

Report

Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	6 September 2022
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	Youth Employability and Work Based Learning
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to: -

- ◆ provide an update on the progress of the Youth Employability Service's targeted employability and senior-phase work-based learning programmes .

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s): -

- (1) that the progress of the youth employability service's programmes to develop the skills, experiences, and qualifications of young people to help them progress to positive and sustained post-school destinations is noted.

3. Background

3.1. The Youth Employability Service supports young people at school in the senior phase and post-school up to age 19 (or longer if care experienced) to develop the skills, experiences, and qualifications to help them progress to positive and sustained post-school destinations.

3.2. The service provides work-based curriculum options for young people in the senior phase and targeted programmes for young people who are identified as requiring support to progress to a positive destination.

3.3. The essence if this support to develop the skills for learning, life and work centre on the following:

3.3.1 Work based senior phase options:

- ◆ GradU8
- ◆ Gradu8 Work Experience
- ◆ Foundation Apprenticeships

3.3.2 Targeted programmes

- ◆ Winter and summer leaver programmes
- ◆ Aspire keywork support
- ◆ AspireWorks

3.4. Across all youth employability programmes, young people are linked to Vocational Development Workers who provide individual targeted support to encourage engagement and support destination planning.

4. GradU8

- 4.1. GradU8 is an innovative work-based learning programme that gives young people the chance to experience a college learning environment and achieve vocational qualifications. The programme is timetabled as a senior-phase option choice across all South Lanarkshire schools with young people attending one-day-a-week during the autumn and spring terms. Young people can choose one of 12 subjects, which have been identified as providing sustainable employment opportunities in the local labour market and allow young people to develop skills and experiences to progress to college, employment or to continue their learning through a foundation or modern apprenticeship.
- 4.2. Young people completing the programme are provided with significant support from the Youth Employability Service and vocational development workers are present on-campus to support young people's engagement, liaise with schools and young people, deal with any pastoral support needs and support young people to plan for the next stage of their employability journey.
- 4.3. Following consultation with schools, since 2020/21 the programme has been delivered through a locality model with all schools linked with college delivery partners with young people attending on either a Monday or Friday. This has reduced the transport requirements and enabled effective timetable planning and increased the uptake from schools.
- 4.4. During academic year 2021/22 the GradU8 programme was delivered at full capacity following a reduction in available places the previous year due to restrictions in place during the pandemic. This was made possible despite the ongoing uncertainty due to the positive partnership relationships between the Council and the colleges. 925 places were made available to schools across 12 subjects.
- 4.5. **GradU8 subjects 2021/22**

Beauty skills	Hair & Barber
Business & Marketing	Health and Social care
Construction	Hospitality
Digital and Media	Make Up Artistry
Early years and Childcare	Sports Fitness
Engineering	Uniformed Services

- 4.6. For academic year 2022/23 the programme is being delivered through the locality model below:

Table 1: GradU8 delivery plan 2022/23

Locality	Delivery Location	Delivery Day
Cambuslang, Rutherglen and Uddingston	South Lanarkshire College Glasgow Kelvin College	Monday
East Kilbride and Strathaven	South Lanarkshire College Glasgow Kelvin College	Friday
Clydesdale	New College Lanarkshire	Monday
Hamilton	New College Lanarkshire	Friday

- 4.7. Following consultation with schools an additional Gradu8 subject option will be delivered from August 2002 which will focus on personal development and confidence building and will be delivered in partnership with New College Lanarkshire and Routes to Work South.

Case studies of young people involved in the GradU8 programme are at Appendix 1

5. GradU8 Work Experience

- 5.1. The GradU8 work experience programme was developed as part of the Education Learning Recovery and Renewal programme to provide an additional work-based option in the senior phase for young people returning to school after the period of significant disruption due to Covid-19.
- 5.2. The programme commenced in October 2021 with 62 young people matched to work placements which they attended one-day-a-week. All young people were supported by their school's link vocation development worker to complete a work-based action plan and schools linked work based SQA units where possible.
- 5.3. Sourcing work placements in some sectors was challenging due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions however, all young people were successfully matched. Work placements were identified with the Council and its partners and local employers and included:

Administration	Hairdressing
Beauty	Leisure
Construction	Mechanics
Early years	Plumbing
Golf	Social care
Grounds	Stables

- 5.4. Following the pilot, a further roll out is now underway for the 2022/23 academic year with 100 places available to schools. Following initial referrals in April 2022, meetings were held with all young people to identify preferred placements. These have been sourced during the summer break and are due to commence in early September 2022.

