that equality was being considered at every stage of that, rather than an equality impact assessment at the beginning, we actually developed a process for doing live and agile equality impact assessments, right throughout the whole review. So at every key stage, we were in there with the programme team, and thinking about what that might mean for folks from equality groups, and how to ensure that they were being included. So this started at the very beginning with the governance and the development of the board. And there were all sorts of efforts made to make the board representative, and where any representation wasn't there, the board looked to fill that gap. And also wherever we were not able to get representation there. That was where making sure that the voices of that group, were very included in the consultation came into play. And there were times as well, where folks would go - young people - to the board and share their experiences with them so that they could understand more about their needs, and that that would help inform their thinking. The main phase of the first part of the review was the consultation and capturing the evidence. So again, a lot of work around the equality impact assessment was thinking about how to do that in the most inclusive way possible. That included reaching out to different organisations and making sure that the needs of equality groups were all being considered and that the right folks were around the table and being included in the consultations, but also thought about how to ensure that the consultations were carried out in a very inclusive way. So making sure that the needs of people in terms of the communication and their

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engagement were sorted at the start, and that the learnings from these were fed into the following stages of the consultation to make sure that the young people in those groups were able to participate as fully as everyone else. Then the final stage of this was, of course, turning what we'd found out from the consultation and from the evidence into the actual recommendations, and the final report of the review. And in terms of thinking about equality there, it was about ensuring that we did actually have a real direction and steer on equality in the Career Review report. I think sometimes in policy and things like this, we can find that equality is a paragraph somewhere or, a small amount of content. But what we really wanted for this, given that tackling poverty inequality was so central to it, was that the content and the drive in the steer for that was also central to the final report. And we'll go on to talk about how that was done. And then also thinking about representation of equality groups as well across the publication and the promotion of the final Career Review, as well. So that was a very sort of whistlestop tour through the equality impact assessment. And if folks have got any questions you can ask. That is about to go live, the final sort of account of the equality impact assessment. I would say because of the nature of it you will find, if you go looking for that on the peer review website, that actually it's the entire equality, impact assessment and review in one document. So it really takes you through how we did that, and what the outcome each stage was.

So going on, then, to think about the content in the final report, one of the key things that was included was some equality indicators. Now the idea behind these is that these will set the tone and the ethos and sort of underpin taking forward all of the recommendations in the review. And so what we wanted to do with these indicators as well (and this is true for care experience young people, as it as for all equality groups), is to remember that what we need to do is balance the support for individuals and how we can actually help them to perhaps overcome some of their own needs. But really thinking very much as well about the systemic and pervasive and persistent inequality that comes from things like discrimination, or stereotyped views of particular groups, and even sometimes just the way that our society is set up there. So what we want to do through that is to address the persistent inequalities that are rampant in our society and our services, but want to support individuals with their diverse needs, and making sure that everybody feels valued for themselves, that everybody's career choices, and opportunities and goals are equally valued. And that really we're thinking there around how people can improve their self-belief and really see the value in themselves. Thinking as well then around encouraging a culture of inclusive and fair work. And that's where as well, we want to be thinking about how we interact with all of the folks who don't have the equality factor. So what's our role, then, if we're non care experienced, and making sure that we understand how we can be more inclusive, how we can be more supportive, because I think it's really those with the privilege in these situations as well who need to think about how we change and how we are more accommodating and supportive and inclusive. And then the final one there is around valuing and recognising skills. And that's really about widening this out so

that we don't have one idea of a sort of hierarchy of achievement, but that actually, everybody's varied values and skills are all given parity of esteem, and that we understand how those can then link in to people moving on in their career. So I'd say just four key equality indicators there that sort of kicked off how we were going to think about the sort of equality across the recommendations. So then we get in to the review recommendations. And you can see here on this slide, it's fairly busy. But you can see here that we have five of the 10 recommendations mentioned here. But also, what we have is an equity statement that sits underneath each one. So thinking there around the development of a career development model is one of our recommendations. And underneath that is making sure that there is a career development model that would guide and provide a framework for all of our services and how we work together across the career ecosystem, does that in a way that is very inclusive, and does consider the needs of everyone that considers access to our services, and equity of access, and also an equitable experience for folks who are using our services. Moving on to some of the others as well, we're thinking - and I'll not go through every single one of these just now because you're going to have time in your groups to really think about these - but thinking about how we all continue to have a very person centred approach to what we're doing and working with folks. And again, that comes into the personalization of need, and everybody understanding that folks that are individuals, as Linda had mentioned earlier, having a particular equality factor doesn't necessarily mean that you will be at more risk of not progressing or that you need support. But certainly, it's about understanding all of the experiences and the circumstances and the factors relating to having inequality needs that perhaps do suggest that people need more support than others.

