

**Department of Business Operations and Partnerships**

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Date: 16 August 2024

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

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Education Committee will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Eastwood Park, Giffnock, on **Thursday, 22 August 2024 at 10.00 a.m.**

The agenda of business is as listed below.

Yours faithfully

*Louise Pringle*

**LOUISE PRINGLE**

**DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**AGENDA**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are requested to give notice of any declarations of interest in respect of items of business on the Agenda.

**3. SQA VERBAL UPDATE**

**4. DRAFT LITERACY AND ENGLISH STRATEGY 2024-27**

Report by the Director of Education (copy attached, pages 3 – 32).

**5. STANDARD CIRCULAR 57: CHILD PROTECTION**

Report by the Director of Education (copy attached, pages 33 – 54).

## **6. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT END-YEAR REPORT 2023-24**

Report by the Director of Education (copy attached, pages 55 – 70).

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

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE22 August 2024Report by Director of EducationDRAFT LITERACY AND ENGLISH STRATEGY 2024-27**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to update Education Committee on the evaluation undertaken of the Education Department's previous literacy strategy and seek approval for the refreshed Literacy and English strategy 2024 – 27.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. Education Committee is asked to:
- a. Note the continued progress of the delivery of literacy and comment on the contents as outlined in this paper; and
  - b. Approve the new draft Literacy and English strategy for 2024 – 27.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Education Committee approved in June 2017 the Education Department's [Literacy Strategy](#) which outlined the ambition for all children and young people within the context of literacy.

4. The strategy identified six key aims over a three year period and a clear set of actions for the department, Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings, schools and Adult Services to undertake in order to deliver these aims.

5. The Literacy Strategy aimed to improve:

- outcomes and reduce inequalities in literacy development;
- attainment in literacy throughout the years of the broad general education and senior phase;
- the employability skills of pupils, school leavers and adults;
- teacher confidence and competence in teaching literacy and English; and,
- the quality of learning and teaching.

6. The strategy aligned to the Education Department's vision of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*, with the commitment to raise standards of literacy for all, from early years to adulthood.

7. The Education Department planned to review the impact and progress of the Literacy Strategy during school session 2020 – 2021, however the Covid-19 global pandemic

interrupted these plans. Using a Collaborative Improvement Visit (CIV) model, the review was rescheduled for session 2023 – 2024.

8. The purpose of this Collaborative Improvement Visit (CIV) was to consider the impact made by the Education Department and schools (including ELC settings) in implementing the Literacy Strategy (2017 – 2020), and highlight the progress made against the expected outcomes. The scope of the review took account of the challenging context created by the continued impact of the Covid-19 pandemic along with the cost of living crisis.

9. The review team identified strengths and areas for improvement. They recommended a refreshed Literacy and English strategy to be agreed and implemented to drive these improvements.

## REPORT

10. Using the Collaborative Improvement Model developed with colleagues in Education Scotland and the Association of Directors of Education, a review team was established containing Quality Improvement Officers, Head Teachers, Principal Teachers of Literacy and Education Scotland's Attainment Advisor.

11. The team observed learners' experiences in 8 establishments; 2 family centres, 5 primary schools and 2 secondary schools through 90 learning visits; conducted focus groups with Literacy Leaders, staff groups, pupil groups, Principal Teachers of English, Head Teachers, Cluster Chairs, and the Adult Learning Service; and took account of planning and assessment documentation and any other relevant information shared.

12. [Appendix 1](#) provides an executive summary of the findings of the review.

13. The attached strategy (Appendix 2) has been written by officers from the Education Department including Head Teachers, Principal Teachers of Literacy and led by a Quality Improvement Officer.

14. The strategy links clearly to the Education Department's vision '*Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*' and sets out three main areas – pedagogy, progress and partnerships – detailing how we will ensure that all children and young people develop the literacy and English skills they need to be successful throughout life.

15. The refreshed Literacy and English Strategy aims to improve:

- the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in literacy and English
- outcomes and reduce inequalities in literacy and English development;
- attainment and achievement in literacy and English throughout the broad general education and senior phase;
- the development of real-life skills of pupils, school leavers and adults; and
- teacher confidence and competence in teaching literacy and English.

16. It will build on existing good practice in East Renfrewshire, use up-to-date research and evidence and ensure that literacy and English have a central and continuing focus in our ELC settings, schools and services.

17. The strategy sets out the actions that will be taken by the Education Department and

ELC settings, schools and services to deliver the 5 key aims in literacy and English. There are performance indicators and targets set and the timeframe over which the actions will be taken forward is the three-year period 2024-27.

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

## **CONSULTATION**

19. In formulating this Literacy and English 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**

20. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **CONCLUSION**

21. The literacy strategy has made a significant impact on learners' experiences across ELC settings, schools and Adult Learning Services.

22. The impact of Covid on literacy and English outcomes for children living in poverty was significant and there requires a continued focus on tackling the impact of this in terms of attainment, with careful and considered use of Strategic and Pupil Equity Funding.

23. The refreshed 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 literacy levels and deprivation;
- improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in literacy and English; and
- increase practitioner confidence and enhance professional practice in teaching literacy and English.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

24. Education Committee is asked to:

- a. Note the continued progress of the delivery of literacy and comment on the contents as outlined in this paper; and
- b. Approve the new draft literacy and English strategy for 2024 – 27.

Director of Education  
August 2024

**Convener Contact Details**

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Appendices

1. Executive Summary Report on Literacy Strategy 2017 – 2020.
2. Draft Literacy and English Strategy 2024 – 2027.

**Appendix 1****Review of Literacy and English  
Collaborative Improvement Visit  
May 2024****Evidence Findings****Scope of Review**

The Literacy and English Collaborative Improvement Visit (CIV) consisted of 3 phases.

**Phase 1:** Planning and preparation to determine the scope of the review with consideration given to the aims and outcomes of the Literacy Strategy and the impact of Covid-19, agree the methodology for gathering evidence and support and build capacity of the review team to support the process - December 2023.

**Phase 2:** Senior officers spent 3 weeks gathering evidence from 8 establishments which included direct observation of learning and teaching across all sectors, gathering peoples' views, analysing qualitative and quantitative data and reviewing documentation and resources. - January 2024.

**Phase 3** – Focus on collaborative improvement - the information gathered during phase one and two of the review, along with the Secondary CIV of English which took place in October 2023 was analysed to secure improvement, share good practice and begin to identify priorities for the updated Literacy strategy 2024 – 2027 with a focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

During Phase 2 the Review Teams:

- observed learners' experiences in 8 establishments; 2 family centres, 5 primary schools and 2 secondary schools through 90 learning visits;
- conducted focus groups with Literacy Leaders, Staff groups, Pupil Groups, Principal Teachers of English, Head Teachers, Cluster Chairs, and the Adult Learning Service
- took account of planning and assessment documentation and any other relevant information shared.

**Summary of Evidence**

<b><i>How good is Literacy and English Attainment?</i></b>	
Focus Area:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attainment in literacy and English throughout the years of the broad general education and senior phase</li> <li>• Improved outcomes and reduced inequalities in literacy development</li> </ul>
Lines of Enquiry:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent have we raised attainment in literacy?</li> <li>• What impact has Covid had on delivering the strategy?</li> <li>• Which interventions have been successful in supporting the development of literacy skills?</li> </ul>

There is evidence of very strong attainment across all sectors. The performance clearly shows added value from schools in terms of literacy and English. There is now more rigorous and on-going analysis of data to support children's attainment by senior leaders and extending to class teachers. Increasingly practitioners and senior leaders are confidently using a wider range of evidence to make robust triangulated judgements about learner's progress against the national standards, rather than relying on fixed 'gradients of learning' and standardised test scores as evidence of attainment. Attainment data suggest that teacher judgements for Talking & Listening are more accurate and robust. The ambition and drive to be the highest performing mainland authority is realistic and evident in the approach to tracking attainment, right down to individual pupils. The way forward is more about marginal gains than full scale improvements.

Staff know their children and families well; they have a sound understanding of the key equity groups in their classes and work collectively to address any barriers children may face. A carefully selected range of interventions and targeted support is being used effectively to meet children's needs and the impact of these is carefully monitored. However, there is still a need to focus on inequalities and closing of the poverty related attainment gap. Small gains achieved previously have been mitigated with the impact of Covid. Although there are definite signs of recovery, the accelerated pace in which our children from more affluent areas have recovered has led to an increase in the poverty related attainment gap.

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels in both primary and secondary indicate a gender gap with girls outperforming boys in almost all measures. This gap is also evident in SQA attainment.

We therefore need to continue to prioritise reducing inequalities and closing the attainment gap in our next strategy.

