

**Department of Business Operations and Partnerships**

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Date: 27 January 2023

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TO: Councillors A. Anderson (Chair), K. Pragnell (Vice Chair), and Councillors T. Buchanan, K. Campbell, D. Devlin, C. Merrick, O. O'Donnell and G. Wallace; and Dr F. Angell; Ms F. Gilchrist; Ms D. Graham; and Mr D. Morris.

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Education Committee will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Eastwood Park, Giffnock, on **Thursday, 2 February 2023 at 10.00am.**

The agenda of business is as listed below.

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DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

**AGENDA**

1. **Apologies for Absence.**
2. **Declarations of Interest.**
3. **Presentation to St Ninian's High School Pupil in Recognition of their Outstanding SQA Award.**
4. **Presentation to Facilities Management Cleaning Service in Recognition of their Best Performer UK APSE Award.**
5. **Education Scotland Reports on Madras Family Centre and Neilston Primary School – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 3 - 42).**
6. **Draft Standards and Quality Report 2021-2022 – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 43 - 86).**
7. **Draft Local Improvement Plan 2023-2026 – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 87 - 98).**
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8. **Education Response to “Let’s Talk Scottish Education” – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 99 - 110).**
  
9. **East Renfrewshire Council Response to the Scottish Government’s Consultation on the Transfer of Education Appeal Committees to the Scottish Tribunals Service – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 111 - 124).**

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**A recording of the meeting will also be available following the meeting on the Council’s YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/eastrenfrewshire/videos>**

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

2 February 2023

Report by Director of Education

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORTS ON MADRAS FAMILY CENTRE AND NEILSTON  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform Education Committee of the reports by Education Scotland on Madras Family Centre and Neilston Primary School.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) note and comment on the contents of the Education Scotland reports on Madras Family Centre and Neilston Primary School; and,
- b) approve the family centre and school's action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Madras Family Centre and Neilston Primary School are situated in the community of Neilston and are led by the same Head Teacher.

4. Madras Family Centre was inspected by a team from Education Scotland in October 2022. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the family centre and identified particular strengths and areas for improvement using the Education Scotland six-point scale and the self-evaluation framework *How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare?*

5. Neilston Primary School was also inspected by a team from Education Scotland in October 2022. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school and identified particular strengths and areas for improvement using the Education Scotland six-point scale and the self-evaluation framework *How Good is our School? (4<sup>th</sup> edition)*.

6. Education Scotland evaluate up to four quality indicators and provide a short report which details the strengths and areas for improvement. The reports for both the family centre and school were published in November 2022 and are attached as Appendices 1 and 2. They have been issued to staff, parents, local elected members, the Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure and made available to the local community.

## REPORT

### Madras Family Centre

7. In assessing the indicators of quality in the family centre, Education Scotland found three aspects of the work to be good: leadership of change; learning, teaching and assessment; and raising attainment and achievement. Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion was judged to be very good.

8. The particular strengths highlighted by the inspection team included:

- The warm nurturing ethos throughout the setting, created by senior leaders and practitioners. Children benefit from strong relationships with practitioners who respect and care for them. Children have made close friendships, which are important to them.
- The stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments, which prompt curiosity and enquiry.
- The dedication of senior leaders and the commitment and resilience of the practitioner team through a period of change. This has ensured children are included, safe and achieving, particularly for those children with additional support needs.

9. This is a good report on an East Renfrewshire establishment, with the evaluations reflecting the department's evaluation of both the quality of provision and the significant disruption caused by Covid-19 pandemic. It is particularly pleasing that the family centre's leadership at all levels was highlighted in the letter to parents/carers as one of the strengths:

- *'Led by senior leaders, practitioners are proud of their contribution to the work of the setting through their leadership responsibilities. These are making a difference to children's wellbeing. They are encouraging families and the community to become more involved with the setting again post pandemic.'*

10. The inspection team identified two areas for improvement:

- Practitioners should continue to engage with national guidance to develop consistently high quality interactions across the team.
- Continue to develop approaches to planning for learning. This will enable children to lead their own learning in greater depth. It will support practitioners to ensure children make the best possible progress.

11. Appendix 3 of this paper includes the school's action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement. The Quality Improvement Service will work closely with the family centre and leadership team to support its implementation.

12. The letter to parents/carers and more detailed summarised inspection findings are available on the [Education Scotland website](#).

### Neilston Primary School

13. In assessing the indicators of quality in the school, Education Scotland found three aspects of the school's work to be good: leadership of change; learning, teaching and

assessment; and raising attainment and achievement. Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion was judged to be very good.

14. The particular strengths highlighted by the inspection team included:

- Enthusiastic and confident children who feel valued and supported. They enjoy learning in Neilston Primary School and are proud of their school.
- The strong culture of teamwork amongst staff. They help each other to develop and improve their work. Their commitment to professional learning and development is having a positive impact on learning and teaching approaches.
- The very effective use of digital technologies to support children in their learning and develop their skills for learning, life and work

15. This is a good report on an East Renfrewshire school, with the evaluations made by Education Scotland reflecting the challenges faced nationally following the Covid-19 pandemic and the department's evaluation of the quality of provision. The school's nurturing and inclusive ethos was particularly noted in the letter to parents/carers as one of the strengths:

- *'The positive relationships across the whole school community which are based on the school values. Senior leaders and staff know children and their families well and work effectively with the local community. They support and create a nurturing environment and an inclusive ethos.'*

16. The very effective approaches to digital learning, combined with teachers' commitment to professional learning which was crucial in supporting remote learning during school closures in 2020 and 2021, was also noted as a strength. It is pleasing that these approaches have continued to be developed and are supporting children well.

17. The inspection team identified two areas for improvement:

- Develop clearer strategic approaches to lead the direction and pace of school improvement activities, with a focus on improving learning outcomes for children.
- Continue to develop consistent approaches to learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that learning is set at the right level of difficulty for all children.

18. Appendix 4 of this paper includes the school's action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement. The Quality Improvement Service will work closely with the school and leadership team to support its implementation.

19. The letter to parents/carers and more detailed summarised inspection findings are available on the [Education Scotland website](#).

20. Education Scotland will make no further reports in connection with the inspection of Madras Family Centre and Neilston Primary School.

21. The Quality Improvement Service will revisit the family centre and school within 2 years of the date of publication to review the impact of the family centre and school's improvement (action) plan in addressing the agreed areas for improvement and to provide a progress report to parents.

## FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

22. There are no financial or efficiency implications related to this report.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

23. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) note and comment on the contents of the Education Scotland reports on Neilston Primary School and Madras Family Centre; and,
- b) approve the school and family centre's action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

Mark Ratter  
Director of Education  
2 February 2023

### **Convener Contact Details**

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### **Appendix**

1. Education Scotland report on Madras Family Centre, Nov 2022
2. Education Scotland report on Neilston Primary School, Nov 2022
3. Madras Family Centre Action Plan
4. Neilston Primary School Action Plan

Appendices

<https://education.gov.scot/media/ckjbdjwu/madras-family-centre-ins-291122.pdf>

<https://education.gov.scot/media/0akdmla3/neilston-ps-ins-291122.pdf>

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# Summarised inspection findings

**Madras Family Centre**

East Renfrewshire Council

29 November 2022

## Key contextual information

Madras Family Centre is part of the Neilston and Madras Learning Campus. The family centre and primary school are managed by the same headteacher. A principal teacher has responsibility for the family centre and Primary 1. The school, family centre and St Thomas's Primary School will move into a new building together in 2024. This is currently being constructed around Neilston Primary School. Children from Neilston, Uplawmoor and Barrhead attend the setting.

The setting provides 1140 hours of early learning and childcare for children aged two to five years of age between 8 am and 6 pm. A range of placements provides families with sessional, full day, term time and 52 week provision. The practitioner team has increased and changed significantly through the move to 1140 hours. The nursery teacher and senior practitioner are relatively new in post. The setting has experienced significant disruption in the first months of 2022 due to COVID-19 related practitioner absence.

At the time of the inspection there were 26 practitioners, one full time teacher, a depute head of centre and a senior practitioner. The setting is registered for 95 children at any one time. There are currently 133 children on the roll.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on working together at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which reflects the context of the setting within its community. Planning for continuous improvement change should be evidence-based and clearly linked to strong self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure that the pace of change is well judged and appropriate to have a positive impact on outcomes for children. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the setting and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- Senior leaders have ensured that practitioners across the family centre and Neilston Primary School share the same vision, values and aims. They are skilled at focusing on improving outcomes for all children attending the setting. Senior leaders' care and compassion has sustained the work of practitioners through times of change and challenge. They demonstrate, through their actions, that they are committed and responsive toward their family centre community.
- The move to providing 1140 hours of early learning and childcare for children aged two to five has brought significant change to senior leaders and practitioners. Children attend on different patterns and the practitioner team has increased considerably in number. Taking forward these changes continues to be a focus for improvement. Senior leaders and practitioners adapt and make changes as necessary to ensure children and their families make full use of the provision.
- Senior leaders and practitioners experienced challenges at times in sustaining enough practitioners as a result of COVID-19. This has affected plans they had in place for continuously improving their work. More recently, senior leaders and practitioners reviewed these plans and improvement activities are underway. For example, enhancing the outdoor area further and enriching children's early mathematical skills. Many of the activities involve parents and the community to ensure they are involved fully. At all times, senior leaders and

practitioners maintain their focus on ensuring children are safe and cared for. They show dedication to their work and resilience during times of challenge.

- Practitioners proudly take responsibility for leadership tasks, which they know will improve the quality of children's learning experiences. For example, interventions to support children's confidence in listening and talking. They are building important skills in leading others through change. Practitioners readily seek out relevant research and link with key partners, which will support them to be successful. They use their skills and talents well as they work alongside their colleagues.
- Senior leaders and practitioners are progressing improvement tasks in a measured way. They are trying out initiatives with smaller groups of children and families and evaluating their success. This is helping senior leaders and practitioners find out the benefits to children and families and if their approaches are sustainable in the longer term. Improving children's progress in early language and communication and early mathematics are a continuing focus for practitioners.
- Senior leaders and practitioners work well together. They are continuing to use national practice guidance including 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' (2020) to evaluate their work. It is timely for senior leaders, as planned, to re-establish more formalised mentoring and the modelling of practice for the practitioner team. Practitioners would benefit from opportunities to receive support and challenge through professional review. This would help facilitate greater consistency in learning and teaching approaches throughout the setting.

**2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment****good**

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of interactions
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- There is a welcoming ethos in the setting. Children are confident in their environment and are encouraged to develop independence. They make choices from a variety of well-presented learning experiences and most engage fully in their learning. Children have time and space to sustain and revisit their play. They are happy and secure, interacting positively with each other.
- Practitioners know children and their families very well. Across the age groups, children benefit from practitioners' warm and supportive interactions.
- Children are keen to speak to their friends and to adults. They willingly share thoughts and ideas. From the youngest children onwards, children have opportunities to engage with role-play, books and stories and mark-making experiences. Children explore early mathematical concepts, particularly in construction and exploratory areas. They demonstrate an interest in applying their skills as they play. Practitioners lead focused group times and targeted interventions well to help children talk and work together.
- Children make good use of sensory experiences such as a sand area on the floor, where children step in with bare feet. This is helping them learn new words and express their feelings. Natural materials and loose parts are incorporated very well into play spaces. Practitioners have organised these materials carefully to promote meaningful learning.
- Children enjoy digital learning through, for example, using large touch screens and programmable toys. Practitioners share tablet computers with children to access information in all areas of the setting. There is scope to develop further children's access to digital technology, to help them to record their own learning.
- Children take part in planned and spontaneous learning experiences indoors and outdoors. Planning for learning processes include 'sparks', ideas that children bring, as well as intentional plans linked to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Practitioners are keen to continue to refine how they support and extend learning through meaningful conversations. This will encourage children to reflect on and talk about their learning. Children would benefit from greater consistency in the skills of thoughtful interactions across the practitioner team. Practitioners should continue to engage with national guidance to develop consistently high quality interactions across the team. As agreed, continue to develop planning processes to support children as leaders of their own learning, helping them develop their own ideas in more depth.
- Helpful systems are in place to check children's progress over time. Linked to this, practitioners make clear observations about what children can do. Observation of play and learning is helping practitioners take a closer look at the progress children make. A broader focus across

the curriculum would enhance this further by illustrating the skills children are developing in all areas of the setting.

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning and development pathways

- Practitioners have been very successful in improving the learning spaces for children to ensure they promote literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing. Practitioners use self-evaluation and research to create a stimulating, attractive environment. Children learn through play across the curriculum. Learning spaces enable children to benefit from a breadth of experiences. Natural materials, many of which are recycled, promote curiosity and enquiry. These help create a calming atmosphere.
- Spaces to promote creativity facilitate exploration with colour. Children use the floor space well to create art through exploring pattern, printing and making models. Practitioners provide musical experiences indoors and outside so children have the opportunity to sing and create sounds. Role-play areas resemble the home, with open-ended opportunities through the availability of fabrics, props and quiet spaces. The 'Stem Den' promotes problem solving and enquiry.
- Practitioners work closely with the community to help children learn about the world of work. Senior leaders, practitioners, local farms and businesses have worked in partnership very well to develop the garden areas.
- Children's individual needs are the focus for planning for transitions into the setting and on to school. Parents are grateful to senior leaders and practitioners for ensuring seamless transitions during periods of challenge.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on children and families – parental engagement

- An established parents' group contributed to the current vision, values and aims. The group meet regularly to discuss the work of the setting and provide valuable feedback to senior leaders and practitioners. Parents are working with senior leaders to enhance further how they find out about their child's progress and which approaches work best.
- Parents are responding well to 'stay and play' sessions which were paused during the pandemic. They enjoy freedom to play alongside their child in all areas of the setting. Sessions are offered on different days to enable as many parents as possible to take up the opportunity. A lending library is provided alongside 'themed' bags to support parents to engage with their child at home.
- Senior leaders and practitioners encourage grandparents to join a nursery session, engaging with their grandchild as they learn about the play spaces and learning experiences provided by practitioners. Post pandemic, this is hugely welcomed.

## 2.1 Safeguarding

- The setting submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.



### 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

very good

This indicator reflects on the setting's approach to children's wellbeing which underpins their ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of each individual. A clear focus on wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all children to be the best they can be and celebrates their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Children aged two to three years of age are settled very well in their playroom environment. They benefit from close relationships with practitioners who know and understand them. Practitioners effectively support children's wellbeing by taking account of their stage of development and individual care needs. They are attentive to children's preferences and their need for social interaction. Children are learning about wellbeing in a supportive environment. Practitioners support sharing, turn taking and children's independence skills very well. They are proactive in considering parents' views.
- Children aged three to five years demonstrate their values of being respectful, honest, safe, responsible, ambitious and ready within the playroom and throughout their play.
- Most children demonstrate a strong sense of self and the warmth of friendship, which is very important to them. A few children are new to the setting and are building confidence at their own pace. Children show that they are learning to manage their own emotions and recognise how others feel. They seek out quiet spaces confidently, to rest as needed. Practitioners guide them well during their play to do this.
- Practitioners provide regular and familiar routines, which contribute meaningfully to wellbeing. Children prepare snack, bake, set tables for lunch and dress for wet weather outdoor play confidently. They come together in their key group to talk, learn more about each other and share their thoughts. This is helping them feel secure and that they belong. Mealtimes, whilst busy, provide opportunities for children to exercise choice and preference. Children are unhurried and take part in conversation at the table.
- Children learn about their rights through focused activity. They share their views, make choices based on their interests and are respected by practitioners who care deeply for them. Practitioners are continuing to enhance their expertise in how to help young children understand their rights.
- Senior leaders and practitioners are meticulous in how they respond to statutory duties. They understand and demonstrate how to safeguard and protect children. In doing so, they have gained the trust of families.
- Where children need additional support to enable them to progress at their own rate, senior leaders work in partnership with families. They create individualised plans, which outline carefully the support children need and who should provide it. Through the work of senior leaders and practitioners, the setting ensures that all children make very positive progress in their learning and development. Senior leaders readily reach out to outside professionals to ensure children have access to as much support as is necessary.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Children are making good progress in their learning. Practitioners understand the impact that the pandemic has had on children's progress. A number of children are new and a few have changed their pattern of attendance.
- Most children communicate using a wide vocabulary. A few younger children are gaining in confidence to share their ideas and needs. Children engage in conversation and listen well to their friends and practitioners. They listen positively to new information and instructions. Children respond very well to stories. They know how to access information from books and other media. Children understand their early writing skills are important. Most are confident in providing a commentary to help their friends and practitioners read their work.
- Most children demonstrate a strong interest in number. They approach practitioners to help them make sense of number as they solve problems and apply their skills through play. A few children are ready to experience more challenge. Outdoors, children measure the distance their car travelled down a slope. They use programmable toys well to create a sequence of movement, demonstrating that they understand positional language.
- Almost all children demonstrate creativity as they paint using their own mixes of colours. They use natural materials to create three-dimensional artwork. Outdoors, children use role-play well to show their imagination and create games. They actively engage in problem-solving, making effective use of the carefully selected materials and toys. Older children have experienced success in growing vegetable and flowers. They use their produce in cooking and baking.
- Senior leaders and practitioners continue to build their confidence in using the East Renfrewshire Council Early Years Tracking Tool to make judgements about children's progress. Practitioners link their observations of children's progress to tracked outcomes. This is helping them to connect informal observations and those they record on a digital platform for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Children demonstrate through their play that they are ready for greater challenge in their learning.
- Senior leaders support practitioners very well in evaluating how well planned interventions contribute to equity for children. Universal and targeted interventions are enhancing children's wellbeing. Practitioners worked with a small group of children to improve their skills and confidence in listening and talking. This was very successful and children's progress is better

as a result. Senior leaders work hard to remove any barriers parents face to ensure children make progress.

## Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

# Summarised inspection findings

Neilston Primary School

East Renfrewshire Council

29 November 2022

## Key contextual information

Neilston Primary School is a non-denominational school serving the villages of Neilston and Uplawmoor in East Renfrewshire. The headteacher is responsible for leading and managing Neilston Primary School and the associated Early Learning and Childcare provision, Madras Family Centre. The current roll of the school is 310 children across 13 classes. A new school building is being built on the existing school site. The building works are extensive and impact significantly on the available playground and outdoor space.

The school has experienced a high number of staffing changes over the last two years, including changes to the senior leadership team. Of the current teaching staff, 61% are new to the school. There have been high levels of staff absence in session 2021-2022 as a result of COVID-19. Attendance for school session 2020-2021 was 95.9% which is above the national average. In September 2021, 10.6 % of children lived within the Scottish index of multiple deprivation zones 1, 2 and 3.

### 1.3 Leadership of change

good

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence-based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners. The themes are:

- developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community
- strategic planning for continuous improvement
- implementing improvement and change

- The headteacher, senior leaders and all staff support children very effectively to understand and use the Neilston Primary School values. Children can describe clearly the ways that the school values help them both inside and outside of school. For example, children know that the value of 'safety' helps them to play well with others in the playground. Children consider the school values with local church representatives during 'reflection space' activities. They enjoy receiving praise postcards at home when they display the school values. Parents describe that receiving praise postcards at home helps them to know and understand the school values.
- Led by the headteacher, staff successfully adapted the school vision and values to RESTORE during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on recovery and regeneration. They supported children very well to rebuild relationships upon their return to learning in school. Staff continue to consolidate and develop effective nurturing approaches to meet the wellbeing needs of children. The school has received a Nurture UK award for this work.
- Across the school, the headteacher, senior leaders and staff know children very well. They have a good understanding of the social, economic and cultural context of the local community. They reflect that supporting children with learning and wellbeing during the pandemic deepened their understanding of the challenges faced by the local community.
- Staff use their knowledge of children and their families well. They work with a wide range of partners across education, sport and leisure, business and the community to promote equity for all learners. Partnership working is having a positive impact on children's attainment and wellbeing. For example, community relaxation sessions promote wellbeing, resilience and a

sense of togetherness. All partners speak positively about the welcoming school ethos and feel their contribution to school life is valued. To maximise the effectiveness of partnership input, staff should work with all partners to evaluate the impact of this work.

- The headteacher and the new senior leadership team support each other very well. The headteacher recognises that, in light of recent changes to the team, there is a need to review senior leadership remits. This will ensure that roles and responsibilities are manageable and focus more clearly on improving children's learning experiences and outcomes.
- Children support the work of the school in a range of relevant leadership roles. For example, they enjoy roles as house captains, pupil council representatives and in the Rights Respecting Schools group. Children participate in the transition steering group with parents to share their ideas about the design of the new school building. This is a useful opportunity for children to influence their learning environment. Staff plan to increase the number and range of children's leadership groups this session. This will provide children with further opportunities to lead the work of the school. Last session, older children used 'How good is OUR school' to evaluate the school's anti-bullying and relationship policies. A few children are unclear how they can share their views and suggestions with adults in the school. As planned, senior leaders should continue to develop the use of 'How good is OUR school?' to gather and act upon children's views.
- The headteacher recognises that current processes to drive the strategic direction of school improvement and guide the pace of change, need to be more effective. Overall, current school improvement priorities aim to improve the skills and confidence of staff in identified areas. Senior leaders and staff should now review improvement priorities to outline clearly the intended impact on children's attainment and achievement. It will also be important to consider the correct balance of new and maintenance priorities. Senior leaders should ensure there is sufficient time to embed improvements, to manage more carefully the pace of change.
- Senior leaders and staff focused rightly on the wellbeing of children and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent recovery year. As a result, quality assurance processes did not take place fully. It is now important that senior leaders reinstate rigorous quality assurance processes. This will help them to identify areas for improvement more accurately.
- Staff complete a range of surveys and use the How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> Edition) framework to identify the strengths of the school and areas for improvement. Senior leaders and staff continue to develop approaches to self-evaluation. They should ensure that the information obtained through surveys is more focused on school improvement and gathered in systematic ways.
- Across the school, there is a strong culture of collegiate working. For example, during periods of remote learning, staff worked together to build on their skills in using digital technologies to support learning. Teachers work collaboratively in joint planning sessions and during team teaching. Colleagues, who are newer to the school, describe that joint planning supports them to use existing school planning processes well.
- All teachers participate in professional enquiry to improve their practice and implement small tests of change. They measure the success of these changes, to evaluate the impact on children's outcomes. The highly effective use of digital technology to support communication with parents is based on this work. Pupil support assistants received valuable professional

learning including the use of reading strategies to raise attainment in literacy. As a result, they provide very effective support to groups and individuals.

- All teachers have opportunities to lead change and improvement. They lead well on curricular areas and deliver relevant professional learning to colleagues. Teachers have started to work with colleagues across the local cluster on a well-planned approach to moderation. Progress in this area has been delayed because of COVID-19. Teachers are well placed to take this work forward.