We really want to be thinking about community based approaches. So how do we get out there and make sure that we're involved in the community and that the services that there are for other young people? And in particular, how do we make sure that when we're talking about community, we mean, all communities? And I think that's something as well, that would be really good to hear today is how do we make sure that the care experience community, and those young folks are really front and centre of this and included in those community based approaches and services, and thinking about how we can best access those young people and where their community actually lies? Thinking then, as well, and then the final 10, again, it's thinking about exposure to fair work. So again, we need to be thinking there around what is fair work? And for folks who may have additional needs, who may be disabled or care experienced? And how do we make sure that all young people are getting equitable access to this exposure and understand what it is? I think in the end, as well, we've got a real opportunity. And when we're talking about the quality indicators earlier, to think about the fact that when we're providing career services to our young people, we're not talking just to the employees of the future, we're talking to the employers of the future. So how do we support our young people to really embed the idea of fair work into their own lives and have that as an aspiration. So that if they do go on, to build a company, that fair work and wanting to employ everybody,

regardless of the equality factors is something that they have, in their minds and in the ethos of their businesses. Thinking about digital engagement and entitlements, as well, and how we make sure that we're improving access to that. And really, as well, thinking around our data, as well, as Linda was saying, you know, we do need to remember that data is a snapshot at times, but thinking very much about how we interpret it more meaningfully, and how we have a shared understanding of that across the whole career ecosystem. So where we don't have data that we feel as reliable, how do we work together to really get that up and running and strengthening that. And in terms of the governance at the moment, of course, for the next part of the Career Review, we still have the Career Review Programme Board, we have the Career Review Programme Team and we have an equality arm to that. And we will also be having, what we're calling change maker populations in each sector. And there'll be thinking about how they take this forward. But beyond that, once folks have decided in each sector, what their service is going to look like how they're going to develop and deliver that to folks, what the vision is that there will be a coalition then sort of work over all of the career services across the ecosystem, and will really provide that direction and steer and governance. So again, in terms of the equity statement, and thinking about the equality groups, it's making sure that we learned from all of the representation we've been trying and modelling across the space of the Career Review, and making sure that the coalition is representative and that it does have the ability to sort of hear the voices of equality goups in that as well.

The final outcome into the main report. And the final report of the career review was really to be thinking about, not just equality in the whole, but actually pointing out that there are differences and key needs across different groups. So things like, in terms of additional support needs, thinking about how we support principles of good transitions, how we ensure things that are accessible for gender, it's really about actually very much thinking about gender competency, and how we make sure that folks understand the impact that gender has. Poverty - we're looking at making sure that folks have the resources that they need to survive before they start to thrive, with the career services as well. Race, we're looking there, around the systemic racism that we see and the institutionalised racism, and how we start to overcome that and tackle that in society. Sexual orientation and transgender as well, ensuring that everybody's identities have been respected. And that we can see, where the representation of that. But the one to really hone in there, on of course, for today's session, is the care experience one, and what we really wanted to highlight and have in the report, and then this next phase of implementation, was thinking about the Independent Care Review about The Promise, and really taking that ethos that it's about love and nurture and care for our care experienced young people. And it's about treating them, you know, as a parent would, and helping them to fulfil their potential. So really making sure that that was in the head and at the heart of the review to drive forward the next phase of activity. So thinking then, very briefly about the future plan for the Career review. As I said a few times, now we are moving into the implementation phase. And that means that each sector is really going to