### **Developmental Milestones**

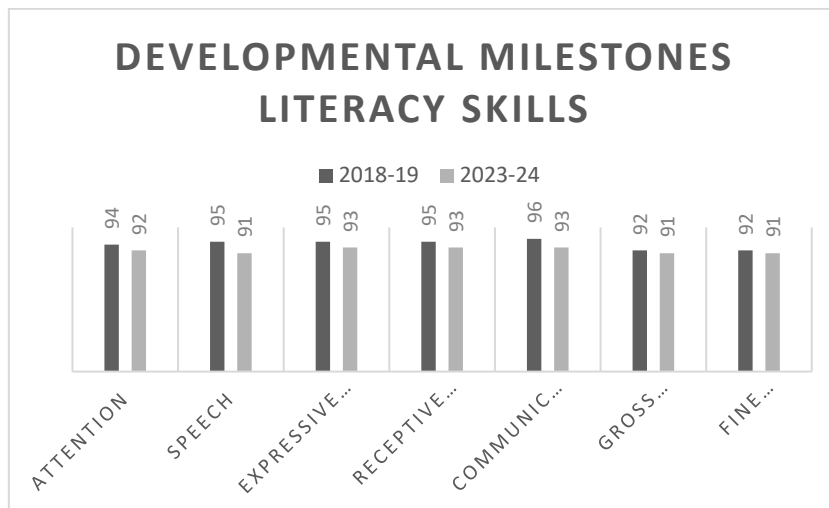
On entry to primary 1 data is gathered in schools each year on the percentage of children achieving the expected levels of development across the following domains: Social, Emotional, Attention, Speech, Expressive Language, Receptive Language, Communication, Gross Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills and Behaviour. In 2023-24 80% of children achieved these developmental milestones overall, compared to 84% in 2018-19.

For the first time, the proportion of children living in more affluent communities achieving their developmental milestones has fallen, with those in Quintile 1 achieving the same as those in Quintile 5. This may indicate the impact of a range of supports which are available to families living in Quintile 1 and 2 including; access to Early learning and Childcare from two years of age, access to hub provision during the pandemic, support from the Excellence and Equity Lead or support from Family First. It should be noted that numbers of pupils residing in quintile 1 are very low in East Renfrewshire.

In terms of literacy, data for all children shows decreases across all of the domains associated with reading, writing, talking and listening as shown in Chart 1 below:



Chart 1



These P1 children would have been between 12-24 months old when the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic came into effect in March 2020. Public Health reports have shown that children’s social, emotional and language development were impacted as a result of the pandemic.

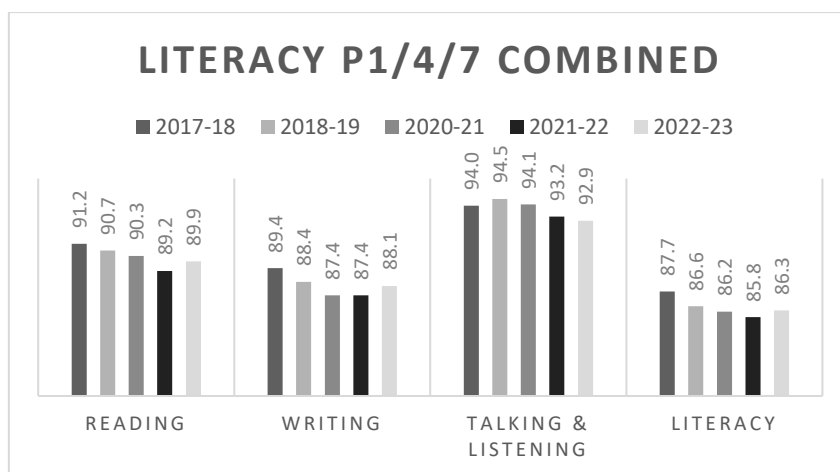
**Baseline Assessments**

Baseline Assessments in Primary 1 assess specific literacy components: Print Concepts, Rhyme, Letter Knowledge, Alliteration and Name. The authority average for percentage of literacy questions correct (raw scores) has remained consistently high at 60% since 2017-18; with a dip of 1% in 2019-20. Alliteration is the area that pupils find most difficult each year. Overall there is a persistent gap of approximately 8 points between children in SIMD Quintile 1 and those residing in Quintile 5. There is also a small gap evident between girls and boys, with girls outperforming boys by an average of 3 points.

**Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL)**

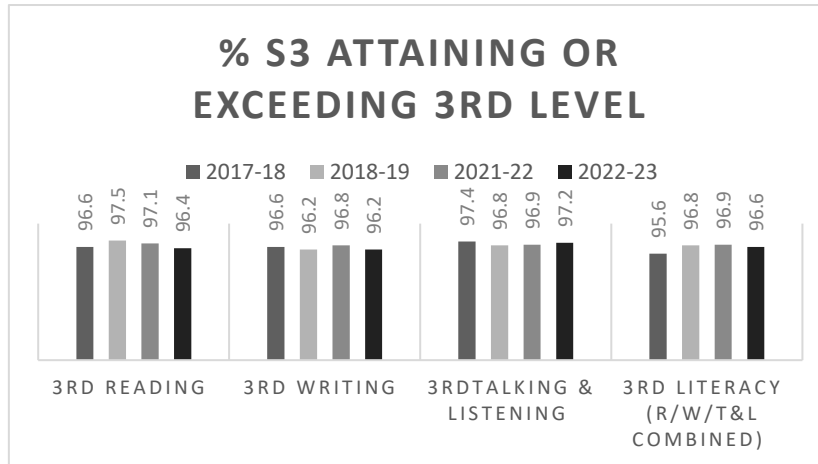
From 2017-2018 to 2022-23 attainment in literacy in the primary sector has remained fairly consistent. No data was recorded in 2019-20 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Each component follows a similar pattern each year with attainment in talking and listening being highest, and writing being lowest as shown in Chart 2 below:

Chart 2



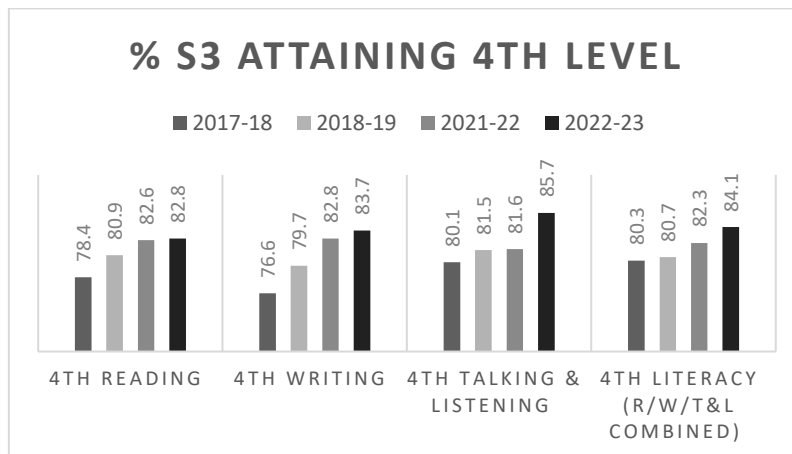
Secondary attainment (S3) at third level in reading, writing, talking and listening has remained consistently high and is significantly above the published national average figures. In 2022-23, attainment at CfE level 3 in reading and writing has decreased slightly since 2021-22 whilst conversely, attainment in talking and listening has increased. Overall, when, reading, writing and talking and listening are combined, attainment in level 3 literacy at S3 has remained relatively consistent as shown in Chart 3:

Chart 3



From 2018-19 to 2022-23, the proportion of S3 pupils (all) attaining CfE level 4 has increased across reading, writing, talking and listening as shown in Chart 4:

Chart 4



The attainment of children entitled to a free school meal has increased across most literacy areas, with the exception of reading, and those living in decile 1 or 2 areas have increased in reading and writing, with no change recorded for talking and listening; this indicates that the poverty related attainment gap has still been a factor for our most disadvantaged secondary aged pupils in S3 over the last five years.

### **SQA/Senior Phase**

National 5 - presentation rates for National 5 English are high with 92.5% of S4 pupils presented in 2022-23. Performance remains strong with an average of 96% achieving A-C awards compared to 86% nationally. There was a 9% increase in A awards from 58% in 2019-20 to 67% in 2022-23.

Higher – most pupils in S5 are presented for Higher English with rates ranging from 84% in 2018-19 to 87% in 2022-23. Attainment at A-C in 2022-23 was 81% across S5/6 which is slightly lower than the pre-pandemic level of 83% in 2019-20, however remains higher than the national figure of 75%. Locally the proportion of A awards increased from 36 to 38% compared to a drop in A awards nationally from 29 to 25%.

Advanced Higher – The percentage of pupils achieving A-C awards at AH has increased from 77% in 2018-19 to 90% in 2022-23. Over this same period the national rate of A-C awards has fallen from 78 to 76%. The proportion of A Awards at Advanced Higher in East Renfrewshire has also increased and is now 36% compared to a national average of 20%.

### English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Since 2018 there has been an increase in the number of learners undertaking the ESOL qualification. In 2018, 14 S4 learners were presented for National 5 ESOL with 100% achieving A Awards. In 2022/23 this figure had risen to 25 learners all of whom achieved A-C awards with 80% achieving an A. 14 learners were presented, and achieved Higher ESOL in 2018, in comparison to 40 learners presented for Higher ESOL in 2023 with 93% achieving A-C Awards.