**2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment****good**

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- The school's vision and values strengthen and build a positive and nurturing ethos across the school. Children and staff in all classes, work together to construct class charters that reflect the school's shared values and commitment to children's rights. Staff know children well, they respect and value them as learners.
- Most children are motivated and engaged in their learning. They are eager and enthusiastic learners who work confidently during set tasks and activities. Across the school, most teachers use suitable teaching approaches which enable children to work in groups, pairs and independently. Staff should continue to reintroduce creative approaches to provide children with more opportunities to be responsible for their own learning.
- Staff across Primary 1 are developing play pedagogy successfully with all children across the stage. They are gaining a shared understanding of learning through play and the role of the adult in the learning environment. Staff plan direct teaching of groups and play opportunities well. They should continue to evaluate the quality of their work to ensure play approaches offer sufficient challenge and progression for all children. Staff make use of the early years national guidance, 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' to develop further their understanding of play pedagogy. They should now regularly evaluate their approaches at key points in the year. This would help staff to build on their successes and ensure improved outcomes for learners.
- In most lessons, teachers match learning experiences to children's needs well. In a few lessons, there is scope to increase the pace and challenge of learning to ensure it is set at the right level of difficulty. This will ensure better outcomes for all children, including the highest attaining. In most lessons, teachers' explanations, instructions and approaches to questioning are clear and support children's thinking skills well. In a few lessons, high quality interactions and skilled questioning prompts deeper thinking and learning, affording children opportunities to reason and analyse.
- All teachers share the purpose of learning and set measures of success for children. This is most effective when co-constructed with children, helping them to be clear about their learning. Children engage in self and peer assessment of their learning regularly. Teachers support older children well to set targets in writing. In these stages, they provide feedback regularly to encourage children and direct them to next steps for learning. This is not consistent across the school. Teachers should involve all children in setting and reviewing a wider range of targets. This will help all children to develop their knowledge of themselves as learners.

- Teachers use digital technologies creatively across the curriculum to deepen and enrich children's learning. For example, children in Primary 7 can access learning independently using teacher recorded video tutorials to re-visit taught concepts. Almost all children are skilled in using interactive boards, tablets, laptops and coding devices from the earliest level. For example, they use software applications to create surveys, info-graphics and edit their work. Children act as digital leaders to support digital literacy within classrooms and across the school. The school has achieved a Digital Schools Award, of which they are proud.
- The current building works reduce the space for learning outdoors. Teachers continue to take some lessons outside when they can, including physical education. Trained 'Forest School' leaders work with classes to make connections within science, learning for sustainability and health and wellbeing. Children are able to articulate the skills they are developing and how they relate to real life. Future work within the planned reintroduction of a 'Skills Academy' will develop further children's skills for life and work.
- Most children have some choice in their learning and in aspects of tasks and activities. For example, within 'Soft Start' or interdisciplinary contexts. This supports them to ask questions that move their thinking on during learning experiences.
- Teachers plan together over differing timescales, using a consistent approach across the school. They make appropriate use of progression pathways to plan for specific curriculum areas. They bundle outcomes and experiences well to provide engaging inter-disciplinary learning experiences.
- All staff focus on closing the gaps in children's learning caused by the poverty related attainment gap, or, as a result of COVID-19. Effective plans are in place to provide targeted support to groups and individuals by employing additional staff using the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF).
- Senior leaders and staff track and monitor children's progress in literacy and numeracy using the local authority's tracking system. Senior leaders and teachers should continue with plans to analyse data more carefully during meetings about children's progress. This will support them to identify the interventions that are making the biggest difference to children's attainment and achievement.
- All teachers gather assessment information to determine the progress that children make. This includes formative, summative and standardised assessments. They plan useful assessment activities for children to demonstrate success in learning through what they can 'Say, Make, Write and Do'. Teachers are developing a shared understanding of national standards by participating in moderation activities. This professional development is increasing their confidence in validating judgements and beginning to deepen their understanding of attainment over time. Teachers should continue to develop the use of National Benchmarks to assess children's progress. This will strengthen their professional judgements and help them to assess the progress children are making through the levels of a Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).

## 2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- Children experience a curriculum underpinned by the school's well-established values. The local authority provides learning pathways, based on the experiences and outcomes of CfE. These are in place for every curriculum area. These pathways support teachers well to plan for progression and build on children's prior learning. Teachers support children well at points of transition as they plan learning for the first term with the next teacher. This approach provides effective continuity in learning. Teachers should continue to develop approaches to make learning meaningful and relevant and plan for the unique context of Neilston Primary School. The reintroduction of learning about the world of work will enhance children's experiences further. Staff are re-establishing partnership working with local businesses and community partners now that COVID-19 mitigations have been lifted. These partners are keen to support learning about the world of work through the school's Skills Academy.
- All children receive two hours of quality physical education each week. Teachers make good use of indoor and available outdoor space to deliver a skills-based, progressive programme of physical education. Children develop ball skills supporting each other well through observation and giving appropriate feedback when working with a partner. They respond well to increasing challenge, dribbling then passing the ball successfully.
- Teachers continue to build on their highly effective approaches to using digital technologies to support learning. They provide engaging opportunities for children to use digital technologies across all areas of the curriculum. A few teachers have continued to create videos of themselves for use in class. Children are highly engaged by this approach and are becoming increasingly independent. In almost all classes, teachers have embedded the use of digital technology in their practice. In other classes or class libraries, children have the option of audiobooks. This supports inclusion and helps to develop children's enjoyment of reading.
- Children at all stages benefit from a clear, progressive skills programme in French. Children are engaged during lessons and apply some of their learning to other curriculum areas. They also learn about French culture.

## 2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Most parents report that staff seek and act upon their views. Parents appreciate the support staff provide to improve children's wellbeing, and in particular, the support they provided during COVID-19. The headteacher consults all parents regularly through online surveys to influence aspects of school life. Parent representatives and children consult with the transition steering group to express their views about the new school building design.
- The headteacher is working with the Parent Council to ensure they share minutes of Parent Council meetings with all parents. There are plans to develop further the variety and regularity of school communication. This will enable parents to plan and attend events and, to further their involvement in their children's learning. Parents expressed a need for parents' evenings to be reviewed in order to increase parental engagement.
- Staff plan a wide variety of opportunities for parents to share their views and ideas throughout the year. These include coffee and chat sessions. Parents are signposted to inputs from guest speakers and webinars on supporting early literacy and numeracy skills at home.
- Parents with children experiencing barriers to learning feel included in meetings about their child. As a result, they feel more able to support their child with learning. A few parents would appreciate more information on their children's progress.

## 2.1 Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

**3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion****very good**

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- All staff have created a nurturing environment and a strong inclusive ethos. They have very good relationships with children. In pre-inspection questionnaires, most children, parents and carers report that children feel safe in school. Most children feel able to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives with an adult in school. A few children and parents feel there could be clearer processes about incidents of bullying. They would like clearer information sharing about how incidents are resolved and expectations of behaviour. As planned, the headteacher should share the recently updated Anti-Bullying policy with all parents and carers. This will support a more consistent and shared understanding about the signs of bullying behaviour and how it can be prevented across the whole school community.
- Children across the school, have a good understanding of children's rights within the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. The school has gained a Silver Rights Respecting Schools Award. Children talk confidently about their rights and what they mean for themselves and others. Across the school, class charters link clearly to children's rights. Children share the 'right of the month' at weekly assemblies and as conversation starters for families on the Parent App. Teachers track the learning and rights covered using planning documentation.
- All staff have a very good understanding of wellbeing indicators with most children able to talk about them. The indicators are integrated into the school's progressive health and wellbeing curriculum framework. They are linked to the CfE experiences and outcomes. This ensures all children benefit from appropriate health and wellbeing experiences, including outdoor learning. These experiences lead to children's improved understanding about all aspects of health and wellbeing and contribute to an inclusive learning environment.
- Staff provide very good opportunities for children to develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills needed to support their mental, social, and physical health. This is helping children to express how they are feeling and use strategies to support their wellbeing. All children have a voice in child's planning meetings and child's plans. This results in high levels of engagement and an environment of respect between children and adults. Almost all children are included and engaged in the life of the school through a wide variety of pupil leadership groups. Children are improving their ability to solve problems, co-operate and improve levels of resilience and perseverance.
- Staff engage effectively with a wide range of agencies to support children's health and wellbeing. During the last academic year, partners such as Active Schools and other health professionals contributed to initiatives supporting children experiencing challenges. These partners helped children to manage their anxiety and overcome reluctance to take part in physical activity. This has supported children well to understand issues that impact on their health and wellbeing.

- Staff receive detailed health and wellbeing transition information for whole classes and individual children. This includes areas of learning covered, effective and consistent classroom routines to support learners and use of resources to support wellbeing. In addition, staff receive a summary of strategies for children with additional support needs. This supports continuity of learning and wellbeing and results in children who are more confident at points of transition.
- Staff undertake appropriate professional learning to ensure they are kept up to date with information relevant to children requiring additional support. Senior leaders ensure that this training leads to measurable improvements in children's wellbeing, through regular check-ins with staff and professional dialogue.
- The local authority submitted self-evaluation information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties, as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff. The HNI also examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole-school health promotion duties as far as they relate to food and nutrition. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the school meals provider.
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and keeping children safe. All staff have completed training in line with their responsibilities and codes of practice. They know their children and families very well, including those who may require additional support. They use staged intervention approaches very effectively to assess and support children. Senior leaders and class teachers track the progress and attainment of children with additional support needs very well. Teachers plan learning which is responsive to the needs of children in most classes. Individualised wellbeing plans support a few children well, with appropriate targets in place. Staff involve parents in planning meetings and very effectively include children's views when agreeing targets and next steps. This results in improved outcomes for these children.
- The inclusive and nurturing ethos of the school leads to the implementation of appropriate interventions to support children who experience challenges. PEF is used effectively to employ staff who support children in nurture groups. Staff gather pre and post nurture intervention information to determine the impact of this work. As a result, children have positive outcomes, such as improved attendance and better engagement in learning. All staff benefit from a variety of professional learning to support inclusion. For example, training in attachment theory and relational practice supports staff to understand the barriers to learning children face. Support staff are skilled in helping children with their learning and emotional wellbeing within classes.
- Senior leaders with pastoral responsibilities work very effectively with teachers, support staff and partner agencies to identify children who have barriers to learning. They monitor their progress and wellbeing rigorously, which is helping to ensure children's needs are met well. Senior leaders monitor attendance closely. They take early action to prevent non-attendance becoming a barrier to learning.
- Staff promote a wide variety of initiatives to improve equality and inclusion for all learners. Parents and children were involved in the creation of an action plan addressing the cost of the school day. This resulted in the school providing a care and share trolley providing food and toiletries, a uniform swap shop and a snack tray.
- Children learn about resilience, diversity and discrimination through planned learning experiences in classes and assemblies. For example, older children recently discussed and debated homophobic bullying. This supports children's understanding and awareness of the diverse communities living in the local and wider school community.



**3.2 Raising attainment and achievement****good**

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children are achieving expected CfE levels in reading, writing, talking and listening and numeracy. Attainment is less strong in aspects of numeracy with the majority of children achieving first level numeracy by the end of Primary 4. At all stages, a few children are working beyond expected levels of attainment.
- During the pandemic, teachers were less confident about the reliability of their judgements of children's attainment of CfE levels. This was the result of two periods of remote learning and significant staff absences. Since school buildings opened, teachers are now re-engaging in professional dialogue sessions to discuss the progress children are making. This is increasing their confidence in making professional judgements. The headteacher has plans to reintroduce professional learning to support teachers' understanding and use of data to help determine children's levels of attainment. This will strengthen their confidence in making professional judgements.

**Literacy and English**

- Overall, children are making good progress in reading, writing, listening and talking. Across the school attainment in literacy and English is good.

**Listening and talking**

- Across the school, most children listen well to instructions from their teachers and most share their views confidently when working in small groups. At early level, children are beginning to take turns when listening and talking in groups. Children should continue to have opportunities to develop their vocabulary and talk in groups. Most children at first level explain clearly the difference between fact and opinion. A few children need prompting to listen well to others and respect their viewpoints. Children should continue to have opportunities to apply their talking and listening skills in a range of contexts to raise attainment in this area. At second level, most children successfully prepare and take part in a debate. They listen well to differing opinions and understand how to influence others' views by using appropriate emphasis, pace and tone.

**Reading**

- At early level, most children recognise familiar single sounds confidently. Most children use pictorial clues to retell familiar stories and predict what might happen next. Children who recently attained first level, read aloud a familiar piece of text, adding expression and showing understanding. A few children were able to answer inferential and evaluative questions. Teachers should continue to work with children to develop their comprehension skills by asking and answering a range of questions about the texts they read. Children working at second level spoke enthusiastically about the novels they choose to read for enjoyment. They are less enthusiastic about their class reading books. They make relevant comments about punctuation and sentence structure.



## Writing

- Children who have attained early level, form letters correctly to write in short sentences. Children, who recently attained first level, write independently, punctuating most sentences appropriately using capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly. They link sentences successfully using appropriate conjunctions such as and, but and because. At second level, most children use notes well to plan for persuasive writing and a debate. In persuasive writing most children present relevant ideas and information in a logical way. Children should develop their understanding of measures of success in writing to raise attainment in this area.

## Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Across the school, attainment in numeracy and mathematics is good.

## Number, money and measure

- Children who have attained early level, sequence numbers forwards and backwards confidently within 30. They are less confident about the months of the year. Children should continue to develop their understanding of time. At first level, most children have a good understanding of place value to hundreds, tens and units. Almost all children at second level, are very aware of the benefits and risks of using bank cards and digital technologies. Across the school, children should have further opportunities to talk about the strategies they use during mathematical calculations. This will deepen and extend their mathematical thinking skills to raise attainment in this area.

## Shape position and movement

- At early level, most children recognise successfully common, 2D shapes. At first level, most children talk confidently about 3D objects using the terms edge, faces, and vertices. Most children working at second level know that the radius of a circle is half the diameter. Children would benefit from further opportunities to apply their knowledge of shape, position and movement in a range of contexts.

## Information Handling

- At early level, most children ask simple questions to collect data and contribute accurately to pictorial displays. For example, when carrying out an eye colour survey. Children working at first level ask and answer questions about travel and display the information successfully in a bar graph. At second level, most children create surveys successfully. They collect, organise and display data accurately through the use of digital technologies.

## Attainment over time

- Overall, most children make good progress in literacy and numeracy over time. Recent data shows the negative impact of the pandemic on progress for individual children, groups and cohorts of children. Senior leaders use data effectively to plan specific interventions to close gaps and accelerate progress for these children. The headteacher plans to develop further the approaches to tracking children's attainment over time. This will help senior leaders and teachers have a clearer understanding of attainment and progress over time within CfE levels across the whole school.

## Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Staff recognise and celebrate children's achievements within and outside school regularly. They celebrate achievements effectively through displays, the use of social media, an online platform and at weekly assemblies. Children are proud to share their successes with others. House captains and vice captains lead the recognition of achievements during assemblies.

This is strengthening children's confidence and skills in planning and delivering presentations.

- Children throughout the school have opportunities to participate in one of many pupil leadership groups. These include the pupil council, eco group, digital leaders, Rights Respecting Schools group, language ambassadors, sports leaders and Junior Road Safety Officers. Senior leaders have gradually reintroduced these groups as restrictions have eased. These groups help children to develop their skills for learning, life and work. Teachers have resumed tracking children's involvement in groups and clubs, following the pandemic. Senior leaders are reinstating the use of this information to identify children at risk of missing out. They actively encourage these children to take part in a school club as a result.

### **Equity for all learners**

- The headteacher uses PEF to provide additional staffing, professional learning and to support participatory budgeting. Senior leaders introduced targeted interventions for children identified through discussions with class teachers. All staff have a strong understanding of the range of barriers to learning children may face. Additional staffing supports reading, writing, numeracy and wellbeing interventions for individuals and groups. High levels of staff absence in 2021-2022 interrupted targeted support for literacy and numeracy. The headteacher re-established targeted interventions as soon as possible to lessen the negative impact on children. All staff engaged in professional learning to help them support vulnerable children using a range of wellbeing interventions. These interventions help children to manage their emotions more effectively and accelerates their progress in overcoming barriers to learning.
- Children responsible for spending the £500 participatory budget consulted their peers and parents to gather ideas. They plan to use the money for school clubs for children who have been less keen to attend previously.

## Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

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## Madras Family Centre Action Plan following Education Scotland Inspection

Area for Improvement	Practitioners should engage with national guidance to develop consistently high quality interactions across the team.				
Impact and Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring and Evaluation
<p><b>Quality Interactions</b></p> <p>Staff are skilled at improving learning outcomes for all children using high quality interactions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide professional learning opportunities for all staff on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Realising the Ambition</li> <li>○ Role of the Adult in the Playroom</li> <li>○ Effective Questioning</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Create opportunities for staff to look outwards and visit settings of best practice.</li> </ul>	PT DHOC SCDO Quality Improvement Team All staff	January 23 – June 24	Realising the Ambition CLPL calendar Professional reading	Learning visits Peer Observations
<p><b>Quality Assurance</b></p> <p>Improved consistency in quality assurance to ensure all staff use skilled questioning and high quality interactions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review previous Quality Assurance arrangements</li> <li>• Look outwards at examples of best practice</li> <li>• Devise and develop a Quality Assurance Guide</li> <li>• Introduce revised Quality Assurance arrangements</li> </ul>	SLT All Staff	January 23 – June 24	HGIOELC Care Inspectorate Quality Framework.	Learning visits Quality Assurance Guide

## Madras Family Centre Action Plan following Education Scotland Inspection

Area for Improvement	Continue to develop approaches to planning for learning. This will enable children to lead their own learning in greater depth. It will support practitioners to ensure children make the best possible progress.				
Impact and Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring and Evaluation
<p><b>Learning and Engagement</b></p> <p>Learning experiences extend and sustain children's interests, help them make decisions and develop their creativity, resilience and independence.</p> <p>Learning is enriched and supported by effective use of digital technologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide professional learning opportunities for all staff on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Realising the Ambition</li> <li>○ How Children Learn and Develop</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Review and refresh planning, observation and assessment approaches.</li> <li>• Create opportunities for all staff to engage in professional inquiry linked to learning, teaching and assessment.</li> <li>• Protect time for staff to share their research and the impact this has on learners.</li> <li>• Build staff capacity in the use of digital technologies to enhance learning and engagement.</li> <li>• Embed digital technologies within the intended planning and provocations across the environment.</li> </ul>	SLT All staff Quality Improvement Team Educational Psychologist PT Equity (Digital Inclusion) PT - STEM	January 23 – June 24	In-Service National Guidance  Enhanced digital technology provision	Learning Visits Peer observations Staff questionnaires (Pre& Post / confidence)
<p><b>Learner Voice</b></p> <p>Children make informed choices about their learning and they have a key role in leading their own learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve children more in planning and leading their own learning by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Creating opportunities for children to talk about their learning and achievements</li> <li>○ Sharing and using a range of assessment information</li> <li>○ Involving children in the planning process</li> <li>○ Engage in CLPL to enrich child involvement in planning learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	SLT  Child Development Officers  EY Teacher	January 23 – June 24	Floorbooks CLPL	Learner conversations Learning visits Floorbooks
<p><b>Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data</b></p> <p>All staff are skilled at using data to identify next steps for learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and challenge staff to use a range of assessment information to improve learning and development, and to reflect on the quality of practice.</li> <li>• Ensure robust tracking of children's progress</li> <li>• Build consistency and rigour of practitioner judgements to ensure learning opportunities meet the needs of individuals.</li> </ul>	SLT  Child Development Officers  EY Teacher	January 23 – June 24	SeeSaw Early Years Tracking Tool	Observations Learning Visits Tracking data Professional Dialogue

Area for Improvement	Develop clearer strategic approaches to lead the direction and pace of school improvement activities, with a focus on improving learning and outcomes for children.				
Impact and Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring and Evaluation
<p><b>Leadership of Change</b></p> <p>The leadership team analyse and use evidence in a structured way to ensure a clear focus on those priorities which will have the greatest impact and lead to sustainable improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devise and implement a more consistent and manageable self-evaluation for self-improvement framework.</li> <li>• Manage a whole school approach to school improvement which takes account of self-evaluation information, local and national priorities.</li> <li>• HT and SLT regularly review progress of school improvement priorities and performance data, managing the pace of change effectively.</li> <li>• Ensure that the actions for school improvements are focused on the core business of the school, implemented consistently throughout; are given time to embed; and are monitored and evaluated.</li> <li>• Involve pupils, staff and parents in evaluating progress and in determining future school improvement priorities.</li> <li>• Negotiate the current and future working time agreement with TU representatives and staff to ensure that appropriate time is given to the essential areas of improvement as outlined by Education Scotland.</li> </ul>	<p>SLT All staff TU Rep</p>	<p>January 23 – June 24</p>	<p>HGIOS ERC Tracking database Working Tim Agreement Parental survey / questionnaires Working Time Agreement</p>	<p>Professional dialogue Pupil dialogue Learning Visits Parental feedback</p>
<p><b>Career Long Professional Learning</b></p> <p>Skilled staff who effectively guide change by connecting improvement and professional inquiry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities created for all staff to engage in professional inquiry</li> <li>• Trends in class level data used to direct professional inquiry focus.</li> <li>• Professional inquiry linked to improvements in learner outcomes.</li> <li>• Update school Professional Inquiry documentation to include focus on data</li> <li>• Protected time in the working time agreement for staff to share their research and the impact this has on learners.</li> </ul>	<p>All staff Quality Improvement Team HE establishments</p>	<p>January 23 – June 24</p>	<p>Working Time Agreement – Time for activity / showcase Professional Inquiry – Whole School Guidance</p>	<p>Review Professional Inquiry documentation submitted and evidence gathered</p> <p>Professional dialogue at May In-service Showcase Professional Dialogue</p>

## Neilston Primary School Action Plan following Education Scotland Inspection

<p><b>Raise Attainment</b></p> <p>High expectations and ambition for all pupils</p> <p>Children will make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment.</p> <p>All staff have a clear understanding of the attainment gap in the school and take forward strategies to address this for identified groups.</p> <p>Attainment in period 2022 – 2026 exceeds the school's 4 year target for pupils in P1, P4, P7;</p> <p>Reading: 89.5% Writing: 86% Talking &amp; Listening: 93% Maths: 86%</p> <p>An improvement in standardised tests scores at P3, P5 and P7.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a consistent approach to target setting and tracking across all stages</li> <li>• Analyse and track attainment and set demanding targets through quality assurance arrangements and professional dialogue with staff on pace, challenge and pupil progress.</li> <li>• Include pace, challenge and differentiation on professional dialogue and learning visit agendas.</li> <li>• Devise, develop and implement a revised Literacy policy and teaching guidance.</li> <li>• Provide high quality professional learning for staff on teaching of reading, writing and talking and listening.</li> <li>• Refresh approaches to 'Talking about Maths' (number talks).</li> <li>• Ensure early identification and intervention for learners' who would benefit from further support or challenge</li> <li>• Continually monitor and track the impact of Pupil Equity Funding.</li> </ul>	<p>ERC PT Literacy Quality Improvement Team PT Literacy Lead DHT – ASN (PEF Lead)</p>	<p>January 23 – June 2026</p>	<p>ERC Tracking database National benchmarks PEF funding</p>	<p>Attainment data Professional dialogue Learning visits Literacy policy &amp; guidance PEF Reports</p>
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Area for Improvement	Continue to develop consistent approaches to learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that learning is set at the right level of difficulty				
Impact and Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring and Evaluation
<p><b>Quality Assurance</b></p> <p>Improved consistency in quality assurance to ensure all staff plan high quality learning experiences for all children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresh previous Quality Assurance arrangements</li> <li>• Look outwards at examples of best practice</li> <li>• Devise and develop a Quality Assurance Guide</li> <li>• Introduce revised Quality Assurance arrangements</li> </ul>	HT DHT All Staff	January 23 – June 24	HGIOS 4 ERC Tracking Database	Professional dialogue Pupil dialogue Learning Visits Quality Review of Learner's work Assurance Guide
<p><b>Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data</b></p> <p>All staff are skilled at using data to identify next steps for learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and challenge staff to develop data analysis / interrogation skills</li> <li>• Ensure robust tracking of pupil progress</li> <li>• Build consistency and rigour of teacher judgements (assessment and moderation)</li> <li>• Introduce 'Fact, Story, Action' Model as part of ongoing professional dialogue and target setting process</li> </ul>	SLT All Staff Quality Improvement Team PT – Learning Teaching & Assessment	January 23 – June 24	Formative and Summative Assessment Information ERC Tracking Database SSNA Data BGE Dashboard SEEMIS Information Regional Improvement Collaborative	Pupil dialogue Professional dialogue Learning Visits Pre and post staff survey on confidence of using data
<p><b>Learning, Teaching and Assessment</b></p> <p>Pupils receive high-quality learning experiences, which are appropriate to their needs.</p> <p>Assessment approaches are</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in the West Partnership 'Improving Our Schools' (IOS) programme</li> <li>• Provide professional learning opportunities for staff on high quality learning and teaching including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use of the design principles</li> <li>○ Learning environments and creative teaching approaches</li> <li>○ Formative assessment approaches</li> <li>○ Differentiation</li> <li>○ Higher Order Thinking Skills</li> <li>○ Bloom's Taxonomy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	SLT Identified Staff All teaching staff PSAs	Ongoing August 22 – June 24	IOS CLPL Materials	Learning Visits Attainment Data Professional Dialogue Pupil Dialogue Peer Observations Staff Induction Programme

## Neilston Primary School Action Plan following Education Scotland Inspection

<p>matched to the learning needs of learners and are used to support them to demonstrate where they are in their learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate opportunities for all staff to look outwards at examples of best practice; and regularly share observations across the staff team.</li> <li>Create a staff induction resource – ensuring consistency across all classrooms.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Learner Voice</b></p> <p>Pupils have more opportunities for leadership and involvement in planning learning, including planning how their skills can be developed over time.</p> <p>Confident learners who can articulate clearly and make decisions about their learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involve pupils more in planning and leading their learning by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consulting on their curriculum</li> <li>Collaborating to design clear curriculum / skills pathways</li> <li>Use of HGI OUR School</li> </ul> </li> <li>Create opportunities for pupils to develop skills for learning, life and work.</li> </ul>	<p>Employers FE and HE establishments Third sector ERC DYW Team All Staff PT – Skills Academy</p>	<p>January 23 - June 24</p>	<p>HGIOURS Skills academy Grant Funding &amp; Fundraising</p>	<p>HT pupil forum feedback IDL planners Learning visits Curriculum/skills pathways</p>

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE2 February 2023Report by Director of EducationDRAFT STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021 - 2022**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To inform Education Committee of the proposed contents of the Education Department's annual Standards and Quality Report for school session 2021 - 2022.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. Education Committee is asked to:
- a) Comment on the content of the annual Standards and Quality Report; and,
  - b) Ask the Director of Education to make any amendments and take the necessary steps to produce and issue copies of the report for stakeholders.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Under the terms of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 education authorities have a duty to produce and publish annually a Local Improvement Plan which details how it and its schools and services will continuously improve, and, based on this plan, a Standards and Quality Report detailing how it has sought and achieved improvements in provision.