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be thinking about how they take forward the recommendations, what that means for them, and whether that's education, universities, colleges, ourselves in SDS, and our third sector, as well. So thinking there are around what is currently working well in their services? How are they currently meeting the recommendations with what they're already doing? And where may they want to improve? And how are they going to move through a sort of development of their services into delivering a more inclusive career ecosystem for all of our individuals. So that does, of course mean that we need to continue to think about how we put the equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of the next phase. And really, what we're looking for here is to develop an approach that makes sure that all of the sectors can actually challenge inequality, and discrimination, and through the implementation of the Career Review recommendations. So we're in the midst of developing that approach at the moment. But it's looking very much like the key elements of that, and the pillars of that will be around prioritising the direction for equality. And as the implementation of the recommendations rolls out. So making sure that all that content that I've just talked you through there that was in the report, actually does end up being front and centre in the implementation of the recommendations. Still thinking about how we make sure that we've got representation of lived experience and have quality expertise throughout this next session. So thinking about who will be involved in taking this forward in terms of developing the services, where are the voices of care experienced young people, those who work with them in that, and all of the other equality groups as well. Equality impact assessments we would see as one tool there as well that we want to use. So making sure that where an equality impact assessment is required, that they're being done and providing some support and guidance to folks on doing that.

But as I say, it's one tool there. So a lot of some of things that we already know around how to make things inclusive how to support people from equality groups, we really want to be putting into a resource toolkit that will help people to get off the ground running. And rather than sometimes going back out and assessing the same things, so making use of previous equality impact assessments, there as well, and to populate that. And I guess this is a bit of a cheeky plea there as well in terms of this. But really, what we will be looking for there is that if you have any contributions to a toolkit if you have any evidence around the needs of care experienced young people, and anything about how that works in your sectors, we would be really pleased to have those contributions and to add them to the toolkit. So hopefully Linda can circulate our email addresses at the end of this. And if you've got anything to add, then we would love to have that. So I think that was really the main thread of the run through of the Career Review, I don't want to overload you with all of the content that's in it. It's a very substantial report. But we do have a Career Review site on the SDS corporate website, where you can find all of the reports, some videos to watch, that will give you a little bit of a steer on the report as well. And the review, and that's where you can find the ongoing information about where we are at the moment and how things are progressing. So Linda, I don't know how if that was nearly

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half an hour or not. But if we were to move on for the Q&A then that would be that would be grand.

That was put in bang on time. Excellent. Thank you so much. I think that is really, really interesting - my head was picking in all sorts of directions as you were talking. I think there's so much in that for everybody here, so thank you for taking us through it in a really accessible way. Because there's a lot in it. And I would urge people, I Michelle has put the link in the chat, and we'd urge people to go and have a look at the full report. It's a great read. And like I say so much to think about. So thanks very much for coming along and, and sharing that with us this morning. So we've got a really nice opportunity now if anybody's got any questions or reflections or insights. Pauline has a kindly agreed to take questions. So if anybody would like to come in, please let me know either put your hands up or are just jump in.

I will stop presenting just now and then I can see people more easily

Lorraine I'm not sure sorry, Lorraine has put something in the chat. I'm not sure if you get access to your Mic Lorraine, but you're talking about how sometimes we're talking about people and then sometimes young people would if we could centre on one in relation to the care experience community and the workarounds. Each and every child or there's Lorraine, we can see you know, lovely to see.

You too. Thank you for that. This is just something I've been toying with on my own work Pauline. So please take it as something we are working through now. So I'm Lorraine, I work for the hub for success. So we support people with care experience of all ages to get into, stay in and return to education. And I'm always toying with how we reframe our language in terms of care experienced people and The Promise. We are working with a group of students just know, there's about 24 of us and we are all care experienced. And one of the things that they've been challenging myself on is thinking about how we talk about service users and referrals, all that kind of language that we're trying to change, and try to move away from service users. Not that you've used that term in what you have done today, but how do we start thinking about we are here to serve people. If it wasn't for the people and who need us, then we wouldn't have an organisation. So how do we start thinking about moving into that space of language? Does that make sense?

It absolutely does. And actually, it's brilliant, because it has reminded me of something I forgot to mention. The whole point of the Careers Review, is that because of the young person's guarantee, it did start off really been focused very much on young people. At the moment in this next phase as well, we are doing some all age testing of the recommendations in the recognition that, having your equality factor or your need doesn't just disappear once you get to a certain age. And many of our career services, although some will be focused very much on young people, the likes of ourselves in SDS,

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universities, colleges are very much more sort of right into the adult sphere. We are an all each service in SDS. So I think at the moment, we're probably sometimes interchangeably young people and people because we're just not quite sure at the moment, what's happening with the next phase, but it will be including folks of all ages. And any advice that we can get around the likes of reframing language is again something that would be fantastic to put into a toolkit. And we ourselves are also working with the sort of each and every child and thinking about all that reframing. So anything that you have that folks are seeing or telling you please do fire over because that would be really, really helpful to give folks across the whole sector to the steer on that.