### Adult Learners

Adult Learning Services continue to work in partnership with West College Scotland and Clyde College to deliver a range of SQA accredited courses including; ESOL, Childcare and IT all of which require proficiency in literacy.

In 2022-23 the overall numbers of adult learners increased with 140 residents engaging with a range of learner centred programmes. This included an increase in the number of adult learners attending one or more ESOL courses. 105 adults accessed ESOL courses at all levels from complete beginners to upper intermediate. Adult Learning Services work in partnership with Clyde College for all ESOL provision. 21 adults successfully completed ESOL for Work programmes and 6 participants moved into employment after the course. 12 adults achieved an SQA ESOL qualification at National 4 level and 2 of these learners progressed from this course to further their studies at college. Adult learning services work with a high percentage of parents within their ESOL provision and the need for ESOL for Parents learning opportunities remain high with 42 parents successfully completing programmes aimed at improving skills, knowledge and confidence in relation to family learning goals.

The 2017 Literacy Strategy set a range of critical indicators and targets using the overall literacy measure at each stage to determine the impact of the strategy as detailed in Table 1 below:

*Table 1*

Critical Indicator	2017-18	2022-23	Change	Target	2022-23 National
Increase % of pupils achieving CfE early level literacy or better by the end of Primary 1.	89.7%	86.5%	-3.2	92%	76%
Increase % of pupils achieving CfE first level literacy or better by the end of Primary 4.	87.6%	86.9%	-0.7	90%	70%

Increase % of pupils achieving CfE second level literacy or better by the end of Primary 7.	85.7%	85.5%	-0.2	87%	73%
Increase % of pupils achieving CfE third level literacy or better by the end of Secondary 3.	95.6%	95.6%	0	N/A	88%
Increase % of school leavers achieving Level 5 Literacy	94%	95%	+1	92%	81.5%

These targets have not been met in the primary sector as a result of the challenges faced since 2020, however attainment at all stages continues to be significantly higher than nationally published figures. The attainment of children entitled to a free school meal and those living in decile 1 or 2 areas has fluctuated during the period from 2017-18 to 2022-23; this indicates the impact of the global pandemic (Covid) on our most disadvantaged primary aged pupils in P1, P4 and P7 in terms of the poverty related attainment gap. In 2022-23 the gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 for combined P1, 4, 7 Literacy was 26.6%, the gap at S3 for Level 4 Literacy attainment was 19.8%.

The 2017 Literacy Strategy also set a range of critical indicators and targets for adult learning services as shown in Table 2 below:

*Table 2*

Critical Indicator	2017-18	2022-23	Change	Target
Increase the % of adult learners working towards a literacy goal	75%	99%	+24	75%
Increase the % of adult learners achieving literacy goals.	90%	95%	+6	95%
Increase the % of adult learners achieving SQA accreditation for their literacy learning.	23%	10%	-13	35%

Since 2018, there has been an increase in the proportion of adult learners working towards a literacy goal. Over this period, an average of 96% of these learners have achieved their literacy goals each year, with 24% on average achieving SQA accreditation for their literacy learning. Adult learners continue progress to a range of positive destinations including volunteering roles, apprenticeships, further education, and paid employment.

### **Successful Interventions**

Senior leaders, practitioners and parents described the impact of literacy interventions which supported children well. Schools make effective use of data to monitor children's progress and identify those who would benefit from additional support or intervention. Reading Recovery, Together Better Readers (TBR), Together Raising Attainment in Literacy (TRAIL) and Chatterbox were all successful in supporting the development of literacy skills in a

targeted way. Daily Literacy Learning has also been shown to improve literacy skills universally in the classes where it has been implemented and assessed. Data shows that 71% of children who participated in Reading Recovery in P2 went on to achieve age-expected levels. These gains were sustained through to P7 where 70% of pupils who had participated in Reading Recovery in P2 were now meeting or exceeding the National Standard.

<b><i>What do learners' experiences in Literacy and English look like?</i></b>	
Focus Area:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of learning, teaching and assessment</li> <li>• The employability skills of pupils, school leavers and adults</li> </ul>
Lines of Enquiry:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well has the curriculum been developed to support learning in literacy?</li> <li>• How has pedagogy improved in the teaching of literacy?</li> <li>• How well have partnerships supported learners' achievements in literacy?</li> </ul>

Children and young people in East Renfrewshire want to do well in their learning. In almost all play spaces and classrooms they are motivated and engaged in their learning and the relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive.

In ELC settings the learning environments are literacy rich, they promote and nurture early communication and language well and demonstrate a clear sense of children's ownership of the spaces. Children's work is proudly displayed and there is an effective balance of different types of print. Experienced practitioners continue to deliver appropriate adult-led experiences to support literacy learning, such as Hanen storytelling, ABC music and Helicopter Stories. To date, 6 ELC settings have been validated as Promoting and Nurturing Early Communication and Language, an internal accreditation by Education and Speech and Language Therapy, which recognises the commitment and focus by the setting on improving the development of literacy across the curriculum in a holistic way. The target set in the 2017 strategy was that 100% of all settings would achieve this validation however the challenges of the global pandemic, implementation of the Early Learning and Childcare expansion and the capacity of services to provide support has slowed progress in this area.

All schools use the skills frameworks which were revised as part of the Literacy Strategy. These are available for reading, writing, talking and listening from early to fourth level and provide consistent curriculum pathways. This enables a strong cluster approach to learning and mitigates from the "fresh start" approach at key transition stages. Although the curriculum framework provides consistency in terms of content, there is still evidence of conflicting pedagogies in ELC, Primary and Secondary. This is particularly evident in approaches to the teaching of reading and the associated skills.

There is increasing evidence that practitioners in ELC and Primary settings are using real-life contexts, building on learners' interests and skilfully making connections across the curriculum to provide relevance and enjoyment and make links to the world of work. Teachers are choosing engaging texts in various media and ensuring an increasing range of culturally responsive texts are used to promote equality and diversity. Staff are committed to improve the curriculum in literacy and English building on strengths and tackling key areas for improvement. However, in Secondary schools in particular, there is scope for staff to take further responsibility for developing literacy and English across the curriculum

Reflecting on the previous review of literacy and English (2014) pedagogy is an improving picture. Up to date research has influenced the CLPL offer, with a focus on approaches to

reading in early years and Primary School. This has supported practitioners to begin to integrate more meaningful literacy learning into their playrooms and classrooms as part of a play and enquiry based approach to learning. This provides learners with the valuable opportunities they need to apply the skills learned in literacy and English across learning in meaningful contexts. In addition, most settings are making increasingly effective use of outdoor spaces within and beyond their school to provide learners with outdoor learning experiences which enable them to apply and deepen their literacy skills – there is scope to develop this further in Secondary schools.

Most learners were provided with high quality experiences that were well planned, promoted curiosity and enquiry and staff used questioning effectively to extend pupils' thinking and deepen learning. Formative assessment approaches such as self and peer assessment and effective use of learning intentions and co-constructed success criteria are well embedded in teacher's practice. Almost all teachers used effective and skilful questioning to clarify learners' understanding, knowledge and skills. There remains scope to improve the quality of feedback, and ensure that learners have time to act on the feedback they receive.

Opportunities for pupils to lead their own learning have improved significantly. Learners are also benefitting from applying their literacy skills as they lead change and improvement in their schools through committees, pupil parliaments and intergenerational work which supports application of skills in real life contexts. Further opportunities for both learning and application of skills can be seen through creative approaches to Inter Disciplinary Learning (IDL) and 'masterclass' type activities which integrate learning from across the literacy disciplines. All schools participate in a wide range of activities to promote reading for enjoyment including; World Book day, P1 Bookbug, summer reading challenges and Reading Schools Accreditation. Digital technologies were used effectively in the majority of lessons to enhance learners' experiences and provide support through assistive technologies such as talk to text.

Overall although almost all learners' experiences were positive, motivating, engaging and active, there is still an inconsistency from class to class and school to school. To make the marginal gains required, we need to bring about consistency for all learners. The 2014 literacy and English review highlighted differentiation and challenge as areas for improvement, this appears to still be an issue in 2024. This is particularly evident in Primary One where whole class teaching does not take cognisance of, or meet, the varying needs of young learners. There also continues to be a need for schools to develop a progressive approach to the teaching and assessment of listening and talking skills.

Adult Learning Services support adults to achieve their employability-related goals. The service works closely with partner organisations to enhance the learning opportunities on offer and engage with those people who would benefit most from the service. Since the introduction of the literacy strategy, additional literacy support was provided to supplement and develop employability skills. Learners used these skills to update their Curriculum Vitae, write cover letters, and apply for work and volunteering positions. Through the Individual Learning Planning process almost all learners identified and took up progression opportunities.

The service works in partnership with a range of partners, include Further Education establishments. This enables the service to offer adults accredited courses in the community, including learners completing SQA National ESOL Literacies courses and ESOL for Work course.

