

**CATHERINE
MCEWAN
FOUNDATION
SCHOLARSHIP**
ALL IN FOR EDUCATION



Scholarship Impact Report 2024



Message from the Founder

Derek McEwan
CEO
The Catherine McEwan Foundation



We are acutely aware that school and managing schoolwork can be a significant challenge for our young people – we are contacted on a regular basis by parents and young people telling us this. Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) is such an unpredictable condition, it often means teenagers in high school miss significant amounts of education. This leads to poorer grades, dropping out of specific subjects or even dropping out of school altogether, through no fault of their own.

We are so proud to be pioneers in this unique collaboration between The Catherine McEwan Foundation, The Education Academy Scotland and our healthcare professional colleagues.

We truly believe we are changing the trajectory for our young scholars living with IBD – that makes us immensely proud.

Congratulations and thanks for the amazing opportunities you have created for the children with Crohn's and Colitis. Keep up the good work!

Rina, Parent of CMF Scholar

Message from the healthcare professional

Vikki Garrick
Director of Patient Services
The Catherine McEwan Foundation



Our scholarship programme is now in its 5th year and we are so proud to say that we have supported over 50 young people living with IBD since its inception, and more than 20 in the last academic year alone. These are young people who may never have had the opportunity to reach their academic potential because they have IBD.

Here in The Catherine McEwan Foundation, we are dedicated to supporting people with IBD throughout the entirety of their journey with the condition, and we know how important this stage in life is for our young people. Supporting them with their education serves a much wider purpose than academic credentialing alone. It builds confidence, self-esteem and encourages personal as well as academic growth. Our young people living with IBD face many challenges and we are passionate about ensuring that educational attainment is not one of them.

This unique partnership with The Education Academy Scotland has gone from strength to strength and we are dedicated to supporting it for many years to come.

Thank you to you and the whole scholarship team who truly have helped George be the best version of himself - we are so proud.

Avril, Parent of CMF Scholar

Message from the Partner

Graeme Rough
Head of Centre
The Education Academy Scotland



At the Education Academy Scotland (formerly known as Saturday School Ltd), we are challenging and changing the way education is delivered in Scotland. Of course, we continue to support the long-standing traditional methods and values, which for the majority of learners, bring success. But more and more learners, across all ages and stages, are finding that this approach is not working for them. We need to work hard to bring a more personalised model for every learner – that’s not easy – but we need to. The Catherine McEwan Foundation has been the catalyst for so much that has followed within our growing suite of scholarships and is the foundation on which our pioneering and completely unique offers stand. The work that Derek, Vikki and a huge group of others are doing within The Foundation, The NHS and wider third sector partners is just incredible. It’s also quite simple: sitting at the heart of all their hard work, dedication and altruism is each individual living with IBD and their family.

Thank you to Derek and his team, all the supporting staff at NHS and most importantly, thank you and well done to our Scholars for making my job at The Academy the utter joy it is to be working with them.

After everything he’s been through in the last 2 years, we are delighted he even sat the exams!
Fiona, Parent of CMF Scholar

About the Scholarship

The Catherine McEwan Foundation Scholarship was launched in 2019 with the aim of improving educational outcomes in the senior phase of secondary school for young people living with IBD. The Scholarship is devised and led by the Foundation, delivered in partnership with The Education Academy Scotland (TEAS); an SQA Approved Centre and tutoring school offering tuition, revision, qualifications, awards and of course scholarships. Specific support is targeted at young people taking SQA National 5 and Higher Qualifications however scholars can join the programme anytime between S3 and S6.

In simple terms, scholars attend “Saturday School” on a regular basis to catch up on work missed through symptoms of IBD and to develop their subject knowledge and understanding to maximise their chances of success in SQA exams. This fully funded educational intervention, supplied by The Catherine McEwan Foundation and backed by a team of generous donors, offers learners unlimited access to TEAS’s highly successful and long-standing portfolio of support, including:

- Weekly Lessons, 80-minute masterclasses in selected key areas for each subject
- Grade Booster Days, 4-hour intensive exam revision courses
- Online support, unlimited 24/7 support and guidance from tutors via Google Classroom.

She’s so happy with her exam results as she missed all of S3 (due to her illness) and didn’t actually start S4 until January!

Lorraine, Parent of CMF Scholar

About the Scholarship (cont.)

Educational support and advice is also given to scholars and their parents/carers to ensure they are fully aware of the options, choices and entitlements they can expect from their education, both at TEAS and their own school.