4. The Local Improvement Plan, upon which this report is based, was approved by Education Committee in February 2021 and reflected the National Outcomes for Education, the Council's Community Plan and the department's contributions to the Council's Outcome Delivery Plan 2021 – 2024. The plan lists the expected outcomes and impact and is organised under the department's vision statement "*Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*". The draft Standards and Quality Report reflects the three key themes of the vision and evaluates the action taken and the improvements achieved as a result.

5. The draft Standards and Quality Report provides evidence of the progress the department and ELC settings and schools have made in supporting all learners, with a particular focus on inequalities of outcome experienced by our more disadvantaged children and young people. The report also details the improvements we have made towards the four national priorities as set out in the National Improvement Framework (NIF).

## REPORT

6. The department has undertaken a self-evaluation exercise which has informed the draft report. This evaluation has helped to outline our next steps which will be fed into the next Local Improvement Plan that is the subject of a separate report to Education Committee. The draft takes into consideration the continued challenges that session 2021-22 presented to East Renfrewshire's residents, families, children, young people, council staff and leaders alike as we adjusted to the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

7. The draft included as Appendix 1, highlights the very good and excellent standards and practice achieved by the department, its schools and services during these difficult times and is offered as a public record of some of the activities which were undertaken during the last school session, and their impact on stakeholders.

8. Evidence for the Standards and Quality Report is gathered annually through a range of activities designed to provide support and challenge to schools and centres. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence for the 2021-22 report was limited to the following sources:

- performance and questionnaire data;
- reports on schools and early learning and childcare settings from the Quality Improvement Team;
- thematic reviews by Education Scotland;
- reports on Early Learning and Childcare Settings by Care Inspectorate Scotland;
- school and service improvement plans and Standards and Quality Reports; and,
- SGS Customer Service Excellence review (CSE).

9. Following feedback, the format of the 2021 - 2022 report has again been designed to provide a more concise, visual and high level summary of the progress made in implementing the 2021 - 24 Local Improvement Plan.

10. With committee approval, the Department plans to issue the report electronically to all parents of children attending an East Renfrewshire school or Early Learning and Childcare setting. A limited number of copies of the published report will also be available in all libraries, education, sports and cultural centres and Council buildings, and will also be available to be viewed online or downloaded from the Council's website.

## FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

11. There are no financial or efficiency implications arising from this report.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

12. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) Comment on the content of the annual Standards and Quality Report; and,

- b) Ask the Director of Education to make any amendments and take the necessary steps to produce and issue copies of the report for parents.

Mark Ratter  
Director of Education  
2 February 2023

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**Appendices**

1. Draft Standards and Quality Report 2021 - 2022

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# Standards and Quality Report 2021-22



Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences



# Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences





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<b>Excellent Experiences</b>	page 28



EVERYONE  
ATTAINING



EVERYONE  
ACHIEVING  
EXCELLENT  
EXPERIENCES

East Renfrewshire Council is committed to providing the highest quality services for all our residents. This Standards and Quality Report demonstrates the strong culture for improvement within the department and across our early learning and childcare settings, schools and services, along with the progress made in achieving our expected outcomes and impact in the past year.

The Quality Improvement Team, through self-evaluation activities, have gathered evidence which has informed this report and enabled the department to identify next steps as it continues in its quest to provide the highest quality of experiences for all our learners. These next steps will be undertaken over the next three sessions through implementation of our Local Improvement Plan 2023-26. External evaluation is carried out by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate who, in visiting our schools and centres, commented very favourably on the practice they observed.

The ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic during session 2021-22 continued to offer challenges for East Renfrewshire's residents, families, children, young people, council staff and leaders alike. It is a credit to all staff how they remained focused on ensuring the best possible outcomes for all learners, no matter the circumstances. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their efforts and acknowledge that relentless focus on meeting the priorities set by the Council and at a national level through the National Improvement Framework.



The Education Department remains fully committed to meeting the needs of the General Equality Duty, as outlined by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, through eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. This responsibility, alongside the commitment to the council's values of ambition, kindness and trust are clearly evident throughout this report.

This Standards and Quality report is an accolade to the many fantastic achievements of East Renfrewshire's Education Department, its early learning and childcare settings, schools and services and the progress made in the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence in session 2021-22.

**Councillor Andrew Anderson,**  
Convener of Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure





# Introduction

During 2021-2022 the context of COVID-19 was still relevant for our children, young people, staff and families, as was our unrelenting focus on mitigating against the impact of the global pandemic, in particular our ongoing commitment to improving our children and young people's health and wellbeing.

The report illustrates the many ways in which children and young people in East Renfrewshire are being supported through enriching, engaging experiences which will help them to become healthy, active and confident citizens. Through the self-evaluation activities which have informed this report, the department has identified next steps in achieving our vision. These will be taken forward over the next three sessions through implementation of our Local Improvement Plan 2023-26.

The strong culture of collaboration and empowerment within the department, together with the high ambitions and standards we set for ourselves, combine to create a unity of purpose and a very high capacity for continuous improvement. I hope you find our Standards and Quality Report for 2021-22 helpful in illustrating how we have worked together to deliver our vision and strive to achieve excellence and equity for all.

*Mark Ratter*

**Mark Ratter,**  
Director of Education



I am pleased to share with you our Standards and Quality Report 2021-2022. We celebrate here the achievements of children and young people and recognise the success of our early learning and childcare settings, schools, services and staff.

The Education Department's vision of Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences continues to provide the focus for all that we do, as we seek to provide the highest quality education and services to children, young people and adults within East Renfrewshire. Our Standards and Quality report is structured under this vision and details progress during session 2021-22 towards each of the target outcomes and impacts detailed in the Education Department's Local Improvement Plan for 2021-24. This report also demonstrates clearly the progress we have made towards the four national priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework.



# Background Information

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## About the Education Department

In 2021-22, East Renfrewshire Council's Education Department provided an education service through seven secondary schools, twenty-four primary schools, of which thirteen have nursery classes, ten family centres and one school for children and young people with additional support needs. The Education Department also has responsibility for Adult Learning and Facilities Management.

## About the Standards and Quality Report

The Standards and Quality Report details the progress made towards achieving the outcomes and impact set out in the Education Department's Local Improvement Plan 2021-24. The Local Improvement Plan is organised under the Education Department's vision of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences* and has a clear focus on outcomes and impact on learners, parents and carers, staff and the community.



**Evidence for the Standards and Quality Report is gathered annually through a range of activities designed to provide support and challenge to schools and ELC settings. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence for the 2021-22 report was limited to the following sources:**

- performance and questionnaire data
- reports on schools and early learning and childcare settings from the Quality Improvement Team;
- thematic reviews by Education Scotland
- reports on Early Learning and Childcare Settings by Care Inspectorate Scotland
- school and service improvement plans and Standards and Quality Reports
- SGS Customer Service Excellence review (CSE)

### **This report is also informed by:**

- the Education Department's Outcome Delivery Plan
- the Scottish Government's GIRFEC wellbeing indicators: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included
- the Scottish Government's National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan
- the four capacities of *Curriculum for Excellence*: successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors

The results of this self-evaluation will be used to plan the next steps, inform the main themes of our Strategic Equity Funding Plan 2022-26 and will be incorporated into the next Local Improvement Plan.





# Schools & Services Inspected



## Schools and Services Inspected in 2021-22

During session 2021-22, a series of inspections took place to evaluate and report on standards and quality.

### Education Scotland

Education Scotland carried out national thematic inspections of Early Learning and Childcare settings and schools with a focus on supporting recovery.

Four East Renfrewshire establishments were selected as part of the national review:

- Glenwood Family Centre
- Giffnock Primary School
- Isobel Mair School
- Barrhead High School

### Care Inspectorate

The following early learning and childcare settings underwent an inspection by the Care Inspectorate:

- Maidenhill Nursery Class
- St Cadoc's Nursery Class

The following schools were engaged in a Follow Through to Education Scotland Inspection:

- St John's Primary School
- St Mark's Primary School

## Standards & Quality and Thematic Reviews

The authority's Quality Improvement Team also carries out reviews which focus on aspects of provision.

A thematic review of the implementation of the Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy took place, looking at the extent to which the strategy improved attainment, achievement and experiences in our schools and ELC establishments in numeracy and mathematics.

Establishments in the Williamwood Cluster (Cart Mill Family Centre, Overlee Family Centre, Busby Primary School, Carolside Primary School, Netherlee Primary School and Williamwood High School) took part in a review which looked at effective transitions for pupils moving from early years to primary and primary to secondary.

Collaborative Improvement Visits took place at Crookfur Primary School and Family Centre, Cross Arthurlie Primary School and Nursery Class and Kirkhill Primary School.

Collaborative Improvement Visits took place with secondary practitioners in Mathematics and Creative and Performing Arts departments.



# Everyone Attaining

## NIF Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy

East Renfrewshire continues to advance equity and excellence as demonstrated through a wide range of local and national attainment measures. Our children and young people achieve exceptionally high standards of attainment throughout the broad general education and senior phase.

### Senior Phase Attainment

Pupils across East Renfrewshire excelled in SQA qualifications with once again another year of outstanding results. These achievements are a tribute to the hard work of pupils, who have also been very well supported by staff and parents.

- ✓ 77% of S4 pupils attained 5 or more awards at National 5 or better, similar to the performance in 2019
- ✓ Increase in the proportion of learners achieving 8+ National 5 awards and 8+ National 5A awards in S4 when compared to the last examination year in 2019
- ✓ 47% of S5 pupils attained 5 or more awards at Higher, up from 44% in 2019. There was also an increase in the proportion of grade A awards achieved from 46% in 2019 to 51% in 2022
- ✓ 69% of S5 pupils attained 3 or more awards at Higher, up from 65% in 2019. This compares very favourably to the Virtual Comparator's value of 51% and the National average of 37% in 2022
- ✓ At Advanced Higher, 44% of S6 pupils achieved one or more awards (an increase of 4% since 2019); 22% of learners achieved at least one Advance Higher at grade A. Commendably, the proportion of presentations achieving A awards at Advanced Higher in S6 increased from 34% in 2019 to 47% in 2022
- ✓ St Luke's High continued to perform well at National 4 level, with almost 96% of S4 pupils achieving this measure
- ✓ Both Eastwood and Barrhead High schools performed extremely well at National 5, with Eastwood High achieving its highest ever proportion of S4 pupils attaining 5 or more awards
- ✓ Barrhead and Woodfarm High schools recorded their highest ever proportion of S5 pupils attaining 5 or more awards at Higher
- ✓ Williamwood High recorded its second highest level of attainment for S5 pupils in 1 or more and 3 or more awards at Higher
- ✓ At St Ninian's High, over a quarter of S5 pupils attained 5 or more A Awards at Higher and Mearns Castle High recorded its largest proportion of S5 pupils attaining this measure
- ✓ Pupils at Isobel Mair school delivered fantastic SQA results, with senior pupils achieving a range of National 2 and vocational qualifications.



## Curriculum for Excellence Judgements

In 2021-22 almost all pupils in P1, P4 and P7 combined, achieved the appropriate Curriculum for Excellence level of attainment in the Broad General Education as measured by teacher professional judgement of progress in reading and talking and listening, with most pupils attaining the expected level in numeracy and writing. The proportions of East Renfrewshire pupils in P1, P4 and P7 combined achieving the expected level in these curricular areas, are significantly higher than the latest published national proportions (2020-21). The levels of attainment of East Renfrewshire pupils in the Broad General Education has remained consistently high, however as a consequence of the Covid-19 global pandemic primary attainment in reading, writing, talking and listening and numeracy has decreased slightly over the last three years.

## Teacher professional judgements

Based on P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined	2018-2019	2020-2021	2021-2022*	ERC 3 Year Average 2018-19 to 2021-22	National Average 2021-2022
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Reading	91%	90%	98%	90%	78%
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Writing	88%	87%	87%	88%	73%
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Talking & Listening	94%	94%	93%	94%	85%
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Numeracy	91%	90%	90%	90%	78%

Based on S3 Pupils	2018-2019	2021-2022*	National Average 2021-2022
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level – Reading	97%	97%	88%
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level – Writing	96%	97%	87%
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level – Talking & Listening	98%	97%	89%
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level – Numeracy	96%	98%	89%

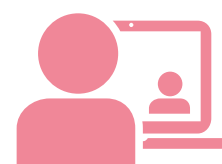
Based on S3 Pupils	2018-2019	2021-2022*	National Average 2021-2022
% Attaining Fourth Level – Reading	81%	83%	54%
% Attaining Fourth Level – Writing	80%	81%	53%
% Attaining Fourth Level – Talking & Listening	81%	82%	55%
% Attaining Fourth Level – Numeracy	78%	83%	59%

\*No data gathered in 2019-20 due to Covid-19 lockdown

Quality assurance and moderation remained a key focus throughout 2021-22. The department worked in partnership with schools to adapt approaches to sharing standards in order to continue to support establishments and practitioners with learning, teaching and assessment. Over the past 9 school sessions, the authority has had a significant focus on developing a shared understanding of standards through a range of moderation activity and professional learning opportunities across all sectors. This has been essential in supporting schools in identifying appropriate interventions which have the biggest impact on improving attainment in literacy and numeracy.

A range of professional learning opportunities were developed and delivered to staff across sectors. The programme of Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) offered was highly evaluated. The qualitative comments received indicate a continued appetite for professional learning on the various aspects of the learning, teaching and assessment cycle/process.

**Staff noted that more cross sector moderation would be helpful and that a key focus should remain on transitions and progression across levels throughout the Broad General Education (BGE)**



**Evaluations from the sessions indicate that almost all 95% feel that they are more confident in the process of moderation and have developed further a shared understanding of standards**

## Questionnaire Data

Statistics from the 2021-22 questionnaires showed that 94% of teachers agreed that they engaged regularly in effective moderation activities that decided standards and expectations, an increase of 2% compared with 2020-21; 89% stated they had regular opportunities to help shape the curriculum through discussions with colleagues and partners, an increase of 5% compared with 2020-21, reflecting the removal of public health restrictions and increased opportunities for collaborative work on curriculum development.

Statistics from staff questionnaires in 2021-22 showed that almost all teachers continued to agree that they were aware of their school’s strategies for raising attainment for all and used information and data effectively to reduce inequalities in children’s and young people’s outcomes.





Reading Recovery was delivered in 16 primary schools to 100 identified individual children. Post intervention assessment indicated that average reading ages had increased by 1.5 years. Schools have indicated through their self-evaluation processes that the children participating in Reading Recovery are transferring their skills to the class setting and practitioners are noting improvements across literacy and English.

*“I have found discussions around research very interesting and useful to inform my teaching and initiatives within my schools and provide me with the necessary evidence to support my decisions”.*

**Teachers Reading Group, Participant 1**

*“There has also been a big impact on the children’s writing skills, which was something that hadn’t been a focus but a very pleasing by-product. From reading more often, and due to reading a more varied group of books, the children now have more of an awareness of different story structures. Some of them are now able to incorporate different story features into their imaginative writing without being taught it.”*

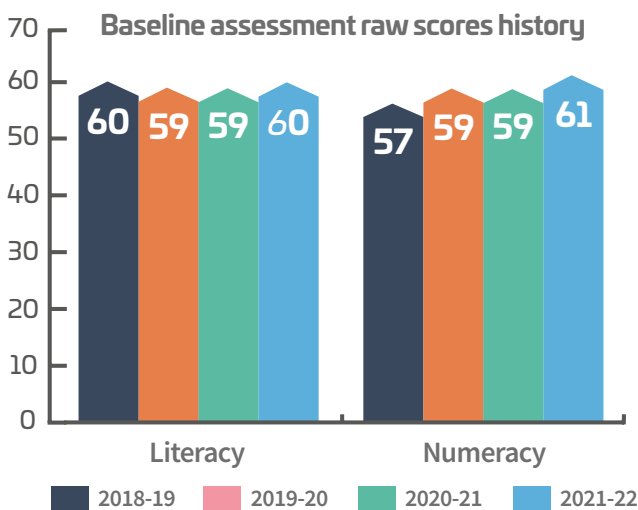
**Teachers Reading Group, Participant 2**

*“There is a new reading atmosphere in our classroom that we made together.”*

**Teachers Reading Group, Participant 3**

## Baseline Performance

A Baseline Assessment has been in place since 2005-06 to assess children’s attainment in literacy and numeracy on entry to Primary 1. Overall performance in literacy and numeracy remained consistent with previous years.

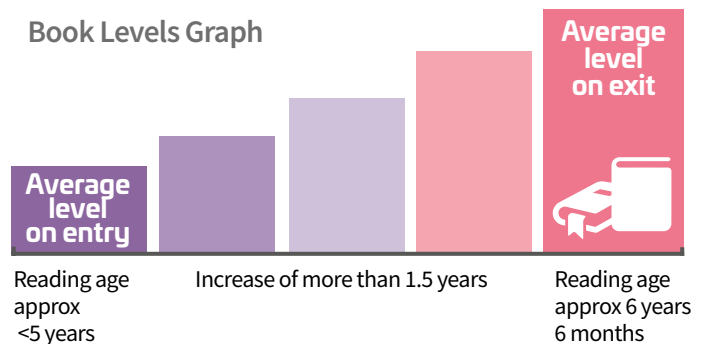


## Literacy Strategy

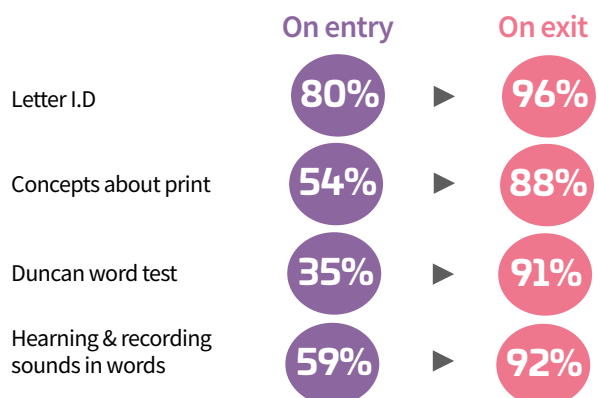
East Renfrewshire’s Literacy Strategy actions have continued to be progressed, with a complementary Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) programme in place. Guidance in relation to Talking and Listening was published with a programme of CLPL to support its implementation. Writing Guidance was also launched with accompanying CLPL to support ELC settings and schools to develop their approaches to teaching writing.

The Teachers Reading Group – Reading for Pleasure, introduced in partnership with the Open University to focus on developing reading for pleasure in schools, continues with a new cohort of staff participating. In CLPL evaluations, staff consistently report that they have improved skills and confidence in teaching literacy.

### Book Levels Graph



### Average results of assessments with ceiling caps





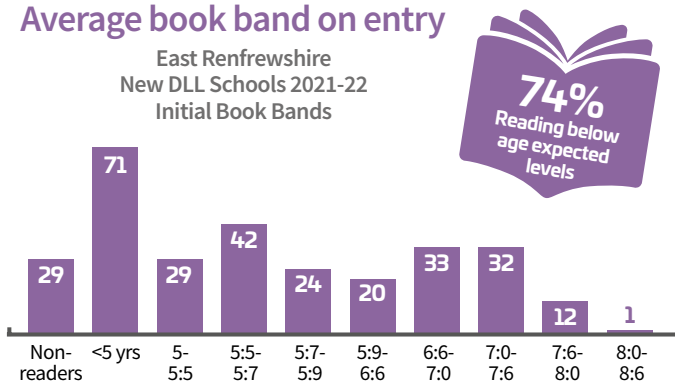
## Numeracy & Maths Strategy

A relentless focus on designing and implementing evidence based interventions to improve literacy outcomes and mitigate against children and young people who missed learning as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic remains. This includes the introduction of Daily Literacy Learning (DLL), a programme related to the methodologies of Reading Recovery, in primary schools. Daily Literacy Learning is a whole class approach to teaching reading and writing with a focus on oral language development.

The impact of the programme is evident with 292 primary 2 pupils across 7 schools participating. 74% of pupils were non-readers or were reading at emergent literacy levels before the intervention whilst 62% of pupils are now reading above expected levels.