<b>What are stakeholders telling us about literacy and English?</b>	
Focus Area:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher confidence and competence in teaching literacy and English</li> </ul>
Lines of Enquiry:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well has the curriculum been developed to support learning in literacy?</li> <li>• How has pedagogy improved in the teaching of literacy?</li> <li>• How well have partnerships supported learners' achievements in literacy?</li> <li>• Which interventions have been successful in supporting the development of literacy skills?</li> </ul>

Learners are articulate, enthusiastic and keen to learn. The views of pupils in primary schools regarding learning in literacy and English, shared through focus groups, are very positive. They enjoy learning within a positive environment, taking responsibility for their learning with help from their teacher when they need it. They do however believe that they should have more choice about what and how they learn. In Secondary questionnaires, however, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of learners reporting that they enjoy learning in English (68%) compared to 84% in 2018 and an average of 82% across all other subjects. In focus groups learners offered a range of explanations why this may be the case including a perception that English is hard and there is an emphasis on assessment rather than on learning and enjoyment. In almost all observed lessons however, learners were engaged in and motivated by appropriately relevant and meaningful learning experiences. Practitioners ensured that learners understood the purpose of their learning through clear explanations and instructions and explicit connections between prior and future learning. In Secondary Schools approaches to personal reading time had been reviewed and evaluated since the 2018 CIV. As a result, the pace of learning and well established routines allowed learners and practitioners to benefit from maximised learning time.

The updated skills framework has supported learning and teaching and literacy across the curriculum. However, pupils were not confident at describing literacy skills. Formative assessment is also a strength, however some pupils still perceive an overreliance by staff on summative assessment in Secondary Schools and the upper stages of Primary School. Learners across the sectors told us that they often find their work too easy, and they get bored when teachers talk too much, they prefer learning experiences which are challenging and engaging rather than passive listening and repetitive tasks. Learners are motivated by current events in the world; they care about the health and wellbeing of themselves, their families, their community and the planet. Although they indicate that opportunities to use their literacy skills are evident across the curriculum, there is limited evidence of this being taught in real life contexts that matter to learners.

Staff across all sectors are very positive about literacy and English. They highlight the quality CLPL, which has been delivered as part of the literacy strategy, as having a positive impact on learners' experiences. The strategy included a critical indicator related to increasing the number of staff reporting that literacy CLPL has impacted positively on classroom practice. The CLPL offer has included a blend of face to face sessions, online sessions, and online independent learning via online platforms such as the Literacy Locker and Early Years Glow Group covering a range of topics. In addition, the Primary Principal Teachers of Literacy have delivered bespoke CLPL on request for schools and clusters, in line with each setting's improvement priorities. Almost all evaluations for Literacy and English CLPL provided continue to be extremely positive.

In addition to the subject specific CLPL practitioners have also benefitted from support for curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment and moderation. The alignment of

departmental priorities is supporting their capacity to teach this curricular area with confidence. The role of departmental staff was highlighted by literacy leads as instrumental in raising the profile of literacy and English across schools as well as providing essential CLPL. This included the Educational Psychology Team and the Principal Teachers of Literacy.

Practitioners are keen to learn with and from each other; they collaborate well to take forward school and cluster priorities. Teachers have taken on leadership roles related to literacy, including those who trained to become Reading Recovery teachers, as well as Pupil Equity Funded Principal Teachers. Teacher confidence in teaching reading, and literacy as a whole, has improved as a result of highly effective CLPL, including professional inquiry and accessing central digital platforms such as the Literacy Locker and Early Years Glow group. Teachers welcome professional learning opportunities which enable them to learn with and from each other as they develop their confidence and practices in teaching literacy and English. There is scope to develop a learning network of 'Literacy Leaders' similar to the leadership role of the Maths Champions to make a positive impact through the sharing of key knowledge, training and resources with the wider staff.

Principal Teachers of English have established a strong ethos of collaboration across the local authority. The English Subject Group is committed to using the programme of collaborative improvement visits as a catalyst to further share best practice in learning and teaching. There is collaborative practice and sharing of expertise within all departments. In all schools, most practitioners actively contributed to self-evaluation activity relating to their collaborative improvement visits. Practitioners continue to benefit from participating in local authority moderation events and are involved in departmental activities which are increasing overall confidence in making professional judgements about how well young people are learning and progressing. In all departments, benchmarks are used increasingly well to define standards that children and young people need to meet to achieve a level. This is supporting improved accuracy of S3 teacher judgements and beginning to demonstrate greater alignment with Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (ACEL) at Level 4, and attainment of National 4 and 5 English.

Adult learners report that improving their English language skills enables them to feel better equipped when applying for work and to understand the employment system in Scotland. Almost all learners reported using their increased literacy skills in other areas of life including supporting children with homework, communicating more confidently with their children's school, filling in work or volunteering-related forms and undertaking college course work.

## **Key Recommendations**

### **Pedagogy**

The Local Improvement Plan 2024-27 emphasises the need for an education system that motivates and inspires learners and nurtures a love for learning and learning behaviour for life. We want children and young people to have learned how to learn and have the capacity to continue to learn beyond school. High quality pedagogy from early years to senior phase is required, within a curriculum that is relevant, flexible and responsive.

Literacy and English are central to this ambition, therefore, to improve pedagogy in the teaching of literacy and English we need:



- A refreshed CLPL programme focusing on pedagogy, with a particular focus on the seven design principles of Curriculum for Excellence – challenge and enjoyment, breadth, coherence, personalisation and choice, relevance, progression and depth.
- To clarify the role of practitioners in all sectors when teaching reading, writing, talking and listening. This must include observation, responsive planning, approaches to assessment and facilitation of play and enquiry based approaches that support learning.
- Literacy rich environments that motivate and inspire learners and promote creativity, curiosity and problem solving whilst learning and applying transferable skills.
- ELC settings and schools to review and improve their literacy and English curriculum ensuring it is relevant, flexible and responsive and that all practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities in teaching literacy skills across the curriculum.
- To build the capacity of all practitioners across the sectors to understand and teach the fundamental aspects of learning to read across all levels, adapting established programmes for local contexts with a deepened understanding of what is important.

## Progress

It is vital that our curriculum and pedagogy is matched appropriately to the needs of our learners, ensuring all have the right weighting of challenge and support to enable them to make appropriate progress and flourish as individuals. We know that not all learners have the same opportunities, therefore equity is at the heart of our approach to attainment.

To support all children to make the best possible progress we need:

- To carefully consider our attainment data to identify and understand the gaps.
- To understand and address the barriers to attainment faced by particular groups of children and individuals e.g. Improving attendance, research-based approaches to supporting boys' literacy and English.
- School leaders who make effective use of qualitative and quantitative data related to attainment in literacy and English ensuring they know the stories and faces behind the data.
- To build the capacity and confidence of teachers to use data to inform learning, teaching and assessment.
- Teachers who have high expectations and ambition for all learners, who have a deep understanding of progression in literacy and English and use this to make robust and reliable judgements of learner's progress within and across levels.
- Clear guidance on the role of school leaders in supporting and challenging teachers to make accurate and robust judgements of learners' progress.
- To increase collaboration between schools to maximise the effective use of Pupil Equity Funding and promote opportunities to work together to plan, measure and track impact of interventions
- To reconsider the use of 'gradients of learning' to ensure that progression pathways are not limited and promote pace and challenge for all learners, including those who exceed the national standard.
- Teachers who meet the needs of all learners via effective differentiation, challenge and adaptive teaching which responds to their understanding of individual learners, rather than groups.

## Partnerships

The Education Department is an empowered, connected, self-improving education system focused on excellence through equity for all children and young people. We foster a supportive environment where all children, young people, parents and staff feel valued, encouraged and

equipped to take initiative and make meaningful contributions to school improvement. Collaboration within, across and beyond ELC settings, schools and services in our local authority is the synergy which will enable us to achieve our collective goals and aspirations for learners, parents, services, staff, partners and the school community.

To make the changes we want to see in Literacy and English we must work together in partnership. We need:

- A council wide approach to supporting literacy development in the early years.
- To collaborate with other agencies and services such as Speech & Language therapists, to support communication and language development.
- More opportunities for practitioners to look outwards and collaborate with others beyond their setting.
- A network of Literacy Leads in ELC and Primary sectors to enable coaching and modelling in their settings.
- A comprehensive professional learning programme which focuses on levels rather than sectors and promotes greater collaboration.

**Appendix 2**

**Draft Literacy and English Strategy  
2024-2027**

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

As the Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure, it is my pleasure to introduce the Education Department's refreshed strategy for Literacy and English 2024-2027.

Literacy and English skills are fundamental to individual success and societal development. The ability to read, write and communicate effectively in English is an essential life skill required to succeed and support our children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

The Education Department undertook a phased review of the previous Literacy Strategy – 2017-2020, to identify the progress and impact for our learners. This focused upon attainment and achievement, learners' experiences and the views of children, young people, adult learners, staff, parents and wider partners.