The Catherine McEwan Foundation Scholarship has successfully assisted learners who, in some cases, would not have gone on to gain qualifications at all. The Foundation is therefore supporting young people and their parents to stabilise their educational progress, in some cases looking simply to reconnect with education after long periods of poor health; outlining the specific steps needed before looking ahead to securing the relevant qualifications. The initial fundamental aim is to support learners to gain qualifications. When they are on course for this, the focus and drive changes to securing the highest possible grades across subjects.

Potential scholars apply via the Catherine McEwan Foundation website. In most cases, interested young people will have learned about the opportunity via their NHS IBD healthcare professional who supports the programme. In fact, these very people are key stakeholders and original co-designers of the scholarship.

She's so happy with her exam results as she missed all of S3 (due to her illness) and didn't actually start S4 until January!!

Lorraine, Parent of CMF Scholar

Our Scholars

Now entering Year 6, and since 2019, we have awarded over 50 scholarships to young people in, or entering, the senior phase of secondary school. The beauty of where we are now, five years on from the inception of our programme, means we are now seeing the almost immeasurable impact of the offer. With so many of our inaugural and early Scholars now well into exciting careers, college and university places, the educational impact is clear. But there is more to all of this than just exam grades: the personal and social impact of what we are doing is just as big, maybe bigger. Reconnecting young people with their education is perhaps the easy part, rebuilding their self-confidence and self-esteem is the fundamental and most important part.



Some of the Catherine McEwan Foundation Scholars from academic year 2023/24

Through the Catherine McEwan Foundation Scholarship, you are not just building confidence and raising their attainment, you are genuinely changing the lives and futures for our young people.

Alex, Teacher of CMF Scholar

George

Now entering S6, George was the first ever S3 learner to join the programme, helping us explore how bringing the entry stage of the scholarship forward by one year might enhance the impact of the programme.

In his original application George explained:

“Since my recent health experience and life-changing events, I am keen to explore a possible career in medicine. I have always enjoyed school and didn't realise how much I missed education until I couldn't go. I would love the opportunity to be awarded this scholarship as it would help me achieve good grades to give me more choices for my future”.

George's mum has not only supported her son through the scholarship, she now works with the Foundation in a professional capacity providing mental health support for adults living with IBD.

“George was diagnosed with Crohn's in 2019 and since diagnosis, he steadily declined physically and emotionally. Resulting in numerous hospital admissions, weight loss, chronic pain, and an array of different treatments. This has resulted in lots of school time missed impacting his education and grades”.



In 2023 George gained As in N5 English and Chemistry, and a B in N5 Maths. In 2024 he has now gained As in Higher English and Chemistry and will stay with us in 24/25 for support in AH Chemistry.

Luke

Luke joined the scholarship programme mid-way through his N5 courses in S4. Like most scholars, he had been on a long hard journey with his health, balancing his education with the ongoing effects of Crohn's:

"I have had a few days off because of my Crohn's and have to get an infusion every 4 weeks so I miss school for that too. The scholarship would help me a lot".

A hard-working and dedicated student, Luke attended multiple classes from January 2023 right through to the exam diets in 2023 and 2024, never missing a session. Supporting his application, Luke's mum explained:

"Luke is a bright boy, but the time off school has impacted his learning. National 5 exams are the foundation for all future exams and the help at this stage would benefit Luke tremendously".

Despite his many health setbacks, Luke showed his aspiration and determination and sat N5 exams in the 2023 diet. Not achieving the success he had been hoping for, he showed amazing character and resilience by repeating these courses in S5. As expected, all of Luke's hard work and determination has paid off.



In 2024 Luke passed gained three valuable National 5 qualifications in Maths, English and Chemistry.

Amy

Amy was awarded a Scholarship in 2023 as she was midway through S4, working on her National 5 courses. In her application, Amy outlined her dedication and determination to succeed, again pointing out the impact that IBD can have on learning:

“I feel this would be of benefit to me as I am struggling with schoolwork since my diagnosis last year, I know this is a really important year for me being my first exams and would appreciate any extra help that is available to me. Before being diagnosed I was coping very well at school and believe my confidence has been greatly reduced due to my illness, not to mention the fatigue the ongoing treatment causes”.

After taking N5 exams in the 2023 diet, Amy then returned to the scholarship programme for a second year. As with all scholars, her ongoing hard work and dedication has paid off for her.



In 2024 Amy passed both her N5 Maths and Higher English exams, gaining an impressive B in the latter.