Case studies of young people involved in the GradU8 Work Experience programme are at Appendix 1.

6. Foundation Apprenticeships

- 6.1. Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) are a national senior phase option, funded by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and designed to allow young people to gain valuable, real-world work experience and access work-based learning while they are still at school. The programme supports progressions to modern and graduate apprenticeships or to further and higher education. Foundation Apprenticeships are delivered at SCQF level 6 and young people can choose to study over 1 or 2 years with part of the qualification based on a work placement.
- 6.2. South Lanarkshire's FA delivery model is designed to ensure young people have access to all Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks. This includes the delivery of South Lanarkshire's FA consortium programme in partnership with South Lanarkshire College and access to the Glasgow Colleges FA consortium.

- 6.3. Following significant disruption during 2020/21, with some elements of remote delivery, the South Lanarkshire FA Consortium was delivered on a face-to-face basis during 2021/22. This included pupils accessing both South Lanarkshire College and FA hubs in SLC secondary schools. The majority of the Glasgow FA programme was delivered face-to-face with some subjects delivered through a blended approach including in person and online delivery.
- 6.4. During the 2021/22 academic year 331 young people participated in Foundation Apprenticeships level 6s

Table 2: South Lanarkshire FA Consortium Learners 2021/22

	1 year starts	2 year starts	2nd year returners	Total
Accountancy			4	4
Business Skills	3	5	9	17
Creative and Digital Media	13	14		27
Children and Young People	22	38	27	87
Healthcare	14	20	11	45
Total	52	77	51	180

Table 3: Glasgow FA Consortium Learners 2021/22

	1 year starts	2 year starts	2nd year returners	Total
Accountancy		9		9
Business Skills	1			1
Civil Engineering	5	23	10	38
Creative and Digital Media			15	15
Engineering Systems		6	4	10
Financial Services	1	5	2	8
ICT Software	8	20	9	37
Mechanical Engineering		19	8	27
Scientific Technologies	1	1	4	6
Total	16	83	52	

- 6.5. In 2020/21 97.4% of young people completing an FA progressed to further/higher education or employment. Destinations for 2021/22 will be reported following confirmation of initial destinations in September 2022.

Case studies of young people completing Foundation Apprenticeships are at Appendix 1.

7. Winter and Summer Leaver Programmes

- 7.1. The Youth Employability Service works with schools, colleges and local providers to provide a range of opportunities for young people who are approaching their school leaving date and are disengaged from school and require support to progress to a positive destination.
- 7.2. Leavers programmes are delivered 3 days a week over a 12-week period and provide both college vocational learning and personal development/employability group work opportunities. All young people taking part in leavers programmes have a link Vocational Development Worker to support engagement and destination planning and provide ongoing one-to-one support.

Table 4: Winter Leaver Options 2021/22

Course	Learning Provider	Participants
Creative Industries	South Lanarkshire College	18
Construction	South Lanarkshire College	28
Creative Industries	New College Lanarkshire	14
Automotive	New College Lanarkshire	12
Construction	First Steps Future Training	20
RISE – Personal Development/Employability	Routes to Work South – Cambuslang	18
	Routes to Work South – Lanark	15

Table 5: Summer Leaver Options 2021/22

Course	Learning Provider	Participants
Creative Industries	South Lanarkshire College	19
Creative Industries	New College Lanarkshire	17
Construction	Tigers Training Ltd	12
Engineering	New College Lanarkshire	13
RISE – Personal Development/Employability	Routes to Work South – Cambuslang	14
	Routes to Work South – Lanark	12