Despite the impact of the Covid-19 Global Pandemic, the review highlighted significant improvement in terms of literacy experiences and progress in our ELC settings, schools and Adult Learning Services, however it also identified key themes for improvement – Pedagogy, Progress and Partnerships.

The refreshed strategy is structured around these themes 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 literacy and English.

This strategy aims to empower children, young people, adult learners, staff and parents with the skills required to improve literacy and English for all in East Renfrewshire.

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

## **Introduction**

*“Literacy is much more than an educational priority – it is the ultimate investment in the future and the first step towards all the new forms of literacy required for the twenty-first century. We wish to see a century where every child is able to read and to use this skill to gain autonomy.”*

**Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director General**

## **A Definition of Literacy:**

*‘the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful.’* Literacy development starts at birth; therefore improvements cannot be confined to a particular sector or point in a learner’s journey. Parents are at the beginning of that journey, nurturing and promoting their children’s language acquisition and development. Early learning and childcare establishments and schools develop children and young people’s basic and advanced literacy skills and in adulthood the ongoing development of literacy skills helps to advance progress on to a sustainable destination.

The overarching aim of the strategy is therefore to raise standards of literacy and English for all from the early years to adulthood.

The strategy will build on existing good practice in East Renfrewshire and ensure that literacy and English will have a central and continuing focus in education and other related policies. The strategy is supported by a set of principles and is meant to provide strategic direction to our early years, school staff and Adult Learning Service. It recognises the need to work with parents and partners to improve literacy across East Renfrewshire’s population.

## Background and Context

The Education Department conducted a review of literacy using a Collaborative Improvement model to review the progress and impact of the 2017-2020 Literacy Strategy and reflect on the challenges created by the continued impact of the Covid-19 pandemic along with the cost of living crisis.

The review team identified significant progress in implementing the previous Literacy Strategy and highlighted key strengths including:

- very strong attainment across all sectors;
- articulate and enthusiastic learners;
- more confident use of data to target interventions and measure impact;
- high quality CLPL which has increased teacher confidence and competence; and
- developments in pedagogy.

The team also identified scope for further improvement which has informed the development of this refreshed strategy whilst taking account of ERC Strategic Equity Funding Plan 2022-26, the DYW Action Plan 2022-25, the Social Justice Strategy, ERC Learning and Teaching Framework and the National Improvement Framework.

The National Improvement Framework (NIF) sets out the vision and priorities for Scottish education. This strategy is closely aligned to the key priorities of the NIF:

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

The NIF sets out the national improvement activity that needs to be undertaken to help deliver those key priorities. This includes the National Response to Improving Literacy (NRIL) which will:

- update and improve the literacy curriculum in CfE, strengthening the role of knowledge and repositioning literacy at the centre of learning across all curricular areas
- implement improvement in children's classroom experiences through professional learning and support for educators with a focus on:
  - core skills, knowledge and experiences that children need to develop competence in the basic tools for literacy,
  - research-informed pedagogical approaches that support children and young people to develop creative and critical thinking within reading, writing and listening/talk,
  - supporting progression in literacy knowledge and skills for all, through improved approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

This strategy is aligned to the Education Department's vision and to the Local Improvement Plan 2024-27 which encourages all of us to focus rigorously on the quality of education we provide, and lead with both ambition and authenticity, to ensure that we improve outcomes for all.

The strategy sets out three main areas which are needed to ensure that our education system motivates and inspires learners and nurtures a love for learning and learning behaviour for life:

- pedagogy,
- progress, and;
- partnerships.

The strategy highlights the central importance of literacy in ensuring that our children and young people learn how to learn and have the capacity to continue to learn beyond school. High quality **pedagogy** from early years to senior phase is required, within a curriculum that is relevant, flexible and responsive.

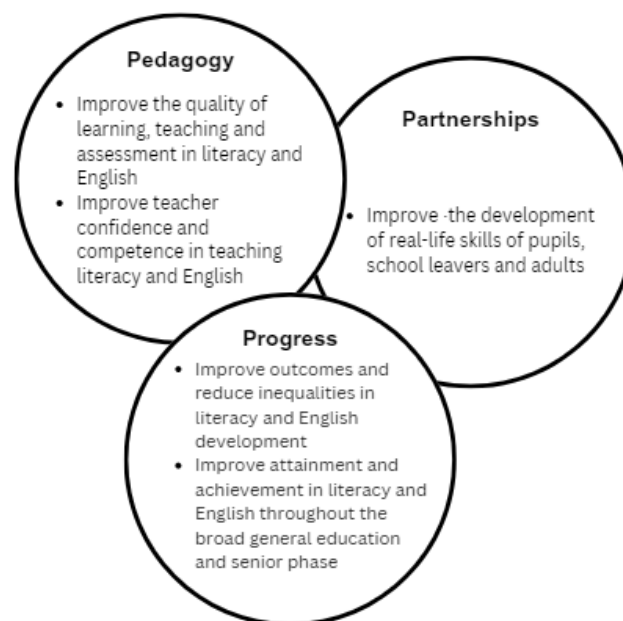
It is imperative that we work together to cultivate positive values and attitudes, igniting that joy and love of learning, which leads to curiosity, creativity and a commitment to lifelong education. Therefore, we must support all children and young people to **progress** in the literacy skills and knowledge needed for 21st century learning.

Collaboration is a key driving force as we strive to improve outcomes and experiences for all our learners. Strengthening **partnerships** within, across and beyond ELC settings, schools and services will enable us to achieve our collective goals and aspirations for learners, parents, services, staff, partners and the school community.

By focusing on pedagogy, progress and partnerships we have set out 5 key improvement aims:

To improve:

- the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in literacy and English
- outcomes and reduce inequalities in literacy and English development;
- attainment and achievement in literacy and English throughout the broad general education and senior phase;
- the development of real-life skills of pupils, school leavers and adults; and
- teacher confidence and competence in teaching literacy and English.





The following sections set out the actions that will be taken by the Education Department, schools and settings to deliver the key aims in literacy and English. The timeframe over which these actions will be taken forward is the three-year period 2024-27.

## Pedagogy

The Local Improvement Plan 2024-27 emphasises the need for an education system that motivates and inspires learners and nurtures a love for learning and learning behaviour for life. We want children and young people to have learned how to learn and have the capacity to continue to learn beyond school. High quality pedagogy from early years to the senior phase is required, within a curriculum that is relevant, flexible and responsive.

Literacy and English are central to this ambition. Therefore, to improve pedagogy in the teaching of literacy and English we will:

- Provide a refreshed CLPL programme focusing on pedagogy, with a particular focus on the seven design principles of Curriculum for Excellence – challenge and enjoyment, breadth, coherence, personalisation and choice, relevance, progression and depth.
- Clarify the role of practitioners in all sectors when teaching reading, writing, talking and listening. This must include observation, responsive planning, approaches to assessment and facilitation of play and enquiry based approaches that support learning.
- Support and challenge establishments to provide literacy rich environments that motivate and inspire learners and promote creativity, curiosity and problem solving whilst learning and applying transferable skills.
- Ensure ELC settings and schools review and improve their literacy and English curriculum ensuring it is relevant, flexible and responsive and that all practitioners understand their roles and responsibilities in teaching literacy skills across the curriculum.
- Build the capacity of all practitioners across the sectors to understand and teach the fundamental aspects of learning to read across all levels, adapting established programmes for local contexts with a deepened understanding of what is important.

## Progress

It is vital that our curriculum and pedagogy is matched appropriately to the needs of our children, young people and adult learners, ensuring all have the right weighting of challenge and support to enable them to make appropriate progress and flourish as individuals. We know that not all learners have the same opportunities, therefore equity is at the heart of our approach to attainment.

To support all learners to make the best possible progress we will:

- Carefully consider our attainment data to identify and understand the gaps at all stages from 3-18
- Understand and address the barriers to attainment faced by particular groups of children and individuals e.g. improving attendance, research-based approaches to supporting boys' literacy and English.
- Support and challenge leaders to make effective use of qualitative and quantitative data related to attainment in literacy and English ensuring they know the stories and faces behind the data.
- Build the capacity and confidence of teachers and practitioners to use data to inform learning, teaching and assessment.
- Encourage and challenge teachers and practitioners to have high expectations and ambition for all learners, have a deep understanding of progression in literacy and English and to use this, to make robust and reliable judgements of learners' progress within and across the levels of the Broad General Education (BGE), with a focus on attainment in S3.
- Provide clear guidance on the role of leaders in supporting and challenging teachers and practitioners to make accurate and robust judgements of learners' progress across the BGE.
- Increase collaboration between schools to maximise the effective use of Pupil Equity Funding and promote opportunities to work together to plan, measure and track impact of interventions.
- Reconsider and provide advice on the use of 'gradients of learning' in the BGE to ensure that progression pathways are not limited and promote pace and challenge for all learners, including those who exceed the national standard.
- Ensure teachers and practitioners meet the needs of all learners via effective differentiation, challenge and adaptive teaching which responds to their understanding of individual learners, rather than groups.
- Offer a range of learning opportunities for adult learners to gain skills for learning, life and work, including ESOL, adult literacy and digital skills programmes.

