

Department of Business Operations and Partnerships

Director of Business Operations and Partnerships: Louise Pringle

Council Headquarters, Eastwood Park, Giffnock, East Renfrewshire, G46 6UG

Phone: 0141 577 3000

Website: www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Date: 2 June 2023

When calling please ask for: Jennifer Graham, 0141 577 3016 and Colin Wright, 07741 999697

E-mail: jennifer.graham@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk and colin.wright@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

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, 8 June 2023 at 10.00am.**

The agenda of business is as listed below.

LOUISE PRINGLE

L PRINGLE

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence.**
2. **Declarations of Interest.**
3. **Education Scotland Report on Braidbar Primary School and Nursery Class – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 3 - 28).**
4. **Draft Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy 2023-26 – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 29 - 46).**
5. **Home to School Transport Policy – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 47 - 68).**
6. **East Renfrewshire Council Response to the Scottish Government's Consultation on Prescribing the Minimum Annual Number of Learning and Hours – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 69 - 82).**

This document can be explained to you in other languages and can be provided in alternative formats such as large print and Braille. For further information, please contact Customer First on 0141 577 3001 or e-mail customerservices@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

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 COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE8 June 2023Report by Director of EducationEDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON BRAIDBAR PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform Education Committee of the report by Education Scotland on Braidbar Primary School and Nursery Class.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) note and comment on the contents of the Education Scotland report on Braidbar Primary School and Nursery Class; and,
- b) approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

BACKGROUND

3. Braidbar Primary School and Nursery Class were inspected by a team from Education Scotland in March 2023. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school and nursery class and identified particular strengths and areas for improvement using the Education Scotland six-point scale and the self-evaluation frameworks *How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare* and *How Good is our School?*

4. Since August 2016, Education Scotland use 2 models of school inspection. The full and the short model.

5. The full model evaluates 4 quality indicators, with the short model focusing on 2. Both models include an evaluation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment and Raising Attainment and Achievement (or the equivalent securing children's progress, in early learning and childcare settings).

6. Braidbar Primary School and Nursery Class were inspected using the short model, with an evaluation for 2 quality indicators and a short report which details the strengths and areas for improvement. The report was published in May 2023 and is attached as Appendix 1. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members, the Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure and made available to the local community.

REPORT

7. In assessing the indicators of quality in the school and nursery class, Education Scotland found both aspects of the work to be very good: learning, teaching and assessment; and raising attainment and achievement / securing children's progress.

8. The inspection team found the following strengths in the school and nursery's work:

- Enthusiastic, confident and articulate children who are very proud of their school. They feel safe, valued and respected.
- The strong sense of teamwork and positive relationships across the whole school. The headteacher's continued focus on empowering staff, children and families to lead school improvement is having a positive impact on outcomes for children.
- The very good opportunities that children have across the school to achieve success. They develop a wide range of skills through a variety of real-life learning experiences, leadership roles and clubs.
- The consistently high levels of attainment and achievement across the school.

9. This is a very good report on an East Renfrewshire establishment.

10. The values, progress and achievements of the children across the nursery class and school were identified by the inspection team:

- *Across Braidbar Primary School, staff create positive learning environments underpinned by the school values and children's rights. All staff and children focus on ensuring values of 'kindness, ambition and creativity' are evident in the daily life of the school.*
- *Children use a range of digital technology well to enhance their learning across the curriculum. Virtual reality (VR) headsets are providing motivating stimuli to enhance learning.*

11. It was particularly pleasing that the leadership of the headteacher was highlighted in the Summary of Inspection Findings.

- *The headteacher provides highly effective leadership for the school community. She is well supported by the depute headteacher and principal teacher. The headteacher's enthusiasm, determination and commitment motivates and empowers staff and the wider community to improve outcomes for all children.*

12. The inspection team identified 2 areas for improvement:

- Teachers in the school should continue to develop the quality of feedback they provide to children about their learning. This will better help children know what they need to do next to continue to improve. It will better support children to develop personal targets to increase ownership of their learning and progress.
- Staff in the nursery should continue to improve further the use of a range of information to ensure a coherent overview of children's progress over time across the curriculum.

13. Appendix 2 of this paper includes the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement. The Quality Improvement Service will work closely with the Braidbar leadership team to support its implementation.

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

15. Education Scotland will make no further reports in connection with the inspection of Braidbar Primary School and Nursery Class.

16. Within 2 years of the date of publication, the Quality Improvement Service will revisit the school to review the impact of the improvement (action) plan in addressing the agreed areas for improvement and to provide a progress report to parents.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

18. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) note and comment on the contents of the Education Scotland report on Braidbar Primary School and Nursery Class; and,
- b) approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
8 June 2023

Convener Contact Details

Councillor Anderson, Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure
Tel: 07341 640 825
Tel: 0141 577 3107
andrew.anderson@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Report Author

Janice Collins, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement)
Tel: 0141 577 3204
Janice.Collins@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Appendices

1. [Education Scotland report on Braidbar Primary School and Nursery Class](#)
2. Braidbar Primary School and Nursery Class Action Plan.

BLANK PAGE

Summarised inspection findings

Braidbar Primary School

East Renfrewshire Council

23 May 2023

BLANK PAGE

Key contextual information

Braidbar Primary School and nursery class is a non-denominational school serving the Giffnock area of East Renfrewshire. Approximately twenty percent of the pupils attend the school from outwith the catchment area. The current roll of the school is 196 children across 8 classes. Most children reside in deciles nine and ten of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data zones. Forty-one percent of children have English as an additional language. The senior leadership team consists of a headteacher, depute headteacher and an acting principal teacher. Attendance for school session 2020-2021 was 96.7% which is above the national average.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- Across Braidbar Primary School, staff create positive learning environments underpinned by the school values and children's rights. All staff and children focus on ensuring values of 'kindness, ambition and creativity' are evident in the daily life of the school. As a result of these shared values, children benefit from mutually respectful and positive relationships. Classrooms are bright and wall displays are child led, leading to children having ownership of their learning environment.
- Children are very proud of their school and are confident sharing their learning with each other and visitors. They demonstrate awareness of the needs of their community and how they can support different groups. Children create starter packs for new children moving into the community from abroad. Children are confident talking about their own experiences, beliefs and cultures and enjoy learning with and from each other. This results in an inclusive approach to learning which builds on the experiences and values of individuals.
- Most children contribute well to the life of the school through a wide range of pupil leadership roles including as members of eco, equalities and health and wellbeing committees. The 'young leaders of learning' have a key role in supporting school improvement using 'How good is OUR school?' to support their work. They are passionate in consulting their peers about what is important to them in school and report confidently on the improvements they have made.
- Almost all children across the school are motivated and engaged in their learning. They enjoy well-planned opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in real-life contexts which have a clear purpose. For example, children used mathematics and map reading skills to plan a visit by train to a local area. The 'spotlight skills' sessions enable children to develop a range of skills for learning, life and work in real-life contexts. Children learn well in a range of contexts outdoors, both in the school grounds and the local area. Children across P1 to P3 learn skills in the 'secret garden' through a progressive outdoor learning programme. Older children use the

outdoors for physical education (PE) and to apply their skills, for example, in measuring perimeter and calculating area.

- Children work well independently, in pairs and in groups. They make choices in what and how they learn through interdisciplinary contexts. This is providing them with opportunities to lead aspects of their own learning. Children are well placed to take even more responsibility for leading their own learning.
- Almost all lessons are well-planned and resourced to meet the interests and needs of children. Teacher explanations are clear and help children know what they need to do in their learning. Almost all teachers use questioning well to check for understanding and most use a range of questioning techniques to develop children's thinking skills. Almost all teachers share learning intentions and success criteria effectively which helps children know what they need to do to be successful in that lesson. Where success criteria are co-created with children, this helps them to take increased ownership of their learning. There is scope for the co-creation of success criteria with children to be further developed across the school.
- In almost all lessons, the pace of learning is brisk and planned at the right level of difficulty for almost all learners. Teachers build very well on children's prior learning. Most children who are working beyond nationally expected standards have appropriate challenge and opportunities to extend their learning. Teachers should continue to ensure that children are given sufficient time to carry out written work, particularly during writing lessons. This will ensure they can demonstrate the knowledge and understanding they have developed.
- Teachers provide positive written and oral feedback to children linked to the success criteria. This helps children to know how successful they have been in that piece of learning. Teachers should continue to develop the quality of feedback across learning to ensure this helps children know what they need to do next to improve. As part of this, children need greater opportunities to act on the feedback provided. This will help them to develop personalised targets in the areas they need to improve and increase further ownership of their learning and progress.
- Staff working across early level are developing their approaches to play-based pedagogy. Learning environments are well-resourced and support children to participate in free-flow play balanced with direct teaching in small groups. Staff interact well with children to support their learning. Staff should continue to work with children to plan learning in different areas. This will help children understand what they are expected to learn through their play. As play progresses through the school, staff should work together to ensure they build on existing practice to ensure play is integral to learning.
- Children use a range of digital technology well to enhance their learning across the curriculum. They are confident using tablets to research, record and present their learning. They access and use digital applications to help gather and share views and support their learning, for example to hear correct pronunciation in French. Across the school, children are developing well their coding skills using a range of devices and software. Virtual reality (VR) headsets are providing motivating stimuli to enhance learning. For example, children use the VR headset to explore what they see, feel and hear in the Arctic to support their writing. Digital leaders use their skills in digital technology to teach skills to other children.
- All teachers plan assessment as part of learning and teaching. Teachers use an appropriate range of assessments at different times to support children's progress. During lessons, teachers use assessment well to ascertain where children need additional support or challenge in their learning. Teachers share and discuss with each other the progress, attainment and achievements of individual children at key points of transition. This supports children to build on their prior learning as they move through the school.

- Teachers work well together, and with staff from other schools, to develop a shared understanding of standards through collaborative planning and discussion of children's work. These approaches to moderation are resulting in robust teacher judgements of progress and achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. Staff are now well-placed to work with colleagues beyond their cluster to continue to refine their understanding of national standards.
- Teachers use local authority progression pathways and skills frameworks well to support planning. Teachers are empowered to adapt planning responsively to meet children's needs and interests. Children are actively involved in planning interdisciplinary topics. This supports their engagement and enjoyment in learning related to the topics.
- Teachers gather a wide range of assessment and other information to monitor and track children's progress in literacy and numeracy effectively. As a result, senior leaders and teachers have a comprehensive knowledge of the progress and attainment of individuals and groups. As a team, they identify those children who require additional support and challenge and plan suitable interventions. These interventions are monitored very effectively to ensure improved outcomes and a positive impact on attainment. As planned, senior leaders should continue to develop systems to include tracking children's progress in other areas of the curriculum.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement**very 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

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Overall attainment in literacy and numeracy is very good. In session 2021-22 most children at early and first level and almost all at second level achieved the appropriate CfE levels in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics. A few children at almost all stages are working beyond expected levels of attainment. Almost all children with barriers to learning are making very good progress towards individual targets in literacy and numeracy.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Across the school, progress and attainment in literacy and English is very good.

Listening and talking

- Children contribute enthusiastically to class discussions. They have rich opportunities to apply their listening and talking skills in different contexts. For example, children participate in learning assemblies and leadership committees.
- Children working within early level listen and respond very well to others. They follow instructions well. Most children share their ideas and take turns. Children working within first level confidently share thoughts and opinions on a range of subjects. They respond well to different types of questions. Children working towards second level confidently contribute to class discussions, express views, and listen respectfully to others. They build on the contributions of others and support others' opinions and ideas.

Reading

- Children working within early level build on their knowledge of sounds, letter patterns and common words confidently through learning activities. They read familiar words accurately in sentences. They can sequence a story and answer questions about a text. At first level, almost all children read familiar texts with fluency and expression. They confidently make predictions, summarise and answer a range of questions about texts. Almost all children working towards second level read with fluency, understanding and expression using appropriate pace and tone. They apply a range of reading skills for example, skimming, scanning, predicting, clarifying and summarising.

Writing

- Almost all children working within early level form letters correctly and use capital letters and full stops accurately in sentences. They use their knowledge of single sounds and letter blends to spell familiar words correctly. Children working within first and second level write across a range of genres. At first level, children confidently use relevant and interesting vocabulary to inform and entertain the reader. They spell commonly used words successfully and use their knowledge of spelling rules to spell unfamiliar words. At second level, children

demonstrate a very good understanding of structure and style of different genres. They use notes and other sources to create new texts to convey information. Overall children working at first and second level would benefit from more regular experience to produce extended writing using teacher feedback to support improvements. There is scope for improvement in children's handwriting at first and second level.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- Overall progress and attainment in numeracy and mathematics is very good. Children across the school have regular opportunities to develop their skills in problem solving and apply these in play-based learning experiences and real life contexts.

Number, Money and Measure

- Children working within early level are developing their confidence in adding and subtracting numbers mentally to 10. They use appropriate language of measurement when comparing common objects. At first level, almost all children identify the place value of three-digit numbers and can add on and subtract from these. Children working within second level confidently create equivalent fractions and express fractions in their simplest form. They read and record time using both twelve hour and twenty-four hour notation and convert between the two. They confidently calculate durations of activities.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, children can confidently identify two-dimensional shapes. They understand and correctly use the language of position and direction. Almost all children working within first level identify symmetry in patterns, pictures and shapes. They create symmetrical pictures and designs with more than one line of symmetry. Children working within second level use mathematical language including acute, obtuse, straight and reflex to describe and classify a range of angles. They are confident in measuring and drawing a range of angles.