Noah

Noah joined us on the Scholarship programme in late 2023 as he was midway through S4, working on his National 5 courses. In his application, showing a strong determination to succeed, he explains just how difficult it can be to learn and stay focussed when living with his condition:

“I feel that my Crohn's disease has really affected my performance at school. Before my diagnosis I was tired all the time (I found out later I had anaemia) and slept for 2 hours after school meaning I had less time to study. I missed weeks of schooling due to being in hospital and having to go in for camera tests, scans and then during my final term of S2 I was on the Modulin diet for 8 weeks during which time I found my concentration was poor. I have tried to catch up but I think my results in my S3 end of year exams were disappointing compared to what my teachers predicted at parents night. I would like to work hard and catch up as I hope some day to work in the medical field.”



In 2024 Noah performed incredibly well in his National 5 SQA exams, gaining As in Maths and English, and Bs in all three science subjects. He will be welcomed back for year 2 of his scholarship as he studies his SQA Highers in 24/25.

Rebecca

Halfway through S4, and in the middle of her National 5 courses, Rebecca became our first ever Edinburgh-based Scholar. Due to our expansion of Weekly Lessons and Grade Booster Days in the East of Scotland, combined with our new partnership with NHS Lothian, we were able to bring her, and more people from Edinburgh onto the programme.

In her application, Rebecca described the impact her condition was having but that she was not willing to let it stand in the way of her aspirations:

I was diagnosed with Colitis in December 2021 and since then I feel like I haven't had a consistent education. I have been too unwell to attend school and I have struggled to find a medication which is right for me. I really care about my education and missing school worries me. I'd love to study medicine at University and I have big hopes and dreams for the future."

Rebecca's mum Lorraine also explained how the condition has affected her daughter:

"Rebecca has had a tough couple of years since her diagnosis and missed almost 50% of S3 due to illness. She spent 4 weeks in hospital over the summer holidays and her diagnosis was changed from Colitis to Crohn's. Despite this, she is still working towards Nat 5's and her teachers are delighted with conscientiousness when she attends school."

**CATHERINE
MCEWAN
FOUNDATION
SCHOLARSHIP**
ALL IN FOR EDUCATION



In 2024 Rebecca passed her National 5 exams in Maths, English, Biology and Chemistry gaining an impressive collection of As and Bs. Rebecca will join us again in the 24/25 for ongoing support as she takes her Highers.

Anees

Anees was another of the many Scholars who joined the programme during its large expansion and upscale in late 2023. In reaching out to us - and like every other Scholar - he described how he was worried that his condition would impact on his education. He also explained the common issue where missing school meant a fragmented learning experience and gaps being created in learning.

“I want to succeed in life and become a Doctor but my condition stops me from going into school and continuing with life most times. I really enjoy school and my subjects and I have missed out on a lot of school work. My teachers forget to put work up for me and forget to catch me up when I do go back to school. I don't want to lose my enthusiasm and willingness to learn in life.”



In 2024 Anees passed all of his National 5s which we supported him with, gaining an impressive set of qualifications in Maths, English, Biology and Chemistry. We look forward to seeing him back with us as he moves on to SQA Highers.

Craig

Craig became a Catherine McEwan Foundation Scholar as he was taking his National 5 subjects in S4. He also became one of our furthest travelling Scholars for classes in 2023/24, regularly making the journey from Clackmannanshire to Glasgow almost every weekend across our programme. As is always the case with initial applicants, Craig explained how he worries that his career ambitions might be impacted by his condition, and shows that he will not let that be the case. He also continues an ever-increasing pattern of scholars who are motivated to use their experience as a positive inspiration, and he like many fellow Scholars hopes to have a career in healthcare.

“My teachers say that I'm capable and work well in individual and group projects, that I'm a conscientious hard worker with a good attitude to learning, and that homework is always done to a high standard and handed in on time.

When I'm an adult, I'd really like to work in medicine or as a healthcare specialist and for that, I'd need to get good grades to go to University, and my family have always encouraged me to be the best I can be. I don't want being really ill with Crohn's in 4th year to get in the way of that.”



In 2024 Craig's incredible dedication and hard work paid off when he gained As in National 5 Maths and Biology, and Bs in National 5 English and Chemistry. We look forward to working with Craig as he progresses in S5.

Rona

Rona joined Rebecca in becoming one of the first Edinburgh-based scholars to take part in the programme as we expanded into more parts of Scotland and linked up with new NHS health boards such as Lothian and Forth Valley. The addition of Weekly Lessons and Grade Booster Days in Edinburgh made it possible for learners in the east of Scotland to access our offer and Rona has been another success story in our journey. She originally met our team at the IBD Family Day in Edinburgh in 2023 and decided to apply. In her application she detailed the impact her condition was having and was well aware of how much we could support her.

“I struggle to study because the amount I have to do is so much and I feel overwhelmed. If I came to your sessions this would help me to feel more confident and get to grips with the things I find tricky. I missed S1 and S2 and was on a part-time timetable in S3 because of my Crohn's. I still feel that this affects my ability in certain subjects. It is amazing that there is an organisation that understands this situation and what I have been through. S5 is my most important year and I want to do well so I can go to university.”