### **Partnerships**

The Education Department is an empowered, connected, self-improving education system focused on excellence through equity for all children and young people. We foster a supportive environment where all children, young people, parents and staff feel valued, encouraged and equipped to take initiative and make meaningful contributions to school improvement. Collaboration within, across and beyond ELC settings, schools and services in our local authority is the synergy which will enable us to achieve our collective goals and aspirations for learners, parents, services, staff, partners and the school community.

To make the changes we want to see in Literacy and English we must work together in partnership. We will:

- Provide a council wide approach to supporting literacy development in the early years.
- Collaborate with other agencies and services such as Speech & Language therapists, to support communication and language development.
- Encourage opportunities for practitioners to look outwards and collaborate with others beyond their setting.
- Develop a network of Literacy Leads in ELC and Primary sectors to enable coaching and modelling in their settings.
- Provide a comprehensive professional learning programme which focuses on levels rather than sectors and promotes greater collaboration.
- Maintain and extend partnerships between adult learning services and colleges to increase the opportunities of residents to access accredited courses within the local community.

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

Strategy Focus	Expected outcome/impact
Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhanced professional practices in teaching reading, writing and talking and listening in English and across the curriculum</li> <li>• increased practitioner confidence in teaching reading, writing and talking and listening in English and across the curriculum</li> <li>• improved curriculum pathways and learning experiences for all children and young people</li> <li>• increased % of staff responding positively in authority questionnaires to 'staff have a shared understanding of their 'responsibility of all' in literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing'</li> </ul>
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased attainment in literacy and English of children and young people, specifically in:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Literacy in the broad general education,</li> <li>- National examinations in the senior phase including English and ESOL</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A reduction in the attainment equity gap in relation to gender, language acquisition, additional support needs, poverty and care experienced children and young people.</li> <li>• Increased % of adult learners working towards a literacy goal.</li> <li>• Increased % of Adult Learners achieving their literacy goals.</li> </ul>
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased % of children achieving developmental milestones related to literacy</li> <li>• increased % of teachers/support staff responding positively in authority questionnaires - 'I am given the opportunity/encouraged to learn and share practice with colleagues from other schools/settings.'</li> <li>• Increased number of staff reporting that engagement in literacy and English CLPL has impacted positively on practice</li> <li>• Increased % of adult learners achieving SQA accreditation for their literacy learning.</li> </ul>

## Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators	2022-23 value	2023-24 Value	ERC Targets 2022-26
% of pupils (P1,P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in literacy (R,W,T&L)	88%	89%	89.3%* (2023-24 Stretch Aim Target)
% of pupils (P1,P4 and P7 combined) from SIMD Q1 achieving expected levels or better in literacy (R,W,T&L)	64%	72%	71.6%* (2023-24 Stretch Aim Target)
% of S3 pupils achieving fourth level in literacy (R,W,T&L)	80%	83%	*N/A
% of S3 pupils from SIMD Q1 achieving fourth level in literacy (R,W,T&L)	67%	82%	*N/A
Proportion of school leavers attaining literacy at SCQF level 5	95%	Available mid-Sep	94%* ERC target is for leavers attaining literacy at SCQF level 5 or better.
Proportion of school leavers attaining literacy at SCQF level 6	81%	Available mid-Sep	94%* ERC target is for leavers attaining literacy at SCQF level 5 or better
Increase the % of adult learners working achieving literacy goals	95%	98%	*N/A
Increase the % of adult learners achieving SQA accreditation for their literacy learning	19% (3yr average)	17%	*N/A
increase % of children achieving developmental milestones related to literacy	92%	92%	*N/A
increase % of teachers/support staff responding positively in authority questionnaires - 'I am given the opportunity/ encouraged to learn and share practice with colleagues from other schools/settings.'	84% - teachers 53% - support staff	84% teachers 53% Support Staff	*N/A
increased % of teachers responding positively in authority questionnaires to 'staff have a shared understanding of their 'responsibility of all' in literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing'	92%	92%	N/A

increase the number of staff reporting that engagement in literacy and English CLPL has impacted positively on practice	baseline to be established	baseline to be established	N/A
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Targets are aligned to the authority targets and stretch aims.

\*no authority targets in place, internal targets will be set and progress measured and reported on.

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE22 August 2024Report by Director of EducationSTANDARD CIRCULAR 57: CHILD PROTECTION**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Education Committee approval of the revised Standard Circular 57 Child Protection (Appendix 1) which provides guidance on child protection in East Renfrewshire Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings and schools.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. Education Committee is asked to:
- a. Approve and comment on the revised Standard Circular 57 Child Protection.
  - b. Ask the Director of Education to take appropriate steps to ensure its implementation in all schools and early learning and childcare settings.

**BACKGROUND**

3. The Scottish Government published revised guidelines on [Child Protection Guidance](#) in 2023 to reflect the changed and changing landscape in this field and provide a framework for local authorities and other agencies to protect all children. The updated national guidance describes the responsibilities and expectations for all involved in protecting children and supports the care and protection of children.

4. Revised Standard Circular 57 reflects the requirements of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021 – updated 2023). The circular also takes into account East Renfrewshire Council's Child Protection Guidance, the update of which is in the process of being finalised and current legislation such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, which has directly incorporated the UNCRC into domestic law.

5. The UNCRC consists of 54 articles including the right to life, survival and development; the right to protection from violence, abuse or neglect; the right to an education that enables children to fulfil their potential; the right to be raised by, or have a relationship with, their parents and the right to express their opinions and be listened to.

6. Scotland's Promise to children and young people is that they will grow up loved, safe and respected. The Promise is built on 5 foundations; voice, care, family, people and scaffolding. Children's rights and The Promise are central to Standard Circular 57 as children and young people must be heard in decision making that affects them and they feel safe when the relationships which they need are recognised, supported and sustained.

## REPORT

7. As mentioned in Paragraph 4, this Standard Circular has been updated following the update of National Guidance. Whilst much of the Standard Circular remains the same, changes that have been made include:

- Reference to updated GIRFEC Refresh materials
- Importance of child's voice
- Links are made to whole family wellbeing
- Focus on strengths based language
- Children's rights embedded
- Language of Keeping the Promise

8. The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021 – updated 2023) highlights that children and young people can be abused in a number of different ways and provides definitions of abuse against the following non-exhaustive areas of concern:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Criminal exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage

9. The draft Standard Circular sets out guidance for staff working in educational settings and advises staff on key areas including definitions of child abuse, roles and responsibilities, referral and recording procedures, safeguarding, children missing from education, information sharing, partnership working, professional learning and monitoring procedures.

10. The updated Standard Circular will be shared with all Head Teachers and Child Protection Co-ordinators. In addition to this, a professional learning presentation has been developed to accompany this Standard Circular. This presentation will be delivered in every setting and school to all members of staff to ensure everyone has a shared understanding of the updated guidance. Further professional learning opportunities will be developed in partnership with the ERC Child Protection Committee.

## FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

11. There are no financial implications for the department or schools related to this paper.

## CONSULTATION

12. East Renfrewshire's Child Protection Lead Officer has been consulted on the contents of this revised Standard Circular.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

13. An Equality, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment has been undertaken to support the update of this Standard Circular.

## CONCLUSION

14. The revised Standard Circular 57 Child Protection in East Renfrewshire ELC settings and schools seeks to update practice in protecting and safeguarding children and young people through linking current research and policy such as the The Promise, Getting it Right for Every Child and UNCRC in order to support all education establishments.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

15. Education Committee is asked to:
- a) Approve and comment on Revised Standard Circular 57 Child Protection.
  - b) Ask the Director of Education to take appropriate steps to ensure its implementation in all schools and early learning and childcare settings.