Information Handling

- At early level, almost all children collect and sort data for a given purpose including using tally marks and pictorial displays. Children working within first and second level confidently use a variety of different methods, including the use of digital technologies, to display data. They know to include a suitable title, labelling on both axes and an appropriate scale.#

Attainment over time

- Data about children's levels of attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics for the last five years shows a pattern of high attainment overall. Attainment in the early level was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Senior leaders are aware of the underlying reasons for this and made effective strategic decisions to support identified needs. As a result, attainment at early level has improved to pre-pandemic levels. Almost all children are on track to achieve the appropriate Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics by the end of June 2023.
- Senior leaders and staff can evidence improvements in attainment in literacy and numeracy for almost all children. Teachers use the 'data dialogue' approach very effectively to identify gaps in children's learning. They plan appropriate interventions to help children who are not achieving expected levels to make progress. These approaches are contributing to reducing identified gaps in learning for individuals and groups of children.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children value their achievements being recognised and celebrated by staff, including at assemblies and online platforms. This includes receiving awards for demonstrating the school's

shared values through their achievements. Children speak with confidence and pride when discussing their many achievements, in and out of school.

- Children develop an extensive range of leadership, communication and citizenship skills through taking part in a variety of pupil committees including house captains, STEAM committee and digital leaders. Evidence of achievement shows that children on these groups make a significant contribution to the life and work of the school.
- Children across the school take part in regular 'spotlight skills' sessions. During these sessions, children participate in real-life and relevant learning contexts including food and health, community and design and manufacturing. Children are developing skills for learning, life and work in engaging contexts.
- Staff and partners provide a wide variety of clubs, including basketball, drama, music and multi-sports. Children enjoy attending the clubs. They are learning new skills and building confidence in performing to others.
- Senior leaders audit children's participation in clubs and school committees. As a next step, staff should support children to understand how they are building on the skills they are developing through participation in these activities.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders and staff have a clear understanding of the social, cultural and economic context of the school community. They take effective action to mitigate against any barriers children face and ensure cost is no barrier to participation. As a result, children and families benefit from a range of support, for example access to a free snack from the self-service breakfast store.
- Senior leaders' rationale for Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) spend is based on robust analysis of a wide range of data to identify needs for specific groups of children. Senior leaders consult with the Parent Council and pupil leadership groups to develop plans for PEF interventions.
- Effective use of baseline assessments and evaluations demonstrates the positive impact of these interventions in supporting improvements in literacy and wellbeing. As a result, very good progress is being made towards improving outcomes and closing the poverty related attainment gap through well-planned interventions.
- Children's understanding of protected characteristics is developed through the effective work of the pupil-led equalities committee and a diversity champion parents group. Children demonstrate a strong understanding of how to challenge discrimination and enjoy regular opportunities to celebrate diversity.

Other relevant evidence

- The headteacher provides highly effective leadership for the school community. She is well supported by the depute headteacher and principal teacher. The headteacher's enthusiasm, determination and commitment motivates and empowers staff and the wider community to improve outcomes for all children.
- Children learn through a progressive religious and moral education programme across the school. This programme is responsive to the beliefs and values of individual children and their families. Children's own life experiences are used as a context for learning. Senior leaders should continue to work with teachers, children and parents to develop their inclusive approaches to religious observance.
- Children learn French across the school, building appropriately on prior learning to develop their listening, talking and writing skills as they progress through the school. Children from P5-7 also learn Urdu as their second language which is culturally inclusive for their school community.
- All children receive their entitlement to two hours high-quality physical education (PE) each week. PE lessons are taught by class teachers using the local authority progression frameworks. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to monitor the impact of the extended PE lessons, particularly with younger children.
- All children have access to a range of age-appropriate fiction and non-fiction texts in class libraries and have opportunities to visit the local library. The choice of books reflects a range of cultures.

Practice worth sharing more widely

- The school has a highly effective approach to working in partnership with children and parents to build a culture of equality. As a school community they wanted to recognise and celebrate the religious and culture beliefs of all children and their families.
- Regular 'spotlight skills' sessions for all children from nursery to P7 are provided with opportunities to develop skills for learning, life and work in engaging contexts. Across the school year, all children participate in real-life and relevant learning contexts including food and health, community and design and manufacturing. Where appropriate, partners support these sessions. During 'spotlight skills' sessions, children work with peers from different classes. They have the opportunity to apply literacy and numeracy skills in real contexts and learn skills linked to the world of work. Children, through the 'spotlight skills' sessions, are becoming aware of, and understanding, the value of the skills that they are developing. Supported by teachers, children reflect regularly on their progress in the range of skills that they are developing.

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

Braidbar Primary School Nursery Class

East Renfrewshire Council

23 May 2023

Key contextual information

Braidbar Nursery Class is situated within Braidbar Primary School in Giffnock, East Renfrewshire. It provides a service for 60 children aged three years to those not yet attending primary school. At the time of the inspection there were 64 children on the roll. The setting was a pilot for 1140 hours from August 2018. All children access either an extended day from 8 am until 6 pm for three days each week or 9 am until 3 pm for five days each week. All children are offered lunch. Parents are able to purchase additional hours of provision if they are available. Practitioners follow rotational working patterns. They manage these to include time to meet together for planning and self-evaluation. The nursery is led by the depute headteacher. It has a full-time teacher and a senior child development officer.

The nursery consists of a large playroom and secure outdoor area. They access other spaces in the primary school as required, including regular access to a wooded area.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very 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

- Relationships between practitioners, children and parents are very positive and nurturing across the nursery class. Children settle very well, with practitioners providing support and encouragement when required. The inclusive ethos ensures that children feel valued, safe and secure. This is supporting almost all children to be confident and motivated in their play. Children have developed friendship groups and play very well together. They are kind and respectful to their peers, sharing and taking turns well.
- Almost all children are engaged in their learning across the indoor and outdoor environment through spontaneous, well-planned and purposeful play. Practitioners have created an inviting learning environment, which allows children to explore and develop their curiosity, creativity and inquiry. Children are demonstrating their individuality in creative skills by designing and sewing their own costumes. Children access outdoor areas on a daily basis, engaging in a variety of exciting experiences in all weathers. They particularly enjoy playing in the Secret Garden where they explore nature and wildlife.
- Practitioners have a very good understanding of how young children learn and develop. They use their knowledge of early learning pedagogy very well to support all children including those with additional support needs. Practitioners' focus on promoting and nurturing early social and communication skills has impacted positively on children's language skills. Children enjoy demonstrating their proficiency in French and taking part in book sessions with their families. Practitioners use skilled questioning well to engage children in their learning, with most children responding confidently. They have implemented and continue to develop well their skills in scaffolding learning. Children access a range of digital technology to support and extend their learning.

- Practitioners know individual children very well. They document individual observations of children within an online platform. Practitioners should now ensure that observations focus on recording children's significant learning. This will support all practitioners to know the children even better as learners. Parents regularly share in children's progress through engagement with the online learning platform. Parents are engaging further in this process through responding and commenting on their children's posts. The nursery team work effectively with partner agencies to support children who have additional support needs extremely well.
- The nursery team has developed a system for planning which supports very positive outcomes for children. A blend of adult-initiated and child-initiated learning experiences meet the individual needs of all children well. Practitioners check children's progress at regular points across the year using the East Renfrewshire Council tracking system. The team engage in moderation activity with local establishments. This helps them understand national standards at the early level. The teacher and depute headteacher should continue with their plans to analyse the tracking data to give an overall coherent picture of all the children's progress over time.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.2 Securing children's progress**very 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 very good progress in early language and communication, early mathematics and health and wellbeing.
- Young children who are new to the setting share their needs and preferences through words and gesture. Almost all children in their preschool year are articulate and use a wide range of vocabulary. They listen intently to practitioners and respond enthusiastically to questioning which challenges their thinking. They use books independently and can talk about the author and illustrator. Children use matrix barcodes to access and listen to their favourite stories on tablet computers. Most children are motivated to practise early writing skills. They write their name and have made many of the labels around the playroom. A few children write regularly for a range of purposes using well-formed letters and numbers.
- Almost all children use number confidently and meaningfully in their play and daily routines. Most children count beyond 10, can order numbers and enjoy the challenge of larger numbers. Almost all children join in singing number songs and rhymes with enthusiasm. They like to have fun with numbers, counting on and back as they play games. Almost all children are aware of time through the rhythm of their nursery day. Most children know the days of the week and seasons, exploring them as they spend time in the Secret Garden. Most children are deepening their understanding of position and direction through experimenting confidently with programmable toys. Practitioners continue to support children to build their confidence and experience across all early mathematical concepts.
- Children share how they are feeling with the nursery staff team each day as they arrive at nursery. Practitioners guide children very well to recognise a range of emotions. Almost all apply this understanding very well during the day. Children are competent at dressing for outdoor winter play and show resilience and enjoyment when playing outdoors in adverse weather. All children are gaining an understanding of healthy eating through self-selecting their snacks. They name and count fruits as they make fruit kebabs. Children sit well together at lunchtime and enjoy talking with each other as they have a meal. Most children understand how to take care of their body by brushing their teeth and taking part in vigorous physical activity in the gym hall.
- Children are making very positive progress in other areas of the curriculum. They are gaining confidence in speaking in French. A few children show a keen interest in sewing and use fabrics creatively to make their own costume. Outdoors, children enjoy birdwatching and like

finding out what birds eat. They record their findings on tablet computers. 'Spotlight Skills' sessions alongside P1 are enabling children to develop meaningful skills in learning, life and work.

- Almost all children are making very good progress over time including those experiencing barriers to learning. Senior leaders and the nursery team have helpful and increasingly well-documented evidence of the progress children make. Practitioners moderate and share the evidence they gather about children in their key groups to enable their colleagues to support children effectively in all play spaces.
- Children and the nursery team share their successes and achievements within the nursery and from home. Children demonstrate their learning in health and wellbeing by praising and recognising each other's achievements. Children have begun to access their online learning journals independently and benefit from reflecting on prior successes as well as adding new ones. Families are becoming more involved in sharing children's successes and achievements from home through adding them to the online journals.
- The values of the setting support the nursery team in promoting and ensuring equity for all. Staff know families very well and use transitions into the setting to find out about and plan for children's needs and preferences. The nursery team are attuned to when children need extra support to help them make progress. They link well with outside professionals to provide children with the support they need. The nursery team celebrate cultural and linguistic differences. They continue to find new ways to support children who have English as an additional language.

Practice worth sharing more widely

- Regular 'spotlight skills' sessions for all children from nursery to P7 are provided with opportunities to develop skills for learning, life and work in engaging contexts. Across the school year, all children participate in three real-life and relevant learning contexts including cooking, community and design. Where appropriate, partners support these sessions. During 'spotlight skills' sessions, children work with peers from different classes. They have the opportunity to apply literacy and numeracy skills in real contexts and learn skills linked to the world of work. Children, through the 'spotlight skills' sessions, are becoming aware of, and understanding, the value of the skills that they are developing. Supported by teachers, children reflect regularly on their progress in the range of skills that they are developing.

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.

BRAIDBAR PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS: ACTION PLAN FOLLOWING EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION

Area for Improvement	Teachers in the school should continue to develop the quality of feedback they provide to children about their learning. This will better help children know what they need to do next to continue to improve. It will better support children to develop personal targets to increase ownership of their learning and progress.				
Impact and Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring and Evaluation
<p>All children receive high-quality feedback about their learning, including in-lesson feedback.</p> <p>All children know and can articulate what they need to do next to continue to improve.</p> <p>Almost all children can lead their own learning, as appropriate to age and stage, leading to a strong sense of ownership of their own learning and progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse responses from cluster 'Effective Feedback' evaluation questionnaires to identify the impact of cluster professional learning, including strengths and areas for improvement in teacher use of feedback. Continue to support teaching staff to refine their understanding of the relationship between LI/SC, high quality feedback and differentiated approaches to learning and teaching. Develop new approaches to sharing feedback during and after lessons to increase the impact of feedback, including through the use of digital technologies. Increase and improve the use of self- and peer-assessment to better support pupils to identify their own progress and next steps. Continue to improve the consistency of practice in using formative assessment to support learners' progress through curriculum development session and by carrying our peer visits. Increase the sharing of progress and next steps with parents at regular intervals using Seesaw. Further develop staff skills in using pedagogical approaches to increase learner independence during learning and teaching. 	<p>Senior Leadership Team</p> <p>Members of the Quality Improvement and Strategic Equity Fund Team</p> <p>QIO and Strategic Equity Fund Team</p> <p>Head Teacher</p> <p>Senior Leadership Team</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>From August 2023</p> <p>From October 2023</p> <p>From September 2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Questionnaire results</p> <p>ERC: Learning, Teaching & Assessment Hub</p> <p>QWIQR</p> <p>Gallery Critique</p> <p>SeeSaw Learning Hub</p> <p>Examples of good practice, locally and nationally.</p> <p>National Improvement Hub</p>	<p>School Improvement Plan and Standards and Quality Report</p> <p>Pupil dialogues show increased ability to articulate next steps</p> <p>All feedback to pupils shows clear links to LI/SC</p> <p>Identified next steps informs teacher planning</p> <p>Parental questionnaire</p> <p>Learning observations show pupils ability to work more independently</p> <p>Quality Assurance</p>