Thank you.

No problem.

Thank you for that question, Lorraine. I think in you are certainly not alone. I think most organisations at the moment are, I would say grappling rightly, with the language and the terms that you use. The Promise has set out a challenge for everybody rightly, for us to think, really intentionally, about the language that you're using to describe the work we do and the services that we provide. And I suppose a wee plug that if anybody's not heard of the Each and Every Child Initiative, on the website we can put a link in the chat to that. But please go in and have a look through, there are loads of free open access seminars about reframing. I personally have found it a useful safe space to go along and think together with other people working around this area to think about what language you use and how we use it and how we meaningfully include people in the work that we do. So thanks very much for that Lorraine. I think we've got a question from Judith Pollock?

Good morning.

Good Morning Judith.

You can call me Judy, Judith gives me the heebie jeebies. If frightens me to death, I guess I'm coming in on the back of Lorraine talking about language. I work for Harmony Education Trust, which is a residential school. And we are just now starting to extend our offer to older young people. Originally it was primary, then went up to the age of 14, and then young people had to move on. And for the first time, we are starting to keep young people on. So we are entering this whole world of older young people and careers, etc. I'm working with SDS, and who have been very, very helpful with us. And my question, or my comment, I suppose, is a little bit to do with what Lorraine was talking about, about language, and for a lot of our young people, they will not be following what we'll just call the traditional route, that somebody down at the high school down the street will be following, where young people will just naturally go through school, ends up doing their Nat4s, Nat5s, Highers etc, etc. Because exactly what you touched on Pauline about the

disruption in education for our young people they are often not quite there at the age of 16. So at 16, when some young people might go to college, they'd be better off staying here for a little while longer, you know, having that bit of care extended, and a slower transition. And the bit that I find quite interesting is that people always talk about an alternative curriculum in inverted commas, or an alternative route in inverted commas and just an alternative everything and then they are a bit old to come into college now, when they're 18, instead of 16. And so I think on the back of that, that's my plea to the whole equalities part. This isn't just care experienced, this is young people with some additional support needs or a learning issue. But for goodness sake, can we start talking about pathways and routes, and young people and stop putting this bit before it, because I don't go around saying, you know, hello, everybody. I'm Judy Pollock, and, I'm, this, this, this, this, and this or else everybody would have their head in their hands anyway. But why can they not just be a young people, and that's their pathway. And that's their story. And so I welcome this whole thrust about embedding a culture of equality. And I think we really need to do that. And I think and I hate to say this, about my own profession, having been a teacher all my life, as I do think we need to get back to the grassroots of those people for example through initial teacher training, and shift that right the way back there, so that, we all grow up in this. Everybody's just a person story. That's my rant of the morning.

I think that is a very worthwhile rant I completely agree. And I'm just wondering, have you ever seen, it is often on LinkedIn a lot, as well, and SDS kind of tries to lead it: the no wrong path. And it's really that idea that everybody has a different pathway and it can be completely unrelated to any equality factor. Somebody can just go around the houses to do different things to end up in the same place as somebody else and it's not important how you get somewhere it's important that you know where you want to get to and that you get the out of the way that's right for you. So I think rather than alternative paths, I think we just need to talk about the right path for a particular person and that's what we're really hoping that through this Career Review as well we can start to promote that.

Exactly, as Sarah Morris has put in the chat there and you're allowed to change your mind!
We've all changed our minds.

Absolutely. And that's the absolute heart of career management skills as well, is to change and grow across your career. And to start off thinking you like one thing and then realise, that actually, it's this little bit of that, that you like, and you're going to extend it out this other way. The whole idea is to not be, you know, starting a career and be in it for the next sort of well…. I mean, at this stage, I'm never going to be able to retire.

Absolutely. Right. You know, I mean, I come from a generation, whereby you did, you went off you trained, and that was your job for life, and that's very much my generation.