8. Aspire keyword support

- 8.1. The Aspire programme provides targeted support to vulnerable young people who require assistance to move to a positive destination. Aspire is funded by a combination of European Structural Funds, Scottish Government's No-One Left Behind and Young People's Guarantee, Clyde Windfarm Community Development Fund and Education Resource's core budget and provides flexible employability support for young people from the last 6 months of school to age 19 (or longer if care experienced) who are at risk of becoming unemployed.
- 8.2. All young people supported by Aspire have a dedicated Vocational Development Worker who supports them to develop an individualised action plan designed to address barriers to employment. The action plan may include 1-2-1 support, personal development and confidence building activities, work experience and vocational tasters and individual supports. The worker also ensures support to access and co-ordinate services from Council services and other key partners, where appropriate, such as housing, social work and money matters. Young people progressing through the programme are followed up with aftercare support to sustain positive destinations.
- 8.3. In 2021/22, 586 young people were referred to Aspire for support, the majority were referred through school 16+ meetings. Of those young people who engaged with and progressed from Aspire, 92% progressed to a positive destination of employment, further learning, or training.
- 8.4. The AspireWorks programme has been delivered since June 2021 to provide a work-based option for young people who have left school and are seeking employment. The programme funded through the Scottish Government's Young People's Guarantee and supports young people to develop employability skills through a flexible programme of work placements, employer engagement and accredited employability focused learning. During 2021/22 the programme supported 140 young people with 47 progressing to employment.

- 8.5. A key success of the programme has been the development of work placement opportunities for young people. Placements are designed to support young people to develop work readiness skills in a real-life work environment and typically involve placements of 2-4 days a week over a 6-12 week period. All young people receive a training allowance and are supported by a Vocational Development Worker and a workplace mentor to complete an in-work action plan. 42 young people took part in placements in 2021/22 across a range of sectors with both the Council and the wider local economy.

AspireWorks case studies are included at Appendix 1.

9. School Leaver Destinations and Post-school tracking

- 9.1. In addition to the delivery of programmes and support to young people, the Youth Employability Service has a strategic and operational remit to support the tracking of young people's post-school destinations. The service is responsible for leading the 16+ planning processes, which use a range of data including the Click and Go risk matrix and 16+ Data Hub to identify those young people most at risk of leaving school and becoming unemployed. 16+ meetings are held 3 times-a-year in all secondary schools and attended by the Youth Employability Service, pupil support teams and Skills Development Scotland. These processes have supported consistent improvements in the Council's school leaver destinations and the Council has achieved its target of being above the Scottish rate for 6 years in a row.

Table 6: Positive School Leaver Destinations 2012/13 – 2020/21

Year	South Lanarkshire	Scotland
2020/21	96.2	95.5
2019/20	94.8	93.3
2018/19	95.7	95.0
2017/18	96.5	94.6
2016/17	95.8	93.9
2015/16	94.1	93.5
2014/15	93.1	93.2
2013/14	92.4	92.6
2012/13	89.4	91.9
2011/12	90.0	90.3

- 9.2. The service also works closely with partners to track the destinations of young people once they have left school to meet the Scottish Government's commitment to ensure all young people aged 16-19 have an appropriate offer of employment, education, or training. Post-school participation is measured and reported on an annual basis by Skills Development Scotland through the Participation Measure, since this measure was introduced in 2016 South Lanarkshire has been in line with or above the national rate.

Table 7: Participation Measure 2016-2021

Year	South Lanarkshire	Scotland
2021	92.8	92.2
2020	92.7	92.1
2019	92.6	91.6
2018	92.5	91.8
2017	91.2	91.1
2016	90.4	90.4