BRAIDBAR PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS: ACTION PLAN FOLLOWING EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION



Area for Improvement	Staff in the nursery should continue to improve further the use of a range of information to ensure a coherent overview of children's progress over time across the curriculum				
Impact and Outcomes	Action	Personnel	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring and Evaluation
<p>All staff in the nursery make very good use of a range of information to build a coherent overview of children's progress.</p> <p>Children experience appropriate levels of support and challenge across the curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase practitioners' understanding and theoretical knowledge of child development (Early Level). Develop practitioners' skills in observation of children's abilities, how they learn through play. Use this knowledge to create appropriate learning experiences and environments within the Curriculum. Extend the range of data gathered in order to understand children's progress and to plan meaningful learning experiences. Develop ways of documenting children's learning and development so that this can be tracked over time to demonstrate progress. Continue to visit other settings to share practice and moderate approaches. Increase the sharing of progress and next steps with parents/carers at regular intervals using Seesaw and in person. 	<p>Early Years Neighbourhood Colleagues</p> <p>Early Years Development Officer</p> <p>Educational Psychologist</p> <p>DHT of Nursery Class</p> <p>CT of Nursery Class</p> <p>Nursery Team (SCDO, CDOs and Play Workers)</p>	<p>October 23</p> <p>Ongoing 23/24</p> <p>Ongoing 23/24</p> <p>October 23</p> <p>Ongoing 23/24</p>	<p>Reflection notes made during visits to other settings, locally and wider</p> <p>Realising the Ambition: Being Me (Scottish Government)</p> <p>GIRFEC (Scottish Government)</p> <p><i>Child Observation</i> (I. Palaiologou)</p> <p><i>Starting from the Child</i> (J. Fisher)</p> <p><i>Supporting Creativity and Imagination in the Early Years</i> (B Duffy)</p> <p><i>The Excellence of Play</i> (J. Moyles)</p> <p>National Improvement Hub</p> <p>Care Inspectorate Hub</p> <p>ERC Tracking Tool</p>	<p>School and Nursery Class Improvement Plan</p> <p>Seesaw posts, floor books and wall displays show progression in learning experiences</p> <p>Observation notes from visits and practitioners' professional dialogue meetings show an increased understanding of child development</p> <p>Moderation Cycle 'Wall'/Planning Evaluations show that experiences reflect data being used, theory being applied and progress tracked</p> <p>Parent/Carer questionnaires, conversations, comments on Seesaw</p> <p>Notes/film clips of conversations with children about their learning</p>

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE8 June 2023Report by Director of EducationDRAFT NUMERACY & MATHEMATICS STRATEGY 2023-26**PURPOSE**

1. To seek elected member approval for the Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy refresh 2023 - 2026.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Education Committee is asked to:

- (a) approve the draft Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy; and
- (b) ask the Director of Education to report to Education Committee on the impact of its implementation.

BACKGROUND

3. Numeracy is well established within the priorities for Scottish Education. The National Improvement Framework (NIF) amongst other things outlined a commitment to:

- *ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy.*

4. This priority mirrors our own focus on the importance of numeracy and mathematics as set out in the Local Improvement Plan 2023-2026.

- *Update and implement the Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy and continue to support attainment and progress through provision of professional learning opportunities.*

5. In September 2016, the Scottish Government published its [Making Maths Count Report: Transforming Scotland into a Maths Positive Nation](#). This report indicated that Scotland had a maths problem and set out three important objectives:

- Transforming public attitudes
- Improving confidence and fluency in maths; and
- Promoting the value of maths for every career

6. Education Committee approved the Education Department's [Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy](#) in May 2018 which outlined the ambition for all children and young people within the context of numeracy and mathematics.

7. In response to one of the recommendations set out in the Making Maths Count report, Education Scotland carried out a national thematic inspection to evaluate the quality of

children and young people's learning experiences and attainment in maths. The [Multiplying Skills, Adding Value](#) report was published in 2019.

8. In March 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, resulting in full scale disruption not only to Education but to society as a whole. Advancement in the implementation of the strategy was severely impacted, however the Education Leadership Team, in the context of building back better and fairer, were committed to gaining evidence of impact of the strategy. The Education Department was also committed to supporting schools as part of their recovery agenda, ensuring improved outcomes for all learners.

9. With colleagues in Education Scotland and the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) a Collaborative Improvement Model was developed to enable a partnership approach to reviewing progress and impact of the strategy in terms of learners, staff, parents and wider partners and to identify next steps.

10. The review team identified significant progress in implementing the Numeracy and Mathematics strategy, identifying key strengths including:

- very strong attainment across all sectors;
- motivated and engaged children and young people;
- improving pedagogy;
- a consistent curriculum pathway; and
- positive views of numeracy and mathematics among pupils and staff.

11. The team also identified scope for further improvement and recommended a refreshed Numeracy and Mathematics strategy to be agreed.

REPORT

12. The attached strategy (Appendix 1) has been written by officers from the Education Department including head teachers, led by the Quality Improvement Manager (Quality Improvement).

13. The strategy links clearly to the Education Department's vision '*Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*' and sets out three main areas – attainment and achievement, learners' experiences and stakeholders – detailing how we will ensure that all children and young people develop the numeracy and mathematics skills they need to be successful throughout life.

14. The strategy challenges all involved to make mathematics more inspiring, enjoyable and relevant to real life; and as a result, to increase enthusiasm, encourage greater participation and raise attainment. It also takes into account the wider national agenda set out in the [National Response to Improving Mathematics \(NRIM\) summary report](#).

15. The numeracy and mathematics refreshed strategy aims to improve:

- outcomes and reduce inequalities in numeracy and mathematics development;
- attainment and achievement in numeracy and mathematics throughout the broad general education and senior phase;
- approaches to learning, teaching and assessment through the provision of high quality professional learning opportunities;
- the development of real-life skills of pupils, school leavers and adults and;
- opportunities for parents / carers to meaningfully engage in their child's learning and achievement.

16. The strategy will build on existing good practice in East Renfrewshire, use up-to-date research and evidence and ensure that numeracy and mathematics have a central and continuing focus in education.

17. It also recognises the importance of numeracy across learning and the need to work with parents and partners to improve attitudes towards mathematics and numeracy and promote the value of mathematics as an essential skill for learning, life and work.

18. The strategy sets out the actions that will be taken by the Education Department and schools to deliver the five key aims in numeracy and mathematics. There are performance indicators and targets set and the timeframe over which the actions will be taken forward is the three-year period 2023-26.

19. The strategy will be monitored on an ongoing basis within the Education Department, with progress reported to the Education Committee on an annual basis through yearly presentations on attainment and through the department's and schools' Standards and Quality Reports.

CONSULTATION

20. In formulating this Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy, East Renfrewshire Council Education Department has demonstrated its commitment to taking into account the views of stakeholders. Staff from early years, primary and secondary schools and Adult Learning Services contributed during this process and consultation with parents, children and young people took place.

FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

21. Any other financial matters relating to this paper will be met from the department's devolved budget.

CONCLUSION

22. The strategy invites schools, services, agencies and families to work in partnership to raise the bar in terms of what all our children, young people and adults can achieve if we are to:

- raise attainment and break the link between poor numeracy and mathematic levels and deprivation;
- improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in mathematics;
- increase practitioner confidence and enhance professional practice in teaching numeracy and mathematics; and,
- transform public attitudes to mathematics, resulting in increased enthusiasm for the subject and increased recognition of its value and importance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

23. Education Committee is asked to:

- (a) approve the draft Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy; and
- (b) ask the Director of Education to report to Education Committee on the impact of its implementation.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
8 June 2023

Convener Contact Details

Councillor Anderson, Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure
Tel: 07341 640 825
Tel: 0141 577 3107
andrew.anderson@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Report Authors

Kathleen McGuire, Quality Improvement Manager (Quality Improvement)
Tel: 0141 577 3865
Kathleen.McGuire@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Janice Collins, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement)
Tel: 0141 577 3204
Janice.Collins@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Background papers

1. Education Committee Report: The Impact of the Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy 2018-2021 (June 2022)
https://eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/7790/Education-Committee-item-06-23-June-2022/pdf/Education_Committee_item_06_-_23_June_2022.pdf?m=637909860168130000
2. Achieving Excellence and Equity: National Improvement Framework and improvement plan 2023
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/achieving-excellence-equity-2023-national-improvement-framework-improvement-plan/pages/6/>
3. East Renfrewshire Education Department Local Improvement Plan 2023-2026
https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/8675/Education-Committee-item-07-02-February-2023/pdf/Education_Committee_item_07_-_02_February_2023.pdf?m=638103201028630000
4. Making Maths Count Report
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/09/3014>
5. National Response to Improving Mathematics (NRIM) summary report
[A National Response to Improving Mathematics \(NRIM\) in Scotland | Policy drivers | Policy for Scottish education | Scottish education system | Education Scotland](#)
6. Multiplying Skills, Adding Value – Numeracy and mathematics for Scotland's learners: a thematic inspection
[Numeracy and mathematics for Scotland's learners: a thematic report \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Appendix
Appendix 1

Draft Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy

East Renfrewshire Education Department

NUMERACY AND MATHEMATICS REFRESHED STRATEGY 2023-2026



CONTENTS

3

Foreword

4

Introduction

6

Attainment and Achievement

8

Learners' Experiences

11

Stakeholders

13

Reporting on Progress and Measuring Success

14

References

FOREWORD

by Councillor Andrew Anderson, Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure

As the Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure, I am pleased to introduce the Education Department's Refreshed Strategy for Numeracy and Mathematics 2023-2026.

This strategy is underpinned by the department's vision statement, *'Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences'* and its aspirations and expectations for all learners in our schools and early learning and childcare establishments.

We undertook a programme of review in 2022 to identify the progress and impact of the numeracy and mathematics strategy 2018-2021. This focused upon attainment and achievement, learners' experiences and staff, parents and wider partners. The refreshed strategy is structured around these areas and sets out key aims we will be working to achieve over the next three years and the clear set of actions required to bring about further improvement within the context of numeracy and mathematics.

Creating a positive climate for numeracy and mathematics requires everyone to contribute and we believe we have set out aims that are ambitious yet achievable and will lead to excellent experiences that have a positive impact on the children and young people who attend our educational establishments.

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



INTRODUCTION

“We are all surrounded by things which rely on maths one way or another. It is no exaggeration to say that maths is the language of modern life.”

Emeritus Professor Adam McBride, University of Strathclyde

East Renfrewshire Council’s Education Department is fully committed to securing positive outcomes for all children and young people. The department’s vision statement – ‘*Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*’ – clearly demonstrates an ambition for all children and young people and sets out the responsibility placed on everyone who works in education to meet the needs of all and develop their skills and capabilities.

This refreshed strategy has taken into account a range of evidence including: the Collaborative Improvement model developed to [review progress and impact of the numeracy and mathematics strategy 2018-21](#), [ERC Strategic Equity Funding Plan 2022-26](#), the [Multiplying Skills, Adding Value thematic inspection](#) and most recently, the [National Response to Improving Mathematics \(NRIM\) summary report](#).

The strategy also takes into account and addresses the 3 key objectives and recommendations set out in the Making Maths Count Report (MMC) (2016) specifically in relation to:

- Transforming public attitudes;
- Improving confidence and fluency in maths for children, young people, parents and all those who deliver maths education to raise attainment and achievement across learning; and,
- Promoting the value of maths for every career.

The focus of the refreshed strategy is on three main areas:

1. **Attainment and achievement,**
2. **Learners’ experiences and;**
3. **Stakeholders.**

It sets out 5 key aims to improve:

- i. Outcomes and reduce inequalities in numeracy and mathematics development;
- ii. Attainment and achievement in numeracy and mathematics throughout the broad general education and senior phase;
- iii. Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment through the provision of high quality professional learning opportunities;
- iv. The development of real-life skills of pupils, school leavers and adults and;
- v. Opportunities for parents / carers to meaningfully engage in their child’s learning and achievement.

The following sections set out the actions that will be taken by the Education Department, schools and settings to deliver the key aims in numeracy and mathematics. The timeframe over which these actions will be taken forward is the three-year period 2023-26.

“To face the challenges of the 21st century, each young person needs to have confidence in using mathematical skills, and Scotland needs both specialist mathematicians and a highly numerate population.”

“All teachers have responsibility for promoting the development of numeracy. With an increased emphasis upon numeracy for all young people, teachers will need to plan to revisit and consolidate numeracy skills throughout schooling.”

Building the Curriculum 1

As a result of the activities set out in this strategy, we expect to see:

- i. Increased attainment in numeracy and mathematics of children and young people, specifically in:
 - a. Mathematics in the broad general education;
 - b. National examinations in the senior phase
- ii. A reduction in the attainment equity gap in relation to gender, ethnicity, additional support needs, poverty and care experienced children and young people.
- iii. Enhanced professional practices in teaching numeracy and mathematics and increased practitioner confidence;
- iv. Improved curriculum pathways and learning experiences for all children and young people and;
- v. Increased opportunities for parents / carers, partners and employers to support children and young people to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for learning, life and work.