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But my kids who are in their 30s, I remember them as young people saying to me, Mom, we don't have to do it like that, you know, it's better to be able to be transferable. And that's right. It's about building those transferable skills. And that's probably a big part of what I've been trying to focus on, is it's not learning that to 2+4 makes 4, it's learning how 2+4 makes 4, learning how to learn, and learning how to progress is so much more important. But anyway, thank you very much. I'm delighted to see the Review and delighted with the equalities drive. Thank you.

Fantastic. Thank you.

Thank you, Judy. And I think there was a lot of love in the room, I certainly wouldn't call that a rant. And it's something that a lot of us definitely advocate for, like you were saying, that use a language and pathways and things like that. So thank you very much for that contribution. I can't see anybody else's hands up in the chat. So I think we're just about ready to go into break-out rooms now. So Pauline shall I pass back to you just to describe what you would like us to do?

Yeah, that's great.

I'll just I'll just tell you in because I think you'll have the slides in your, your own sessions. But what we're really wanting to think about, then, is that specific direction that we've given for care expedience, you know, that this really should be about love, and nurture, and focus on support, and helping people realise their full potential. What we would really like is if you were able to consider the recommendations and equity statements in your groups, and just think, what are the key things we need to think about in relation to care experience? So how do we make sure that love and nurture and corporate parenting is at the heart of all of those as we take them forward? And if folks are agreeable and happy with that, and what we would like to do as well as just take notes from what you all think, and perhaps build that into part of the resource toolkit as well. So that beyond this session, people across the sector can benefit from your thinking on that, as they start to take things forward. I think it's really, really important that we get all opportunities to get folks views on this from people as experienced as you are in this area. So if that's alright with folks, I guess the key thing is how do we get love and nurture, front and centre as we take forward these recommendations?

That's great, Pauline. Thank you. And we are going to have two groups will have 20 minutes. And those groups once we come back, it will feed back just the main themes from those groups. But if you see people in those groups furiously scribbling notes. But please don't worry, these will be anonymized, so it won't be attributable to anybody. And we won't be recording the break-out sessions either. And what we will do is we will collate all of that, make it available on our website and also give it to Pauline and Greg as well,

like they were saying, we will use the insight and feedback from folks to really bring that in as part of the toolkit in the framework.

Thank you so much to everybody. And in those break-out rooms, I think, just within the breadth of recommendations, we could have looked at all of those and quite a lot of depth for a long time. And thank you, Emma and Gemma for, for facilitating that conversation, and Michael, can I come to you to get any better feedback from your group?

Of course, I'll attempt to give some feedback. And of course, there's never enough time. So we started off by people introducing themselves and describing where we are now. And I think it was really quite exciting to hear people saying that we're in the space of change. So everyone was reflecting or the people who spoke were reflecting that they're in that space of recognising that the way we do careers is better and is changing. And some people reflecting on knowing what it was like and how it is now that we're in that space, but also an acknowledgement that we're on a journey and things need to get better. We then went in to talk about some of the bigger systems and environments needing to change and then went right down on to the individual level to think about what individual young people need and how to be bespoke. Then there was a warning that the time was going to run out. So we ended on really beginning to think about, again, I guess I want to end on this idea of participation and listening to young people. So anything that we do, we must continue to listen to young people and understand how they are experiencing what it is that is being offered to them so that we don't get caught up in ourselves, and that we're continuing to listen to them. I hope I've done justice to the conversation. Anyone else in my room want to chip in then please do. As usual, I take silence as consent, Linda.

Thank you, Michael. And I think we were very similar in our group, Jane, do you want me to go through some of the notes that I've made, and then other people in the group can mention anything that I've missed, but I think we were very similar in terms of a wide ranging the conversation was, and the richness around the details. So we started off by talking about how we ensure that we address inequalities that can exist within equality groups. So I think it was Lorraine who gave a really nice example about the inequalities that can exist for young people that are looked after. So we know that young people who are looked after their own very often don't have access to the same supports or resources as young people that are maybe in foster care or in kinship care. And then that will be similar for young people that are in foster care, may not have the same access as other groups of looked after children. So it's about ensuring that within different groups of young people that we understand, as you were saying Michael, the individuality and the nuance and the specific support needs that that exist for individual children and young people. That not viewing our looked after or our care experienced children, young people as a homogenous group. And we talked a wee bit as well about in terms of digital access, but also widening out into other support. We talked about the supports that were put down during lockdown and we need to make sure that they continue and many of them