Mark Ratter  
Director of Education  
22 August 2024

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Appendix 1: Standard Circular 57 Child Protection in East Renfrewshire Settings and Schools

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REVISED STANDARD  
CIRCULAR 57  
June 2024

**EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**

**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

The Council Office  
211 Main Street  
Barrhead  
East Renfrewshire  
G78 1SY

TO HEADS OF ALL EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Dear Colleague

**REVISED STANDARD CIRCULAR 57 CHILD PROTECTION**

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Definitions
3. Role and Responsibilities of Education Staff within Educational Establishments
4. Referral and Recording Procedures
5. Safeguarding
6. Children Missing From Education
7. Confidentiality and Information Sharing
8. Communication with parents and members of the community
9. Engagement with partner providers and visitors to settings
10. Career Long Professional Learning
11. Equal Opportunities
12. Monitoring Procedures
13. Prevent

- Appendix 1    Definitions of Abuse  
Appendix 2    Useful Contact Numbers  
Appendix 3    Children's Charter  
Appendix 4    Key Legislation Links

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Revised Standard Circular 57 provides guidelines for all staff in East Renfrewshire's education establishments to ensure that all children and young people are protected and that their needs are being met.
- 1.2 Revised Standard Circular 57 reflects the requirements of the *National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021 – updated 2023)*. The circular also takes into account current legislation which is listed in appendix 4 of this document.
- 1.3 The UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 places children's rights at the heart of what we do. East Renfrewshire Council Education Department is committed to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and its implementation in education establishments through, for example, the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award. UNCRC underpins the Getting it Right for Every Child approach. The child's best interests, right to non-discrimination, and appropriate involvement in decision-making are key requirements.
- 1.4 *The National Framework for Standards - Protecting Children and Young People, Scottish Executive (2004)* is the means by which the Charter for Children is delivered in all education establishments. These standards apply to all professionals working with children. Connections between safety and rights are further illustrated in *The Promise* as children must be heard in decision-making that affects them. Children feel safe when the relationships which they need are recognised, supported and sustained.
- 1.5 All staff within education settings have a duty of care to make sure all children and young people are safe from abuse, neglect and exploitation. This includes all staff within a school or centre; supply teachers, all support staff, technicians, janitorial, catering and cleaning staff who have regular contact with children. Day to day professional experience of, and relationships with children, is a fundamental protective factor. As such, all staff must be aware of and must follow, Child Protection procedures.
- 1.6 In fulfilling this duty, close partnership working is essential, with parents and carers and relevant agencies - primarily Social Work, Police, Health Services and the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration (SCRA). It is the sharing of information, collective thinking and collaborative action that enables decisions to be made in the best interests of children.
- 1.7 Standard Circular 57 details the procedures and actions to be taken when there are concerns relating to the care and welfare of a child or children and/or the potential risk to their wellbeing. Head Teachers should ensure these procedures are adhered to and followed meticulously at all times unless to do so will place the child at higher risk. In such a circumstance, advice must be sought from East Renfrewshire Council Legal Services and the Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity).
- 1.8 Revised Standard Circular 57 must be brought to the attention of all staff on an annual basis.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 For the purpose of this Revised Standard Circular a 'child' is understood to be a young

person under the age of 18 years and still at school. Young people who have left school and are aged 16 – 18 will be covered by adult protection procedures unless their needs are assessed to lie within child protection. There may be instances in which the adult protection legislation offers greater protection to children and young people. Social Work will determine this on assessment of the referral.

2.2 The *National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021 – updated 2023)* highlights that children and young people can be abused in a number of different ways and provides definitions of abuse against the following non-exhaustive areas of concern (see *Appendix 1*):

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Criminal exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced marriage

2.3 The guidance also illustrates a range of possible indicators of risk which can be used in the recording process to categorise the key elements of concern.

“Safeguarding” is a term which is broader than ‘child protection’ and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and incorporates protecting children from abuse and maltreatment, preventing impairment of children’s health and development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### **3. Role and Responsibilities of Education Staff within Educational Establishments**

3.1 All settings should designate a member of the Senior Leadership Team, normally the Head Teacher, as Child Protection Coordinator. The Child Protection Coordinator must:

- Be the main contact for child protection referrals from staff and ensure the procedures in this circular are followed;
- Ensure all staff are informed about child protection through annual in-house child protection training and access to the child protection training calendar;
- Engage in appropriate professional learning, including Signs of Safety, and other relevant training specific to their role;
- Ensure general information on pupil support and child protection is readily available to parents, staff and pupils;
- Liaise with other agencies to support investigations, court proceedings, child supervision requirements and case referrals and attend all related meetings as appropriate;
- Ensure meticulous record keeping of all information, related to child welfare and protection using a chronology of significant events, with relevant documentation;
- Ensure child protection files are securely stored, with clear protocols for sharing of the information.

- 3.2 The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate procedures are followed in the event of concerns regarding a child's welfare or evidence of the risk of immediate danger to them.
- 3.3 The setting has a key role to play in early intervention and prevention and must utilise the wide range of available professional expertise to support children and their families. The Joint Support Team (JST) has a key role to play in this as a forum for agencies to share information and plan for cohesive and appropriate intervention.
- 3.4 Settings should fully utilise the refreshed GIRFEC framework (Education) to identify, assess and plan to meet the needs of children and young people.
- 3.5 All staff must:
- Ensure they are fully conversant with Revised Standard Circular 57;
  - Contribute to a proactive ethos, which seeks to minimise the risk of harm;
  - Share information on an inter-agency basis which is of benefit to a child's wellbeing;
  - Focus on preventative, early intervention strategies;
  - Respond effectively and promptly to any concerns, especially of imminent risk to a child;
  - Contribute to the assessment of a child's needs and necessary support;
  - Contribute to assessment and recording of all child welfare and child protection concerns, using a chronology of significant events and related documentation.
- 3.6 Settings should review and update their policies annually by involving staff, pupils and parents in discussion and development. This helps to ensure the relevance of policies and gives priority to the rights, safety and wellbeing of children and young people including helping them develop in their ability to keep themselves and others safe and how to access support if they need it.
- 3.7 All settings should operate within a good practice framework for pupil support which reflects the vision, values and principles of East Renfrewshire Council Education Department as set out in key policy documentation.
- 3.8 Education staff have a key role in monitoring and supporting children, particularly in the case of any child who is on the Child Protection Register. Staff may have a range of concerns about a child which do not necessitate a child protection referral; such a child may be referred to the Joint Support Team. Where a child is in need of support, a Single Agency Wellbeing Plan may be sufficient to plan to meet the child's needs.
- 3.9 The setting should record concerns, or significant events using the chronology which is available on the Education GLOW, Staff Only section:
- [Significant Events Chronology.doc \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- 3.10 Some children may require more intensive support and settings should be proactive in utilising their own resources, including multi-agency and Education staff, and in calling planning meetings in line with GIRFEC framework advice. Where there is a need for a more comprehensive assessment and inter-agency support is required further assessment should be actioned.
- 3.11 Learners and families with English as an additional language should be given support



through the provision of appropriate and available Departmental resources.

- 3.12 In line with the Signs of Safety framework, Education staff are required to attend all relevant Child Protection planning meetings and provide a written report of their assessment of the child's needs and/or progress made in implementing a previous Child Protection Plan or Wellbeing Plan. The appropriate Child Protection planning meeting report should be completed prior to attending. These are contained on the Education Intranet, Staff Only Site.
- 3.13 Information on the establishment's child protection policy and procedures for making a referral should be contained in handbooks and available on websites. Posters identifying key members of staff in relation to Child Protection should be displayed in reception areas. All visitors to the building should routinely be issued with identification (Refer to Section 10).

#### **4. Referral and Recording Procedures**

- 4.1 Education staff are in a unique position because of their daily contact with children. They will often be the first person with whom a child shares their concerns, or who notices a change in the child's behaviour. Staff also work hard to maintain positive relationships with parents and carers. In the event of a disclosure or of concern staff should be aware that they do not have the authority to investigate these concerns which must be reported to Social Work and/or the Police. Where there are concerns about significant risk or safety in the home setting, Head Teachers should make a direct referral without reference to the parent/carer.
- 4.2 Children and young people have a right to be listened to and their voice heard. A child or young person may seek out a trusted member of staff to tell them about a worry or concern. In such situations, the member of staff should:
- Be supportive and assure them you will only share this information with those people who need to know in order to prevent any further harm;
  - Take time to listen to what the child is saying, without asking too many questions;
  - Reassure the child that they were right to tell you;
  - Record in the child's own words what was said; and,
  - Sign and date these notes.
- 4.3 The investigation of referred concerns is the responsibility of Police Scotland and Social Work personnel and is carried out by specially trained staff following structured procedures. This process can be hindered by attempts to gather evidence at an earlier stage.
- 4.4 The information should immediately be passed on to the Head Teacher and the Child Protection Coordinator. If the Head Teacher or Child Protection Coordinator is unsure if the concerns warrant child protection action, they may seek advice from the Request for Assistance Team on what course of action, if any, should be taken.
- 4.5 If the Head Teacher considers that a child may have been abused or is at risk of abuse, a Child Protection Referral should be made, by telephoning the Social Work Request for Assistance Team.
- 4.6 Where a child is felt to be in immediate danger, Police should be contacted.

- 4.7 If the child or their family has English as an additional language, support should be provided through appropriate and available Departmental resources.
- 4.8 A list of Social Work and Police telephone numbers is contained in Appendix 3.
- 4.9 A Child Protection Referral Form is available on the Education, Staff Only Intranet.