This strategy uses the following **definitions of numeracy and mathematics:**

Mathematics is more than just becoming familiar and fluent with numbers, **mathematics capability** includes: ^{i ii}

- The ability to model real-life situations and make connections and informed predictions;
- Being equipped with skills to interpret and analyse information, simplify and solve problems, assess risk and make informed decisions;
- Being open to new ideas and alternatives, and appreciative of the importance of evidence, and critical reasoning;
- Being curious, imaginative and diligent

'Numeracy is not only a subset of mathematics; it is also a life skill which permeates and supports all areas of learning, allowing young people access to the wider curriculum.' ⁱⁱⁱ

Learners are numerate if they have developed:

'the confidence and competence in using number which will allow them to solve problems, analyse information and make informed decisions based on calculations.' ^{iv}

Mathematics and numeracy develops essential skills and capabilities for life, participation in society and in all jobs and careers. The discipline of mathematics also represents a fundamental element of the STEM agenda, which is a priority nationally and a key action locally.

The refreshed strategy will continue to build on existing good practice in East Renfrewshire, use up-to-date research evidence and ensure that mathematics and numeracy has a central focus across the authority. It recognises the need to work with parents and partners to improve attitudes towards mathematics and numeracy and promote the value of mathematics as an essential skill for learning, life and work.



ATTAINMENT & ACHIEVEMENT

“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 knowledge and skills necessary to shape their future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors.”

Refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge Vision (April 2022)

Raising attainment and achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy along with closing the poverty-related attainment gap for children and young people are key priorities for Scottish Education. *Beyond Equity: A Social Justice Framework for Education in East Renfrewshire* recognises the similarities between ERC and national priorities and the ethos of continuous improvement. Our emphasis continues to raise aspirations for all learners, whilst at the same time ensuring we improve the attainment of children and young people who experience disadvantage.

Attainment across all sectors, when measured by teacher professional judgements and performance in national examinations, is very strong in numeracy and mathematics.

- In 2021-22, overall primary attainment (based on P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined) in numeracy and mathematics was 90%. East Renfrewshire performs well compared to the latest national average of 78%.
- In 2021-22 East Renfrewshire was the highest performing LA in numeracy at P1, P4, P7 and P1, P4, P7 combined.
- 98% of S3 pupils achieved third level in 2021-22; 83% achieved fourth level.
- From 2016/17-2020/21 the average percentage of P1 pupils achieving early level in numeracy has been 93%.
- Over the past 3 years the percentage of S4 pupils achieving National 5 Mathematics, grades A-C, has reduced from 90% in 2020 to 89% in 2022 compared to the national average of 70% in 2022. The percentage of S4 pupils achieving Applications of Mathematics grades A-C over the past 3 years has reduced from 95% in 2020 to 91% in 2022 compared to the national average of 78% in 2022.

- Over the past 3 years learners have performed very well in Higher Mathematics with grades A-C at 90% in 2020 and 87% in 2022 compared to the national average of 77%.
- The percentage of learners achieving A-C awards at Advanced Higher has reduced slightly over the last 3 years from 84.1% in 2020 to 83.8% in 2022 compared with the national average of 77%.
- School leaver destinations remain consistently high and above the national average. Initially in 2021-22, 98.5% of leavers were in a positive destination (higher education, further education, employment, training and voluntary work), above the national average of 95.7%.
- The latest participation data (2022) indicated that 97% of ERC 16-19 year olds were participating in a positive outcome, well above the national figure of 92.4%.

Numeracy performance in the early years has improved. From 2005-06, when the P1 baseline assessment was introduced in its current format, to 2022-23, the average raw score in numeracy has increased from 48% to 60%. However, our data also identifies areas where we need to bring about further improvement. In 2021-22, the percentage of P1 children achieving Early level in numeracy in SIMD Decile 1 is 70.8% and in Decile 10 is 94.9%. Our numeracy baseline and research highlights the need to focus our interventions at an early stage.

Along with literacy and health and wellbeing the additional money associated with the Strategic and Pupil Equity Funds (SEF / PEF) will be focused on improving outcomes in numeracy.

“Thorough contextual analysis has taken place using a range of quantitative and qualitative data. A clear rationale for the use of the additional funding has been determined using this data and shaped by all stakeholders.”

Delivering Excellence through Equity: ERC Strategic Equity Fund Plan 2022-26

Strategy Focus	Expected Outcome/Impact (what we will measure and report on)	Activities (what we will do to bring about improvement)
Attainment and Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased attainment in numeracy and mathematics of children and young people, specifically in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mathematics in the broad general education; - National examinations in the senior phase • A reduction in the attainment equity gap in relation to gender, ethnicity, additional support needs, poverty and care experienced children and young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and challenge all settings and staff at all levels to gather and analyse attainment data and identify individuals and groups who require support. • Build capacity and confidence of practitioners at all levels in the use tracking and monitoring tools in order to better support all learners ensuring they make appropriate progress in their learning. • Provide opportunities for the sharing of successful interventions and learning from the use of Strategic and Pupil Equity Funds and professional enquiry/action research within and beyond ERC and foster opportunities for collaboration where appropriate. • Support moderation activity within and across sectors to build assessment capable learners and staff who share a clear understanding of standards and expectations within and across Curriculum levels. • Support Principal Teachers to develop evidence based approaches to raising attainment and achievement and guide the strategic direction and pace of change to ensure continuous improvement.

LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES

"The focus is on improving the quality of teaching. Excellent maths teaching requires good content knowledge, but this is not sufficient. Excellent teachers also know the ways in which pupils learn mathematics and the difficulties they are likely to encounter, and how mathematics can be most effectively taught."

EEF, Improving Mathematics Guidance Report (2017)

In East Renfrewshire we are committed to ensuring that all children and young people develop the numeracy and mathematics skills they need to be successful throughout life. It is recognised nationally, that the high standard of education in East Renfrewshire leads to positive outcomes for learners. We are ambitious for each and every one of our children and young people and whilst attainment is consistently strong, we work continuously and relentlessly to raise the bar for all.

In order to raise attainment and achievement we need to provide our learners with the highest quality experiences. We recognise that it is essential that these experiences must occur in a climate characterised by nurturing and supportive relationships, where learners feel secure and confident to ask questions, take risks, solve problems, explore alternative approaches and explain their thinking. Practitioners must provide an appropriate balance between repeated practice and consolidation along with activities which allow learners to apply skills in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

One of the National Response to Improving Mathematics (NRIM) Partnership Board's aspirational aims (2021) is to *'transform Scotland to be a greater maths-positive nation (achieved partly by promoting the joy of mathematics).'* We know that there is a negative public perception of mathematics, in many cases related to a negative experience of the subject whilst at school. In 2022, *Winning Scotland* surveyed 6500 school pupils across Scotland to better understand their attitudes to maths. In the report, *'Children and Young People's Attitude to Maths'* it noted that 45% feel nervous or anxious about maths and 42% think that

some people are just born good at maths. The report suggests that there is a significant percentage of pupils across Scotland who have negative feelings towards maths. Evidence from pupil questionnaires carried out across ERC in session 2021-22 suggest that there is greater enjoyment and enthusiasm than the national picture with 85% of primary and 77% of secondary pupils indicating that they enjoy learning in numeracy and maths.

During session 2021-22, a Collaborative Improvement (CI) Model was developed to review the progress and impact of the numeracy and maths strategy 2018-21. A review team observed learners' experiences in 14 establishments across all sectors through 97 learning visits, analysed 7185 pupil questionnaire responses from primary, secondary and special sectors, 400 questionnaire responses from parents across the authority and conducted various focus groups with a range of staff, pupils and parents. The team also took account of performance data and planning and assessment documentation as required.

Evidence gathered indicate that pupils in ERC want to do well in their learning. In almost all classrooms and playrooms they are motivated and engaged in their learning and the relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. Pedagogy is an improving picture. Up to date research has influenced the professional learning offer, with staff advocating a more investigative, explorative approach to learning, where viewing and using mistakes as a learning opportunity as opposed to a heavier reliance on rote learning, formulaic, rapid recall.

All establishments were using the revised numeracy and mathematics skills framework to support the planning of learning, teaching and assessment with increasing evidence that practitioners are using real-life contexts and links to STEM to provide relevance and make links to the world of work. In ERC we are committed to improving the curriculum, building on strengths and 'Raising the Bar for All' and must take into account recommendations made

in recent national reviews, for example, OECD Report (2021), Hayward Review (2023) and the outcomes of the National Discussion. Schools and staff should take further responsibility for developing numeracy and mathematics across the curriculum providing learners with opportunities to learn in context through interdisciplinary project-based approaches which allow them to demonstrate their skills and ability to collaborate and problem solve in action.

"Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment do not sit in isolation in ensuring excellent experiences. Schools in ERC are supported to build a curriculum which is unique to its context and meets the needs of all its learners as outlined in the Refreshed Narrative for Scotland's Curriculum (2019)."

Excellent Experiences for All: A Framework for Learning, Teaching and Assessment in ERC

Strategy Focus	Expected Outcome/Impact (what we will measure and report on)	Activities (what we will do to bring about improvement)
Learners' Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced professional practices in teaching numeracy and mathematics and increased practitioner confidence • Improved curriculum pathways and learning experiences for all children and young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high quality professional learning opportunities for staff in key aspects of numeracy and mathematics e.g. Number Talks, Numeracy across learning, CPA approaches, mathematical mindsets. • Continue to build capacity and confidence of all staff to support them to plan and deliver quality experiences for all learners with a particular emphasis on challenge, differentiation and the use of formative assessment to support high-quality feedback. • Provide further professional learning and leadership opportunities for Numeracy & Maths Champions and support them to enhance practice in their own establishments. • Provide professional learning for staff in the secondary sector in relation to any new qualifications structure to ensure the curriculum and learning pathways are responsive to the changing needs of individual learners.

Strategy Focus	Expected Outcome/Impact (what we will measure and report on)	Activities (what we will do to bring about improvement)
Learners' Experiences		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and challenge all settings to regularly review their curriculum to ensure it is relevant, captures real-world numeracy and mathematics contexts and leads to increased motivation and appropriate progression in learning. • Support and challenge establishments to revisit numeracy as a responsibility for all practitioners. Share practice and provide opportunities for collaboration to support understanding and implementation. • Continue to build on the effective use of digital technologies to enhance learners' experiences in numeracy and mathematics. • Further develop cluster working approaches to ensure there is clear progression and continuity in learning from 3-18 e.g. review cluster common language and methodology guidance ensuring a focus on effective assessment and profiling across levels.



STAKEHOLDERS

'We have identified two main challenges. The first is to convince everyone, whatever their circumstances in life, that they have the ability to become proficient at maths. The second is to convince them of the benefits of doing so.'

Making Maths Count (2016)

Bringing numeracy and mathematics to life through creative and innovative teaching approaches which are linked to real-life situations will allow learners to make connections across areas in their own personal life. Thinking through real-life situations involving numeracy and mathematics and breaking down problems enables natural connections to be made to the real world.

We must ensure that the teaching of numeracy and mathematics is connected more directly to employment therefore equipping learners with the transferable skills necessary to contribute effectively to the world of work. A greater awareness of the range of career options open to young people in the field of mathematics enables young people to have control over their own future. Partnerships with employers is key to exposing learners to the world of work allowing them to make informed choices later in life. Continual illustrations of employability skills that can be used in any work setting are key aspects of bringing mathematics to life and are and should be encouraged at all times.

The views of learners across ERC regarding numeracy and mathematics are very positive. They enjoy learning within a positive environment, taking responsibility for their learning and being provided with help from their teacher when they need it.

Parents across ERC, through focus groups and questionnaire responses, have indicated that they want to improve their skills and understanding of current approaches to numeracy and mathematics to better help

their children with their learning. Some lacked confidence in their own skills and others were unsure about how numeracy and maths is currently taught in our schools and settings and didn't want to confuse their children by telling them the 'wrong' way to do something.

We realise the importance and benefits of family learning and effective parental engagement in relation to numeracy and mathematics and as such we will further develop our approaches to ensure that our parents feel well supported and have the necessary skills to help their children to learn and enjoy mathematics. Our revised Parental Engagement and Involvement Strategy 2022-25 and the work of our Adult Learning Service will be crucial in taking this aspect forward.

The ERC Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Plan focuses on 3 key areas: curriculum, collaboration and equity. There is a commitment for all schools and clusters to expand opportunities across the curriculum to develop skills for life, learning and work and to foster partnerships with employers whilst promoting diversity, inclusion and equity at all levels. Given the importance placed on maths as an essential life skill for every job, we need to take further action to ensure our partnerships with employers have a positive impact on the skills development of children and young people. These partnerships should also lead to a greater awareness for pupils of the wide range of career options that their mathematical skills make available to them.

Strategy Focus	Expected Outcome/Impact (what we will measure and report on)	Activities (what we will do to bring about improvement)
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased opportunities for parents / carers, partners and employers to support children and young people to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for learning, life and work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work in partnership with Adult Learning Service to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure parents / carers have the necessary numeracy and mathematics skills to support their children's learning, and; - upskill our own workforce through support from employers and maths coaches. Support all establishments to increase opportunities for family learning and meaningful parental engagement and involvement with their children's learning in numeracy and mathematics. Further develop partnership working, and the use of STEM and DYW to add value to children's experiences in numeracy and mathematics. Support establishments and DYW co-ordinators to work with employers to promote a greater understanding of maths as an essential skill for every job. Promote involvement in National Numeracy Day and Maths Week Scotland and provide opportunities to share innovative practice.