- 9.3. To continue to increase the percentage of young people participating in employment, education or training a short life working group was established in March 2022 with key local partners. The group has developed an action plan with an objective to increase the participation rate to 95%. As part of the plan, the Youth Employability Service and SDS have led on the development of new locality tracking processes which following an initial pilot in the Hamilton locality have now been rolled out to all localities.
- 9.4. A key element of the tracking involves carrying out home contact visits to confirm destinations and offer support to young people who are unemployed or in an unknown destination. Home contact visits were carried out in June and August 2022, during which contact was attempted with 225 young people. These visits have proved very successful with 71 young people confirmed as being in a positive destination and 55 identified as requiring employability support.
- 10. Support for care experienced young people**
- 10.1. Providing support to care experienced young people is a key priority for the Youth Employability Service. By working closely with schools, social work and SDS, care experienced young people are identified across our programmes and provided with individualised support as required.
- 10.2. This support has had a positive impact on the school leaver destinations of care experienced young people. In 2021 60 school leavers were classified as care experienced and achieved a positive destination rate of 90%, an increase of 4.3% from 2019/20 and above the National average of 87.9%.
- 10.3. In 2021/22 the service provided one-to-one support through the Aspire programme to 88 care experienced young people. Of these young people 29 progressed to a positive destination, 2 were not ready for employability support, one disengaged and one signed on with DP. 55 continued to be supported and tracked.
- 10.4. The Youth Employability Service and SDS work in partnership to track the destinations of care experienced young people up to the age of 25. The tracking uses a range of data sources including the 16+ Data Hub, schools, SDS, DWP and social work and local knowledge. The most recent tracking exercise in June 2022 identified the destinations of 389 young people aged 16-25.

Table 8: Destinations of care experienced young people

Employability Status	Number
Aspire / AspireWorks	26
Community Service	1
Custody	3
Employability fund programme	10
Employment	49
Stage 1 programme	3
Further Education	54
Higher Education	22
Modern Apprenticeship	18
School pupil	135
Volunteering	1
Unconfirmed/unknown	11
Economically inactive/Unavailable ill health	31
Unemployed	24
Moved outwith Scotland	1
Total	389

11. Employee Implications

- 11.1. The programmes described in this report are delivered and managed by the Youth Employability Service. 34 out of the current staff team of 43 are fully or part funded by external grants or contracts. 14 of the staff team are currently on temporary contracts until March 2023.

12. Financial Implications

- 12.1. The service is resourced by a blend of funding which includes core education resources, European Structural Funds, Scottish Government No-one Left Behind and Young People's Guarantee grants and Skills Development Scotland Foundation Apprenticeship contracts.
- 12.2. The funding arrangements will be subject to significant change in the coming years. European Structural Funding of employability programmes will cease in September 2023 and application processes are underway to secure replacement Shared Prosperity Funding. Scottish Government grants and SDS contracts are in place until March 2023.

13. Other Implications (Including Environmental and Risk Issues)

- 13.1. There are no significant risk implications in terms of the information contained within this report.
- 13.2. There are no implications for sustainability in terms of the information contained within this report.

14. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 14.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

Tony McDaid
Executive Director (Education Resources)

24 August 2022

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ♦ Education and Learning: Inspiring learners, transforming learning, strengthening partnerships

Previous References

- ♦ Education Resources Committee – 9 November 2022

List of Background Papers

9 November 2021 – Youth Employability

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact: -

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Case Studies

(All young people's names have been changed)

GradU8

Amy

Amy participated in the GradU8, Early Years and Childcare course which started in August 2021. As part of the individual planning process that supports young people taking part in the programme, Amy's school highlighted that she was pregnant and expecting a baby in November. Hazel from the Youth Employability team agreed with Amy that this would be shared with the college so that she could get the support that she needed. After she had the baby, Amy did not attend college for several weeks however during this time Hazel kept communication going through texts and phone calls and kept the college informed about when she intended to return. Amy was apprehensive due to the amount of work she had missed, however Hazel assured her that she would be able to return to college and, with support, could catch up on the work.

When Amy returned to college in January 2022, an individual plan was put in place with her school to allow her to focus on college and achieve her preferred pathway of a full-time early learning and childcare course when she left school. With support from Hazel and the lecturer, Amy caught up with the work she had missed and successfully completed the course. When the applications for post-school college courses opened Hazel helped Amy to apply and complete her personal statement. As a result of Amy's hard work and the individual planning, she was offered a full-time place on the course and is due to start in August 2022.

Caitlin

When Caitlin started the GradU8 Sport and Fitness programme at South Lanarkshire College she initially struggled with her attendance and engagement in learning. She had recently moved school due to difficulties involving bullying. Caitlin was reluctant to engage in the class in the beginning and struggled to fit in with her classmates due to social anxiety, which was heightened when meeting new people.

Caitlin confided in Anthony the link Vocational Development Worker for the course, about the difficulties she was having and described how she lacked motivation to get out of bed in the morning and attend school or college. She also hadn't got a clear idea about what she wanted to do when she left school.