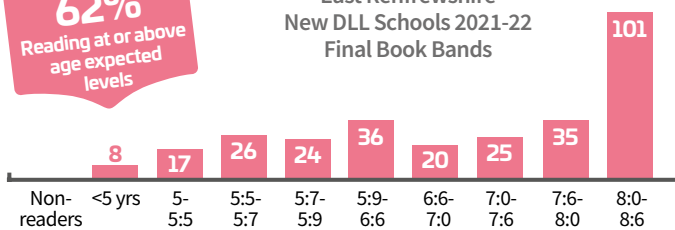
### Average book band on entry

East Renfrewshire  
New DLL Schools 2021-22  
Initial Book Bands



### Average book band on exit

East Renfrewshire  
New DLL Schools 2021-22  
Final Book Bands



With the support of colleagues in Education Scotland and the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) a review of the impact of the Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy 2018–2021 was undertaken in February and March 2022.

This review highlighted clearly the impact the strategy had on learners and staff. It also recognised key strengths in our ELC settings, schools and across the Education Department, including:

- East Renfrewshire was the highest performing Local Authority in numeracy at P1, P4, P7 year stages of the BGE, with attainment in the senior phase in numeracy and mathematics being much better than the national average and our virtual comparator
- In almost all classrooms and playrooms children and young people are motivated and engaged in their learning and the relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive
- Pedagogy in numeracy and mathematics is an improving picture. Up-to-date research has influenced the professional learning offer, with staff advocating a more investigative, explorative approach to learning
- The numeracy and mathematics skills framework provides a consistent curriculum pathway. It enables a strong cluster approach to learning and supports consistency at key transition stages
- The views of learners regarding numeracy and mathematics are very positive. In questionnaires, most, pupils in primary, special and secondary school strongly agreed or agreed that they enjoyed learning in numeracy and mathematics and felt that they were making good progress
- Staff across all sectors are very positive about numeracy and mathematics, in particular the high quality support and professional learning they have received
- All establishments felt the leadership role of the Maths Champion had made a positive impact through the sharing of key knowledge, training and resources with the wider staff.

## Baseline

### NIF Priority 2: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

Baseline assessment data in 2021-22 highlighted a gap between the attainment of those living in SIMD 1-3 and those in SIMD 8-10. This poverty related attainment gap has remained unchanged at 9 points for numeracy compared to the previous year and reduced in literacy from 10 points in 2020-21 to 7 points in 2021-22.

Equity is at the heart of East Renfrewshire's education strategy and attainment results reflect the work of teachers to vigorously support all pupils. The department has rigorous and highly effective approaches to monitor and track the equity of provision for young people across our schools.

This positive result may be attributed to the high quality remote learning which was available during the periods of school closure and the increased provision of 1140 hours ELC which these children received. Resources from recovery monies were effectively deployed to support the recovery curriculum with a focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

The analysis of outcomes for children and young people in the key equity groups is a central feature of our approach to self-evaluation and quality improvement. The Education Department and schools use data regularly to raise awareness, monitor progression, build leadership capability and capacity, plan improvement activities, and set targets.

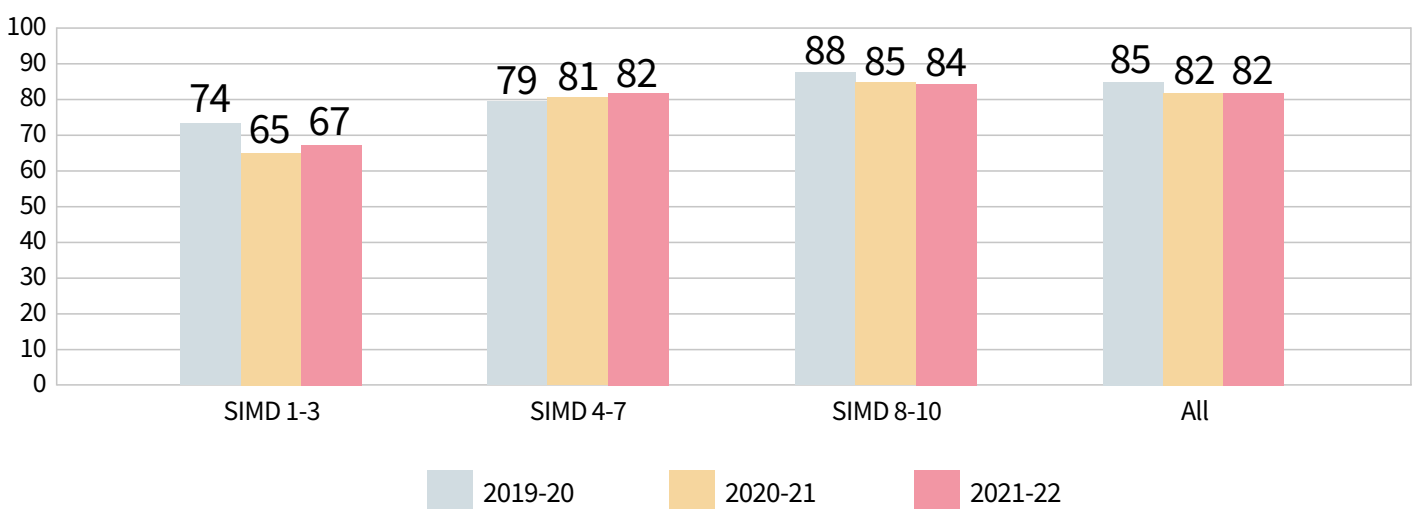
## Developmental Milestones

Developmental milestone data in 2021-22 demonstrated that the proportion of children residing in SIMD 1-3 properties achieving their milestones on entry to P1 increased slightly by 2 percentage points to 67% compared with 65% in 2020-21, this is still significantly lower than a previous recorded high of 74% in 2019-20 (following a 4 year trend of improvement). Meanwhile the proportion of children achieving their milestones residing in decile areas 4-7 and 8-10 has increased slightly or remained relatively consistent over the same period, with 82% and 84% of children respectively attaining the measure, resulting in a significant gap between those in deciles 1-3 and the remainder of the cohort.

## Raising the bar and closing the gap

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) can be used to identify children and young people who live in the most deprived areas in Scotland. Nationally, we compare the performance of a range of key equity groups against overall performance to measure and monitor the poverty related attainment gap.

## Developmental Milestones: History: by SIMD 2019-20 to 2021-22



## SQA

The gap in performance between the most and least deprived (Q1 v Q5) S4 learners achieving 5 or more SCQF level 5 awards increased by 3% in 2021-22 to 32%; this compares favourably to the Virtual Comparator (44%) and National average (41%) for the same measure in 2021-22.

The percentage of S4 pupils with cumulative Insight point attainment scores of 263 or less (equivalent to eight "Pass" awards at National 4 level) increased from 5.2% in 2018-19, to 7.1% in 2021-22.

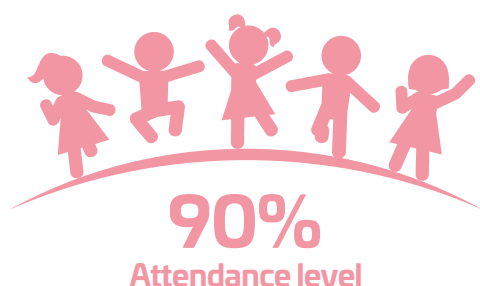
## Free Meal Entitlement

The proportion of young people with free meal entitlement in S4 attaining 5 or more SCQF Level 5 awards remained at 55% in 2021-22; this compares favourably against the national and Virtual Comparator values; with 25% and 51% respectively.



## Looked After Children & Young People

The overall attendance level for looked after pupils of 90% in East Renfrewshire compares favourably to the national figure of 87%. More targeted interventions are now being provided by schools and third sector partners to support the attendance and engagement of care experienced learners.



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## Scottish Attainment Challenge Pupil Equity Funding

East Renfrewshire schools received a total of £1.6m Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) in session 2021-22 to resource their work to tackle the poverty-related attainment gap. As in previous years, schools adopted a wide range of interventions based on the needs of identified children in their local context, for example:

- Targeted support for literacy and numeracy learning and teaching
- Initiatives to promote digital inclusion
- Support for pupil health and wellbeing
- Collaboration with third sector partners to support pupils and families facing specific barriers to school attendance and participation
- Initiatives to reduce the cost of the school day
- engage in professional dialogue within settings and across sectors.

The department worked together with Education Scotland during May and June to evaluate the impact of PEF from 2017-22. The following key strengths were identified:

- The impact of the reading recovery programme on pupil engagement and attainment
- Numeracy and literacy progress as measured through Curriculum for Excellence levels
- Improvement in attendance, pupil motivation, engagement, confidence and self-esteem
- Professional learning and collaborative opportunities for practitioners to support equity
- The development of the Child Poverty Delivery Improvement Group, established in 2019 to support coordinated working across services to reduce the impact of child poverty
- An increase in collaborative working with other establishments, partners, parents and local businesses
- Leadership opportunities which have resulted in increased understanding of poverty-related barriers to learning, motivation and job satisfaction.

A refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched by Scottish Government in March 2022, including the introduction of a new Strategic Equity Fund (SEF). This fund will support central education departments in their work to improve education outcomes for children and young people experiencing disadvantage across the authority area.

Throughout spring 2022 officers consulted and involved pupils, parents and staff to develop a clear strategic plan for the use of SEF over the next four years. Updated guidance on the effective use of PEF and associated support sessions were provided for head teachers in May 2022.

## Raising Attainment and Achievement

As part of the Education Department's annual improvement planning and reporting cycle, all ELC settings evaluate their performance against key quality indicators for How Good is Our ELC? with schools evaluating against indicators from How Good Is Our School?4. The Quality Improvement Team work together with Head Teachers to ensure that each school's self-evaluation is rigorous and takes account of a wide range of evidence gathered from diverse sources and involving all stakeholders.

In 2021-22, 100% of schools continued to evaluate their progress as 'good' or better for raising attainment and achievement. 52% were evaluated as 'very good' and 9% as 'excellent'. The higher proportion of 'very good and excellent' evaluations compared with 2020-21 reflects the rigorous efforts by schools and departments to mitigate against the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and address gaps in learning as a consequence of school closures the previous year.



## Early Learning and Childcare

We have taken a variety of steps to support quality, coherence and progression across early level learning and teaching.

This has included the successful delivery of high quality professional learning opportunities for school leaders and teachers on developing playful pedagogy in their schools in partnership with University of Strathclyde. This training was well attended and evaluated positively. Impact was demonstrated in follow up visits with the majority of schools inviting a member of the QIO team to their establishment to further support this child-centred approach to learning and teaching.

As a result of this continued focus, children in all primary one classrooms now experience a more responsive curriculum in more playful environments which supports their curiosity and independence well. Teachers are becoming increasingly skilled in achieving an appropriate balance of adult and child directed activities which ensure that children make very good progress across the Early Level as they move from nursery into primary one.



Financial resources were provided to all primary schools to enable them to extend their provision in the early years and this was seen to have a positive impact on the learning environments and the children's experiences. Children are also benefitting from increased access to outdoor learning which is being delivered as part of the overall approach to learning through play.

Teachers and senior leaders in primary schools have begun to engage with the data in the Early Years Tracking Tool which is used in ELC settings to track and monitor children's progress. This supports continuity and progression across Early Level and enables practitioners to more effectively build on what children already know and can do when they start primary one.

## Early Years Action Plan

We continue to promote the entitlement of 1,140 hours ELC for all eligible 2 year olds in partnership with colleagues including Health Visitors, Social Workers and Family First Workers who are fully aware of the eligibility criteria and encourage families to apply for places. We were able to meet the demand for places for eligible two year olds again this year. As well as providing Early Learning and Childcare for eligible and vulnerable 2 year olds, where there was capacity to do so we were also able to support working families with the offer to purchase nursery places. A further 102 children and families in this age group benefitted from this service.

134  
children  
allocated  
places

12%  
increase on  
the previous  
year

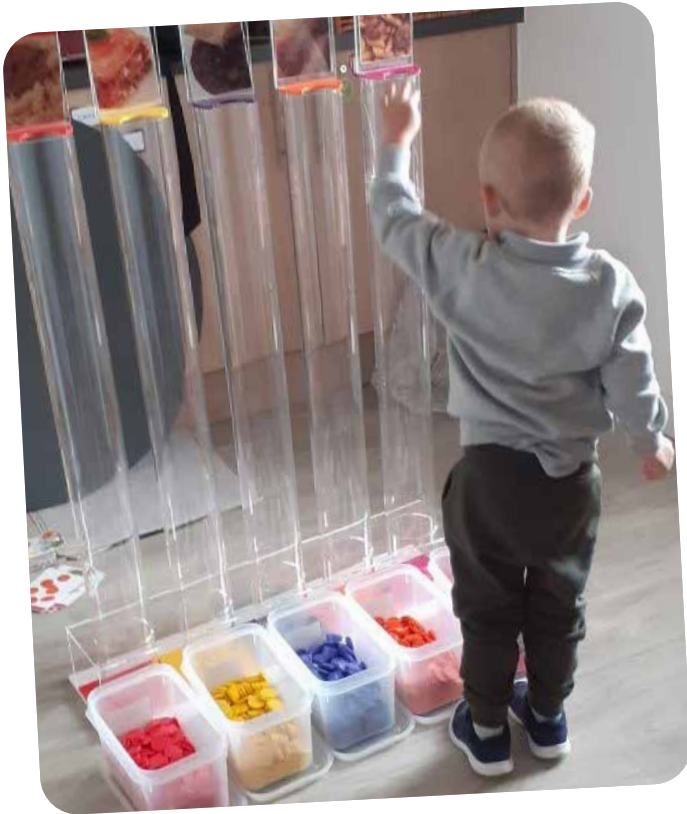


We continue to invest in our workforce to ensure that all staff are highly skilled and motivated. This takes various forms including a focus on Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) and professional inquiry.

Throughout 2021-22 ELC practitioners continued to make effective use of the '0-6 Pedagogy' online hub which was developed as part of the ELC expansion plan. This online resource provides staff across the local authority with an increasing range of high-quality learning materials. These include; online training videos, SWAY presentations, research articles, video clips, photographs and interviews with experienced practitioners.

Usage data shows a high level of engagement with the materials with 3029 views in 2021-22, an increase of 53% on the previous year. New staff benefitted from the induction resources and materials sharing the theory and background of ELC practice. Quality Mealtimes was also a focus for many this session (122) as practitioners began the implementation of the lunch provision associated with 1140 hours, as was the implementation of the Early Years Tracking Tool (255).

Our staff continue to benefit from our involvement in the West Partnership (Glasgow City Region Education Improvement Collaborative) which has a well-established relationship with Edinburgh University. This allows us to access extremely high quality professional learning linked to current research, policy and theory underpinned by the principles of Friedrich Froebel, one of the earliest pioneers of early childhood education. A further 12 practitioners from our schools and early learning and childcare settings benefitted from this opportunity in 2021-22 and were commended by the University for the high quality of their work. A further 4 practitioners have taken their learning further by engaging with the Froebelian Futures Professional Enquiry Programme. This has led to improved experiences for children in these setting with projects shared on a national digital resource.

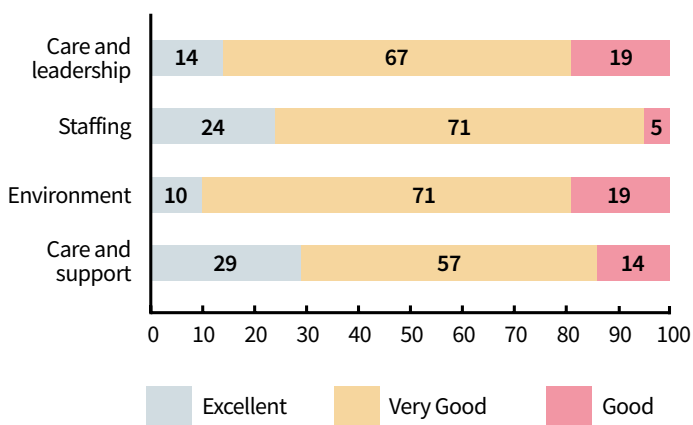


Children benefitted from the full roll out of meals and snacks associated with 1140 hours of ELC. To support with menu choice we asked children in 4 ELC settings, Arthurlie, Busby, Cross Arthurlie and Glenwood to provide feedback on what they liked and disliked on the lunch menu along with some new ideas. The children voted and the information gathered was used to help refresh the menu.

Quality is at the heart of the delivery of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) experiences. The Care Inspectorate re-introduced routine inspection activity from August 2021 visiting establishments in person. Two local authority settings were visited as part of this quality assurance process.

The quality of ELC in our local authority settings exceeds the National Standard with most settings achieving grades of very good or better.

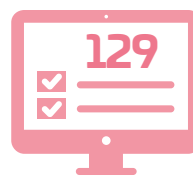
Care Inspectorate Grades in East Renfrewshire Council ELC settings



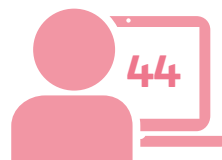
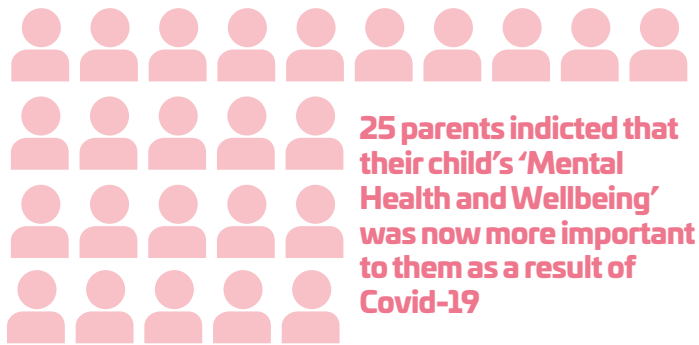
## Parenting support

The Educational Psychology Service has continued to update the Healthier Minds website. This provides a range of information to support the mental wellbeing of children and young people in East Renfrewshire and to offer signposting to parents.

Educational Psychology have offered online sessions to parents in conjunction with the Healthier Minds service and education colleagues. Topics have been based on information from parents about what would be helpful in terms of supporting their children's wellbeing. In 2021-22, topics included: 'Supporting young People through Exams' and 'Supporting Children with Anxiety'. These were recorded and uploaded onto the website so that they could be accessed by parents after the event.



129 parents completed a survey prior to an online session regarding exams, to inform the content of the session and to gather their views about the impact of Covid-19 on their child's education



44 Parents attended the online session



44 parents attended the online session and had the opportunity to submit questions which were answered during the Q&A section. Of these 44 parents, 10 completed an evaluation. 90% parents strongly agreed/agreed that the session was useful to them; that they learned some helpful strategies and that the format of the presentation and Q&A was useful. 80% strongly agreed/agreed that the information on the teenage brain was useful.

The session was described as; "well presented and helpful" with "good tips from the panel".

One participant stated; "I felt that I am not alone, my daughter is not alone."



# What are we going to do now?

- Support and challenge schools to raise attainment for all pupils and close the poverty related attainment gap, through analysis of data, improved learning, teaching and assessment and effective use of resources (including Pupil Equity and Scottish Attainment Challenge Funding).
- Review and evaluate the impact of the Literacy Action Plan in line with the strategy the current context.
- Update and implement the Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy and continue to support attainment and progress through provision of professional learning opportunities.
- Continue to implement the Developing the Young Workforce Action Plan 2022-2025.



# Everyone Achieving



Throughout 2021-22, learners, staff members and partners demonstrated a range of achievements. There is an ethos of achievement and high expectation within a culture of self-improvement within all our educational establishments. Children and young people are active, involved and motivated and supported well and provided with opportunities to ensure they succeed.

## Leadership

Leadership development is a key area on the national policy agenda and the Education Department are committed to providing a detailed and robust Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) programme for all our aspiring leaders and experienced Head Teachers. In a rapidly changing world, it is essential that leaders and managers are equipped with the skills to adapt to the changing needs of schools and their communities. The CLPL provision aims to increase leadership capacity across all sectors of the school estate and is supported through effective coaching and mentoring. Our educational establishments foster collaborative leadership opportunities for staff at all levels as leadership is essential in achieving high expectations and ambitions for all learners. There continues to be a range of professional learning opportunities for staff to develop in this area, for example through Masters Level learning as well as the Into Headship and Excellence In Headship programmes. Senior Leaders provide strong leadership which enables our schools and centres to continuously improve.



**In 2021-22 100% of schools continued to self-evaluate their performance as 'good' or better for leadership of change 75% were 'very good' or better**

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

**The S6 Charities Committee at Eastwood High School have worked tirelessly to raise funds for a range of chosen charities such as Children in Need, Red Nose Day and Radio Lollipop. They have been involved in the planning, advertising, promotion and running of events which have raised more than £2400.**

## Newly Qualified Teachers

38 primary and 86 secondary probationer teachers successfully completed their one year Teacher Induction Scheme placement in June 2022 and have achieved the GTCS Standard for Full Registration.

They were well supported in their schools and through a comprehensive authority wide training programme facilitated by the Education Department. Probationer teachers successfully completed a professional inquiry during the course of the session with support from the Quality Improvement Team and school staff, and their findings were shared at a showcase event in May 2022. In a survey carried out in June 2022, all probationers who responded agreed that professional learning provided by the local authority had developed their professional values and commitment, and professional skills and abilities.

## Research Hubs

In partnership with the University of Strathclyde, Research Hubs which provided training and ongoing support for practitioners on appropriate and impactful professional inquiry, were established in Cross Arthurlie Primary and Woodfarm High School. Every teacher engaged with a professional inquiry and, in some cases, collaborative inquiry with their peers which has further promoted the culture of professional inquiry across each establishment.

Probationer teachers successfully completed a professional inquiry during the course of the session, with support from the Quality Improvement Team and school staff, and their findings were shared at a showcase event in May 2022. In a survey carried out in June 2022, all probationers who responded agreed that they had developed as an enquiring professional through involvement in professional inquiry.



“The research hub allowed Cross Arthurlie staff to continue in their development of Practitioner Inquiry as a sustainable form of professional learning which has a positive impact on staff and children. We have developed a culture of enquiry with all staff across the school and nursery working individually and collaboratively to solve problems. The support from Strathclyde University helped us refine our model of practitioner enquiry and ensure that improvement was measured using data that is readily available and meaningful. Sharing our processes and progress with one another at the end of the school session was a genuine celebration of our achievements.

*The improvement seen by staff and the positive impact on them and their children has ensured that all staff are fully committed to practitioner enquiry. We have also shared our model for inquiry with other schools who are seeking to further develop this within their own establishment.”*

**Head Teacher,  
Cross Arthurlie Primary School**

## Professional Learning

Between August 2021 and June 2022, 263 courses were facilitated by the Quality Improvement Team and Education Psychology Service. Training programmes focussing on Moderation, Literacy, Numeracy, STEM and Leadership have significantly increased the confidence of practitioners to improve learning, teaching and assessment. Evaluations of courses facilitated by the Quality Improvement Team demonstrated that almost all attending staff felt confident that their participation would lead to a positive impact on learners. Significant numbers of teachers participated in professional learning facilitated by the West Partnership, and increasingly our schools and ELC centres are sharing their professional learning across and beyond their clusters.

During session 2021-22, 19 teachers were engaged in Masters (SCQF level 11) learning with the University of Glasgow and University of Strathclyde. There was a particular focus in these courses on educational leadership and professional inquiry. Almost all teachers who completed their Professional Update in session 2021-22 evaluated the impact of their professional learning on themselves and pupils, and believed that their learning had improved their practice.