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didn't arise due to lockdown they existed way before that. So things like access to broadband to digital devices and to digital education. And all those inequalities existed before lockdown, it's just that lockdown shone such a harsh light on them. So do we need to be thinking about not just digital support but wider support in the context of post lockdown and COVID recovery. Someone made the point about what work has been done behind the scenes with employers and corporate parents, around looking at their responsibilities towards ensuring equity for care experienced people. Some people's experiences since lockdown is that this is an area that there has not been quite as much focus on and that progress has slowed down, because of COVID. And thinking about own communications and messaging around how we communicate with people. Are our definitions clear? We had a conversation around what is the definition of fair work that was in the recommendation in the Career Review? And what do we mean by terms like, like ecosystem and our language around careers advice? How do we make sure that these are accessible and can be understood by everyone that we are intending to be able to access services. And so like I say, and you said Michael, it was such a rich discussion, and I think in the few minutes we've got, we'll never do it justice. But if Gemma or anybody else in the group, if there's anything that you want to check on that I've missed, please, please do.

No Linda, I think that was a really great recap of a really rich conversation. Thank you.

Thank you very much.

Pauline, I will come back to you just before we finish up with any final reflections on some next steps.

Thank you so much, it's been fantastic to hear from everybody and hear those discussions as well. So really looking forward to being able to use that to inform things, and I guess, the next steps is really moving into this implementation phase, firming up the approach to equality over this next time. So obviously, you know, those three things that have popped up there alongside the resource toolkit will have a lot more underneath them. So thinking about the kind of activity that we'll be doing to take that forward. And there will be some things that as a Programme Team, we're able to do and that will be done and driven around the Programme Board. And then other things, it's about scaling up and supporting each of the sectors to do that for themselves when they're taking things forward. So I guess my request would be that we put our email addresses out along with this, if folks do read the report, or if you have any reflections after today, or any ideas about how we can really make sure that the care experience community is included and represented across all the sectors and this then would love to hear your ideas, your thoughts on that. And we are always open to engaging and chatting to folks and seeing what we can do together to make things better.

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That's brilliant. Thanks very much. And we will definitely make sure that we share and your and Greg's email addresses as part of the follow up from this. And I think as well if you have anything that going forward, if there are updates to your implementation plan, updates in the Programme Board or when people can get in touch, please let us know and we can put that on our website or social media, we can get a newsletter sent out as well because I know that people who have come along today have a particular interest in this area. So in terms of next steps from CELCIS, what we will do, like we said at the start we will make the video available on our website alongside the feedback that we'll collate from the break-out rooms and the question and answer session, we will share the slides that Pauline together along with their email addresses so if people want to get in touch with Pauline and Greg please feel free to do that. And we will make sure that we update in the forum as well if there's any more developments. I just want to finish off today by saying a huge thank you to you all for coming along. We know what a busy time as for everybody. Part of that is COVID recovery, but we also know June is always exceptionally busy for anybody working in education. That's why we rushed it to try and get things finished off before the break for the summer holidays. And so I just want to reiterate a big thank you to all of you for choosing to spend some time with us this morning to talk about this area to Pauline and to Greg who was not able to be with us, a big thank you for all your prep and planning and coming along and for all these discussions. And huge thanks as well to the CELCIS team behind the scenes. Helping everything to go smoothly and to Michael and Gemma for facilitating things. The next forum meeting is due to be at the beginning of October and we'll confirm a date with you for that a wee bit nearer the time and open registration. We're always keen to hear what people think in terms of themes that they would like us to cover. So if you've got ideas about that, please feel free to get in touch with us directly and we'll always do our best to do that. Michelle, will email you a very short evaluation at the end of today's session. And we'd be really, really grateful if you would take five minutes to complete that, because it really does help us to shape the quality and the format going forward.

So if you do things yourself with five minutes would be really appreciative of that. So that's just leaves me to say again, thank you very much for coming along. It's been lovely to see you all and I hope that everybody's managing to get a wee bit of a break at some point over the summer and looking forward to seeing you again in at the start of the academic year. So take care everyone and have a lovely day.

Thanks for having us. Bye.