REPORTING ON PROGRESS & MEASURING SUCCESS

The department and all educational establishments undertake annual self-evaluation activities which are summarised in Standards and Quality Reports. These reports include data that will measure performance and provide information on the progress made and impact of the actions taken to secure the outcomes outlined within the three main areas of the refreshed strategy; attainment and achievement, learners' experiences and stakeholders. The department's Strategic Equity Fund Plan will also be reviewed on a quarterly basis to identify progress against identified stretch aims.

As is current practice, we shall continue to report annually to East Renfrewshire Council Education Committee on the attainment and achievements of our pupils in the broad general education and senior phase; this will continue to include a focus on numeracy and mathematics. We will also report on the quality of education provided by our establishments through (Education Scotland) school inspection reports and Care Inspectorate reports, these will provide further evidence of our progress in implementing the actions set out within this strategy.

The table below illustrates the performance indicators and targets set for 2023-26:

Indicator	2021-22 value	2023-26 target
% of pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in numeracy	89.6%	92%
% of pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) from SIMD Q1 & Q2 achieving expected levels or better in numeracy	76%	85%
% of S3 pupils achieving fourth level in numeracy	83%	85%
% of S3 pupils from SIMD Q1 achieving fourth level in numeracy	61.6%	85%
Proportion of school leavers attaining numeracy at SCQF level 5	89.4% (2022 value)	91%
Increase the % of adult learners working towards a numeracy goal	16%	20%
Increase the % of adult learners achieving numeracy goal	16%	20%
Increase the number of staff reporting that engagement in numeracy and mathematics CLPL has impacted positively on class/playroom practice	Baseline to be identified in Year 1	
Increase the number of pupils reporting positive attitudes towards learning in numeracy and mathematics	Baseline to be identified in Year 1	

REFERENCES

- ⁱ Curriculum for Excellence: Mathematics - Principles and Practice, Page 1
- ⁱⁱ Excellence in Mathematics: Report from the Maths Excellence Group, Scottish Government, page 3
- ⁱⁱⁱ Curriculum for Excellence: Numeracy across learning - Principles and Practice, Page 1
- ^{iv} Curriculum for Excellence: Numeracy across learning - Principles and Practice, Page 1



EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE8 June 2023Report by the Director of EducationHOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Education Committee's approval for the introduction of the new Home to School Transport policy following the completion of the non-statutory consultation exercise.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Education Committee is asked to:
 - a. Note and comment on the results of the consultation; and
 - b. Approve the Home to School Transport Policy to apply from the beginning of school session 2023/24

BACKGROUND

3. On Thursday 20th April 2023, Education Committee noted the [proposed draft Home to School Transport policy](#) and asked the Director of Education to undertake a non-statutory consultation exercise with appropriate relevant stakeholders.

4. The introduction of a school transport policy or alteration of school transport provision does not have a legislative requirement for a consultation to be undertaken, however the department recognises the importance of seeking views of stakeholders to inform the development of the final policy prior to approval by Education Committee.

5. The policy is based on the existing practice in place across school transport provision, aligning with legislative requirements and national guidance provided by the Scottish Government. It is primarily intended to bring all existing practice in to a single, accessible document and provide for greater consistency across all schools within East Renfrewshire. Full information on the development process is detailed in the committee report considered by Education Committee in April 2023.

REPORT

6. The draft Home to School Transport policy consultation was primarily undertaken via an online survey, providing stakeholders with the opportunity to contribute to the policy prior to its consideration by Education Committee. The online consultation launched on

Wednesday 3rd May 2023 and closed on Sunday 21st May 2023. The consultation was publicised through the Council's social media channels and was specifically shared with the parents at Isobel Mair School, Carlibar Communication Centre and Williamwood High School Support Service as well as through Parent Councils. In addition, a consultation session was held with Parent Council Chairs at a meeting on Wednesday 24th May 2023. A separate feedback session was undertaken with pupils who attend Williamwood High School and access ASN transport, seeking their views on current transport provision and what improvements could be made.

7. The online consultation sought stakeholder's views on the principles of the draft policy and offered opportunities for stakeholders to highlight any additional concerns across a number of other areas: mainstream transport; ASN and specialist transport; and general comments on wider transport provision. The consultation questions are attached as appendix 1.

8. A total of 136 responses were received through the online consultation exercise. Of the consultation responses received, 127 (93%) were from parents or carers, with 5 members of staff and 2 pupils responding. In addition, 2 'other' responses were received. Of the total number of responses, 46% were from those who either directly use school transport or from the parents and carers of children who do so. Responses were received from parents and carers with pupils attending a number of different schools across East Renfrewshire. The highest number of responses received were from parents and carers of Isobel Mair School, Maidenhill Primary School, Our Lady of the Missions Primary, Carlibar Primary, Williamwood High School, St Ninian's High School and Mearns Castle High School.

9. The majority of the responses received (76%) were supportive of the principles set out in the draft policy. A total of 11% of responses were against the principles, with 13% indicating that they were not sure. In addition, stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide any additional views on the principles, with the majority of views outlining broad support. A number of comments related to issues raised in the subsequent sections of the consultation with specific other comments related to:

- a. Environmental concerns about transport provision and the promotion of active travel options;
- b. The availability of public transport from specific areas within East Renfrewshire; and
- c. The purpose of the new policy.

10. A small number of comments expressed concern or disagreement with the proposed principles. In addition, a small number of comments highlighted specific concerns related to their own child's transport provision which was outside of the scope of this consultation.

Comments on the Views Expressed/Issues Raised - Mainstream Transport Provision

11. A total of 50 additional comments were received regarding mainstream transport provision. Whilst most of these did not highlight any specific issues, a number of comments were made in relation to mainstream transport provision and the aspects of the draft policy relating to this provision:

- a. *Concerns about the eligibility and distance criteria for pupils accessing school transport*

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 defines the statutory responsibilities of local authorities with regards to the provision of school transport. The Act specifies that transport is to be

provided for children residing within an authority, aged up to 8 years old who live 2 or more miles away from their allocated school, and for those aged over 8 who live 3 or more miles from their allocated school. Within East Renfrewshire, transport is provided on a more generous basis than that outlined in the legislation, with a 2 miles distance criteria applying for all primary-aged pupils and 3 miles distance criteria applying for all secondary-aged pupils. The existing distance criteria have been in place since the 2006/7 school session.

An assessment has been undertaken to consider the implications of any change to the distance criteria. Based on an initial desktop exercise, a reduction in the distance criteria for primary-aged pupils from 2 miles to 1 mile could lead to an additional 1,387 pupils becoming eligible for school transport. Similarly, a reduction in the distance criteria for secondary-aged pupils from 3 miles to 2 miles could lead to an additional 1,109 pupils becoming eligible for school transport. Such changes, were they to be implemented, could lead to an additional estimated cost of £2.375m per year. This cost is likely to be conservative as such an increase in requirements would be unlikely to be able to be met by any local providers. It is unclear whether there would be sufficient provision available in neighbouring areas to allow this to proceed.

b. Inappropriateness of safe walking routes

All safe walking routes are assessed by the department's health and safety advisor in line with the West of Scotland Road Safety Forum Guidelines. This approach is in place across many other neighbouring local authorities.

Safe walking routes are assessed on the basis that pupils are accompanied or supervised by an adult for the entire journey. Any decision on the ability of a pupil to walk a route unaccompanied should be taken by the parent/carer.

Where there are any reported changes to safe walking routes or a parent/carer highlights specific concerns with the assessed route, this should be reported to the department's School Transport Service to determine whether a reassessment is required. Any material changes will subsequently be investigated.

c. Request for additional paid services to be provided or an expansion of the privilege scheme to enable more pupils to access transport.

Where any existing school transport provision has vacant space available, these spaces are made available for families to purchase through the department's privilege pass scheme, as detailed in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003, with a charge levied. It should be noted that privilege spaces are limited by the number of vacant spaces on any existing transport provision and can fluctuate depending on the number of eligible pupils requiring provision.

The Education Department does not currently provide transport on a commercial basis. A number of years ago a service operated on a commercial basis, serving Williamwood High School, following its relocation to the site on Eaglesham Road. Whilst initially popular, the service's popularity declined with no parents/carers willing to maintain payments for the service. Subsequently, the service ceased to operate approximately 10 years ago.

In recent years a small number of parents and carers have sought to establish such services on a private basis where there is sufficient demand and these appear to be working well where they exist. This may be something which parent councils wish to explore further.

d. Increased school transport provision will reduce the number of private vehicles driving to schools.

As noted in paragraph 10a, there is a significant additional cost associated with the expansion of the eligibility criteria for school transport. Where pupils are not eligible to access transport provision, safe walking routes are in place and pupils and their families are encouraged to use these when travelling to and from school.

Active travel options are promoted as the alternative to the use of private vehicles to travel to and from school, with a number of initiatives being taken forward both by the Council and individual establishments to encourage these options. Whilst an increase in the number of large buses could potentially reduce the number of private vehicles in and around schools, it is less favourable than active travel options, due to the continued environmental impact.

12. A small number of comments provided in response to this question related to transport provision for pupils residing in and around the Maidenhill area, attending either Mearns Castle High School and Maidenhill Primary School. All properties within the Maidenhill development fall within the 3 mile distance limit for Mearns Castle High School and, as such, no transport is made available. Any changes to transport provision for this group of pupils would require to be applied across all other secondary schools, resulting in significant additional costs for the Education Department. Walking routes have been established for pupils to walk to and from Maidenhill Primary School from both the Maidenhill and Mearns Kirk areas and have been assessed by the department's health and safety advisor as in line with the West of Scotland Road Safety Forum guidelines.

Comments on the Views Expressed/Issues Raised - ASN Transport

13. A total of 42 comments provided in response to the question on ASN transport, 18 of which expressed an opinion. Of the 18 responses, 12 were supportive of ASN provision they currently access and the proposed policy. Many of the comments related specifically to the transport provision in place for pupils attending Isobel Mair School, with respondents highlighting how important it was as a service for those who did not live close to the school. Additional comments highlighted the value of transport in supporting the wellbeing of young people attending school.

14. Further comments in relation to ASN provision and the draft policy included:

a. The length of time that pupils can spend on school transport

The School Transport Service continuously looks to reduce the time that pupils spend on school transport, working with the Council's Transport team to identify efficiencies in routes and reviewing these on an ongoing basis throughout the year. This can include working with schools and families to change the vehicles pupils are transported on to reduce journey times.

Given the existing practice whereby all pupils are collected and dropped off at their home address, this can lead to significant journey times, with often circuitous routes around local communities. The revised policy will establish collection points for pupils attending ASN provision, ensuring equity with mainstream provision, in line with the Scottish Government's national guidance. As detailed in the policy, all such collection points will be in easily accessible locations a short distance from individual home addresses.

It should be noted that in cases where a pupil has been specifically assessed as unable to travel to and from the collection point, arrangements will be made for collection at their home address. Given the complex needs of pupils attending Isobel Mair School, all pupils will continue to be collected from their home addresses where transport provision is in place.

This change will result in a reduction in journey times for pupils on school transport.

- b. *The opportunities for families with an accessible vehicle to use this as an alternative to dedicated school transport*

It is recognised that, in certain circumstances, it may be more appropriate or beneficial for a pupil to travel to and from school with their parent or carer in the family's own vehicle. This may be particularly relevant for families who have a Motability vehicle. The draft policy therefore provides for families to use their own vehicle for transporting their child to and from school. In such circumstances, where agreed by the School Transport Service, a mileage rate will be paid for the journeys made to and from school on each day the pupil attends.

General Comments

15. In addition to the comments made regarding both mainstream and ASN transport provision, stakeholders were provided with the opportunity to raise any other relevant issues regarding the introduction of the Home to School Transport policy. A number of comments appeared to relate to comments made in previous sections of the consultation or additional comments in support of the existing provision in place. Further additional comments included:

- a. Access to public transport
- b. Lack of transport encourages families to drive
- c. Cycling facilities

16. Such comments fall outwith the scope of this policy, however, will be considered by schools in developing their own school travel plans to support more active travel options for pupils and their families travelling to and from school. In addition, as agreed at Cabinet in December 2022, the Environment Department is developing a policy on the use of traffic restrictions around schools, following on from the successful pilot at Giffnock Primary School. The final policy criteria is set to be considered by Cabinet at a future meeting once complete and will subsequently support the efforts of schools in encouraging further active travel opportunities.

17. In addition to the feedback received through the online consultation exercise, a focus group was undertaken with pupils attending Williamwood High School, all of whom currently access ASN transport. The focus groups sought pupil views on what they liked about transport, with pupils specifically highlighting the social aspects of transport and the opportunity to use their phones and listen to the radio when travelling. Feedback was also sought on what pupils would change regarding school transport. Most pupils responded positively, however, the main concern raised was that it could be noisy at times.

18. The feedback provided through the consultation exercise has been incorporated in to the updated Home to School Transport policy, provided as appendix 2, with updates highlighted.

19. Subject to approval by Education Committee, the new Home to School Transport policy will take effect from the beginning of the new session in August 2023.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

20. Home to school transport is currently funded through existing budgets within the Education Department. Due to the high rates of inflation over the last year, the existing budgets have come under increasing pressure as a result of increased fuel and contract

prices. Whilst the recommendation does not result in any significant changes, the introduction of a consistent policy will ensure provision is delivered equitably, providing clarity to staff on the circumstances in which any transport provision should be put in place. This will ensure the service is delivered efficiently.