Professional Update is a scheme of re-accreditation for teachers, which ensures the highest standards are maintained in Scottish schools. In September 2021, East Renfrewshire was recredited by GTCS to facilitate Professional Update. The GTCS recreditation report highlighted sector leading practice in the local authority.

East Renfrewshire Council completed the original Professional Update (PU) Validation process in August 2012. Since then there have been changes in approach to Professional Review and Development (PRD) for teachers and the PU process taking into account national developments in professional learning strategy and the launch of the revised General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) PRD Guidelines. The revalidation visit took place in September 2021 and some key strengths were identified:

- The Panel considered East Renfrewshire to be sector leading for Professional Update
- Council-wide approach to PU and commitment to supporting and engaging all teachers was commended
- Creation of a sustainable climate of trust that supports and promotes professional learning as a ‘way of being’
- Quality assurance that continually seed the views of all stakeholders to support improvement.

## The Professional Update processes in East Renfrewshire have been revalidated for a period of 5 years.

*“It was clear from the evidence presented throughout the Revalidation event that the processes supporting PU and PRD in East Renfrewshire Council has been well considered in line with the revised PU Revalidation Guidelines. The comprehensive reflective documentation clearly demonstrated that East Renfrewshire Council has been engaging in operationalising of PU policy to support all teachers. The self-evaluation outcomes shared at the strategic presentation were supported by the evidence presented prior to panel and were triangulated through positive and honest discussions with those in the focus groups.”*

**Report of Professional Update Revalidation Event, September 2021**

## Improving Our Classrooms and Schools

Members of the Quality Improvement Team work in partnership with the West Partnership Regional Improvement Collaborative to provide this Masters Level professional learning programme for practitioners in the primary sector. Improving Our Classrooms (IOC) places classroom practitioners at the heart of school improvement and focuses on self-evaluation at classroom level leading to improved attainment and approaches to learning and teaching. All participating teachers are provided with a mentor from another school in East Renfrewshire who engages in training to ensure they are fully and well supported through the programme. Eleven teachers completed the programme and submitted a Case Study of Improvement.

*“The IOC course is the best professional learning I have been involved in. Every week I have learned so much and I left every session with new ideas that I could implement in my class the next day. This course had an impact on me from the very first session and made me reflect on everything I do as a teacher. The course constantly encourages you to challenge your thinking and what you are currently doing in your school/class and forces you to reflect on how effective your practice is.”*

**Participant, IOC Cohort 3**

*“Taking part in IOC has been an excellent way to help me reflect on my practice and enhance it further by developing my confidence and knowledge of different areas of highly effective practice. I would recommend this to any teacher, no matter how much experience you have!”*

**Participant, IOC Cohort 3**



In 2021-22, a whole-school model, Improving Our Schools (IOS), was developed where all teachers in a primary school can engage in the professional learning programme together. One of our primary schools piloted this within the authority and found the process to be extremely impactful and supported them to use data-informed targeted interventions to improve attainment and achievement in numeracy and mathematics for all children across the school.

*“Engagement in the Improving Our Schools (IOS) pilot programme has influenced change across the whole school and enhanced our collaborative culture. When reviewing the range of evidence collated throughout the programme, it is clear our engagement has shifted hearts and minds in St Clare’s where teachers are open to change and fully committed to continuous improvement. It has placed improvement firmly in the hands of each class teacher, empowering them as lead learners within their classroom. All teachers have analysed the data and used this to plan targeted interventions, which have proven to raise attainment for their learners, as evidenced through class based assessments, SNSA and teacher judgements. All teachers report that IOS has facilitated a rich dialogue between all practitioners, which has centred on classroom pedagogy.”*

**Head Teacher, St Clare’s Primary  
(pilot school engaging in IOS)**

*“I enjoyed looking at tracking and interpreting data. I found the ‘Fact, Story, Action’ approach to tracking highly effective.”*

**Participant, IOS**

*“It was good to work with our trio to discuss journal questions and aspects arising from the webinars.”*

**Participant, IOS**



## NIF Priority 4: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

## Developing the Young Workforce

A focus on Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) in both the BGE and Senior Phase continued last session, with a new DYW plan developed focusing on 3 key areas:

- **Curriculum** - we will expand opportunities across the curriculum for all children and young people to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- **Collaboration** - we will foster partnerships, creating a learning system that prepares all children and young people for the world of work
- **Equity** - we will promote diversity, inclusion and equity at all levels of Developing our Young Workforce.

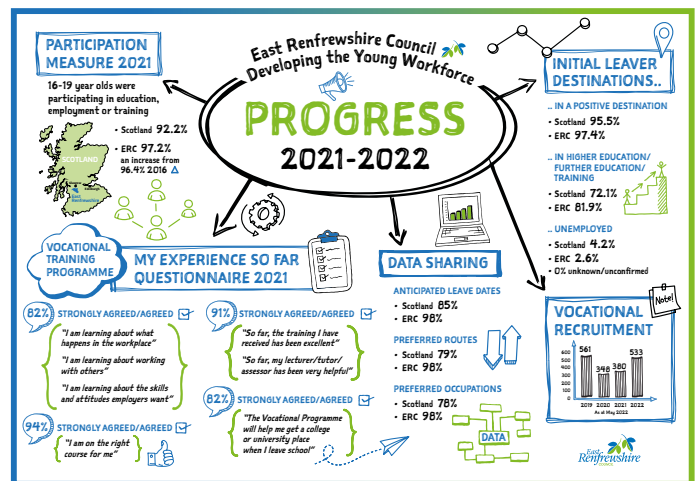
## Adult Learning Services

During 2021-22, Adult Learning Services continued to offer online learning opportunities alongside the re-introduction of face to face contact with adult learners. The number of adult learners attending English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) increased to 80 learners, who attended one of the 6 classes ranging from beginner to upper intermediate levels. The service continues to work in partnership with Clyde College for all the ESOL provision.

- 22 adult learners successfully completed ESOL for work programmes
- 6 of those learners then progressed into employment
- 12 adult learners achieved an SQA ESOL qualification at National 4 level
- 3 of those learners then progressed onto further college studies
- 41 parents successfully completed ESOL for Parents programmes focused upon improving skills, knowledge and confidence in relation to family learning goals
- 33 adult learners engaged in Adult Literacies learning over the past year.

Building on the Digital Champions training the team engaged in with Connecting Scotland last year; they continue to play a key role in digital inclusion. They provided an additional 17 families and individual residents with a digital device, broadband connectivity and ongoing support to engage with learning and services online. Through consultation with learners, new online learning opportunities were developed to include a weekly, online drop in café to encourage engagement and topic specific weekly learning input.

In partnership with West College Scotland, 15 adult learners gained SQA qualifications in one or more of the following SQA courses at SCQF Level 4: Getting Started in IT, Lifestyle Advice & Mindfulness Strategies, Moving on in IT, Working in Early Learning & Childcare and Criminology: Crime in the Community. 25 adult learners were supported with employability learning programmes. For example, digital and technical support, advice on creating and editing CVs, searching for jobs online, accessing training and finding learning opportunities. With improved confidence and further developed employability skills, all learners felt confident enough to apply for a range of jobs.



## Vocational Education

Vocational Education continues to contribute to the achievement and attainment of young people in the senior phase and support them to develop skills for work. The vocational opportunities on offer reduced as a result of Covid-19 with more young people opting to study in school. In addition, many partners had challenges redesigning their courses to a remote learning model. The number of young people participating in vocational courses also increased from 346 in 2020-21 to 365 in 2021-22. The Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) programme is now embedded in the senior phase offer in our schools. The unique opportunity of work based learning provided by (FAs) has increased to 28 courses available with a spread of one year and two year courses.

The progress of our young people is closely monitored to ensure successful outcomes for every young person undertaking a vocational course. This tracking is possible due to the support of college partners and training providers who work well with us to maintain pupil progress and intervene where appropriate, offering further support as required.



## School Leaver Destinations

The Covid-19 pandemic had previously impacted on the percentage of leavers in a positive destination (initial destinations recorded as 96.2% in 2019-20). In 2020-21, initially 97.4% of leavers were in a positive destination compared to 95.5% nationally. Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and the Scottish Government worked together to develop a measure of participation which allows identification of the participation status of the wider 16-19 year old cohort.

As agreed by Scottish Ministers, the Annual Participation Measure (APM) has been adopted in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework as the measure of young people's participation in education, employment, training or other positive post school destination.

**In 2022, 97% of ERC 16-19 year olds were participating in a positive outcome, well above the national figure of 92.4%**



East Renfrewshire having the highest proportion nationally of young people actively participating in society in a positive way. Our partnership with SDS has ensured that our young people, staff and parents receive the most up to date, relevant labour-market information to support their learner pathways. Staff participated in professional learning to enhance their knowledge in relation to careers information and guidance. We develop and nurture relationships with employers to support learner experiences and broaden learner pathways. A priority of the DYW School Coordinators is to work with employers to allow our young people to demonstrate and apply these skills in different contexts.

They have also started to explore a variety of models to meet the needs of their context and cohort, recruiting a more diverse range of staff with a broad skill set to enhance support for employability.

These models are being discussed across ERC to share effective practice. This is impacting positively on building staff capacity in relation to skills development and employability and in some cases, having a direct impact on individuals and families within the school community who are receiving appropriate support, often out with the school day.

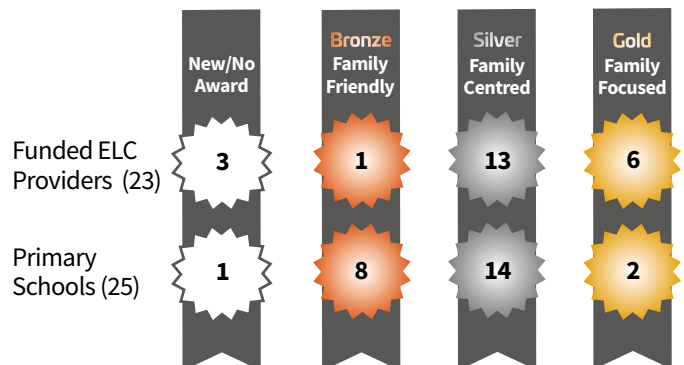
In 2021-22, there was a return to employer event activities with Employer Brunches for both young people in mainstream and an event for young people from our specialist provision.



## Parental Engagement and Involvement Strategy

Despite the ongoing restrictions on parents entering our buildings which remained in place until April 2022, 4 more ELC settings achieved Gold Family Focused status this year: Thornliebank, Mearns Nursery Class, Glenwood, Isobel Mair Family Centres, with Busby being reaccruited Gold. St Cadoc's Nursery Class, one of our newest settings which opened in 2019, achieved Bronze Family Friendly status. In addition, Mearns Primary School, became the second school to achieve Gold Family Focused status.

Family Centred approaches data:



Once public health restrictions were lifted all of our settings were keen to re-engage with parents and invite them in to share in their child's learning and end of term celebrations. For some families, this was the first time they had ever been in their child's school or nursery.

East Renfrewshire Education Department launched its revised Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy 2022-2025, early in 2022. This strategy focuses on 3 broad areas: Communication, Collaboration and Consultation and aims to:

- improve the ways that we communicate with ALL parents to ensure that they are provided with the information and support that they need to be involved and engaged in their child's learning;
- expand opportunities for ALL parents to collaborate at all levels within our education system; and
- support consultation with parents in a variety of ways to fulfil our statutory duties and shape our services.





## UNCRC Rights Respecting Schools

Professional learning has been delivered in collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and through the West Partnership to raise awareness of Children’s Rights which is linked to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Bill. A Young Person’s Rights Group has been established in partnership with East Renfrewshire’s Community Learning and Development (CLD) Team.

A total of 34 settings, an increase of 4 on last year, hold the Rights Respecting Schools award with 12 at Gold Level which signifies a school that has fully embedded the principles of the UNCRC into their ethos and curriculum.



## Customer Service Excellence

The Education Department undertook an assessment by SGS Customer Service Excellence in March 2022 and achieved a continued award of the Customer Service Excellence Standard.

The report recognises the department's continuing commitment to providing excellent services and to seeking continuous improvement. It identified the service as Fully Compliant against all criteria, with 9 areas of Good Practice and a further 31 areas of Compliance Plus, which are 'behaviours or practices which exceed the requirements of the standard and are viewed as exceptional or as an exemplar to others.' The number of areas of Compliance Plus was maintained from the previous assessment in March 2021 and increased from 26 in November 2019.

*"The Education Department has continued to advance equity and excellence throughout a wide range of local and national attainment measures. Children and young people achieved high standards of attainment throughout the broad general education and senior phase. They have enhanced systems and approaches to deliver staff training, support and professional development opportunities online, including a wide range of training to support digital learning and teaching continue to be utilised and evaluated."*

**Customer Service Excellence Assessment Report, March 2022**

## Convener's Awards for Outstanding Achievement

The annual Convener's Awards were celebrated with an online event in June 2022. 35 young people and groups from across the authority were recognised for outstanding achievements in various fields such as sports, creativity, community service and advocacy.

### OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

**A St Luke's High School pupil's charity work has had a huge impact on her local community. She took part in the YPI project and supported the local charity, Include Me 2 Club. Her team donated £3000 to the charity and she then became a trustee of the club. In recognition of her hard work, she was named 'Volunteer of the Year' and 'Barrhead Young Person of the Year'. She made it onto the Young Women's Scotland to 30 under 30 list and was recognised in the Scottish Parliament and Westminster.**

All of our establishments have maintained good progress in their implementation of the actions outlined in the department's Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy, with many of the key outcomes being overtaken as a result of the continued use of digital technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic. A variety of professional learning sessions have been offered to build on the improving digital skills of teaching staff, enabling them to embed digital literacy skills into everyday learning and teaching. Evaluations indicated that most participants (80%) felt they had a better understanding of the digital tools and were more confident when using them after the sessions.



**80% of teaching staff have a better understanding of digital tools**

*"A worthwhile and informative session which will impact my professional development and understanding of utilising digital technology to best advantage."*

**Participant, Digital CLPL session**

Further investment in digital devices for all learners has improved equity for all learners and one of our Early Years' establishments became one of the first in Scotland to achieve a Digital Schools Award. Our usage of Glow, Scotland's national digital learning platform, has increased by 37% for pupils and 15% for teaching staff throughout the course of this academic year, demonstrating an upward trend of the use of digital tools in our classrooms.

*"Learners use a variety of technology on a daily basis to support and enhance learning. The school utilises a broad range of software and digital applications to provide a rich and diverse, cross-curricular learning experience for its pupils. There is a good range of software in use across the school, which supports the special needs of pupils. The school has enhanced provision and has built up expertise in the use of assistive technologies. Staff were very familiar with the needs of all learners and could tailor the range of adaptive settings within the devices to individual needs."*

**Isobel Mair School, Digital Schools Award validation report, August 2021**





## 1+2 Languages: Focus on CLPL

Primary and early years colleagues were supported through a wide range of professional learning opportunities focused on foreign language learning and pedagogy throughout the session.

- 50 practitioners attended regular ERC 'bitesize' French twilight sessions
- 34 practitioners participated in French and Spanish language learning courses for primary teachers, in partnership with Glasgow City Council
- 30 practitioners participated in pedagogy-focused languages courses in partnership with SCILT
- Four teachers achieved GTCS Professional Recognition for leadership of languages, with a further 10 currently working towards accreditation.

## Languages Leaders Network

A network of primary school staff with leadership responsibility for Modern Languages worked collaboratively throughout the session to further develop the primary French curriculum, with a focus on improving relevance, progression, and challenge and enjoyment. This work is supporting primary teaching staff to offer motivating, high quality language learning experiences at all stages. Early evaluation of impact suggests that language learning is increasingly being explored through cross-curricular themes in outdoor learning, health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy lessons. In course evaluations, languages leaders noted improved knowledge and skills in progressive development of listening, talking, reading and writing.

*"It has been helpful to think more globally about French within our curriculum."*

**Primary Languages Leader**

*"I got some great pupil feedback and a lot of the children expressed that they enjoy learning French and feel more confident this term!"*

**Participant, Bitesize French CLPL**

40 primary and early years practitioners from 15 establishments travelled to France during the spring holiday to participate in a six-day French immersion professional learning course. The course was fully funded by the EU Erasmus+ scheme, having been postponed from April 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Learning activities were focused on effective modern languages pedagogy for young learners, embedding language learning across the curriculum, and further developing French language knowledge and skills.

In evaluations, all practitioners reported that their individual learning goals had been met or exceeded. Almost half of participants have registered for further modern languages professional learning with many reporting increased confidence to deliver CLPL for colleagues as well as French learning and teaching. Professional dialogue with participants and senior school staff revealed wide implementation of ideas from the course in playrooms and classrooms during Term 3.



*'The immersion course was the best learning experience I have ever taken part in. It has allowed me to grow in confidence with learning and teaching French.'*

**Participant, French immersion course April 2022**





## STEM Strategy

The Education Department Science, Technologies, Engineering and Maths (STEM) Strategy and associated action plan was updated in 2021-22 in line with the national STEM Education and Training Strategy: Refresh (May 2022). Its main aims are to upskill staff, build capacity and develop and sustain greater partnership working across our establishments, with partners in further and higher education, related industries and other STEM organisations.

Through the Raising Aspirations in Science Education (RAiSE) programme a Primary Science Development Officer (PSDO) has been recruited to lead and co-ordinate high-quality professional learning and to support practitioner planning, networking, and collaboration.

The PSDO had been building capacity through a programme of professional learning and the provision of support to all primary schools to enhance experiences for all learners. National PSDO network events and training throughout the year allow the PSDO to collaborate with, share and learn from other RAiSE Officers to maximise collective capacity and impact.

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

A pupil from Woodfarm High School has been commended for her achievements in Advocacy. She has been committed to ensuring the voices and opinions of young people and the community are heard. Through her involvement in a variety of groups and forums such as the Woodfarm Pupil Parliament, the Woodfarm Amnesty Group, the Woodfarm 'Making Sense of' Group and East Renfrewshire Youth Voice, she works with people within her own community and beyond to raise awareness of human rights, raise funds and campaign for improvements.





# What are we going to do now?

- Review, update and implement a revised leadership strategy
- Support and challenge schools to develop their approaches to learning and teaching using the most up to date pedagogical research and practices, implementing the CLPL framework and sharing approaches to professional inquiry across our schools and centres, including through Research Hubs
- Develop and deliver targeted programmes to support adult learners to improve skills for life, in particular literacy, numeracy and maths skills of adult learners
- Continue to implement the Parental Engagement and Involvement Strategy 2021–2024
- Continue to work in partnership with ELC settings, schools and ERC Culture and Leisure Trust to ensure all children and young people have high quality opportunities for achievement that are recognised and celebrated
- Review, update and implement the Digital Learning and STEM Strategies.

# Excellent Experiences

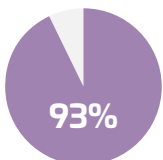
It is recognised nationally, that the high standard of education in East Renfrewshire, which has been sustained over many years, leads to positive outcomes for learners. We are ambitious for each and every one of our children and whilst attainment is consistently strong, we work continually to raise the bar for all. Our staff are our most valuable resource. We place great importance on investing in them to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver creative and engaging experiences for all.



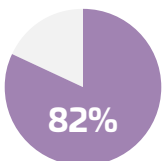
In 2021-22, 100% of schools self-evaluated their provision and 'good' or better for learning, teaching and assessment. 50% were evaluated as 'very good'.

## Questionnaire Data

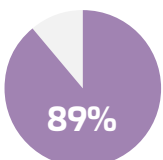
Statistics gathered from questionnaires in 2021-22 showed that:



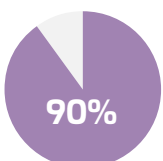
93% of teachers stated that they were actively involved in the school's on-going self-evaluation



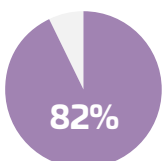
82% said that they have opportunities to be involved in agreeing priorities for the school



89% of parents and carers said they were satisfied with their child's school

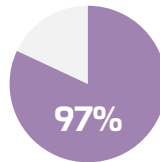


90% of learners said they were happy with their school/setting

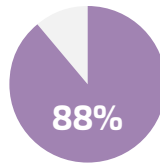


82% of parents of school children agreed that the school supports their child's emotional wellbeing; 95% of parents in ELC settings agree with this

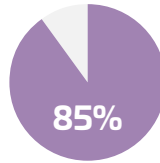
74



97% of teaching staff and child development officers stated that children and young people had the opportunity to lead their own learning



88% of pupils stated that they are able to take responsibility for their learning



85% of parents and carers agreed that their child receives the help they need to do well.



## Collaborative Improvement Visits

In 2021-22, Collaborative Improvement Visits (CIVs) for Early Years, Primary and Special Sector, were piloted in 4 establishments. The model for the visits was developed by a group of Head Teachers. Cartmill Family Centre, Crookfur Primary School and Family Centre, Cross Arthurlie Primary and Nursery Class and Kirkhill Primary all engaged in these visits throughout session 2021-22. The focus of these visits were decided upon collaboratively by the establishment and the visiting team with a consistent focus on learning and teaching and raising attainment for all. The purpose of the visits is to support the establishment's self-evaluation and quality assurance processes and practices relating to key questions relevant to continuous improvement as detailed in their improvement agenda.

Collaborative Improvement Visits also took place with secondary practitioners in Mathematics and Creative and Performing Arts departments.

These visits foster opportunities for colleagues to work collaboratively to share what is working well and support improvement. The visits have promoted partnership working to ensure that we achieve sustainable improvements for all children and young people.





## Primary Music Residential

For the first time since May 2019, the Primary Music Residential Course at Lendrick Muir in Clackmannanshire took place in May 2022. 50 Primary 7 pupils from all over East Renfrewshire came together to form a String Orchestra accompanied by eight members of the Instrumental Music Service. The children mastered six pieces during the week which allowed them to develop their musicianship, string skills and ensemble work. In addition to this, they engaged in out-door pursuits such as mountain biking, bungee trampolining and high ropes and learned the ukulele in the evenings. The week culminated in an evening performance at Carlibar Primary School for parents and friends in the first live concert taking place by the Instrumental Music Service since February 2020.

*“The concert was wonderful, I especially loved the live looping (never seen that before) and the Ukuleles. Amazing what was achieved in such a short space of time!”*

**Parent of child attending P7 Music Residential**

*“I just wanted to say thank you, to all the staff for running the strings week residential last week. Despite some nerves beforehand from my son because he didn’t know anyone else going, he had a fantastic time. He made new friends and really enjoyed the opportunity to learn new pieces and play with other people. He also loved all the activities at Lendrick Muir. He came home very animated and full of stories about the fun he had had”.*

**Parent of child attending P7 Music Residential**

*“Thank you so much for organising it. The opportunity was a great learning and confidence building experience for him, both musically and personally, and we are very grateful for the huge effort that you must all have put in to make it happen.”*

**Parent of child attending P7 Music Residential**



## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

A pupil from St Ninian’s High School has successfully achieved a place within the Scottish Ballet Senior Associate programme and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Ballet programme for six consecutive years.

He has secured one of only 15 places available throughout Scotland on this highly competitive programme. Through his commitment and dedication to dance he has excelled in all aspects of SQA dance and he demonstrates exceptional technical and performance skills in a wide range of genres.