Anthony offered guidance on the appropriate steps to take and suggested people they could speak to about it. After some time, Caitlin's attendance had noticeably improved, as well as her confidence as she participated more in the class. She also began to feel comfortable and engaged more with her peers. Caitlin finished the programme and passed all of the units comfortably. She was also delighted to find out that an application for an apprenticeship in the construction industry was successful.

Ryan

Ryan took part in the Gradu8 Uniformed Services course at City of Glasgow College, however he decided early on that the course wasn't for him. Debbie, the link worker for the course worked closely with Ryan to encourage him to engage. Through this, Debbie established that Ryan had a traumatic childhood and suffers from anxiety. Debbie provided targeted 1-to-1 support including assisting with scribing while in college and helping him build confidence.

Ryan's motivation to join the Uniformed Services course had been to enable him to achieve a pathway into his chosen career of the Army. Once he completed the course his school referred Ryan to Aspire. Due to the good relationship they had built, Debbie was allocated as his keyworker, they developed a plan to support him to his chosen destination. This included accompanying him to the Army careers office in Glasgow where Ryan spoke to current army personnel and gained some valuable insights into the role. Debbie then supported Ryan to apply, and he is currently awaiting the outcome.

GradU8 Work Experience

David

David was involved with the Youth Employability service for over 2 years and engaged well with Owen, his link vocational development worker throughout. Initially David took part in the GradU8 construction course at South Lanarkshire College, working extremely well despite the challenges of covid and online learning. After returning to school in S5 David was referred to the GradU8 work Experience programme where his first choice was a placement in sport and fitness. Due to their prior relationship Owen and David built a positive relationship and a placement was sourced with Energie Fitness. David worked every Monday and his role involved general tasks in the gym as well as assisting in the delivery of fitness sessions. The feedback from the employer was very positive and they said David was a joy to have around. As David approached his school leaving date Owen supported him through an Aspire action plan and he successfully applied to a sports coaching course at City of Glasgow College which is due to start in August.

Sam

Sam, who is care experienced, was identified by his school as a pupil who would benefit from taking part in the GradU8 work experience pilot as he was becoming unsettled in class and enjoyed taking part in practical work. After meeting with Rosemary from the Youth Employability Service he agreed to take part in one of the work placements offered by SLLC which were designed to give experience across a range of roles within the organisation. Rosemary supported Sam to develop a work placement action plan and accompanied him at the beginning of each of the new placements. Sam engaged really well with Rosemary and really enjoyed the work experience and at the end of his placements he successfully applied for an SLLC post as a Recreational Assistant (dry side).

Foundation Apprenticeship Case Studies

Holly

Holly took part in the Youth Employability Service's Foundation Apprenticeship in early years which is delivered in partnership with South Lanarkshire College. Holly had originally been taking part to support her plan to become a primary teacher however during the 2nd year of her FA, Holly decided to leave school to pursue a career as an early years practitioner. Due to her progress and commitment, the youth employability team and the college agreed that she could finish with her FA qualification and continue in her work placement after leaving school.

Support was given to Holly to ensure she could access everything she needed to work on her FA course and the nursery agreed for Holly to increase her work placement days to allow her to work through her SVQ. The lecturer and nursery staff were impressed by Holly's work ethic and maturity and her ability to hold down a part-time job whilst studying and attending additional days demonstrated her determination to accomplish her goal of completing her Foundation Apprenticeship. When the Council advertised modern apprenticeship positions the team provided her support with her application and put her through a mock interview.

Holly was successful in her interview and was given a full time Modern Apprenticeship with South Lanarkshire Council in April 2022. We have no doubt that Holly will be a very capable practitioner and a fantastic asset to any early years establishment.

Liam

Liam applied for the 1-year Business Skills FA as part of his 6th year timetable and in his application disclosed his ASD diagnosis and his anxiety about leaving school. Liam, who had been attending KEAR campus felt the FA would help with his transition from school to work. He settled well into the college initially but when he started a new unit with a different lecturer, he became very anxious and began to disengage.