21. The Education Department is committed to fulfilling its statutory duties by providing home to school transport for those who are eligible whilst also ensuring that we meet our commitments towards Best Value.

CONSULTATION

22. The policy has been considered through a non-statutory consultation exercise, with the views of relevant stakeholders incorporated in to the policy as indicated above. There has been a strong response provided from parents and carers, with a small number of staff also contributing through the online exercise. In addition, a focus group was undertaken with pupils from Williamwood High School.

23. An Equalities, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the policy. In addition, given the links to the Council's wider environmental priorities, a further Climate Change Impact Assessment has also been undertaken.

CONCLUSION

24. The draft policy seeks to bring together the existing practice in place across all transport provision, providing a clear, consistent, accessible policy for staff and families. Following the completion of a non-statutory consultation exercise, the draft Home to School Transport policy has been finalised, incorporating the feedback provided from stakeholders.

25. Subject to approval, the policy will be applied for the upcoming school session, starting from August 2023.

RECOMMENDATION

26. Education Committee is asked to:

- a. Note and comment on the results of the consultation; and
- b. Approve the Home to School Transport Policy to apply from the beginning of school session 2023/24

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
8 June 2023

Convener Contact Details

Councillor Anderson, Convener for Education, Culture and Leisure
Tel: 07341 640 825
Tel: 0141 577 3107
andrew.anderson@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Report Author

Graeme Hay
Education Senior Manager (Leading Change)
Tel: 0141 577 3217
graeme.hay@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Online Consultation Exercise Questions

Appendix 2 – Home to School Transport Policy – June 2023

BLANK PAGE

APPENDIX 1

Online Consultation Exercise Questions

1. Are you responding to this consultation as a:
 - Pupil
 - Parent/carer
 - Member of staff
 - Other
2. What school do you (or your child) currently attend?
 - List of schools to select from
3. Do you (or your child) currently access home to school transport?
 - Yes
 - No
4. Do you agree with the four key principles for the delivery of home to school transport?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not sure
5. Do you have any other comments about the draft principles?
6. Do you have any comments you wish to make about the mainstream transport section of the draft home to school transport policy?
7. Do you have any comments you wish to make about the ASN or temporary transport sections of the home to school transport policy?
8. Do you have any additional comments you wish to make?

BLANK PAGE

APPENDIX 2

Home to School Transport Policy – June 2023**Introduction**

The provision of an effective school transport system is an important responsibility of the Education Department and contributes towards our vision of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving Through Excellent Experiences*.

The Education Department's School Transport Service has responsibility for ensuring the provision of home to school transport, making sure all eligible pupils are able to travel to and from school safely. The School Transport Policy outlines the eligibility criteria, provision and responsibilities for school transport for pupils accessing both mainstream and ASN schools.

All school transport provision is arranged in line with the Council's statutory responsibilities, set out in legislation, most notably through the Education (Scotland) Act 1980¹.

This policy relates to transport between a pupil's home address and the school. Transport throughout the school day, for example, school trips or transport for consortium arrangements are not in the scope of this policy.

Principles of School Transport

In providing school transport, the Education Department will consider our responsibilities under each of the four key principles:

- All school transport is put in place to meet the needs of pupils first and foremost. It is not intended to address any parental or childcare need.
- School transport will be provided in a way which seeks to minimise the time pupils spend being transported to and from school where possible.
- School transport will be organised in line with the Council's statutory responsibilities in ensuring Best Value.
- The Education Department will be mindful of the Council's environmental responsibilities and commitments in the provision of school transport.

¹ Section 51 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 sets out the legislative duties in the provision of school transport. Section 42 of the Act sets out the distance criteria for walking distances, whereby transport must be provided.

Mainstream Transport

1. Legislative

- 1.1. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 sets out the legislative basis on which school transport requires to be provided. The Act specifies that transport provision is to be provided for children aged up to 8 years old who live 2 miles or more from their allocated school and for those aged over 8 who live 3 miles or more from their local school.
- 1.2. Transport is only required to be provided to the allocated school. Where a pupil attends an alternate school as a result of a successful placing request, transport does not require to be provided.

2. Eligibility for School Transport within East Renfrewshire

School transport is provided for pupils to support their travel to and from school in the following circumstances:

2.1 Distance

- 2.1.1 The pupil lives 2 miles or more from their allocated primary school via the shortest safe walking route.
- 2.1.2 The pupil lives 3 miles or more from their local allocated secondary school via the shortest safe walking route.

2.2 Redirected Pupils

- 2.2.1 Where a pupil is redirected from their catchment school to an alternative school and where they reside beyond the normal distance eligibility criteria, transport will be provided.
- 2.2.2 This transport will only be provided for the period in which the pupil is redirected. In the event that a redirected pupil is offered a place at their catchment school as a consequence of a place becoming available, but the parent/carer or young person decides to remain at the redirected school, in such situations, the child will no longer be regarded as a redirected child and will be removed from the redirected list; school transport will cease to be provided.

2.3 Exceptional Support

- 2.3.1 In exceptional circumstances, where a pupil faces challenges with travelling to school due to a significant medical condition or injury, a request for short term transport can be made. This may include where a pupil has sustained an injury or is experiencing another significant medical condition.
- 2.3.2 Any request should initially be made to the school directly to consider what support may require to be made available.
- 2.3.3 As part of assessment, the ability of the parent or carer to support the pupil's transport to school will be taken into consideration. In addition, medical evidence may be requested to support the application for time-limited school transport.
- 2.3.4 Where any such requests are granted, they will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and will only be awarded for a period of up to 3 months.

3. Safe Walking Routes

- 3.1. Where required, safe walking routes will be assessed by the Education Department's Health and Safety Advisor, in line with the West of Scotland Road Safety Forum Guidelines. The distance will be measured from the entrance to a property's garden to the nearest suitable entrance to the school grounds.
- 3.2. Any appeal on the suitability of an existing safe walking route can be made to the Education Department's School Transport Service. Where a material change has occurred in the route, this will be reassessed in line with the above outlined process.
- 3.3. Where a route has been assessed as a safe walking route by the department's Health and Safety Advisor and is less than the distance limit outlined above, transport will not be made available.

4. Privilege Transport

- 4.1. The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 enables local authorities to make any surplus capacity on any existing school transport available for purchase by pupils with no other existing eligibility. Within East Renfrewshire, this is known as privilege school transport. Privilege transport will only be made available where there is no additional cost to East Renfrewshire Council.
- 4.2. Privilege school transport is only available where there is surplus capacity on any existing school transport and, as such, is not available for all schools. Where privilege school transport is able to be made available, the capacity is limited and it is often not possible for all requests to be granted.
- 4.3. There is no right or guarantee to privilege school transport and it is always awarded on a temporary basis. Access to privilege transport does not confer any ongoing right to this service in subsequent years.
- 4.4. Privilege school transport is only made available after all pupils with an eligibility have been granted a place at the beginning of a new school session. Following this process, where surplus spaces are available, details will be advertised on the Council's website and communicated through individual schools. Applications for privilege school transport can be made directly to the Education Department's School Transport Service.
- 4.5. All pupils wishing to access privilege transport are required to submit an application for each school session. This includes pupils who have previously used the service.
- 4.6. Privilege transport is allocated by means of a ballot of all received applications. Full details on the allocation of places is available through the scheme's terms and conditions.
- 4.7. A daily charge is applied for pupils access privilege school transport. Where this charge is not paid, the service will be withdrawn.
- 4.8. Any privilege school transport is allocated on a termly basis. Due to the need to ensure that those with an eligibility to school transport can be accommodated on existing school transport, it is not possible to guarantee that privilege school transport will continue beyond any existing allocation. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary for privilege school transport to be withdrawn during a school term.
- 4.9. The terms and conditions for the privilege school transport scheme are available on the Council's website and will be shared with all parents/carers accessing the scheme.

5. Placing Requests

- 5.1. There is no school transport for pupils attending an alternative to their allocated school by means of a successful placing request.
- 5.2. School transport is not available for pupils residing out with East Renfrewshire Council.
- 5.3. Where an East Renfrewshire resident pupil attends either Calderwood Lodge Primary School or Thornliebank Gaelic Primary School by means of a successful placing request, transport will be provided where the pupils resides 2 or more miles from either school, due to both schools' authority wide catchment area.

6. Out of Authority Provision

- 6.1. School transport will not normally be provided in circumstances where a pupil attends a school outwith East Renfrewshire.

Gaelic Medium Education Provision

- 6.2. Where a pupil attends GME provision which is not offered within East Renfrewshire, transport will be provided.

7. Early Learning & Childcare Transport

- 7.1. Transport is not provided for children attending early learning and childcare. Families are able to access a range of different types of locally available provision within their Early Learning and Childcare Community.

8. School Transport Provision

Types of Provision

- 8.1. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 indicates that school transport can be made available through a range of different types of provision. This includes, but is not limited to: dedicated school buses, service buses, trains or individual or shared minicab services. Where a service (or public) bus or train is used, a pass will be provided where required.
- 8.2. Where an appropriate public service bus is available, this may be allocated as school transport provision. In such circumstances, the pupil would be expected to use the National Entitlement Card to access this service.
- 8.3. Where alternative provision is not available, in exceptional circumstances, the Education Department may also offer mileage costs to parents/carers who are able to transport their own children to school. Any such request for mileage should be submitted to the School Transport Service and will be considered in line with the principles outlined in the policy.
- 8.4. Where a pupil has an eligibility to transport, it will be made available via the provision outlined above. All transport will be allocated in line with the needs of the pupil. There is normally no choice offered in the type of provision that would be preferred.

Collection and Drop-off Locations

- 8.5. Pupils will be required to travel to and from a designated pick-up/drop-off location to access school transport. This distance will be in line with the existing distance criteria outlined in sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2.

- 8.6. Parents/carers are responsible for pupils' safe travel to and from the allocated location. Where a pupil is unable to travel to and from the location independently, the parent/carer must ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place.²
- 8.7. School transport will not normally collect and drop-off pupils from an individual home address.

Transport outwith Normal Hours

- 8.8. School transport will normally cover a return journey on each school day; to school in the morning and back to the drop off location in the afternoon. Arrangements may be made by schools to cover pupils taking part in activities outwith the course of a normal school day; however this will be considered on a case by case basis. The costs of additional transport accrued because of extra-curricular provision will not normally be met by the Council.
- 8.9. School transport will not normally be provided for pupils attending appointments through the course of the school day and it would be the responsibility of the parent/carer to arrange for transport in such circumstances.

Applying for Transport

- 8.10. Applications for school transport are only required to be made for pupils starting either P1 or S1. There is no requirement for an annual application to be made.
- 8.11. Where a family's circumstances change, for example, moving to a separate address or different school, an application for school transport can be made on the Council's website. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school of any changes to their home address and this must be submitted as quickly as possible.

Accessing Transport

- 8.12. Where a pupil is accessing a public service, they will be required to have a valid National Entitlement Card. This card provides free access to bus travel and, where necessary, a train pass will be allocated to this card.
- 8.13. Responsibility for applying for and maintaining this card sits with individual parents/carers and pupils. Where a pupil loses or forgets their card, they may be charged for or denied travel. A lost card should be reported to the Education Department to ensure the existing travel pass is deactivated.

Escorts

- 8.14. Escorts will not normally be present on mainstream school transport services.

Cancellations

- 8.15. Where a pupil travels via a minicab or small vehicle service and is not requiring school transport for a particular day, notice should be provided to the driver of the vehicle wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the School Transport Service should be advised as far in advance as is possible.

² Scottish Government, *School Transport Guidance* (2021), para 8

ASN Transport

Transport may be provided for pupils who have additional support needs which means they need help travelling to and from school.

“Getting school transport right and making it accessible to all can be an enabler for many young people to reach their full potential and live fulfilling and independent lives. The journey to and from school should not be underestimated in the role that it plays in building confidence in young people to travel more independently, which may help them access higher and further education and, ultimately, support with employment.”³

9. Legislative Context

- 9.1. Local authorities have duties under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) to identify, provide for and review the additional support needs of their pupils. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from the learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances; or social and emotional factors.
- 9.2. Under this duty, local authorities should consider if a pupil has been assessed as having additional support needs and, if so, whether this would also include the need for school transport.

10. Accessing School Transport

- 10.1. School transport is primarily provided for pupils based on the distance which they live from their catchment school. However, in addition to the distance criteria, school transport can be provided due to:
 - Placement within a school
 - Additional support needs
- 10.2. The distance criteria applies to all children, whether attending a mainstream or ASN school, however, in some circumstances, it may be that a pupil will be considered for transport due to the nature and extent of their additional support needs as detailed below:
 - The pupil has a physical or sensory impairment or a severe, profound or multiple learning difficulty which requires specialist transport arrangements;
 - The pupil has a disability which prevents them from accessing the transport generally available to take other pupils to the school;
 - The pupil attends a specialist provision or school (distance criteria will still apply);
 - In exceptional circumstances, the parent/carer is unable to transport the pupil to school.

Placement within a School

- 10.3. Where a pupil is placed in a school which is not their catchment school and the distance between the residence and school is greater than the distance criteria, transport will be provided. This applies to pupils attending Isobel Mair School, Carlibar Communication Support Service, Carolside Communication Support Service, and Williamwood Communication Support Service.

³ Scottish Government, *School Transport Guidance* (2021), para 24

- 10.4. Transport will not normally be provided for those pupils who reside within the distance criteria. Only in cases where a pupil is assessed as requiring school transport (section 10.6) would this be provided.

