

WHO CARES? SCOTLAND

Care Experienced Learners

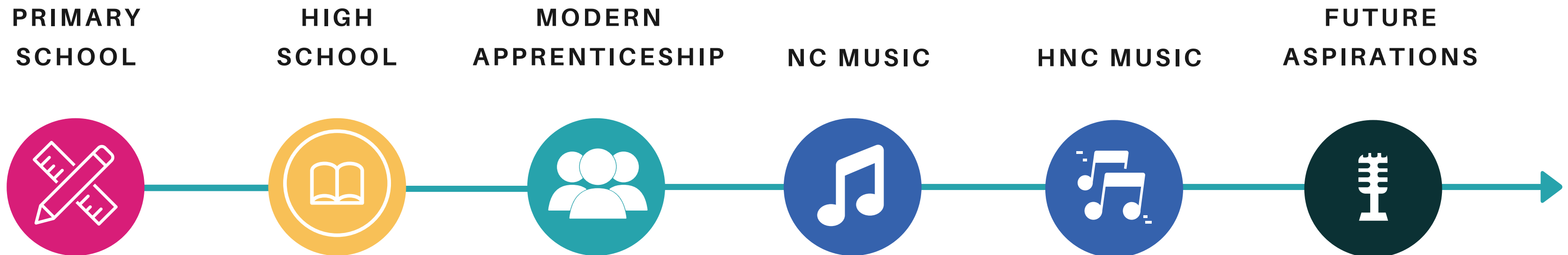
Josh's Journey

A Case Study and Best Practice Guide



JOSH

Josh is a Care Experienced student at college studying an HNC in Music. Music has always been a passion of his and he knew from a young age that he wanted to be a musician. Education was, and is, an important part of Josh's life. He has decided to share his learning journey with us, to help us gain an understanding of education through the lens of a Care Experienced student.



PRIMARY
SCHOOL

HIGH
SCHOOL



PRIMARY SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL - JOSH MOVES INTO CARE

Josh has positive memories of both primary and secondary school. He recalls, "School was always a **good distraction** from my outside life, it was something I had **control** over in my life". Josh moved into a care placement when he was in secondary school. This was when Josh started to face barriers to his education. "I had a few barriers at school but the main ones were always when **I was moving to a different placement**. It was sometimes **hard to concentrate** whilst thinking about moving".



PRIMARY
SCHOOL

HIGH
SCHOOL



PRIMARY SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL - POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Josh's favourite subjects at school were Music and P.E. **He really enjoyed performing in the school shows** and was cast in main roles in several productions including *Hairspray* and *We Will Rock You*. Josh had **good relationships with some of his teachers** and remembers most of them being **understanding of his situation and helpful towards him**. Josh gained his Nationals in S4 and Highers in S5.



PRIMARY
SCHOOL



HIGH
SCHOOL



PRIMARY SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL

DECIDES TO LEAVE SCHOOL AT 17

Josh decided to **leave school** halfway through his 6th year in January 2019. He had **just turned 17** and had come off his **Compulsory Supervision Order**.^{*} At this time, Josh moved into his own house.

**A Compulsory Supervision Order is a legal document which states that the local authority is responsible for looking after and helping the young person. It is put in place by either the Children's Hearing or a Sheriff under the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. A Compulsory Supervision Order terminates when a young person turns 18.*





MODERN APPRENTICESHIP

BEGINS A MODERN APPRENTICESHIP

In January 2019, Josh started a **Modern Apprenticeship** with Who Cares? Scotland as a Participation Assistant based in Glasgow. This was a 12-month post during which time Josh completed a work-based SVQ 3 in Children and Social Work. Josh also acquired many new skills that would **enhance his work experience and boost his confidence and self-esteem.**



NC MUSIC



NC MUSIC

ENTERS COLLEGE TO STUDY NC MUSIC

As the Modern Apprenticeship position was time-limited to 12 months, **Josh began making plans to transition before his time in post ended.** Josh decided that he wanted to return to education. "I knew I could study more and gain more qualifications that could land me in a more stable job in the future." Josh looked for courses that started in January 2020 and applied to college to study a 6-month access course in NC Music, SCQF Level 6. Josh found the application process **straightforward**, and he was also provided **some support** to do this.