South Lanarkshire College and the youth employability team put a plan in place to support Liam. This involved the lecturer spending one-to-one time explaining new pieces of work to him and giving him additional time to complete. The plan was successful, and Liam engaged well, demonstrating good IT skills and organisational and project management skills. As the year progressed, Liam was more confident about contributing in class and was able to work well in a team with other students on the course, including taking part in a project presentation video the class produced and presented to Senior Managers from the college and youth employability service. After successfully completing the FA and leaving school Liam moved out of South Lanarkshire and is due to start college in August.

Aspire / AspireWorks Case Studies

Jack

When Jack, who is care experienced, was referred to Aspire by an SDS Careers Advisor he was involved in offending in his local community and required support to address his chaotic lifestyle. Ade from the Youth Employability team was allocated as Jack's worker and he supported him to set both short term and long-term goals including addressing his offending, opening a bank account and exploring vocational pathways. Ade and Jack built up a positive relationship and agreed that he would attend a personal and social development programme to build his confidence, motivation, and social skills. Jack successfully completed this and achieved an SQA qualification in employability and personal development. Jack identified construction as his preferred route and Ade supported him to take part in a CSCS preparation course. Jack passed this first time and successfully applied for a college construction course due to start in August.

Cara

Cara was referred to Aspire in January 2021 while she was pregnant. She gave birth in February and after an initial period of adjustment, began engaging with Craig from the Youth Employability team. Craig and Cara worked together over an 18-month period which included periods when Cara was unable to engage due to illness and home life challenges. However, over time Craig was able to support her to work on her personal and social skills and develop her confidence. Cara enrolled on the RISE programme which is delivered on the Council's behalf by Routes to Work South and although she didn't complete it due to illness and her role as a mum, the course did give her motivation and she felt ready to move on to further education. Craig supported her to apply for college courses, and Cara has now been accepted to start a hospitality course at Kelvin College in August.

Chloe

When Chloe was referred to Aspire she had completely disengaged from school in S5 and had an attendance rate of below 50%. However, she had managed to achieve good qualifications at National 4 and had clear aspirations to work in the funeral industry. Debbie from the team supported Chloe to develop a plan that would get her to her chosen positive destination. This including building her confidence, looking into college courses and assisting with her CV.

Due to her age Chloe understood that it may be difficult to secure work experience in the funeral industry. However, Debbie was determined to support her and made contact with a local funeral director. Debbie accompanied Chloe for an informal chat and tour of the business and a short one-week placement was agreed. Despite the short duration Chloe was given experience of various aspects of the job including at the hospital mortuary, attending house deaths, and assisting with embalming. A joint review was carried out with Debbie and the employer at the end of the week and the employer was so impressed that Chloe was offered a full-time job as a Funeral Service Operative where she will be fully trained in all aspects of the industry.

Employer feedback:

"Chloe is doing great she has been on the Ambulance since she started which can be very intense. She is doing her job very well, still a bit quiet, but she is getting on well with everyone and how could you not get on with her she is a great girl"

Kerr

Kerr's pupil support teacher referred him to Aspire at the beginning of his last 6 months of S4. He was disinterested, bored and his attendance was very poor. Mum was constantly phoning the school saying he wasn't feeling well, however on reflection Kerr was becoming a school refuser. I met with Kerr, his Mum and pupil support staff and it was agreed that Aspire support would help him engage with an alternative to school. Kerr indicated that he wanted to pursue a career in either mechanics or bricklaying. He had become demotivated, and I hoped that doing something that interested him and learning new skills would lead to a positive destination at school leaving date.

The plan was to support Kerr into either work experience, training or college tasters with a focus on construction/mechanics. Kerr was initially reluctant and unsure of trying something new, however; with support and encouragement he started our construction tasters course with Tigers (construction training company) 3 days per week. Transport was provided from the school which helped resume his routine and improve his motivation.