Assessment for School Transport based on Additional Support Needs

- 10.5. Many children with identified additional support needs who attend mainstream school will be able to make use of mainstream transport to travel to and from school, ensuring inclusion and encouraging independence.
- 10.6. Where a pupil with additional support needs does not have eligibility for school transport based on the distance criteria, the parent/carer can request an assessment for school transport and should contact the school directly. Information will be collated from a range of relevant sources including: parents/carers; school staff; community and allied health professionals who are involved with the child or young person; and the Educational Psychology Service if the child or young person is known to them or is an open case.
- 10.7. Any assessment will include consideration of the nature and extent of the child's additional support needs, and the assessed impact of transport on a child's transition to and from school.

11. Transport Provision

Types of Provision

- 11.1. For pupils accessing ASN transport, this will normally be provided through either a private shared minicab service; a larger minibus vehicle; or an adapted minibus or other such vehicle. The specific type of vehicle provided will be suitable for the assessed needs of the pupils travelling. All legislation regarding the safety of wheelchair users is considered in allocating school transport. In addition, current guidelines around the safe transportation of oxygen are also adhered to at all times.
- 11.2. Where a pupil has an eligibility to transport, it will be made available via the provision outlined above. Emphasis will be placed on the safety, sensitive care and comfort of the pupil travelling. There is normally no choice offered in the type of transport provision that would be preferred. Should the needs of a pupil change to the extent that they require alternative transport provision, this should be discussed in the first instance with the school directly. This may require to be assessed before any changes can be implemented.
- 11.3. The type of vehicle used will also be informed by the number of pupils from the local community also requiring to access the service. This will be balanced with the need to ensure that time spent on school transport remains appropriate. This will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and the allocated transport may be altered throughout the session where improvements to journey times can be made.
- 11.4. Consideration will be given to a parent/carer transporting a pupil to school where they have access to a Mobility vehicle. This is particularly suitable for those pupils with an adapted or specialist vehicle. Where this arrangement is in place, the parent/carer will be provided with a mileage rate. This will be in line with the Council's mileage rate paid for staff travel.

Out of Authority Provision

- 11.5. Where a pupil has been placed in a school outwith East Renfrewshire, transport will be provided. This transport may be shared where more than one pupil is attending the same school.

Collection & Drop-off Locations

- 11.6. Pupils will normally be required to travel to designated collection and drop-off locations to access school transport. Parents/carers are responsible for making arrangements for the pupil's travel to and from the pick-up/drop-off location. The parent/carer should consider the appropriateness of any pupil travelling to this location independently and, where they are unable to do so, the parent/carer must ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place.⁴
- 11.7. Appropriate locations will be identified within close proximity to the pupil's home address. All locations will be accessible via a safe walking route from the pupil's home address and, where possible, will be based at existing bus shelters. This will provide shelter in the event of inclement weather whilst waiting to be collected.
- 11.8. Consideration will be given to establishing alternate locations, for example at a local school, where this is more appropriate and accessible. Parents/carers can make such requests to the School Transport Service. Such arrangements will only be possible on the provision that there is no detrimental impact to the wider operation of the service.
- 11.9. Only where a pupil has been specifically assessed as unable to travel to and from the pick-up/drop-off location will consideration be given to arranging a collection at or near the home address. It is automatically assumed that all children attending Isobel Mair School will meet this threshold and will therefore all be collected and dropped off at their home address.
- 11.10. Where a parent/carer is not at the allocated location at the end of the day to collect the pupil, the driver or escort will initially look to establish contact with the parent/carer to arrange for them to collect their child. In the event that contact is not made and no alternative provision is in place, the driver/escort will contact the Education Department who will identify an appropriate drop-off location in conjunction with HSCP colleagues.

Escorts

- 11.11. Escorts will only be provided on any school transport to look after pupils specifically assessed as requiring supervision. This may include medical or safety needs.
- 11.12. Whilst an escort may offer support to a pupil in accessing the vehicle, they will not collect a pupil from a home address or undertake any such similar duties.
- 11.13. Escorts will normally only be provided on larger vehicles on which a number of pupils travel. In smaller vehicles, there is normally no requirement for an escort to be provided.
- 11.14. Appropriate training and support is available for all escorts (including those employed by East Renfrewshire Council and those on contracted services) to ensure the ongoing safety of all pupils travelling on dedicated school transport.
- 11.15. Where more specialist support is required due to more complex individual needs, this will be considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with health professionals.

Applications

⁴ Scottish Government, *School Transport Guidance* (2021), para 25

- 11.16. For the majority of pupils accessing ASN school transport, there is normally no requirement for an application to be submitted. The provision of transport is normally arranged by the School Transport Service on confirmation of the pupil's attendance at the specific school.
- 11.17. Where there is no assumed eligibility to ASN school transport, an application for provision can be made through the Council's website or by contacting the school directly.

Cancellations

- 11.18. It is required that parents/carers contact the operator if the pupil does not require school transport due to illness or other reasons to avoid any undue cost to East Renfrewshire Council. Where this is not possible, parents/carers should contact the School Transport Service directly.

Administration of Medication

- 11.19. Medication cannot be administered by operators or escorts under any circumstances unless they have been fully trained and authorised by the Education Department to do so in respect to the specific pupil. Operators should be advised of any medical condition which may impact on the pupil during the course of the journey.

12. Early Learning & Childcare Transport

- 12.1. Transport is not provided for children attending early learning and childcare. Any exceptional requests for ASN transport to an early learning and childcare specialist service will be considered by the Early Years Intervention Group (EYIG) as part of the wider consideration of the most appropriate placement for a child.

Temporary & Short Term Transport

13. Transport may occasionally require to be provided for pupils who would not normally qualify under the school transport policy. This can be for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to:
 - Short term injury impacting mobility (section 2.3)
 - Housing referrals
 - Social work referrals
- 13.1. Where a pupil is displaced from their home address, for example due to domestic violence/crisis, homelessness or foster/kinship care arrangements, transport may be provided in the short term to enable the pupil to continue to attend their school. It is recognised that this continuity will be important during such challenging periods. The need for transport will be considered by the Education Department in conjunction with the pupil's school. Any such requests will require to be supported by the relevant service (for example, social worker or housing officer). It is essential any such requests are supported by the appropriate Head of Service/Senior Manager within the relevant service.
- 13.2. Where the need for transport is agreed by the Education Department, signed off by the Head of Service/Education Senior Manager, consideration will initially be given to any existing transport options available. This will be through the availability of public transport options. It is possible that existing public transport

could provide a link to other existing school transport services which may be able to be accessed. A parent/carer may be asked to consider alternative means of transport to support the pupil's journey to and from school, including support from other families. It is only in exceptional circumstances that dedicated transport will be made available.

- 13.3. Where there are any additional costs associated with the provision of such transport, the relevant service, either Housing Services or Social Work Services, will be liable for 50% of the cost of the provision. This will be agreed in advance of the transport being made available and will require to be approved by an appropriate senior officer in the respective department.
- 13.4. Any transport provided under such arrangements will be in place for an initial period of up to 4 weeks. The arrangement must be reviewed following each 4 week period up to a maximum of 3 months. It is expected that alternative transport arrangements will be established in advance of the end of the 3 month period. Where transport arrangements are required beyond the 3 month period, this will require to be approved by a Head of Service following consideration of any exceptional circumstances.

Pupil Behaviour when Accessing School Transport

14. Parents/carers have a vital role in working alongside the Education Department to ensure that school transport is safe and accessible for all eligible pupils. Parents/carer should encourage all pupils to behave in an appropriate way to their needs at all times when accessing school transport and emphasise the importance of safety, reminding pupils to be vigilant when board or leaving the vehicle.
15. Where pupil behaviour does not meet the appropriate standard, the Education Department may suspend access to school transport, with the parent/carer assuming responsibility for their children travelling to and from school. Where pupils with additional support needs are not able to manage their behaviour in a safe manner whilst accessing transport, the Education Department will work with the school and parent/carer to consider the behaviour needs and best way to support the pupil. This may involve consideration of alternative means of provision where appropriate.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

16. Parents/carers have a number of responsibilities in ensuring that pupils are able to access school transport safely.
 - 16.1. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure pupils can travel to and from the transport pick up and drop off location safely, and ensure that there is someone at home to receive them. Where a parent/carer has a concern about their child's ability to travel independently to any pick up location, they should ensure appropriate arrangements are put in place.
 - 16.2. For those circumstances in which a parent/carer considers their child able to travel independently, they must ensure that they prepare them by ensuring they are aware of and follow the safest walking route, crossing at the most appropriate places and behaving responsibly whilst waiting to be picked up. In such circumstances, parents/carers must ensure that they have discussed with their child what to do if the transport does not arrive or if they fail to access the transport for any particular reason.

- 16.3. Where, as a result of persistent inappropriate behaviour, school transport provision is withdrawn, the parent/carer will assume responsibility for making and/or paying for alternative transport provision.

Contractual Arrangements & Conditions

17. Contracts & Procurement

- 17.1. School transport is delivered by a number of different providers, contracted through the Council's transport partner SPT and by the Council directly. Each provider is required to align with the Council's procurement specifications. This includes specifications around the operation of the contract, safety of the provision and vehicle specifications.
- 17.2. All drivers and escorts are required to complete a PVG Disclosure process to ensure the safety of all pupils accessing school transport. This is monitored by SPT and individual providers as part of the condition of the contract.
- 17.3. The Education Department works with SPT and individual providers to monitor performance and ensure compliance with contract specification. Where a provider is not meeting the contract specification, for example due to time delays, either SPT or the Education Department directly will engage with the provider to monitor performance and seek improvements where possible.

18. Vehicle Timetable

- 18.1. Tender specifications normally allow a 10 minute time band within which pupils must be picked up or set down with the middle of the band being the preferred time. Given the volume of traffic at the beginning and end of the school day, there can be occasions where school transport is unavoidably delayed.
- 18.2. The Education Department expects all pupils to arrive at school before the start of the school day and all timetables are designed to achieve this. Unfortunately, at the beginning of each session, there can be a degree of short term disruption as providers and pupils adjust to new routes. Whilst in most cases this will resolve itself very quickly, where this is not the case, the Education Department will work with providers to ensure any necessary adjustments are made.

Complaints

19. Where a parent/carer or pupil is unhappy or concerned about school transport provision, they should follow the department's complaints procedure.
- 19.1. For mainstream school transport, complaints should initially be made to the pupil's school directly. The school will record the complaint and send it on to SPT who will investigate the complaint with the operator directly. The complaint may also be sent directly to SPT, using their own complaints policy. Where the issue cannot be resolved by the school in conjunction with SPT, the complaint can be raised directly with the Education Department. This should be completed in line with the Council's complaints policy, available online.
- 19.2. For complaints related to the provision of ASN or temporary transport, these should initially be raised with the pupil's school who will aim to offer an initial resolution. Where the issue is not resolved, the complaint should be raised through the Council's complaints procedure, available online.

BLANK PAGE

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE8 June 2023Report by Director of EducationEAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S
CONSULTATION ON PRESCRIBING THE MINIMUM ANNUAL NUMBER OF LEARNING
HOURS**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek the Education Committee's approval of the proposed response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the prescription of the minimum annual number of learning hours of school education school pupils should receive each year.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Education Committee is asked to note and approve the Education Department's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the prescription of the minimum annual number of learning hours of school education school pupils should receive each year.

BACKGROUND

3. In March 2023, the Scottish Government published a consultation seeking views on plans to set a legal minimum number of hours of school education school pupils should receive each year. More details are included in the [Scottish Government consultation paper](#)ⁱ.

4. Local authorities in Scotland are required to have schools opened for 190 days each year as defined by [Regulation 5 of the Schools General \(Scotland\) Regulations 1975](#)ⁱⁱ, as amended. This requirement is unaffected by this consultation.

5. However the number of learning hours that schools must provide annually is not defined in legislation. Furthermore a definition of learning hours and the types of school minimum hours would apply to is also not currently provided for.

6. [The Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#)ⁱⁱⁱ makes provision for Scottish Ministers to set the minimum number of learning hours in a school year however, until now this has not been enacted. It is in accordance with this legislation that ministers now propose to use this power to make regulations later this year.

REPORT

7. The consultation proposes to define learning and teaching hours as '...the period of teaching that learners receive within the school day.' not inclusive of break-times, extra-curricular activities or breakfast clubs etc. The minimum number of learning and teaching hours is proposed to be defined as 950 (25 per week) and 1045 (27.5 hours per week) for those in mainstream primary and secondary schools, respectively.

8. The expectation of the minimum number of learning hours also applies to special schools, however the consultation does recognise that in order to meet the needs of such children, planned learning does take place over break and lunchtimes and that learning hours in these circumstances need to be tailored to the individual's needs.

9. The proposal is only applicable to schools that are managed by local authorities or are grant aided schools, and does not apply to independent sector or those choosing to home educate.

10. The proposal does allow for the continuation of requests from local authorities to ministers for special exemption to the required number of learning hours in accordance with the provision of the [Education Scotland Act 1980](#)^{iv}. Such requests are often made for unavoidable ad hoc school closure days such as children transferring from an existing to new school building or to mark additional public holidays, such as the recent Queen's State Funeral.