In the 2024 SQA exam diet, Rona made her hard work and dedication pay off gaining an impressive set of results: A in Higher English, C in Higher Human Biology, B in both National 5 Maths and National 5 Chemistry.

Andrew

Andrew joined us as an S4 pupil in January 2024 as he worked on his National 5 subjects. He had been having difficulty with his learning as treatment and illness took its toll on him. As with many of our scholars, he saw his grades in school begin to decline and knew he would benefit hugely from the help available via the scholarship programme. Andrew is one of many scholars who has also shown how quickly results in school can improve in a very short space of time, demonstrating just how fast the scholarship supports learners to turn things around and get their education and in many cases, their self confidence back to where it should be.

“I feel my grades have dropped substantially towards the end of last year, the school work was getting harder because I was missing a lot of school due to IBD - I have also been in hospital a lot last year. I would like to come to Saturday school as I would like to go into engineering after school and improve my grades to do so.”



In the 2024 SQA exam diet, despite having joined the scholarship with his grades dropping to 20/30% in school, Andrew passed his National 5 exams in Maths, English, Chemistry and Physics, reigniting his aim to study and work in engineering when he leaves school.

Academic year 23/24 all results

Scholar	Local Authority	Subjects we supported them with	Final SQA exam grades
GB	Clackmannanshire	H English, H Chemistry	A, A
NM	East Renfrewshire	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Biology, N5 Chemistry, N5 Physics	A, A, B, B, B
CS	Clackmannanshire	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Biology, N5 Chemistry	A, B, A, B
RH	Edinburgh City	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Biology, N5 Chemistry	A, B, B, D
NM	Edinburgh City	H Maths, H Physics	A, C
RH	Edinburgh City	H English, H Human Biology, N5 Maths, N5 Chemistry	A, C, B, B
DC	South Lanarkshire	H Maths	B
FW	South Lanarkshire	H English, N5 Maths	B, B
AR	East Dunbartonshire	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Biology, N5 Chemistry	B, C, C, C
LQ	West Dunbartonshire	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Chemistry	C, B, C
AM	Glasgow City	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Chemistry, N5 Physics	C, B, C, C
MH	South Lanarkshire	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Biology, N5 Chemistry	C, B, F, F
AR	South Lanarkshire	H English, N5 Maths	C, C
IL	Borders	H Maths, H English	C, C
HG	Edinburgh City	H English, N5 Maths, N5 Biology	C, F, F
SA	Glasgow City	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Physics	Not given
RL	Glasgow City	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Biology, N5 Chemistry, N5 Physics	Scholar in S3, exam results in 2025
HC	South Lanarkshire	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Biology	Scholar in S3, exam results in 2025
MR	Edinburgh City	N5 Maths	Scholar in S3, exam results in 2025
LG	East Renfrewshire	N5 Maths, N5 English, N5 Physics	Scholar in S3, exam results in 2025

Next steps

As we commence academic year 2024/25, we will continue to grow our offer to ensure we support as many people as possible with their education and future opportunities beyond secondary school. As with all aspects of the Catherine McEwan Foundation, we put progress, development and innovation at the heart of what we do.

Key aspirations for 24/25:

- Further recruitment of even more scholars, linking with more NHS regional boards, local authorities, young people and families
- The introduction of online Monthly Masterclasses to add even more educational support options and break down geographical/travel restraints for our Scholars
- The development and pilot of an offer for primary-aged learners: *STEM Saturdays*, to allow younger learners in upper primary living with IBD to access fun, engaging and hands-on STEM learning activities to build skills, confidence and numeracy
- The continued delivery of our Weekly Lessons and Grade Booster Days across our in-person sites in The Glasgow Academy and St George's School in Edinburgh
- Increased opportunities and dialogue with our Scholars and their families to share wider opportunities such as employer and university engagements/events
- The offer of the SCQF Level 7 Award in STEM Leadership for our Scholars to add further value to their qualification, skills and future opportunities
- Increased subjects on offer including the introduction of AH Chemistry and N5/H Applications of Maths
- The further development/opportunities for our scholars to lead as Ambassadors for the Catherine McEwan Foundation.

He is delighted with his exam results and they are a massive improvement on his prelims before he started his scholarship.

Lindsey, Parent of CMF Scholar

**CATHERINE
MCEWAN
FOUNDATION
SCHOLARSHIP**
ALL IN FOR EDUCATION



catherinemcewanfoundation.com



www.educationacademyscotland.com