## Widening Participation

All secondary schools worked in partnership with Glasgow University to support eligible young people into higher education through the Top-Up, Reach and Access to a Career programmes. Through the widening access programmes young people from targeted groups can engage in a range of learning activities to enhance their self-study skills and preparedness for higher education. Successful participants are eligible for adjusted offers for university courses.

41 young people completed widening access programmes in 2021-22 through a range of webinar-based, tutorial-based and independent learning activities. As a result, 25 East Renfrewshire young people were eligible for adjusted offers to enter a wide range of higher education courses in Autumn 2022. This represented 61% of the young people who completed their programmes last session.



## Equality, Diversity and Social Justice Equalities Network

School Equalities Coordinators met online termly to undertake professional learning and share practice to promote equality. A range of partners from Education Scotland, universities and third sector organisations together with the quality improvement team, provided professional learning opportunities focused on promoting children's rights, reducing gender-based violence and supporting bilingual learners.

A group of coordinators from 12 schools worked throughout the session to evaluate the cost of the school day in their establishments, supported by the quality improvement team. Schools engaged with pupils, parents and staff in their school communities about financial pressures, then used the results of their consultation to develop action plans to reduce the cost to families of school attendance and participation. As a result, a number of schools have identified new ways to support families through initiatives such as uniform recycling schemes, more budget-friendly fun events and signposting to financial support services.

Most parents and carers indicated in a recent survey that the cost of participating in school activities and events is affordable.

**77%**  
affordable





## NIF Priority 3: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.

### HealthiER Minds

Between July 2021 and June 2022, the Healthier Minds Screening Hub has discussed the emotional wellbeing of 416 children and young people, 62 of these were re-referrals. 94% of the children and young people who received support from the Healthier Minds team reported improved outcomes, with all parents and carers saying they would recommend the service to others.

Our Healthier Minds website continues to evolve in response to feedback from children, young people, families and schools and is the hub for those seeking more information on self-help, support and local services.

In 2021-22, new topics were provided to support children and young people to make sense of current events, such as the war in Ukraine. Guidance documents and online resources were also developed on the following topics: *'Emotionally Based School Absenteeism'* and *'Eating Problems and Eating Disorders'*.

### Educational Psychology Service

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) continues to provide a comprehensive CLPL programme for education staff across the authority, with universal, targeted and intensive programmes and resources. These aim to build capacity amongst staff to enable them to support all aspects of children and young people's mental wellbeing. The EPS has also delivered Mindfulness sessions to staff to enhance their own wellbeing.

Training Sessions and CLPL Programmes delivered in 2021-22 include:

- Supporting Pupil and Staff Wellbeing
- Implementing Bereavement and Loss Lessons across the Curriculum
- Eating Problems and Eating Disorders
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills and Training
- Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance
- Supporting Children with
- Mindfulness Sessions for Staff
- Meeting Learners' Needs and Promoting Positive Relationships for Newly Qualified Teachers.

All CLPL programmes and sessions have been well attended and positively evaluated. The Educational Psychology Service continues to provide support and consultation to schools and ELCs on the topics covered to establish the impact of staff CLPL on pupil wellbeing.

- All participants attending the 2-day Applied Suicide and Intervention Skills and Training indicated that they felt more prepared and confident to support someone at risk of suicide
- There were 60 responses from probationer teachers following the 'Meeting Learners Needs and Promoting Positive Relationships' training. 40 of the participants rated the session 4 out of 5. Most of the respondents described the session as enhancing their knowledge and teaching skills and reinforcing the importance of positive relationships with pupils

Of the 36 responses to the evaluation of the supporting pupil and staff



wellbeing session, the average star rating for the usefulness of the session was 4.83/5.00. In response to the statement 'I have learned helpful information about the impact of development trauma on children and young people', the average rating was 4.92/5.00. The 36 respondents also gave an average rating of 4.56/5.00 to the statement 'I have learned useful ways of looking after myself.'



*"I now have a deeper understanding of the psychology behind a young person's behaviour and actions. I will also use advice given in the course in my classes to improve my practice."*

**Participant, EPS training course**



## Learning for Sustainability

Learning for Sustainability (Lfs) is a theme across learning within the curriculum which enables learners, educators, education settings and their wider communities to build a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society. It supports the development of knowledge, skills and values at the heart of the curriculum's four capacities and supports engagement with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Pupils continue to participate in a wide range of Lfs activities including award based programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, John Muir Award and Eco School Green Flag. 61% of primaries and 57% of secondary schools hold an Eco Schools Green Flag Award, a higher proportion of schools than in any other local authority.

Nine educational establishments worked in partnership with the environment department to plant trees in "Wee Woods" sites across East Renfrewshire, to recognise the importance of COP26.

In partnership with Winning Scotland Foundation, 7 settings are undertaking professional inquiry linked to the whole setting approach to the development of growth mindset, through the Mindset Teams programme. We have also worked with our partners in HSCP to agree a pilot of a new Winning Scotland programme, Mindset In Care.

School staff continue to benefit from high quality professional learning linked to Learning for Sustainability and Global Citizenship provided by West of Scotland Development Education Centre (WOSDEC); a key partner in Lfs. This has included Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) offered to all probationer teachers.

One of our secondary teachers was presented with the Education Scotland Learning for Sustainability Practitioner Award for her work with a group of young people in St Ninian's High School working towards the National Progression Award for Beekeeping.

*"It would be amazing if every learner received their entitlement to Lfs because we would be able to open up so many young people's eyes to see how we, together, can make a difference to our environment and protect this planet and people would change the way they do things in order to protect all the things around them."*

**Teacher, Lfs Practitioner Award Winner**



*Lfs is incredibly important for increasing our knowledge about the environment because we are in a climate crisis right now and the responsibility of improving it and making it a better place is ultimately up to us so learning about this in school helps us to make the world a better place."*

**Pupil, Beekeeping NPA**



## Corporate Parenting and Young Carers

A new framework has been established allowing better measurement of the progress in attendance and attainment of care experienced learners through analysing data specific to the different categories of care experience, providing greater insights to inform our approach.

The overall attendance level for looked after pupils of 90% in East Renfrewshire compares favourably to the last national figure of 87%. An in-depth audit of emotionally based school absenteeism was undertaken, and targeted support is planned for next session.

Most primary and all secondary schools have engaged with a Young Carer development worker who has delivered assemblies, workshops and drop-in sessions for pupils, and training for staff. There has been an increase in the number of carers being identified by schools and being supported by the Carers Centre as a result of this activity.





## Joint Inspection of Children's Services

The Care Inspectorate implemented a Joint Inspection of Children's Services for Children and Young People at Risk of Harm in East Renfrewshire. The inspection team found the work of the partnership to be excellent and highlighted the following areas of strength:

- Sustained positive trends in child health, educational attainment and positive destinations for school leavers
- Strong partnership working
- Targeted supports in education services to help them engage in learning
- Participating meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives
- Children and young people were well supported to exercise their rights to make real choices in matters that were affecting their lives.

The QI team carried out a case file review to ensure that child protection files maintained by establishments reflect the highest standards of practice. Quality Improvement Officers sampled at least one file in most establishments. The case file review demonstrated that child protection files are being maintained to a consistently high standard, and that staff are confident in responding to any child protection or safeguarding issues. Adults know and understand the indicators that may suggest that a child/young person is suffering or is at risk of suffering harm. The views of children and parents / carers are taken into account during safety planning.

## Nurturing Approaches

A range of professional learning opportunities continue to be available and provided for practitioners to develop and share ideas, practice and resources to translate the principles underpinning Nurturing Approaches into daily practice.

Neilston Primary School was accredited as a National Nurturing School in November 2021. This award recognises the school for providing pupils with a higher level of nurturing support to achieve their full potential.

*"Nurture principles are visible in all classes as well as around the school and are referred to, creating a feeling of belonging and unity for the whole school community. The quality of the staff shone through, they are knowledgeable, motivated and creative in their approaches to the health and wellbeing support needs of pupils as well as being supportive of each other."*

**The National Nurturing Schools Programme, Assessment Report, November 2021**

*"I am immensely proud of the work that my team do and this accreditation demonstrates our pupil-centred, wellbeing focused approach."*

**Head Teacher, Neilston Primary School**

## Anti-racism

The department worked in partnership with University of the West of Scotland to further develop anti-racist approaches to education through 'Let's Talk About Race' sessions. These small-group professional learning sessions supported 33 head teachers, 30 teaching staff and 7 quality improvement officers to develop a more nuanced understanding of racism and further develop racial literacy. A further five teaching staff also completed Education Scotland's Building Racial Literacy programme.

Evaluations of all sessions were very positive and indicated that participants felt better equipped to create a culture of race equality in their establishments.

All participants in 'Let's Talk About Race' sessions agreed or strongly agreed that they:

- felt more confident talking about racism
- felt more confident about how to create an anti-racist learning environment
- intended to share their learning about racism with others.

An Education Development Officer was appointed in April 2022 to further expand the support available to schools to develop anti-racist education, promote global citizenship and support bilingual learners and families.

*'I am now much more aware of my role as a socially just leader and will be ensuring that staff, parents and children are racially literate. I will be including some of the learning and actions into my Improvement Plan 2022-23.'*

**Head Teacher Participant, Let's Talk About Race**

## Anti-bullying

Our educational establishments continue to report a low number of incidences of bullying and racist behaviour.

The annual anti-bullying return shows there were 42 recorded bullying incidents in 2021-22, a decrease of 9 from 2020-21. The three-year average number of incidents is 48.

Incidents and alleged incidents of racist behaviour remained low across both primary and secondary establishments. Those which did occur were dealt with sensitively and appropriately with restorative approaches.



## ASL Review

A review of Additional Support for Learning (ASL) in East Renfrewshire Council was undertaken in 2021. Its purpose was to consider how we can provide high quality support to children and young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) who attend specialist provision whilst also providing enhanced ASN provision in our mainstream schools through sharing of specialist knowledge, training and resources.

During the process, staff, parents and carers and children and young people were consulted in order to obtain their views. Almost all parents and carers said they feel their child/young person is treated fairly and with respect. The Quality Improvement Team devised an action plan to address the recommendations and, through 4 work streams – Vision, Culture and Climate, Specialist Provision and Professional Learning - will work closely with staff from settings and schools and across the department to support them to make the necessary improvements to practice.



## 81 Exclusion Rates

### Violence Against Women

The education department is working in partnership with the Violence Against Women Partnership to raise awareness of and reduce incidences of gender based violence. We have provided schools with guidance on dealing with Gender Based Violence in Schools.

A Rape Crisis prevention worker has worked in partnership with Child Protection coordinators and pastoral care staff in our secondary schools, delivering workshops and providing support for young people. Our secondary schools have registered with the Rape Crisis' Equally Safe At Schools programme, and one school has begun its journey to become an accredited Equally Safe School.



### Mentors in Violence Prevention

All secondary schools have received training in Mentors in Violence Prevention from Education Scotland, along with partners from VAW Partnership, CLD, Women's Aid and Police Scotland. School staff and partners then train senior pupils to become mentors and deliver workshops through the PSHE programme. Evaluations of the professional learning provided by Education Scotland for staff were very positive, demonstrating an increased awareness of the issues relating to this subject.

Professional learning for staff in educational establishments is provided at Child Protection Coordinator meetings and through the multi-agency and Public Protection Calendar.

The Education Department continue to work in partnership with schools to create and support opportunities for schools to provide nurturing interventions for young people, through both targeted and whole school interventions in order to manage behaviour in a proactive way.

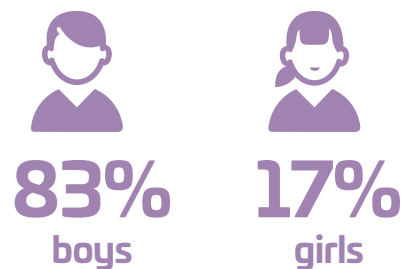
In 2021-22, there were no permanent exclusions. The rate of exclusions in East Renfrewshire schools remained very low, however there was an increase in the overall number of exclusion incidents from 2020-21.

Overall exclusions across the primary and secondary sector increased to a rate of 2.4 incidents per 1000 pupils with 6 half days being lost per 1000 pupils, an increase from 1.2 and 5 respectively in 2020-21. Exclusion rates in 2021-22 are significantly lower than the national values of 11.9 exclusion incidents per 1000 pupils.

In 2021-22 there were no exclusion incidents in the primary sector. Nationally, the rate of exclusions in the primary sector is 6.4 incidents per 1000 pupils which is a decrease from 8.1 incidents per 1000 pupils in 2018-19 (2019-20 and 2020-21 data include significant periods of school closure and therefore make comparisons more difficult).

There were 41 exclusion incidents in the secondary sector in 2021-22, up from 18 the previous year. Consequently the rate of exclusions in the secondary sector increased to 5.1 incidents per 1000 pupils and 12.9 half days lost per 1000 secondary pupils (up from 9.3 half days lost per 1000 secondary pupils in 2020-21). The authority rate is significantly lower than the national rate of exclusions in the secondary sector at 33 incidents per 1000 pupils, which overall is a decrease from 39.6 in 2018-19.

There were no exclusions of pupils from Isobel Mair School or from within our Care Experienced community in 2021-22.



Overall, the proportion of temporary exclusion incidents was split 83% boys and 17% girls for this session – the first time that girls have been excluded since 2019-20.

## Attendance

Overall, attendance in the Primary Sector decreased in 2021-22 to 93.9% from 96.8% in 2020-21. The overall attendance drop in 2021-22 resulted in a reduction in both male and female attendance to 93.8% and 93.9% respectively; creating a very small gap of 0.1%.

Attendances within the Secondary Sector are calculated for S1-S5 only. In 2021-22, overall attendance in the secondary sector was recorded as 91.4%; 2.9% less than 2020-21 and the lowest recorded in the past six years. In 2021-22, overall attendance of males and females was recorded as 91.7% and 91.1% respectively, a decrease of 2.7% and 3% respectively from 2021-22.



## 82

## Facilities Management

In accordance with national legislative changes, in August 2021, Facilities Management and Catering Services extended the free school meal provision to include all children at the P4 year stage and from January 2022, extended free school meal provision further to include all P5 pupils. The success of the rollout of the provision was further highlighted in the Scottish Government's annual census on school meals which showed that East Renfrewshire schools had the second and third highest proportion of pupils accessing a free or paid for meal in the primary and secondary sectors respectively.

The Catering Service was also reaccredited for Food for Life and Coeliac UK certification. The Catering Service will look to utilise the findings of the research reports from its secondary school meal partnership work with the Scottish Poverty and Inequality Research Unit at Glasgow Caledonian University.

The janitorial and cleaning teams continued to maintain high levels of service throughout 2021-22. Janitorial and cleaning staff made a crucial contribution to the success of educational establishments by ensuring appropriate cleaning regimes were in place and overseeing the ongoing maintenance and building improvements throughout the authority.





## 83 Investment

Education Recovery funding continued to be targeted to support recovery from the pandemic in line with the department's Building Back Better and Fairer framework. This included the allocation of additional teaching and support staff to schools and early years centres as well as funding for specific cleaning and PPE resources. Careful management of this funding enabled additional support staff to be retained until the end of school session 2021/22.

Specific funding supported the rollout of universal free school meal provision to all P4 and P5 pupils, as well as the introduction of meals for all children in early learning and childcare accessing their statutory entitlement. Eligible pupils have also continued to benefit from free school meal funding during school holidays as well as family pandemic payments at various points throughout the year.

The department's core budget returned an underspend of around 0.5% for 2021/22 with the ongoing efficient use of resources also evidenced by continued above average performance in terms of cost per pupil place.



### Period Product Consultation

Throughout May and June 2022, we consulted with pupils, staff and parents on the provision of period products across our schools and ELC establishments. Whilst products have been available in our schools for a number of years, new Scottish Government legislation required such products to be made freely available across all public buildings.

A total of 330 individual responses were received, expressing a range of preferences about both the current availability of products across our establishments as well as outlining how they would like to see provision improved in the future. This has informed the development of an East Renfrewshire Council-wide statement of provision and the department will be continuing to work closely with our pupils and staff to continue to improve access and reduce stigma around period products.



**330**  
responses  
were received





## Modernisation

The expansion of the early learning and childcare estate was completed with all new centres fully operational from August 2021. Similarly the extension of facilities at St Ninian's High School was completed as planned for session 2021/22.

The current capital plan includes the following projects which have commenced or will be progressed over the coming years:

- In June 2022, work began on the Learning and Leisure in Neilston Project which will result in the creation of an education campus comprising of new build replacements for Neilston Primary School, St Thomas' Primary School and Madras Family Centre, located on the current site of Neilston Primary School. Good progress is being made and the new facilities are scheduled to open early 2024
- Further extending Crookfur Primary School in view of increasing demand within the catchment area
- Providing additional learning and teaching spaces at Isobel Mair School
- The development of an all-weather sports pitch and running track at Mearns Castle High School



# What are we going to do now?

- Continue to expand and enhance the Healthier Minds Service to ensure it supports all children, young people and families
- Implement the recommendations from both the National ASL review and the department's ASN review, including providing professional learning around inclusive practice in ELC settings and schools
- Develop and implement a Social Justice Strategy
- In partnership with colleagues across the Council, continue to implement The Promise, updated Child Protection Guidance, UNCRC, our Corporate Parenting Policy, Child Poverty Action Plan and the GIRFEC refresh
- Continue to support schools and the Instrumental Music Service to develop flexible approaches to delivery of instrumental music tuition
- Continue to work in partnership to maintain an enhanced level of support with regard to the reduction of teacher workload and bureaucracy within establishments
- Devise and implement a Learning for Sustainability Strategy (Get to Zero)
- Continue to seek investment to improve the learning environment for all our children and young people and expand provision as required.







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इस सूचना-पत्र में उल्लेखित सूचना यदि आप हिन्दी अनुवाद में चाहे तो कृपया सम्पर्क करें।

如果您想得到该资料所含信息的译文，请联系：

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਲੀਫਲੈਟ ਵਿਚ ਦਿਤੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਇਥੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ اس لیفلیٹ میں درج معلومات کا ترجمہ اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں تو ہم سے رابطہ کریں

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE2 February 2023Report by Director of EducationDRAFT LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023 - 2026**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek Education Committee approval for the Education Department's draft Local Improvement Plan 2023 - 2026.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. Education Committee is asked to approve the attached draft Local Improvement Plan 2023 – 2026.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Members will be aware of the previous [Local Improvement Plan 2022 – 2025](#). The Standards and Quality Report 2021 – 2022, provides an indication of the next steps the department, its services and educational establishments will take to ensure continuous improvement over the next few years.

4. The draft Local Improvement Plan takes full account of the East Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership Community Plan, the Fairer East Ren Plan and Locality Plans, the department's contributions to the Council's Outcome Delivery Plan 2022 – 2023 and the department's strategy Advancing Excellence and Equity in Education in East Renfrewshire. Links to the National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities and drivers have been incorporated into the plan.

**REPORT**

5. The draft Local Improvement Plan is designed to give an indication of the department's key areas for improvement over the next three years and is updated annually to take account of changing priorities. The draft plan is included as Appendix 1.

6. The expected outcomes and impact are organised under the department's vision statement of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences* and have been reviewed and amended to reflect the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and the results of the department's ongoing self-evaluation.

7. The plan has a clear focus on improving outcomes for all our learners and the impact we expect to have on the experiences of the children, young people and adults who attend our schools and use our centres and services. In line with the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 the plan also sets out how we will address the inequalities of outcomes that exist for different equity groups and how we will achieve the priorities associated with the NIF.

8. High level areas for improvement are outlined and give an indication of the priorities for development and the activities the department, schools and services will take to make the necessary improvements in the quality of provision. It is expected that the authority will negotiate and work with managers and head teachers to use each service's / school's own self-evaluation, the information gathered through external evaluations and the Local Improvement Plan to identify priorities for inclusion in their own improvement plans.

9. The department evaluates its progress annually to identify strengths in current provision and areas where further improvement is required. The self-evaluation and evaluations of services and schools by the department's Quality Improvement Team, Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate help to identify steps which need to be taken to secure continuous improvement.

10. The timescale for the implementation of the plan is school sessions 2023 – 2024 to 2025 – 2026. The department will continue to report on the progress it has made with its Local Improvement Plan.

#### **FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS**

11. The department will direct funding from its delegated budget to support the improvement agenda as outlined in the draft local improvement plan.

#### **CONSULTATION**

12. Under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 education authorities are required to consult with pupils, staff, parents and all other interested parties on their priorities for improvement for the ensuing year. To this end, and following approval by Education Committee, the department will issue the appended draft plan to all schools, parent councils, service managers and partners to gather the views of all stakeholders. Thereafter, the plan will be amended as appropriate, finalised and issued to schools, services and stakeholders.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

13. Education Committee is asked to approve the attached draft Local Improvement Plan 2023 – 2026.



Mark Ratter  
Director of Education  
2 February 2023

**Convener Contact Details**

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**Appendix**

1. Local Improvement Plan 2023 - 2026

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# Local Improvement Plan 2023–2026

East Renfrewshire Council Education Department



Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences



## A message from Councillor Andrew Anderson

As the convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure, I am very pleased to introduce the Education Department’s Local Improvement Plan for 2023-2026.

Despite the challenges of recent years, since becoming convener, I have been incredibly impressed by the focus and drive of our ELC settings and schools to improve outcomes for all our learners. During my tenure as convener, I will do my utmost to ensure this continues to be the case.

This Local Improvement Plan details the commitment of the Council to deliver the highest quality services for its residents, whilst setting out ambitious outcomes that captures our aspirations and expectations for all learners and customers. It outlines the key outcomes we will be working to achieve in the next three years whilst focusing on delivering the Education Department’s vision of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*.

The plan outlines the ongoing commitment to supporting everyone, including staff, to realise their potential whether they go to or work in one of our schools, ELC settings or services. It will also ensure we deliver the outcomes in East Renfrewshire’s Community Plan and achieve the National Improvement Framework priorities.

I warmly commend the improvement plan to you and invite parents, carers and all our other partners to work with the staff in our ELC settings, schools and services in securing the outcomes and impacts identified in the plan.

Councillor Andrew Anderson  
Convener of Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure



## Introduction to Local Improvement Plan for 2023–2026

I am pleased to introduce the Education Department’s Local Improvement Plan 2023-2026 which sets out our priorities and objectives for the next three school sessions 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26.

The plan reflects the areas for improvement identified through an extensive audit process by the department’s Quality Improvement Team to identify strengths in our current provision and areas where further improvement is required.

The department’s progress as evidenced in this audit, is detailed in the Department’s Standards and Quality Report 2021-2022 which is available on the Council’s website or from libraries, Council offices and schools.

For as long as I can remember, there has been a relentless focus in all East Renfrewshire ELC settings and schools to raise attainment for all, whilst reducing the poverty related attainment gap. Looking back over the past few years, there is no doubt that progress has been challenged by the global pandemic in 2020, however some of the forced changes during this time led to innovative practice and a sharpening of the focus of what our priorities should be moving forward.

The high level areas for improvement, along with the outcomes and impact, have been updated and are organised under the department’s vision statement *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*. They clearly link to the National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan 2023 and the department’s contributions to the Council’s Outcome Delivery Plan 2022-2023.

The Local Improvement Plan 2023-2026 provides schools and services with a framework for improvement and a ‘unity of purpose’ as we strive to improve outcomes and experiences for all our learners.