11. In addition there are some exemptions to the defined number of learning hours which do not require ministerial approval, such as in the case of:

- a. specific learner's needs;
- b. matters out with an authority's control such as school closure for weather; and
- c. where other circumstances that ministers prescribe by regulations may apply.

12. This consultation is an opportunity for stakeholders to provide views and evidence about the potential impact of the implementation of this policy.

13. The consultation period is from 21 March 2023 to 13 June 2023.

14. The enactment of the minimum number of learning and teaching hours as defined in paragraph 7 is in line with East Renfrewshire Council's provision. Currently all ERC primary, secondary and special schools provide learning hours in accordance with the suggested number of minimum learning hours.

15. However, defining the minimum number of learning hours in statute further reduces the flexibility local authorities have to design education services and means that the Council will no longer be able to determine the appropriate number of learning hours to best meet the needs of its school aged children. In addition, the approach set out in the consultation paper lacks clarity in a number of areas and may result in longer-term financial and practical implications.

16. The Council's draft response to the consultation takes the position of not being in favour of implementing legislation to define the minimum number of learning hours and details the reasoning for this; the draft response is included as Appendix One.

CONSULTATION

17. Head teachers of early years, primary secondary and special schools have been made aware of the consultation following discussion at Head Teachers' meetings and encouraged to respond independently. The Parent Council Chairs have also been made aware of the consultation and encouraged to respond.

FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

18. As the proposed minimum learning hours are in alignment with the current provision across education in East Renfrewshire Council, there are no immediate financial implications the proposal.

19. However, as is noted in the draft response in Appendix One, the legislating of minimal learning hours will remove the Council's autonomy to determine the appropriate number of learning hours for its learners and context in future years. Given the significant proposals for change in Scottish Education that are likely to take place in coming years, it is likely that in order for the Council to meet such a statutory requirement as this, will result in a significant financial burden.

CONCLUSION

20. The proposed response to the consultation records the Council's position that it is not in agreement with the proposal to legislate for a standardised annual minimum number of learning hours that school age children should receive.

21. Should the proposal be progressed:

- a. any additional financial costs associated with the introduction of the annual minimum learning hours, and any other future changes to the delivery of education as detailed in the draft response, must be fully funded by the Scottish Government.
- b. greater clarity of the definition of the term 'learning hours' is required in order to incorporate all of the types of activities and events which take place throughout a school day and year in which children and young people will be engaging in their learning;
- c. it should be made clear that learning hours are not only those delivered by registered teachers but also other appropriate support staff;
- d. local authorities should not be expected to ensure the minimum number of learning hours to children by extension of the school year;
- e. the recording of learning hours and requests for exemptions should not be overly bureaucratic and school leaders and local authorities should be trusted to use their professional judgement using provided guidance, to determine learning hours inclusion.

RECOMMENDATION

22. Education Committee is asked to note and approve the Education Department's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the prescription of the minimum annual number of learning hours of school education school pupils should receive each year.

Convener Contact Details

Councillor Anderson, Convener for Education, Culture and Leisure
Tel: 07341 640 825
Tel: 0141 577 3107
andrew.anderson@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Report Author

Joe McCaig
Head of Education Services (Provision)
Tel: 0141 577 3229
joe.mccaig@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Background Papers

- ⁱ Scottish Government Consultation on the prescription of the minimum annual number of learning hours of school education school pupils should receive each year: <https://consult.gov.scot/learning-directorate/learning-hours-consultation/>
- ⁱⁱ Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1975/1135/contents/made>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Education (Scotland) Act 2016: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/8/contents/enacted>
- ^{iv} Education (Scotland) Act 1980: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/44/contents>

Appendix

Appendix 1

Respondent Information Form – Consultation Questionnaire

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

For individuals, are you responding as a:

- Learner
- Parent
- Teacher
- School Support Staff
- Education Practitioner
- Other, please state:

Full name or organisation's name

East Renfrewshire Council

Phone number

0141 577 3001

Address

Eastwood Park
Rouken Glen Road
Giffnock

Postcode

G46 6UG

Email Address

Joe.mccaig@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)

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.

Do not publish response

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

Should the Scottish Government set in law the minimum learning hours pupils in Scotland should receive?

- Yes
 No
 Not Sure

East Renfrewshire Council does not agree with the proposition of the Scottish Government to set in law the minimum number of learning hours for school pupils in Scotland. At the outset the proposal paper does not clearly define learning hours and the other learning experiences which should be included in the definition. The proposal does not provide any detail with regards to how the number of minimum learning hours will be recorded and reported upon, and the process by which local authorities can apply for exemption to the legislative hours.

The number of learning hours being proposed by the Scottish Government aligns with the current delivery models within the primary, secondary and special sectors across East Renfrewshire Council and so if these are the confirmed hours, this will not initially impact on the Council given current delivery model. However, whilst the current provision matches the proposed hours, this will limit the Council's ability in future to make any alterations to the delivery of school age education which the Council may feel is most appropriate to meet the needs of our learners and local circumstances/context, limiting flexibility. The introduction of this legislation undermines local authorities' autonomy to design and deliver services for their local communities.

Financially, any legislation which sets the minimum number of learning hours must be fully funded by the Scottish Government on a sustainable ongoing basis, as any additional costs now or in future which are associated with the legislation cannot be met from already stretched existing budgets. As indicated, the proposed hours will not impact on the Council's existing provision however, the introduction of these regulations in the current financial circumstances may see disproportionate cuts in the future on a range of services that all contribute to ensuring improved outcomes for children and young people.

Nationally there is a variety of developments that require to be considered alongside this proposal. There is now an expectation that local authorities maintain their teacher numbers and Pupil Support Assistant hours, based on the annual census in September 2022, on an ongoing basis. Regardless of any changes to school rolls or local decision making regarding educational approaches or local contexts, local authorities are required to maintain these staffing figures. Furthermore the Scottish Government has committed to reducing the number of pupil teacher class contact time (learning hours for teachers) from 22.5 hours per week to 21 hours per during this parliamentary term. Professor Hayward is currently undertaking an independent review of qualifications in Scotland that is likely to result in significant change to teaching and learning approaches as well as assessment, qualifications and certification. Combined, these developments, along with the removal of flexibility that legislating for minimum learning hours will bring, will result in significant financial, recruitment and logistical challenges to local authorities that must be considered by the Scottish Government collectively.

East Renfrewshire Council does recognise that the proposal indicates that there will be flexibility in the requirement to offer a set number of learning hours on the basis of occurrences which are: out with its control; on request to Ministers for adjustment to the hours; and on the needs of specific learners. For example it may be the case that a pupil will follow part-time timetable for a period of time to support that child appropriately, and it is right that schools are entrusted to make such decisions locally, overseen by education authorities. However there is a lack of detail in this regard in the proposal.

76

The Council also notes the recognition that learning hours of children who attend a special school will require to be flexible due to the needs of such learners and that learning does take place at times such as break and lunchtime. This will allow these children's need to continue to be met appropriately.

Please explain your answer in the text box.

Question 2

Do you agree that the minimum annual learning hours should be 950 hours for primary schools?

- Yes
 No
 Not Sure

Please explain your answer in the text box.

East Renfrewshire Council is not in agreement that the annual learning hours for the primary sector should be defined as 950 hours in statute.

As noted previously, currently primary school children attend East Renfrewshire's schools for 950 hours per annum, on the basis of 25 hours teacher contact time per week, distributed equally across the 5 days of the week. Furthermore, pupils across all stages who attend East Renfrewshire primary schools are provided with 25 learning hours from the commencement of the P1 school year. This allows for the continuation of a similar length of day as children experience in the early years, as part of the 1140 hours provision and we believe that this is the optimum number of hours for our learners' needs and our context, at this time.

However, whilst the Council believes that this number of learning hours, at this time, is the most appropriate for children at these stages, the Council may consider in future years that this number of learning hours is no longer most appropriate for its learners and its context. Consequently, the Council does not agree with the removal of local autonomy on deciding the most appropriate learning hours for primary aged children and that 950 hours of learning hours should be set in statute.

The proposal paper indicates that the number of learning hours offered in Scotland is already significantly above the OECD average, which suggests there is no need to legislate on such a matter. The proposal paper also does not provide any evidence that 950 hours is the most appropriate number of teaching hours for the country or the impact that legislating as such will have on learners, with no reference to other fundamental factors such as the quality of learners' experiences, the workforce and its development, the curriculum etc. and outcomes for learners.

Question 3

Do you agree that the minimum annual learning hours should be 1045 hours for secondary schools?

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

Please explain your answer in the text box.

East Renfrewshire Council is not in agreement that the optimum number of annual learning hours for the secondary sector should be defined as 1045 hours in statute.

East Renfrewshire Council currently delivers 1045 hours of learning annually to secondary pupils to overtake their entitlement to the entirety of the broad general education but also to overtake the demands of the academic and vocational offering in the senior phase. This number of learning hours also allows for time for students to take part in wider school events and extra-curricular activities and the Council believes that this is the optimum number of learning hours for its learners' needs and context, at this time.

As noted in response to question 1, other national agendas are likely to have a significant impact on the Council and the removal of the Council's autonomy to make decisions on the number of learning hours which meets the specific needs of its learners and context, is not welcomed.

As per response to question 2, the proposal paper indicates that the number of learning hours offered in Scotland is already significantly above the OECD average, which suggests there is no need to legislate on such a matter. The proposal paper also does not provide any evidence that 1045 hours is the most appropriate number of teaching hours for the country or the impact that legislating as such will have on learners, with no reference to other fundamental factors such as the quality of learners' experiences, the workforce and its development, the curriculum etc.

Question 4

Do you agree with the suggested definition of learning hours set out at paragraph 2.1 above?

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

Please explain your answer in the text box.

'Learning hours are the period of teaching that learners receive within the school day. In most cases, they do not include lunch and other break times or extracurricular activities or provision such as breakfast clubs that may take place around the core school day.'

Considered solely on its own, East Renfrewshire Council generally agrees with the sentiment of the learning hours definition. It is accepted that in such a definition there should be a compulsory attendance element to the defined learning hours excluding non-compulsory elements, such as breakfast clubs and extracurricular activities. In addition, the Council agrees with the non-inclusion of break and lunchtimes for mainstream schools, but with the caveat of inclusion for special schools where appropriate.

As pupils may not attend school for many reasons on any given day, the wording of the definition of learning hours should be changed to:

*'Learning hours are the period of teaching that learners are **offered** within the school day. In most cases, they do not include lunch and other break times or extracurricular activities or provision such as breakfast clubs that may take place around the core school day.'*

Furthermore, the definition/legislation must be clear on 'period of teaching' - does this mean time spent with a General Teaching Council (GTC) regulated school teacher or more widely with other support staff. Any suggestion of learning hours being defined as solely time spent with a GTC registered teacher is not in keeping with modern pedagogical approaches, or in the best interest of learners.

See further comments in response to questions 5 and 6.

Question 5

Apart from the exemptions outlined in this paper are there any other circumstances where a variation to the number of learning hours provided may be needed?

Please set out your response in the box below

How exemptions would work in practice has not been outlined in the proposal paper and so this makes it difficult to respond fully.

It is assumed that the definition of learning hours extends to include school/education authority organised events at which pupils will be accompanied by teacher(s)/other school or council staff, which take place during the school day, such as school trips and longer term residential stays. This must be clarified.

Other events take place throughout the school year where children / young people may not be accompanied by a member of teaching staff, such as further and higher education open events and vocational work experience opportunities; such events should also be regarded as learning hours.

Young people in the senior phase will at times not attend school as consequence of National Qualifications and in particular during examination periods. This period of time for these pupil should be included as learning hours.

In the circumstances where a child is not able to attend school due to prolonged ill health or where it is appropriate for a child to attend for part of the school week based on their needs, the school and education authority will ensure that where possible, a student is able to continue with their education in some form. In these situations the continuous provision of education, in whichever ever is the most appropriate form and regularity, should be recorded as learning hours.

These examples do not cover all potential events that we would expect to be included as learning hours and so school leaders and local authorities will require to be provided with flexibility and be trusted to use their professional judgement using provided guidance, to determine learning hours inclusion.

Question 6

Are there any further views you wish to share regarding this proposal?

Please set out your response in the box below

In early learning and childcare, every child is entitled to the entirety of 1140 hours provision, even in the case where there have been an exceptionally approved closure days such as the Queen's State Funeral. The flexibility in the offer of early learning and childcare in East Renfrewshire means that in such situations we are able to offer those families who wish to access the lost hours of provision, their full entitlement. This is also possible by having family centres that are open for 52 weeks of the year and an accompanying staffing complement. This of course is not possible in school age education. Any legislation must be clear that where a school has not been able to offer the full number of learning hours as consequence of an event out with its control or where a direction has been approved by Ministers for an exemption/modification to the learning hours, there is no requirement for the lost hours to be offered. This relates also to the suggested change of wording used in response to question 4, and the need for the definition of leaning hours to be regarded as offered hours and not provided.

Should the proposal be implemented, further guidance and clarity is required regarding the recording and reporting of learning hours which are offered to school aged pupils and any exemptions to this offer, such as in cases where children's needs dictate that they will not receive the entirety of the defined learning hours. It should be ensured that and recording and reporting on learning hours is kept to a minimum to avoid the creation of additional workload.

It is unclear as to the timeline for the enactment of any legislation and so should defined learning hours differ from those currently employed in East Renfrewshire, the Council will require enough time to implement any changes as well as resources and support.

BLANK PAGE