NC MUSIC



NC MUSIC

FACING FINANCIAL BARRIERS

Josh identified as a **Care Experienced student** on his **college application form** and received an **email** and **follow up call** from the Care Experienced named contact at the college. Josh then **received funding through the college** which he was entitled to due to his care experience. However, in receiving funding, Josh's local authority **incorrectly assessed this as an income and stopped paying his rent**. This had a significant impact on Josh as he then had to find a way to pay his rent.





HNC MUSIC

COMPLETES NC MUSIC AND BEGINS HNC MUSIC

COVID-19 hit early on in Josh's course and the college turned to online teaching. Josh, however, had **limited access to digital equipment** and this impacted on his ability to complete some course work. Despite this, he successfully completed his NC. Josh progressed into HNC Music after the summer break and was given **some support from a friend to apply for the SAAS Care Experienced Student Bursary**. Josh is happy to be receiving this financial support, and **the bursary is not viewed by the local authority as an income**, which means that they will **resume paying his rent**.





FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

WHAT'S NEXT?

Josh is already planning beyond his HNC. Josh wants to study **musical theatre at university**. He aspires to go **travelling** after his degree. He has also considered becoming an **advocate for Care Experienced people** in the future. Josh feels he is in a good place just now, as he says, "I personally believe **I have the support I need right now**. The support from college, Who Cares? Scotland and North Ayrshire Throughcare is making it possible for me to **study and enjoy what I'm passionate about**."



JOSH

REFLECTIONS ON HIS EDUCATION AND CARE EXPERIENCE

Josh values education and wants to make the most of this opportunity. "Education is important to me as it's a factor in my life, and most people's lives, that we as people get to control. We're in control of the way we think about education and we're in control about how we use the information we take in.

Personally, education is a pathway to success that I want to achieve".

Josh states that being Care Experienced has impacted his life in many ways, including his learning journey through education, "I definitely do think that being Care Experienced has impacted my education over the years, but it has also helped me to view the world in a different light".

PRIMARY
SCHOOL



HIGH
SCHOOL



MODERN
APPRENTICESHIP



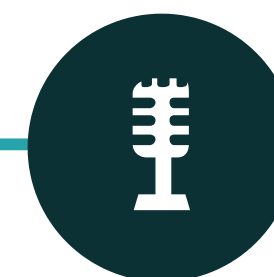
NC MUSIC



HNC MUSIC



FUTURE
ASPIRATIONS



JOSH

KEY LEARNINGS



ENCOURAGE TALENT

Josh thrived when given the opportunity to perform in his school shows. Support and encourage Care Experienced people to explore and enjoy their passions and talents.



UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF CARE EXPERIENCE

School and college can be a good distraction, but sometimes it can also be hard to focus when there are stressors outside of education, such as moving placement . Be mindful of what a Care Experienced person might be facing, and be ready to offer help if they need it.

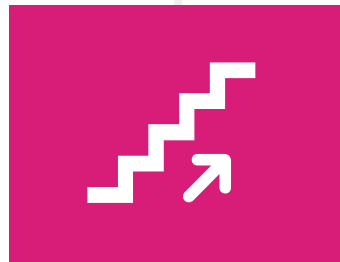


BE AWARE OF POSSIBLE FINANCIAL BARRIERS

Josh's education was impacted when he struggled to pay his rent due to an incorrect assessment of his college funding. Be aware of what financial support a Care Experienced person is entitled to, and support them to access it. Alternatively, if unsure, connect them with someone who can support with this, such as an advocate or Student Adviser.

JOSH

KEY LEARNINGS



PLAN AND SUPPORT TRANSITIONS

Josh really benefitted from well-managed transitions, from carefully planning next steps to receiving support in completing applications and moving into his own house. Offer tailored support and guidance in navigating applications and transitions as well as future planning.



BE PROACTIVE

Josh struggled at college when he didn't have access to digital equipment and his course moved online. Not all Care Experienced students reach out for support - it is important to check in to make sure they have all they need to continue with their course work.



ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO SELF-DECLARE

Josh self-declared as Care Experienced at college and received support all through his time at college, including financially. Make sure that students are aware of what Care Experienced means, and the support available to them if they self-declare.