Mark Ratter  
Director of Education



## Using this Local Improvement Plan

The Local Improvement Plan outlines the high level areas for improvement for all services and schools and is informed by the Department's Outcome Delivery Plan which details the targets and indicators that will be used to measure the impact of our work. This is illustrated in the diagram on page 4, included in which is the Council's Corporate Vision Statement, the Strategic Outcomes that relate directly to the services the Education Department provides and the connection between national and local plans. Links between the National Improvement Framework priorities and drivers have been incorporated into the plan. The West Partnership Improvement Plan 2022/23 sets out the areas that the eight Local Authorities will collaborate on regionally to support and challenge establishments to improve.

The plan lists the expected outcomes and impact under the headings of the departmental vision statement. It contains a list of high level areas for improvement and outlines the actions we will take over the next three years to achieve the expected impact and outcomes. The list is extensive but it is not intended that each school or service should include every strand, or even every Key Area, in its improvement plan for the next three years.

The purpose of this Local Improvement Plan is to help and guide individual settings, schools and services in planning for improvement, not to prescribe what those improvements should be or how they should be taken forward.

### There are a number of steps which each setting, school, cluster of schools or service should take in planning for improvement:

- Engage in an ongoing process of self-evaluation for improvement using the relevant Quality Framework e.g. How good is our school? or How good is our early learning and childcare? Account should be taken of recent evaluations resulting from an inspection by Education Scotland, Care Inspectorate or a review by the Education Department's Quality Improvement Team
- Schools and services should prepare a Standards and Quality Report, which reflects the Education Department's guidance on reporting and summarises the results of the self-evaluation and progress with implementation of the School Improvement Plan
- Identify aspects of performance in which improvement is necessary. Give due weight to major strategic initiatives, local and national, for example the National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education and Advancing Excellence and Equity in Education in East Renfrewshire
- Collaborate with all stakeholders to identify priorities for the improvement plan and the expected impact and outcomes
- Manage teacher workload by focusing on a small number of key priorities which can be implemented and take account of working time agreements
- Draw up a list of the action points to be taken to bring about the desired improvements. This list should also give an indication of the likely timescale and the member(s) of staff who will be responsible for leading on each area where a need for improvement has been identified
- The impact made in bringing about the desired improvements should inform the self-evaluation process and be reported in the annual Standards and Quality Report
- Involve the authority's Quality Improvement Team at each stage in planning for improvement.

### The authority has an important role to play in planning for improvement:

- Working with individual settings, schools and services in their evaluation of performance and provision
- Assisting the school or service to identify the areas for improvement in the next cycle
- Ensuring that the school's or service's improvement plan reflects local and national priorities
- Supporting the improvement agenda through appropriate continuing professional learning activities including learning partnerships
- Monitoring progress through Transition Reviews, Collaborative Improvement Visits and other aspect and thematic reviews.

## East Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership – Community Plan

**The Community Planning Partnership’s vision for East Renfrewshire is:**  
An attractive and thriving place to grow up, work, visit, raise a family and enjoy later life.

**Key Strategic Outcomes** (as related to the services delivered by the Education Department)

- All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure childhood and succeed
- East Renfrewshire residents are healthy and active and have the skills for learning, life and work.

### Fairer East Ren Plan

**Focus on closing the gap:**

- Child poverty is reduced
- Improved employability
- Moving around (transport)
- Improving positive mental health and wellbeing
- Reducing social isolation and loneliness and increasing safety.

### Locality Plans

**Locality Plans in development:**

- Neilston
- Auchenback
- Thornliebank
- Arthurlie, Dunterlie and Dovecothall.

### Education Department Outcome Delivery Plan

Intermediate Outcomes, Indicators and Targets. An indication of how we will measure our contributions to the delivery of the Community Plan, Fairer East Ren and Locality Plans.

### East Renfrewshire Local Improvement Plan

**Outcomes and Impact:** Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences Activities which will improve the quality of service delivery and the experiences of our children, young people and adults.

## National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan 2023

### Vision

- **Excellence through raising attainment and improving outcomes:** ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to shape a sustainable future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors.
- **Achieving equity:** ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

### Five Priorities

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

### Six Drivers of Improvement

- School and ELC leadership
- Teacher and practitioner professionalism
- Parent/carer involvement and engagement
- Curriculum and assessment
- School and ELC improvement
- Performance information.

### West Partnership Regional Improvement Plan

**Vision: Equity, Excellence and Empowerment**

**Workstreams:** Leadership, Empowerment and Improvement, Wellbeing for Learning and Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

Our vision is one of **Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences**. We believe that this vision can and will be realised through the commitments signalled in this plan and reinforced by the actions taken in our early years settings, schools and services to improve the quality of the experiences we provide for the children, young people, adults and families of East Renfrewshire. Our target outcomes and expected impacts in the next three-year cycle will be:



# Everyone Attaining

**National Priorities** – Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people. Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education

NIF Drivers	Expected Outcome / Impact (what we will measure and report on)	Activities (what we will do to bring about improvement)
<p>School and ELC Leadership</p> <p>Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism</p> <p>Curriculum and Assessment</p> <p>School and ELC Improvement</p> <p>Performance Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be the highest performing mainland council area as measured by national examinations for school leavers</li> <li>• Improved attainment in the senior phase</li> <li>• An increase in the number of pupils, school leavers and adults with well-developed employability skills</li> <li>• Be the highest performing mainland council area as measured by Curriculum for Excellence levels</li> <li>• Improved literacy and numeracy attainment throughout the years of the broad general education</li> <li>• An improvement in the attainment of disadvantaged children and young people</li> <li>• An increase in the percentage of schools evaluated as 'good' or better for raising attainment and achievement</li> <li>• An increase in activities which support prevention and early intervention, improve outcomes and reduce inequalities</li> <li>• An improvement in the percentage of young children reaching all of the expected developmental outcomes on entry to primary school</li> <li>• Continue to be the highest performing mainland council area as measured by the annual participation measure for school leavers</li> <li>• A further improvement in school leaver destinations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and challenge schools to raise attainment for all pupils and close the poverty related attainment gap, through analysis of data, improved learning, teaching and assessment and effective use of resources (including Pupil Equity and Scottish Attainment Challenge Funding)</li> <li>• Review and evaluate the impact of the Literacy Action Plan in line with the strategy</li> <li>• Update and implement the Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy and continue to support attainment and progress through provision of professional learning opportunities</li> <li>• Continue to implement the Developing the Young Workforce Action Plan 2022-2025.</li> </ul>

**National Priorities** – Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people. Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education. Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing.

<b>NIF Drivers</b>	<b>Expected Outcome / Impact</b> (what we will measure and report on)	<b>Activities</b> (what we will do to bring about improvement)
School and ELC Leadership  Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism  Parent/Carer Involvement and Engagement  Curriculum and Assessment  School and ELC Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ethos of high expectations and achievement in every school and service</li> <li>• A culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement in all schools and services</li> <li>• A skilled and confident workforce</li> <li>• A culture of professional enquiry in all establishments</li> <li>• An increase in the percentage of schools evaluated as ‘good’ or better for leadership of change</li> <li>• An increase in the percentage of schools evaluated as ‘very good’ or better for learning, teaching and assessment</li> <li>• An increase in the percentage of pupils agreeing they have opportunities to celebrate personal achievements</li> <li>• A consistently high satisfaction level of residents engaging with our services</li> <li>• Higher levels of parental engagement in their children’s learning and in the life of the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review, update and implement a revised leadership strategy</li> <li>• Continue to implement the Parental Engagement and Involvement Strategy 2021-2024</li> <li>• Support and challenge schools to develop their approaches to learning, teaching and assessment using the most up to date pedagogical research and practices, implementing the CLPL framework and sharing approaches to professional inquiry across our schools and centres, including through Research Hubs</li> <li>• Develop and deliver targeted programmes to support adult learners to improve skills for life, in particular literacy, numeracy and maths skills of adult learners</li> <li>• Continue to work in partnership with ELC settings, schools and ERC Culture and Leisure Trust to ensure all children and young people have high quality opportunities for achievement that are recognised and celebrated</li> <li>• Review, update and implement the Digital Learning and STEM Strategies.</li> </ul>



**National Priorities** – Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people. Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education. Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people. Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing.

<b>NIF Drivers</b>	<b>Expected Outcome / Impact</b> (what we will measure and report on)	<b>Activities</b> (what we will do to bring about improvement)
Teacher and Practitioner Professionalism  Parent/Carer Involvement and Engagement  Curriculum and Assessment  School and ELC Improvement  Performance Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A curriculum which enables all children, young people and adults to be successful, confident, responsible and effective in school, their work, their community and internationally</li> <li>• Learners’ experiences support them to develop their personalities, talents, mental, spiritual and physical abilities to their potential</li> <li>• An increase in opportunities for young people to develop knowledge, understanding and the skills for life and active participation in a global multicultural society and Scotland’s place in it</li> <li>• A rights based culture, centred on Getting It Right For Every Child</li> <li>• Practices and experiences which ensure that the needs of children, young people and adults are identified and addressed</li> <li>• Maintain and where possible improve upon the already low exclusions and high attendance rates in our schools, especially for looked after children</li> <li>• Maintain and where possible reduce the number of children and young people reporting they experience bullying and/or racist behaviour</li> <li>• A positive culture in health and wellbeing in every school and service</li> <li>• Resources which lead to improvements for learners and service users.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to expand and enhance the Healthier Minds Service to ensure it supports all children, young people and families</li> <li>• Implement the recommendations from both the National ASL review and the department’s ASN review, including providing professional learning around in-clusive practice in ELC settings and schools</li> <li>• Develop and implement a Social Justice Strategy</li> <li>• Continue to support schools and the Instrumental Music Service to develop flexible approaches to delivery of instrumental music tuition</li> <li>• Devise and implement a Learning for Sustainability Strategy (Get to Zero)</li> <li>• In partnership with colleagues across the Council, continue to implement The Promise, updated Child Protection Guidance, UNCRC, our Corporate Parenting Policy, Child Poverty Action Plan and the GIRFEC refresh</li> <li>• Continue to work in partnership to maintain an enhanced level of support with regard to the reduction of teacher workload and bureaucracy within establishments</li> <li>• Continue to seek investment to improve the learning environment for all our children and young people and expand provision as required.</li> </ul>



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Faodar am pàipear seo fhaotainn ann an Gàidhlig agus ann an cruthan eile mar ann an clò mòr agus Braille. Airson tuilleadh fiosrachaidh, feuch gun cuir sibh fios gu Customer First air 0141 577 3001 no post-d gu [customerservices@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk)

इस सूचना-पत्र में उल्लेखित सूचना यदि आप हिन्दी अनुवाद में चाहे तो कृपया सम्पर्क करें।

如果您想得到该资料所含信息的译文，请联系：

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਲੀਫਲੈਟ ਵਿਚ ਦਿਤੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਇਥੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ اس لیفلیٹ میں درج معلومات کا ترجمہ اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں تو ہم سے رابطہ کریں

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

2 February 2023

Report by Director of Education

EDUCATION RESPONSE TO 'LET'S TALK SCOTTISH EDUCATION'

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is to inform Education Committee on the Education Department's response to the Scottish Government's Consultation on the national curriculum.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. Education Committee is asked to note the contents of the Education Department's response to the Scottish Government Consultation on the national curriculum.

**BACKGROUND**

3. The Scottish Government and CoSLA launched a National Discussion on the vision for education in Scotland: "Let's Talk Scottish Education" on 21 September 2022.

4. The national discussion was a direct consequence of a recommendation in the [Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education](#) publication; to create a compelling and consensual vision for the future of Scottish education.

5. Professor Carol Campbell and Professor Alma Harris were asked to act as independent facilitators for the National Discussion.

6. The discussion took place between 21 September and 5 December with a report timetabled for spring 2023.

7. Ten questions were set by the independent facilitators to prompt discussion and response.

8. The discussion presented an unprecedented opportunity for children, young people and all those who support them to have their voices heard in a debate to establish a compelling and consensual vision for Scottish education.

**REPORT**

9. East Renfrewshire Education Department created various opportunities to engage learners, parents and carers, staff, leaders and partners in this important and exciting discussion.

10. The engagement timetable (appendix 1) details the range of voices that contributed to the departmental response.

11. Senior leaders in establishments took responsibility for capturing the views of children, young people, staff and parents.

12. A pupil curriculum conference took place, highlighting the importance of the pupils' contribution and views.

13. Comments from all respondents were recorded, analysed and included in the final response which can be found as part of appendix 2.

## **CONSULTATION**

14. The response has been determined through formal consultation with a range of stakeholders including:

- Children and Young People
- Parents / Carers
- School Staff
- Head Teachers
- Quality Improvement Team
- Education Leadership Team
- Education Committee

## **FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS**

15. The Education Department is well placed to implement any recommendations or improvements as a result of the national consultation and subsequent report.

16. A Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment group was established in September 2021, with a remit of leading departmental policy and guidance for schools.

17. Group membership is made up from Head Teachers, Depute Head Teachers, Principal Teachers and Quality Improvement Officers and chaired by the Head of Service (Quality Improvement).

18. This group would be tasked with responding to any recommendations arising from the national consultation and subsequent report.

19. The Education Department Local Improvement Plan would also reflect any national recommendations.

20. There are no financial or efficiency implication arising from this report.

21. Any significant changes as a result of this national consultation may lead to financial or efficiency implications in the future. If this was to be the case, a report providing detail would be shared at a future Education Committee.



## RECOMMENDATION

22. Education Committee is asked to note the contents of the Education Department response to the Scottish Government Consultation on the national curriculum.

Mark Ratter  
Director of Education  
2 February 2023

### **Convener Contact Details**

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### Appendices

1. Engagement Timeline
2. Education Department Response

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**‘Let’s Talk Scottish Education’ – National Discussion on the future of Education**  
**21 September and 5 December**  
**East Renfrewshire Council Education Department: Engagement Timeline**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Host</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Ongoing	Raise Profile with all establishments	J. Collins	
17 November 2022	Parent Representatives	F. McDonald R. Ali	Cross Arthurlie Primary
12 October 2022	Parent Council Chairs	S. McColgan	Barrhead High
28 October 2022	Quality Improvement Team	J. Collins	Mearns Castle High
15 & 16 November 2022	Teachers inc. LNCT representatives	A Hutcheson G. Friel J. McGregor	St Marks Primary Braidbar Primary Carolside Primary
15 & 16 November 2022	Local Government Employees inc. LNCT representatives	A Hutcheson G. Friel J. McGregor	St Marks Primary Braidbar Primary Carolside Primary
8 November 2022	ELC Pupil Representatives	S. Hunter L. Matthews C. Morris	ONLINE
10 November 2022	Primary Pupil Representatives	S. Hunter L. Matthews C. Morris	Eastwood High School
10 November 2022	Secondary Pupil Representatives	S. Hunter L. Matthews C. Morris	Eastwood High School
7 November 2022	Education Leadership Team	J. Collins	Education Department, Barrhead Offices
9 November 2022	Secondary Head Teachers	J. Collins	Mearns Castle High
16 November 2022	ELC, Primary and Special Head Teachers	J. Collins	Eastwood House
16 November 2022	Education Committee	J. Collins M. Ratter	Online

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**Let's Talk Scottish Education****East Renfrewshire Council Education Department Response****5 December 2022****1. What kind of education will be needed by children and young people in Scotland in the future?**

Our elected members, school leaders, staff, parents, carers and pupils overwhelmingly agreed that although we cannot predict what the world or society is going to be like in the future, we must build an education system focused on equality, equity and children's rights. We need to focus on the skills, the abilities and the resilience to adapt to situations that children and young people may face in the future. Although knowledge is important, we must have an education system that teaches children how to access knowledge. A system that motivates and inspires learners and nurtures a love for learning and learning behaviour for life. Children and young people should be able to identify as learners and have an understanding of what that means. This is not at the expense of achievement, with all stakeholders emphasising the need for a world class system in terms of qualifications; however we want children and young people to have learned how to learn and have the capacity to continue to learn for the purpose of attaining qualifications and beyond.

High quality pedagogy from early years to senior phase is required, within a curriculum that is relevant, flexible and responsive. All of our stakeholders expressed a desire to maintain a weighting on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, however other areas must be decluttered, as although Curriculum for Excellence is set up as a skills based curriculum, the reality is it has become about coverage rather than creativity, curiosity, problem solving and other transferable skills. However some staff expressed a desire to balance knowledge and skills more evenly, especially in the secondary sector. They believed that this would support with transition at key stages across sectors. It was also felt that a predominately skills based broad general education and a knowledge based senior phase, leads to real disconnect across the secondary school sector. Our secondary pupils also highlighted that with knowledge comes high stake assessments, which often diminishes the enjoyment at school. Some of our elected members shared a concern that as children progress through school and across sectors the subjects become demarcated with young people's experiences narrowing too quickly and the application and relevance of skills achieved become limited.

Staff feel strongly that children and young people need space to slow down, be brave and to take on bold, important learning in relation to big questions about their world and the world beyond their classroom, for example real life contexts such as global issues. This has to be balanced with children and staff feeling an unhelpful sense of hyper responsibility for a range of issues that cannot be solved by children. Although schools can be very effective at identifying issues that may need addressed, this does not mean that the responsibility lies with schools to resolve the issues nor can schools solve this on their own.

Staff expressed a need to focus on continuity across 3-18 and for learning and teaching to be based on the curriculum - not the assessment criteria; in particular in the secondary sector.

This needs to be developed in partnership with higher and further education establishments and employers to ensure a child or young person's school experience leads to positive destinations and outcomes in the future and the development of skills and attributes which are sought by employers. All future pathways should be valued by children, young people, parents, employers and wider society.

Pupils and staff, highlighted the importance of digital skills for the future. Concerns were expressed that the skills children and young people are developing are not able to be enhanced or built upon due to staff and parent expertise and the lack of resources and support.

## **2. How do we make that a reality?**

Courageous and values based leadership at all levels within the education system.

Our children and young people shared that by making the curriculum more relevant it would instantly motivate and support progress. They provided examples such as learning more about changing our world for the better and their role in doing so, thinking about real life and real world issues such as cost of living, climate change, endangered species and wars and conflict.

Our parent and carers highlighted the need for the education system to be more inclusive and equitable with representation and relevance for all key equity groups. They suggested smaller class sizes, increased resources, including teachers and support staff; decolonising of the curriculum and increased training for all in mental health and wellbeing.

Our school leaders and staff believe that there needs to be more trust in the education community than there is at the moment. A frustration was evident from the level and volume of initiatives that have surfaced from central government, many contradicting the other. The pace of change has become counterproductive with a workforce who are motivated to improve, however with diminished capacity because of the number of national policies, initiatives or guidance.

Again school leaders and staff highlighted how the GTC Standards were reviewed and relaunched but there appears to be further disconnect between the narrative around professional autonomy and empowerment and the current system. They suggested for the system to improve and deliver there needs to be a review of the empowerment agenda and a move towards allowing local solutions to local issues by trusted professionals. Take forward the OECD recommendations about decluttering the system to ensure that any centralised agencies have a proper understanding about the realities of school life (not just through inspection) and are prepared to model solutions/ work in partnership with practitioners on the ground to add value, rather than continue to expect more from an overburdened schools system.

Children and young people need an education system that empowers families as the primary educators of their children and schools that foreground relationships and authentic partnerships to explore values, build emotional intelligence and allow children to patiently engage with and explore the skills they will need to navigate an uncertain future.

School Leaders and staff also asked for investment in their profession, from Initial Teacher Education, through to Career Long Professional Learning. Investment to ensure high quality teaching and learning, with a culture of collaborative and professional inquiry.

**3. How can every child and young person's individual needs be supported and addressed in the future?**

All stakeholders stated the importance of relationships across the system, where children and young people are listened to, and their views valued and acted upon by a skilled, confident and passionate workforce.

Parents and carers believed that fairer funding to local government to enable education to be appropriately resourced would support with inclusion and equity. School leaders echoed this but also asked for expectations and priorities to be managed more appropriately as we move into a period of less local government funding.

School leaders believe that Curriculum for Excellence's Four Capacities are very much relevant, and would only require some tweaking to make relevant for today's children and young people, however they stressed a deeper understanding of how to ensure these are part of the outcomes from the curriculum and not left to chance.

This was reinforced by children and young people who recalled the capacities but not in the context they were intended.

**4. What is one thing that needs to stay and why?**

All stakeholders made a plea for continued investment in education, both capital and revenue, with school leaders and staff stating career long professional learning opportunities are essential in an improving system. All teachers agreed that in Scotland, the profession should remain a qualified profession to maintain high quality.

Although specific funding in terms of Pupil Equity Funding and Strategic Equity Funding were recognised and appreciated, it was highlighted that this was against a backdrop where other services and resources were being cut.

Parents / carers and staff also strongly suggested that for the presumption of mainstream to be a reality in Scotland, investment is required to support inclusion, in particular recruitment and retention of teachers and pupil support staff.

School leaders and staff also stated that teachers in early years are pivotal to early intervention and prevention and would encourage further investment in this area at a national level.

The commitment to increased access to technology and the equitable roll out of this is key to meeting the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners however, this should be purposeful.

**5. What are the most important priorities for a future Scottish education system?**

All stakeholders highlighted the need for the curriculum to be the main focus in the classroom and not the exam system. There is a genuine plea that the National Discussion influences the Professor Louise Hayward review and not the other way about.

All value qualifications, and emphasise the need for a world class system, however how we assess progress and measure success should align to how we teach and how children learn.

There is a real commitment by all stakeholders to raise attainment for all children and young people and a desire to close the poverty related attainment gap. Although staff highlighted the key role they play in this, they believe the challenges with resources across services, often mean collaboration is not able to take place. Therefore a commitment to prioritise children's learning and wellbeing is needed.

Teachers believe choice within the education system should be a priority. Scotland meets the needs of young people and families by offering a broad spectrum of education at different ages and stages of life. This choice within our system, from rural schools, Gaelic medium, denominational schools, ASN etc, offers parents and pupils the best chance to have an education that will allow growth and development and success that will impact on the individual and the common good of society. The Catholic educators recorded that within that sector, the provision of Catholic schools needs to stay.

Staff believe that children's rights should be embedded into pedagogy and practice, with mental and emotional wellbeing and resilience being nurtured and developed in all pupils from an early age.

Parents believe the variety of curriculum pathways, linked to labour market information, in the senior phase should continue to be prioritised, however they believe that these should be considered in all Scottish Government measures (i.e. Scottish Attainment Challenge).

**6. How can we ensure that everyone involved in education in Scotland has a say in future decisions and actions?**

All stakeholders believe that the Scottish Government needs to listen more to local authorities, school staff, parents / carers and children and young people. There is a concern amongst all that many decisions are removed from what happens in the ELC setting or school.

Staff also emphasised the importance that if you're asked for your opinion that people listen. It was noted that this has not been the experience of many stakeholders during recent national consultations.

**7. How can children and young people be cared for and supported in the future? (i.e. physical and mental wellbeing)?**

All believe there is genuine motivation and willingness by all partners to collaborate to bring about improvement and support for children and young people, however diminishing resources and lack of funding from government mean that planning commitments are often not realised.



Although some ring fenced money is available it is often felt that there is no strategic discussion between Scottish Government Directorates or Education Scotland so many policy initiatives are disjointed or misaligned in terms of single agency priorities.

All stakeholders agreed that ensuring children and young people's voices are heard in relation to their physical and mental health and wellbeing is key. However parents, staff and school leaders highlighted the need for effective signposting and available support to respond.

