

To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 1 November 2018

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Scottish Attainment Challenge - Care Experienced Children and Young People fund

1. Summary

- 1.1. At the meeting on 23 August 2018 the Education and Children's Services Policy Board agreed to future reports on the use of the funding from the Scottish Attainment Challenge for care experienced children and young people. The report outlines the initial plans to utilise the funding in the current financial year.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Education and Children's Services Policy Board notes the proposed utilisation of the Scottish Attainment Challenge – Care Experienced and Young People Fund.
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3. Background

- 3.1. In June 2018, the Scottish Government announced it will invest £33 million of the Scottish Attainment Challenge to specifically support the educational needs of care experienced children and young people between now and the end of the parliamentary term.
- 3.2. The term 'care experienced' is now a widely used term within the sector to describe any person who has experience of being in care, regardless of their placement length, type or age.
- 3.3. This fund is part of the Scottish Government's commitment to ensuring that all care experienced children and young people are supported, underpinned by the getting it right for every child approach to improve outcomes and support their wellbeing.

- 3.4. The Scottish Government and COSLA agreed that the additional funding would be allocated using data from the annual Children Looked After Survey, for children aged between 5-15 who were looked after on 31 July 2017.
- 3.5. For the current financial year the funding allocated is £800 per child. The allocation for Renfrewshire in 2018/19 has been calculated at £359,200 based on 449 Looked after Children aged 5-15 on 31 July 2017. In future years the funding will increase to £1200 per child resulting in the allocation for Renfrewshire increasing to £538,800.
- 3.6. Whilst the funding is allocated using the number of looked after children aged 5 to 15, it is for the local authority to decide how the funding will best be used to improve the attainment of all care experienced children and young people. There is a need to ensure that the funding has a clear focus on delivering equity and improving educational outcomes for care experienced children and young people. It cannot be used to replace or replicate existing services.
- 3.7. In Renfrewshire the funds will be used to support care experienced children and young people. We use the term care experienced to include children and young people who:
- are looked after at home;
 - are looked after in foster care;
 - are looked after in residential services;
 - are in kinship placements;
 - on the periphery of care;
 - are adopted; and
 - those who were previously in one of the above categories.
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4. Progress

- 4.1. Renfrewshire Council has a strong governance arrangement in place for the Scottish Attainment Challenge. The Attainment Challenge Governance Board is chaired by the Chief Education Officer and had 4 specific workstreams: data analysis, learning and teaching, families and communities and leadership. A fifth workstream has been added in relation to the care experienced children and young people fund.
- 4.2. The care experienced children and young people workstream has been established to monitor the fund and implement plans. The workstream has representatives from education, social work and health and social work.
- 4.3. The initial plans for utilising the care experienced fund are focused on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. The initial proposals are as follows:
- extending access to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to include children aged birth to 5, who are looked after at home;
 - providing “sleep hygiene” training for staff working directly with children and young people;
 - provide additional support to care experienced children to improve attendance at school and improve engagement in the curriculum;
 - implement a mentoring service in partnership with Aberlour Children’s Charity; and

- staffing to develop the family firm and education support for care experienced children and young people.
- 4.4 At present children aged birth to 5 and who are looked after away from home receive a new book every month from the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The new funding will allow participation in this scheme to be extended to all children aged birth to 5 who are looked after at home. By extending the participation in this scheme all looked after children aged birth to 5, in Renfrewshire will have their own library by the time they start school.
 - 4.5 Many care experienced children and young people have significant issues with sleeping. Their poor sleeping regime can have a negative impact on their ability to participate in the school curriculum. Sleep Scotland deliver 'sleep hygiene' training for staff who work with children and young people. This training will provide a range of staff (residential workers, social workers and teachers) with the knowledge and skills to support children with better sleep patterns.
 - 4.6 Many care experienced children and young people face challenges in getting to school and engaging in the curriculum. In an attempt to reduce the impact and effect of poor attendance and poor engagement in learning it is proposed that additional direct support will be provided to address these areas. The new service will also provide direct support to parents of care experienced children and young people to engage in their child's learning journey. The new service includes partners in health, education and social work.
 - 4.7 Over the past few years there is an increasing understanding of the positive impact of mentoring for care experienced children and young people. It is proposed that working with Aberlour Attain, Renfrewshire can deliver personalised support for looked after children and young people to improve attainment, resilience and wellbeing via a flexible, relationship-based mentoring service. The service will seek to recruit mentors from across Renfrewshire Council and partner agencies, who will encourage children and young people to value education and have high aspirations.
 - 4.8 The final proposal for the initial use of the care experienced fund is to create two short term positions to provide leadership on developing the family firm model within Renfrewshire and to develop targeted education support for individual care experienced young people.
 - 4.9 Future reports will be presented to the Education and Children's Policy Board on the impact of the care experienced children and young people fund.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The costs for the proposals outlined in this report will be contained in the grant allocated by the Scottish Government.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – any new positions will be advertised in line with safe recruitment policies and costs will be maintained within the allocated funding model.
3. **Community Planning** – *none*.

4. **Legal** – *none*.
 5. **Property/Assets** – *none*.
 6. **Information Technology** – *none*.
 7. **Equality & Human Rights**
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
 8. **Health & Safety** – *none*.
 9. **Procurement** – *none*.
 10. **Risk** – *none*.
 11. **Privacy Impact** – *none*.
 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – *not applicable*.
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List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Paper 1 – *none*.
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