Initially Kerr attended the course well however after a few weeks his old habits of not attending returned. I was in regular contact with Mum who reported that he was just lazy at getting out of bed! Following meetings with Kerr and Mum he said he was enjoying the course and my role was reiterating the advantages of training and by providing continued encouragement and support Kerr's attendance improved. Throughout the course his attendance was sporadic but, overall, it was much improved from school. The new skills he was learning were invaluable when we completed applications for college. Kerr was offered a place in college starting in August however just before his school leaving date he applied for a vacancy in a local garage. He was invited for interview and was successful! He has now started an apprenticeship in panel beating. *Linda – Vocational Development Worker*

Morgan

The pupil support staff at Morgan's school were concerned about her mental health and wellbeing which had deteriorated to the extent that she was not attending school at all and was being supported by CAMHS. Morgan had struggled with relationships at school and did not have a consistent peer group, often truanting due to anxiety around relationships and her weight which had become a significant issue, impacting further on her physical and mental health.

Due to these issues, Morgan was referred to Aspire and Jim was allocated as her keyworker. After Morgan and her mum failed to attend meetings arranged in school, Jim carried out home visits. Jim built a relationship with Morgan and her mum, and they identified that the impact of covid had left Morgan feeling isolated and anxious. Morgan had a good relationship with her sister who worked in a local nursery and Jim suggested that they explore the possibility of setting up a work placement in the same nursery. Morgan was keen on this and Jim set up a meeting with the nursery where it was agreed that Morgan would start a placement on the same days as her sister. After a successful placement, Morgan applied for an apprenticeship vacancy with another nursery and Jim supported her to prepare including purchasing interview clothes. Morgan was successful and started her apprenticeship in May, with Jim continuing to provide ongoing support.

Stephen

Stephen engaged with AspireWorks as part of a pilot to increase the number of care experienced young people working in the Council. After completing a construction taster course at college, Laura from the team supported Stephen to apply for a joinery apprenticeship vacancy with the Council and they worked through an action plan that included codes of conduct within SLC, expectations of an SLC employee along with interview and employability skills coaching.

Unfortunately, Stephen was unsuccessful at interview and both he and Laura recognised that due to his literacy needs the 4-year apprenticeship may prove too challenging. Laura worked with colleagues in Corporate Resources to consider alternative, flexible routes for Stephen as part of the care experienced employability pilot programme and a position as a temporary General Operative with Housing Resources was identified. This would allow Stephen to receive a salary while developing his skills and experiences. Stephen was keen to pursue this and Laura supported him to prepare for the post. Stephen started with the Council in March 2022 on a temporary basis and is doing well, with positive feedback from his supervisors. Laura is continuing to provide aftercare support and working with Stephen to plan his next steps.

AspireWorks Groupwork case studies

Employability Award

Over the last year the Aspire Works team has been working through a plan to utilise staff skills and experiences to deliver and assess vocational qualifications on an in-house basis. Initially, we worked to create the services' own version of the Employability Award, an SQA accredited qualification. This qualification encompasses various aspects of looking for and securing employment. The format of the qualification gives young people the opportunity to tailor their responses to the sector of work they are interested in. Delivery of the qualification takes place in a group environment, allowing young people to develop skills such as communication, confidence and team working. Where possible we aim to utilise group discussion to allow young people to share their own ideas and experiences.

Alongside delivery of the Employability Award, staff have been working towards their own assessor and verifier qualifications. This allows us to mark and verify candidate qualifications in line with SQA procedures. Our first intake saw 11 young people registered with 10 of these sustaining the full programme of training and securing their Level 4 Employability Award. 5 of the young people have progressed to employment with the remainder continuing to be supported by the team.

Early Years School Support Assistant Pilot

The AspireWorks team alongside our colleagues in education, worked collaboratively to provide a pilot for young people who had expressed an interest in pursuing a career as an Early Years/ School Support Assistant.

The aim of the pilot was to provide young people with sector specific knowledge, employability skills training as well as an opportunity to gain practical work experience. The group was made up of 12 young people and two members of the AspireWorks staff who facilitated the sessions. For the first 6 weeks the young people were involved in classroom-based learning two days per week. During this time a range of employability skills sessions were delivered, and we also invited a School Support Assistant to come along for a Q&A with the young people and give a brief overview of the job, challenges and expectations. Following this, the young people went on a 6-week work placement within South Lanarkshire establishments which ended in June.

Following the completion of the programme the young people were supported to apply for jobs. In August two of the young people from the group attended an interview with SLC for permanent posts within local schools and are currently awaiting the outcome.