Children and young people also expressed a desire to have clear signposting to mitigate against isolation and loneliness. They also talked about opportunities to exercise, play and take part in hobbies and clubs as crucial.

Parents and carers agreed and suggested free at the point of access opportunities for children and young people to exercise their mental and physical health.

Children and young people also talked about the structure of the school day and opportunities for mindfulness and relaxation to be included. They also shared that in their experience adults are fantastic role models for emotional and mental health.

#### **8. How can the right of every child and young person to have opportunities to develop their full potential be achieved in future?**

Staff believe that more work needs to be done with all stakeholders around understanding what each individual's full potential is. They believe it is about having a curriculum rationale that meets the needs of children and young people within the context of the school and the community. To do so there needs to be enough autonomy within the curriculum to enable flexibility and different curriculum pathways to ensure children are on the appropriate path. All pathways should be ambitious, challenging but achievable. We want to ensure that we do have high attaining and achieving young people who realise success with their choices.

Inclusion and the recommendations of the Morgan Review are vitally important to ensuring the right pathway for all children and that there are key opportunities to develop potential and achievement.

Staff and parents stated the need for investment in order to do so. Investment in smaller class sizes, more teachers and support staff and high quality professional learning.

Parents / carers supported this view.

#### **9. How can children and young people be helped to learn about our changing world, so they feel able to positively contribute?**

It is a fine balance between a prescriptive and non-prescriptive curriculum. At the moment staff in our secondary schools believe the senior phase it is too prescriptive, leaving no capacity to engage children and young people about the changing world. There is a real commitment to developing children and young people prepared for the future, however the SQA exam system is in direct conflict with this. At the moment the focus is on knowledge to pass exams, rather than developing skills they will need for learning, life and work. Staff therefore state that while the SQA exams are still used as a narrow measure of accountability, they will not be able to provide a curriculum that fully equips young people for the world we live in or indeed develop the four capacities.

They call for brave leadership when reviewing a very well established system and suggest looking towards other systems such as the international baccalaureate. They cited this as being far more relevant and also providing young people with opportunities for pupil leadership, pupil voice, Rights Respecting agenda, community partnership, learning for sustainability and meaningful engagement as change makers and campaigners.

Staff requested a curriculum that allows more opportunities to work in partnership with the local community (including parents) on real life projects.

**10. Do you have any other comments that you would like to provide about a vision for the future of Scottish Education?**

There was a word of caution by some stakeholders not to ‘throw the baby out with the bathwater’ and ensure we have capacity in the system (especially the workforce) before any systemic change.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE2 FEBRUARY 2023Report by Director of EducationEAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S  
CONSULTATION ON THE TRANSFER OF EDUCATION APPEAL COMMITTEES TO THE  
SCOTTISH TRIBUNALS SERVICE**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek the Education Committee's approval of the proposed Council response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the transfer of the functions of education appeal committees to the Scottish Tribunals Service.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. Education Committee is asked to note and approve the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the transfer of the functions of education appeal committees to the Scottish Tribunals Service.

**BACKGROUND**

3. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 ("the 1980 Act") allows for parents/carers of school age children to apply for a school place at any school. Where a parent/carer wishes for a child to attend a non-catchment school, such an application is by means of a written request ("placing request"). The 1980 Act allows for parents/carers to appeal a refused placing request decision.

4. The popularity of East Renfrewshire's schools means that the Education Authority receives a significant number of school placing request applications, disproportionately in terms of the size of the Council.

5. The 1980 Act also allows for parents/carers of children excluded from school to appeal against such decisions. East Renfrewshire Council has very few exclusions annually and such appeals are rare.

6. Local authorities are currently required to set up and maintain such education appeal committees.

7. The Tribunals (Scotland) Act 2014 created a new two tier structure for devolved tribunals. As part of the 2014 Act, Education Appeal Committees are listed as one of the tribunals which would be included. This would see the transfer of appeal committee hearings from local authorities (stage 1) and Sheriff Courts (stage 2) to a similar structured two tier appeal process managed by the Scottish Tribunals Service.

8. In November 2022, the Scottish Government published a consultation with a proposal to transfer the appeal committees to the Scottish Tribunals as provided for by the 2014 Act. If approved the process would require secondary legislation to be put in place; this process is expected to take at least 18 to 24 months from the date a decision is made to progress the transfer. It is unclear as to when a decision will be made.

9. The Scottish Government consultation provides an opportunity for consideration of the implications of these proposals and allows the views of those involved in the current and proposed system for school admission and exclusion appeals to be fully explored. More details are included in the [Scottish Government consultation paper](#).

10. This consultation will enable the Scottish Government to decide on whether to proceed with the transfer on the basis of as broad a range of viewpoints as possible.

## REPORT

11. The consultation period is from 24 November 2022 to 6 February 2023.

12. Various Council stakeholders with experience and interest in Education Appeal Committees were consulted on their views on the proposed changes.

13. Consultees include elected members, Business Operations and Partnerships, Legal Services and the Education Department. A cross party meeting of elected members took place to consider the proposal.

14. The proposed response by East Renfrewshire Council to the consultation is included as Appendix One.

## CONSULTATION

15. The response reflects the views of the East Renfrewshire consultees.

## FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

16. There are no specific financial or efficiency implications related to this paper and the department will use its existing devolved budget to undertake its duties should the proposed transfer of appeal committees be approved.

## CONCLUSION

17. The proposed Council response to the consultation records the Council's position that it strongly disagrees with the proposal to transfer education appeal committees to the Scottish Tribunal Service.

18. Whilst the principles behind the proposal to transfer appeals with respect to transparency, fairness, impartiality, the need for regular training and to reduce the stress and concerns of placing requests and appeals on appellants are recognised, these principles are already part of the robust appeal process in East Renfrewshire Council. A move to a centralised Scottish Tribunal Service is not required and such a move would result conversely



in a significant detrimental impact on all stakeholders, including inequality for appellants, as detailed in the proposed response in Appendix One.

19. The Council asks via its submission to the consultation that the Scottish Government does not proceed with the transfer of education appeal committees to the Scottish Tribunal Service and continues with the existing arrangements.

## RECOMMENDATION

20. Education Committee is asked to note and approve the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the transfer of the functions of education appeal committees to the Scottish Tribunals Service.

Mark Ratter  
Director of Education  
2 February 2023

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### **Background Papers**

Scottish Government Consultation on the transfer of the functions of Education Appeal Committees to the Scottish Tribunals: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/transfer-functions-education-appeal-committees-scottish-tribunals-consultation-paper/>  
Education (Scotland) Act 1980: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/44/contents>  
Tribunals (Scotland) Act 2014: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/10/enacted>  
East Renfrewshire School Admissions and Placing Requests: <https://eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/article/4436/School-Admissions>

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## Transfer of Education Appeal Committees to Scottish Tribunals

### Respondent Information Form

**Please Note** this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy: [Privacy - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- Individual
- Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

East Renfrewshire Council

Phone number

0141 577 3001

Address

Eastwood Park,  
Rouken Glen Rd,  
Giffnock, Glasgow

Postcode

G46 6UG

Email Address

customerservices@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- Publish response with name
- Publish response only (without name)
- Do not publish response

#### Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

No

## Questionnaire

### Question 1

Do you agree that appeal committees **should transfer** to the Scottish Tribunals?  
And if so, why?

- Yes  
 No  
 Not Sure

Please explain your answer in the text box.

East Renfrewshire Council strongly disagrees with the proposal to transfer the functions of Education Authority Appeal Committees to the Scottish Tribunal Service.

The Council asks via its submission to the consultation that the Scottish Government does not proceed with the transfer of education appeal committees to the Scottish Tribunal Service and continues with the existing arrangements.

The Council has consulted multiple stakeholders in preparation for responding to this consultation including: elected members (who held a consultation meeting); the Council's Legal Services department; Clerks to the Education Authority Appeal Committee; and the Council's Education Department.

Whilst all stakeholders recognised and agreed with the principles behind the proposal to transfer appeals with respect to transparency, fairness, impartiality, the need for regular training and to reduce the stress and concerns of placing requests and appeals on appellants, they believed that these principles were already part of the robust appeal process in East Renfrewshire Council. The Council believes that the move to a centralised Scottish Tribunal Service is not required and that such a move, would result conversely, a significant detrimental impact on all stakeholders.

East Renfrewshire Council does not believe that the development of a two tier centralised tribunal service, which in effect would mirror the structure of appeals which is currently in place in accordance with legislation (but with a different location and panel members), would make any improvement on the current approach. The current process allows Education Authorities to be held to account by locally elected members and lay persons, who not only have to consider the challenges of the Education Authority, but must also consider the position of their constituents, within in the framework of legislation. Furthermore the current system ensures that in the case where an appellant does progress to appeal at the Sherriff, there is a separate legal entity/body (few more conversant with law) which then re-considers the appeal at that time, which is a completely discrete body from the stage 1 appeal. There could develop a perception that the proposed approach with a two tier Tribunal Service results in less independence and scrutiny by discrete bodies across the two tiers; the current approach is considered to be more independent than the proposed system.



Consultees commented upon the unique context of each local authority in Scotland and the local knowledge and experience which Education Appeal Committee members have developed over a significant period of time. This local knowledge and experience is vital in that members are able to understand and fully appreciate the reasoning for placing request submissions and appeals and can fully understand appellants' contexts. Additionally, given members' knowledge of the local community and services, members are able to provide appellants with supportive guidance and advice which is particular to the Council. Committee members are also well informed with the local contexts for refusal of such placing requests such as local development planning. Moving to a centralised tribunal service would not only lose this vital knowledge and experience of local context, familiarity with council policy and the appeal processes, but would also result in appellants not being provided with this local knowledge, support and guidance.

Committee members commented upon their disappointment at the suggestion in the consultation paper that appeal committee members are not trained, lack knowledge, are biased and not impartial, and commented that they found this suggestion offensive; it was also commented that the proposal is primarily on the basis of surveys which were undertaken more than 16 years ago and do not reflect current approaches. Within East Renfrewshire, committee members are provided with regular training in the process of administering appeal hearings and are led and supported to this end at all times by the Clerks to the Appeal Committee. Furthermore committee members receive regular training from the Council's Legal Services and have access to legal advice as and when required. The Clerk of the appeal committee ensures that all hearings are undertaken in an open, transparent and fair manner and ensures that at all times the Education Department and the committee are completely discrete from each other. In each of the last five years the Education Appeals Committee has upheld appeals and granted places in East Renfrewshire schools overturning the decision of the Education Department in cases where it believed it was appropriate to do so, in keeping with legislation.

All East Renfrewshire Council consultees are concerned with the centralisation of the process and the inequitable impact of this. East Renfrewshire Council in no way recognises the suggestion that the hosting of appeal committee hearings in Council buildings is intimidating for appellants and believes that the hosting of appeals in a central tribunal would actually be more intimidating. This perception is held by consultees on experiences of attending the Additional Support Needs Tribunals, and it was commented upon that these tribunals feel more formal and adversarial, particularly when compared with local Education Authority Appeal Committees. Furthermore, the requirement for applicants to travel to a central location is inequitable as this may not be possible due to cost, ability to travel and/or time. East Renfrewshire Council is a small geographical area which means that all appellants do not need to travel far should they wish an appeal hearing in person. A move to a centralised tribunal service is likely to result in a service which is not equitable to all.

It is noted in the proposal document that it may be possible for hearings to be held remotely by the tribunal service. As a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, East Renfrewshire introduced the option of remote online conference appeal committee hearings as well as the traditional options of in person or written submissions. Whilst this was undertaken as a matter of need at the time, East Renfrewshire Council has

continued to offer the three modes of appeal hearing. Since March 2019, all with the exception of one appeal hearing have been requested remotely; this is in excess of 300 appeals having been heard remotely. This has allowed appellants to join meetings from a location of their preference and means people are relaxed and do not feel intimidated by the process and can be easily supported; there is little disruption to an appellant's day. The Council ensures that all required parties are able to access the remote meeting (such as family advocates), any documentary evidence can be submitted and that there is a robust system in place for managing remote meetings. The approach to remote meetings is of benefit to committee members and Council officers who can work more efficiently. The consultees also noted that the need for Council officers to travel to a central location would result in significant additional workload, impact on officers' time, result in additional costs to local authorities and be completely inefficient; such a change would be a significant backwards step and would be counter active the local and national actions with regards to net carbon zero.

Across Scotland all 32 local authorities have their own unique school admissions and placing request policies which are in accordance with national legislation and have come into effect following public consultation and approval by locally elected members. The centralisation of the appeals committees was viewed as an erosion of local democracy as a consequence of the removal of the appeals process from locally elected members and lay persons to a centralised team; this is heightened given that East Renfrewshire's policies have been created locally following full public consultation and approved by locally elected members.

The East Renfrewshire policies, like those for all other local authorities, have been developed to ensure that all applicants are treated in a fair, consistent and transparent manner whilst facilitating the Council to meet its statutory duties of ensuring a school place for residents of the council area. Whilst it is not yet clear as to the composition of proposed Tribunal hearings or as to how appeal hearings would be arranged and managed, East Renfrewshire Council has concerns with the application of its policies by a committee which may not be fully conversant with the its policies, and which may be hearing complex cases from several different local authorities (with differing policies) and schools over a short period of time. Furthermore, East Renfrewshire's policy ensures that any applicant, catchment or placing request, who is not allocated a place at their preferred school, is able to challenge the allocated place or refusal, which leads to further complexity for committees not familiar with the Council's policy. Such appeals include:

- Placing Request: Application for place in a non-catchment school;
- Catchment allocation: An applicant not allocated a place at a preferred catchment school;
- Redirected children: Those allocated a place in a non-catchment school due to oversubscription;
- Request to remain: Where a child no longer resides in the catchment area of the school but wishes to continue to attend the school.

This means that whilst the majority of Education Authority Appeal Committee hearings relate to requests for places for the commencement of the school year, we continue to receive and process hearings throughout the year and in multiple contexts, and not

only for new school places at P1 and S1 year stages. This will result in an on-going capacity requirement throughout the year for a tribunal service.

The consultees have concerns about the basis for the placing request estimates with the suggestion that the demand nationally would be around 600-700 placing request appeals annually; in East Renfrewshire alone the number of appeals in recent years averages in excess of 140 appeals in a normal year. The Council is further concerned with a central tribunal service's ability to process the significant number of appeal hearings required particularly over a short period of time. Placing request applications are not responded to until the end of April in accordance with legislation; this provides a short window of 3 months in which to hear applications before the end of the school year. There would be a necessity to share data between all 32 local authorities and the Tribunal Service to ensure that any appeal received by the tribunal: is a genuine one; is received within required timescales; and that there are not multiple appeals by the same appellant in one year, as per legislation. This is further exacerbated by the timelines which applicants have to appeal to Education Authority Appeal Committee and where appropriate, subsequently the Sheriff Court; in both cases appellants have up to 28 days to progress appeal on receipt of outcome letter. Consequently East Renfrewshire Council has significant concerns regarding a central service being able to process all placing request hearings prior to the end of the school year. Should appeal hearings not be heard as soon as possible, and certainly before the end of the school year, this will result in children and families being distressed with the uncertainty of outcome and children will not be able to engage in transition activities with the other learners who they will be attending school with. Any delays will impact negatively on the start of pupils' education; this would be heightened for children and families with additional needs. By extension such delays will have significant workload implications and challenges for officers and schools within local authorities.

East Renfrewshire Council is also concerned with a central service's capacity to manage the potential additional appeals which are required when an appeal is upheld in favour of an applicant. As per legislation, all other similar applications have to be reconsidered, applicants informed that a decision has been upheld and offered the opportunity to re-appeal their decision. Whilst such a situation can be managed locally given scale and local flexibility, should this occur at a central level with regards to several schools/local authorities, this would result in the need for co-ordination between the central service and local authority and will undoubtedly result in a significant number of appeals requiring to be reheard, which East Renfrewshire Council does not believe would be possible for a central tribunal service within desired timescales of children and families.

A central tribunal service will require significant administration support due to required ongoing communication and co-ordination with local authorities given any material changes. For example, placing request applications continue to be received after the legislative timeframe at the end of April and where applications cannot be granted these will often result in more appellants on an ongoing basis. Another example is where school places often become available following a refused placing request, as a consequence of previously allocated places no longer being required. These two examples highlight how such changes will require to be communicated and co-ordinated with a central service on an ongoing basis and the significant workload

challenge this would present as well as difficulties with the effective and efficient timetabling of appeal hearings.

Locally arranged appeal committees are flexible and allow for changes to be made to schedules quickly and easily to accommodate appellants. Currently within East Renfrewshire where an appellant requests a particular date/time or requires a change of date/time at short notice, the Council is able to accommodate such changes; remote hearings are particularly helpful in this regard. However East Renfrewshire Council believes that a central tribunal approach, as a consequence of the demand for appeal hearings and the need to align with appropriate committee members, would be rigid in its allocation of appeal hearing dates/times and would be completely inflexible to any change or alterations to accommodate appellants' needs. This would result in appellants not being able to attend a hearing; should the hearing be heard in an appellant's absence and the appeal not upheld in the appellant's favour, this will lead to an increase in demand for Tier 2 tribunals and place further strain on the proposed service's capacity to process all hearings within appropriate timescales.

Whilst East Renfrewshire acknowledges the frankness of the proposal paper, it is concerned at the suggestion that a central tribunal service will require time to bed in and that local authorities may choose to have legal representatives as a consequence:

*'We also expect local authorities may choose to have legal representation in cases before the Tribunal at least in the initial period while a new system was bedding in.'*

**Para 4.25 of consultation paper**

This suggests, at least initially, that any central tribunal will not have the confidence of all stakeholders, and given the gravity of appeal committee hearings to appellants and local authorities alike, may undermine the process and decisions made. Such concern is likely to increase the number placing requests appeals which are submitted as it could be considered by applicants that there is a greater likelihood of a positive outcome from appeals and may also lead to a greater number of Tier 2 appeals. This perception is also likely to lead to an inequity between appellants, with those financially capable, able to instruct legal representation whilst others will not be in such a fortunate position.

As noted in the proposal paper there will be a requirement for secondary legislation governing the operation of appeal committees to be put in place, should the transfer of functions come into effect. However the consultation does not provide detail of which elements of the legislation will change; will the only changes be the transfer of committees from local education authorities and Sheriffs to a central tribunal service, or will there be other changes which would have greater consequences such as statutory timeframes and deemed decisions. Furthermore, as is currently the case, should a Sheriff uphold an appellant's appeal, education authorities have the opportunity to appeal that decision where it is felt appropriate via Judicial Review. There is no detail in the consultation proposal as to what vehicle would be available to education authorities to challenge the decision of a Tier 2 tribunal decision. East Renfrewshire Council believes that there should be such a vehicle for local authorities, as is currently the case.

East Renfrewshire Council is concerned with the proposal with regards to proposed costs. The proposal suggests costs of between £500,000 to £700,000 per annum for a central tribunal service, with costs being met by central and local government – given the concerns previously made, these costings seem to be an under estimate. As the proposal has not been fully costed at this time it is difficult to comment further. As noted previously, almost all appeals are heard remotely within East Renfrewshire Council and so there is little cost associated with the process; where meetings have been held in person there is also little expense to all parties. Given the current economic challenges being faced in local government, it is concerning that a process which is efficient, working well and very low cost, will be replaced by one which will cost more and likely be more inefficient and inequitable.

### Question 2

**Do you consider that appeal committees should remain with local authorities but with improvements to how they operate? And if so, what changes would you like to see?**

- Yes**  
 **No**  
 **Not Sure**

**Please explain your answer in the text box.**

It is notable revenue funding is to be made available for the proposed transfer of the appeals service.

Currently, Councils have met the costs of changes to the appeal committee hearing process including costs associated with the rental of neutral venues for hearings and for capital investment in such areas as IT equipment to accommodate changes such as remote meetings.

Furthermore, lay persons volunteer to undertake their role in the committees. It is noted in the proposal that members of the tribunals would be recompensed for their service. The Council would like to see the availability of a revenue budget to recompense volunteers for their service and to acknowledge their commitment to their local communities.

### Question 3

**Do you consider that **no changes** should be made to how appeal committees operate? And if so, why?**

- Yes, no changes should be made**  
 **No, changes should be made**  
 **Not Sure**

**Please explain your answer in the text box.**



The Council's response to the consultation records the Council's position that it strongly disagrees with the proposal to transfer education appeal committees to the Scottish Tribunal Service.

East Renfrewshire Council does not believe that there is any requirement to change how appeal committee hearings are currently operating in Scotland.

As noted in response to question 1, there are multiple factors for this position. However there are key themes which should be re-iterated:

- The proposal is based upon surveys undertaken in excess of 16 years ago – these findings in no way are reflective of the current context in East Renfrewshire Council;
- Appeal committee hearings are offered to appellants in person, remotely, or by written submission; in three years all but one of these in East Renfrewshire has been undertaken remotely. This ultimately removes any concerns regarding appellants feeling intimidated by attending a non-neutral location, and avoids the inequity, inefficiency, cost and disruption of asking appellants and officers to travel to a central location;
- Significant concerns regarding a centralised body being able to overtake all appeals, subsequent appeals (and any others required as a consequence of an appeal being upheld) in a timely fashion for learners, schools and families to prepare for transitions, impacting negatively;
- Tier 1 and tier 2 tribunals would be no less daunting than attending a local Education Appeals Committee or Sheriff Court, respectively;
- Current process has clear checks and balances and discrete entities involved in considering appeals, thus avoiding any perception of bias;
- Concerns regarding legal due process and how this would be impacted;
- Significant training, expertise and local knowledge assists greatly in ensuring accurate decisions on application of local authority policy within legislative framework are made;
- Current processes operate at little to no cost to local authorities and appellants. The proposal would introduce significant cost with no benefits for this.

Whilst East Renfrewshire Council does not believe that there is a need to make any changes to the operation of appeal committees, it would like to take this opportunity to highlight that the Council does believe that there is a need for a review of the legislation in relation to school admissions, placing requests and appeals. For example, there are various elements of legislation which are contradictory. One such contradiction is the requirement for education authorities to ensure a Roman Catholic denominational school place for any child of Roman Catholic faith. Whilst East Renfrewshire Council is in agreement with this guarantee, the legislation does not support the Council in ensuring this as the Council is unable to consider any places as reserved places within a Roman Catholic denominational school for children of Roman Catholic faith. Whilst in almost all cases East Renfrewshire Council can accommodate all children of Roman Catholic faith in their catchment school at the commencement of their education (P1 and S1), thereafter should a child join the community of one of the popular Roman Catholic schools within the Council, it is almost certainly the case that the child will not be able to be accommodated at the local school, and will require to be redirected to

another Roman Catholic denominational school within the council. This is at great expense to the Council, but most importantly, impacts negatively on the child and family given:

- the impact of travelling time;
- missing out on after school clubs;
- challenges for regular parental engagement;
- siblings who attend catchment and non-catchment schools and associated issues;
- not attending school with friends in the vicinity of residence;
- having to move school once again once if/when a place at the denominational catchment school becomes available.

If legislation permitted the Education Authority to consider places as reserved for Roman Catholic children, (in keeping with the legislation and its intentions with regards to no more places being held than is required), this would avoid these issues.

Once again East Renfrewshire Council strongly disagrees with the proposal to transfer the functions of Education Authority Appeal Committees to the Scottish Tribunal Service.

The Council asks via its submission to the consultation that the Scottish Government does not proceed with the transfer of education appeal committees to the Scottish Tribunal Service and continues with the existing arrangements.