



Care to Achieve 2018: Long-term outcomes of looked after children – a workshop

Thursday 29th March,
10.00-15.30. St Mungo's Museum, 2 Castle Street, Glasgow GG4 0RH

Workshop Report

Presentations

There were six presentations during the day. The slides for all the presentations are available in a single PowerPoint file.

- Dr Neil Harrison of the University of the West of England spoke about [Moving on Up: Pathways of Care Leavers and Care Experienced Students into Higher Education](#).
- Sarah Young, Projects and Evaluation Officer at Become, outlined the research opportunities afforded by the [Propel](#) platform.
- Lucy Freem, Scottish Government statistician, gave an overview of [children's social work statistics](#) in Scotland.
- Nick Stansfeld and Dr Scott Montgomery of the [Scottish Funding Council](#) gave a presentation on the National Ambition for Care Experienced Students and data analysis for care experienced students in colleges and universities, 2013/14 – 2016/17.
- Lorna Caldwell and Nicola Dean of the [Student Awards Agency for Scotland](#) explained the Care Experienced Bursary and the Accommodation Grant.
- David Jack of [Skills Development Scotland](#) explained the SDS 16+ Data Hub and the Annual Participation Measure.

Discussion sessions

Discussion: responses to the question: 'What are the implications for research we might carry out in Scotland/What questions would we ask?'

- There is an opportunity to look at corporate parenting plans (and the first report to Parliament) and think about how these lead to improvements that make a difference for children and young people – what do you do and say that makes a difference for children and education?
- We could take a lead from Neil Harrison's research to begin to think about conducting a similar piece of work in Scotland. There is a need for a longitudinal study.
- Could we do a comparison between England and Scotland, mindful that these are very different systems?
- Could we look at the impact of the bursary over time? Have young people used the bursary to study outside Scotland?

- What is the impact of different support arrangements in universities and colleges? For example, relationship support and funding support. Can we look at the impact of other interventions that are happening in Scotland?
- The impact of different backgrounds and gender.
- Can we go beyond positive destinations? How successful is higher education for care experienced students in sustaining long term employment? Suggestion of linking up SDS and SAAS data.
- Look more deeply into reasons for academic dropout and the relationship between access to academic support and dropout.
- Recognition of the limitations of the Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) as an identifier – not available pre-5, not routinely collected by colleges and universities; some local authorities have low rates of recording SCN on social work records.
- How to involve children and young people in discussions about data collection and use.
- Links between health and wellbeing, and education.
- Opportunities to carry out more detailed analysis of different care pathways (in and out of care status, moves between different care setting, settled care) and the effects on aspects of education.

Discussion: Responses to the question: ‘How can we work collaboratively to get a longer view of care-experienced students in college and university in Scotland?’

- There is a tendency for national agencies to operate separately. Sharing tasks and pooling resources could help create a more comprehensive picture.
- The 32 local authorities return data to the centre. It could be helpful for information to go in the other direction. Local authorities might appreciate support to use the data. It might be useful to ask local authorities what they would like from the system.
- Each national agency has a bit of the story. Each reports at different times of the year. Would be useful to have a list of the different relevant reports. It might also be useful to have a composite report, bringing together data from the different national agencies. Perhaps CELCIS could do this?
- Useful to consider the national priorities for looked after children (and the care review is relevant) and think about what data we should collect to monitor progress.
- There may be other organisations which should be brought into the discussion, e.g. SQA and COSLA.
- A future event could include local authorities.
- Opportunity to link SAAS and SDS data.
- The eligibility for aftercare dataset held by Scottish Government could be analysed further since it has information about what young people are doing.
- There is a need to fix the problem of identifiers (SCN) which appears to be impeding work to follow up young people beyond school.
- The term ‘care experience’ is now widely used, but there is no common definition.
- Should consider a wider view of education and include data about apprenticeships (though currently these would be recorded as ‘employment’).
- There is a need to improve how disability is represented in the looked after children data.

- Opportunities to collaborate with Neil, e.g. in conducting a similar qualitative exercise on the care experienced student experience.

Possible actions

Short-term

- Create a directory of the data sets on looked after children, with information about the content, data owner, reporting cycle, publication month and web location.
- Find a solution to the particular difficulties in recording SCNs.
- Support work by SFC and Become to specify the data opportunities provided by Propel.
- Follow up with Neil Harrison his offer to make available his questionnaire for possible adaptation for a study with care experienced students studying in Scotland.
- Engage in further discussion with Scottish Government statisticians about the work to identify a longitudinal data resource and further analysis of the aftercare dataset.
- Have further discussion with relevant partners to explore whether engagement in apprenticeships can be separated from employment data for care leavers/care experienced adults.

Medium-term

- Take the opportunity afforded by the end of the first reporting period for corporate parenting plans to identify references to improvements in outcomes.
- Find an appropriate forum to have further discussion about the use of terminology: specifically the use of 'care experience' in relation to data.
- Scope and create a 'composite' report, or series of reports on the education outcomes/wellbeing/post-school experience of looked after children/care-experienced adults.
- Draw the attention of researchers and research groups to potential areas of inquiry, such as accessing support, drop-out and enrolment by gender.
- Carry out further work to understand the issues with recording and reporting of disability and additional support needs, and assessment of looked after children.
- Plan a Care to Achieve-type event to include local authorities.
- Do some thinking about how looked after children and young people can be involved in discussions about data which aim to represent them (e.g. by learning from the experience of the Care Review).

Longer-term

- Set up a longitudinal study of looked after children in Scotland from early education to post-school education.