[Child Protection Referral Form.doc \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

It should be completed and a copy sent that day to:

- Social Work Request for Assistance Team or relevant Social Work Office (if not ERC)
  - Lead Officer (Child Protection)
  - Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity)
  - Principal Educational Psychologist, if the child has additional support needs. The School Nurse or in Early Years settings the Health Visitor
- 4.10 A copy of the Referral Form should be kept in the child's file and details of referral added to their chronology.
- 4.11 The Head Teacher may also send a copy of the Referral to the Reporter, where there are significant enough concerns to prompt the consideration of compulsory measures of care.
- 4.12 Social Work will determine the action to be taken following a formal referral and confirm their decision and action taken to the Head Teacher.
- 4.13 In line with Health Board procedures, the School Nurse or Health Visitor will monitor all Child Protection Referrals received and carry out further action as required.
- 4.14 On occasions Police and Social Work will require to carry out a Joint Investigative Interview (JII). The purpose of a JII is to gather forensic evidence and hear in the children's words their views on the presenting issues. In such circumstances this will be done by Police and Social Work staff trained in the Scottish Child interview Model (SCIM) in specialist designated buildings. In exceptional circumstances there is flexibility to bring the visual recording system to an agreed destination, for example, the school building, if in collaboration with the young person it was agreed that this was in their best interest. East Renfrewshire Council alongside Police and the Scottish Criminal Justice Courts have adopted the Bairns Hoose model that is underpinned by trauma informed and trauma recovery practice for children. Currently, this is running in parallel with the SCIM model with the expectation it will replace it in the coming years.
- 4.15 Where there is any concern related to the conduct of a member of staff, immediate contact must be made with the Head Teacher.
- 4.16 Where a member of staff has concerns related to the conduct of the Head Teacher, immediate contact should be made with the Education Senior Manager (Developing People).

## **5. Safeguarding**

- 5.1. The care and protection of children and young people is central to the work of staff in all establishments and fundamental to creating an environment for learning. As such, all staff in settings have a crucial role in identifying and responding to the needs of children.
- 5.2. Within East Renfrewshire, establishments have a number of early intervention strategies in place for identifying vulnerable children and those in need of additional support. The Education Consultancy Group and Education Resource Group consider the need for additional educational resources. The Early Years Intervention Group provides support and allocates places for vulnerable children in early years.
- 5.3. All educational establishments operate within the GIRFEC framework (Education).
- 5.4. In line with *Getting it Right for Every Child* all children with additional support needs, as defined in the broadest sense, should have an individualised plan in place.
- 5.5. Education staff will:
  - Contribute to the planning process by providing assessment information and identifying needs;
  - Provide resources to implement the plan;
  - Co-operate with multi-agency monitoring and review procedures as relevant to their areas of responsibility;
  - Continue to monitor the child's wellbeing in the context of regular pastoral care procedures; and,
  - Involve Psychological Services in the subsequent care plan, where appropriate.
- 5.6. The use of preventative approaches and early identification of need can help avoid child protection action at a later stage

## 6. Children Missing From Education

- 6.1. Standard Circular 5 details policy and procedures related to Attendance at School. Head Teachers and staff should implement these procedures rigorously.
- 6.2. Procedures to be followed when children are missing from education are contained in Revised Standard Circular 57(a). These relate to children who attend early years establishments, primary and secondary schools. Staff should work in line with [Children Missing from Education Service Guidance](#) (2022), which contains resources and Children Missing from Education contacts. The Children Missing from Education (Scotland) Service provides guidance and advice on good practice concerning cases of children missing from education, and checks the national Management Information System (SEEMiS) to see if the child has enrolled at another publicly funded school in Scotland.
- 6.3. Although attendance at early years settings is not compulsory, procedures in Revised Standard Circular 57(b) should be followed when a child fails to attend or is missing from education, within a nursery or family centre.

## 7. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- 7.1. It is critical that education staff are clear that wherever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child or young person may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, they should share, seek advice and where necessary refer concerns to Social Work or Police. The child's interests must be the overriding consideration in making such decisions.
- 7.2. All children and young people have a right to be listened to and to have matters treated in confidence. Involving children and young people and upholding their rights has always been good practice and builds trust with children, young people and their families, however it is now law following UNCRC legislation. Where there is no risk to a child's wellbeing, education staff should respect their right to confidentiality.
- 7.3. Where possible, consent to share information should be sought from the child and their parent or carer, the exception to this is where there is potential of harm to the child or young person or where the child or young person has already been identified as being at risk through child protection procedures. In such circumstances then the need for consent is overridden and information should be shared with appropriate agencies.
- 7.4. For the purposes of the Data Protection Act a person over 16 has the capacity to consent. A child under 16 has that capacity if the child has a general understanding of what is involved. In the absence of any indication to the contrary children aged 12 or over are generally expected to be old enough and to have that understanding to give their consent. However the understanding or capacity of the child needs to be considered individually. In most cases, where a child is unable to consent, then a person with parental responsibilities and parental rights, such as a parent, guardian or carer, should be asked to give consent on behalf of the child unless this places the child or others at greater risk.
- 7.5. Children and young people should be advised that there are no guarantees to confidentiality, where the Child Protection Co-ordinator/ Head Teacher assesses them to be at risk.
- 7.6. In line with the commitments of [The Promise](#) children and young people who are looked after or looked after away from home by the local authority have the same rights to confidentiality with the same caveats in respect of assessed risk.
- 7.7. While it is essential that there is information brought to the attention of the Child Protection Coordinator from a wide range of sources, education establishments should have a protocol for sharing information. This should include which staff are informed of investigations or action concerning a child or young person. However, it is appropriate to ensure all staff are aware when a child may need extra care and support, without necessarily being provided with full details of why this is required.
- 7.8. Staff in support roles, particularly those with contact with parents within the setting or in the family home, must be informed of any investigation or action planning following child protection concerns. They may need this to ensure their own safety.
- 7.9. Other staff may require more limited information to help them deal sensitively with children and young people in different situations e.g. changing for physical education, lateness.
- 7.10. It is appropriate that any member of staff who first reports concerns is helped to feel that they were right to share concerns and are assured that appropriate responses will be made by the Child Protection Co-ordinator and/or Head Teacher.

- 7.11. Settings should have an effective, secure system for storing information related to children and young people. This should ensure that the needs of the child or young person are met, by ensuring effective recording and sharing of information and a clear protocol for accessing confidential information related to a child or young person.

## **8. Communication with parents/carers and members of the community**

- 8.1. General information should be available to all parents, carers and members of the community through the handbook, website and leaflets. This information should:
- Provide parents/carers, children and young people with a named contact and how to get in touch if they have concerns about safety and wellbeing of children;
  - Tell parents, children and young people how the setting responds to concerns or allegations;
  - Inform parents, children and young people of the setting's complaints procedure;
  - Describe the confidentiality policy;
  - Describe how the setting ensures staff are suitable to work with children and young people;
  - Describe the setting's general measures for keeping children and young people safe and well; and,
  - Explain the learning opportunities for children and young people to keep themselves safe and well.
- 8.2. There should be specific information for parents if action is required when there are concerns. This should:
- Explain the setting's responsibilities in jargon-free language;
  - Provide named contacts for further information, in the setting and local authority;
  - Give details of organisations that can help parents, such as translating services, advocacy or support;
  - Explain the setting's policy on recording action in response to concerns; and,
  - Ensure clear communication between staff when a family is the focus of concerns, to decide on an appropriate communication strategy.

## **9. Engagement with partner providers and visitors to educational establishments**

- 9.1. It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure that any organisation or service engaged directly by settings and external to the Education Department:
- Is fully briefed on Revised Standard Circular 57; and,
  - Has clear procedures and training in place to ensure the care and safety of children with whom they are working.
- 9.2. All parents, visitors to settings who have regular and sustained contact with children or who are required to supervise children must undergo an enhanced PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) check.
- 9.3. The Education Department will ensure that all authority engaged providers, including FE colleges and ELC funded providers will be provided with a copy of Revised Standard Circular 57 and appropriate training offered.

## **10. Career Long Professional Learning**

- 10.1. At the start of each new session, the Child Protection Coordinator should ensure that all staff are fully briefed on Revised Standard Circular No. 57, with a minimum of an annual review of policy and practice to ensure compliance with the Standard Circular.
- 10.2. Training materials are available on the Education GLOW: Staff only site.
- 10.3. All staff should sign the training log annually to acknowledge they have received training on child protection procedures. The Child Protection Coordinator should ensure the Child Protection Training Log is signed and completed for each member of staff and a copy submitted to the Quality Improvement Manager (Child Protection) in September each year.
- 10.4. The Quality Improvement Manager (Child Protection) has a specific responsibility to coordinate and monitor child protection training, within the Education Department and all settings, and liaises with the Council's Child Protection Lead Officer.
- 10.5. There are three levels of central inter-agency training; an annual programme is issued and can be accessed using the CPD Manager or by contacting the Quality Improvement Manager (Child Protection). The Child Protection Coordinator should ensure that key staff undertake CLPL at the appropriate level depending on their role.
- 10.6. The Child Protection Coordinator should ensure all visiting staff and students within the setting are briefed on child protection procedures as part of their induction procedures.
- 10.7. Child Protection Coordinators receive additional training through the Council's Child Protection training programme and seminars on relevant issues and from regular meetings and communication with the Quality Improvement Manager (Child Protection).
- 10.8. Head Teachers will be routinely advised of any developments.

## **11. Equal Opportunities**

- 11.1. The Head Teacher / the Child Protection Coordinator should ensure that the setting's Child Protection Policy and Procedures is compliant with the legal requirements of the Equality Act (2010).
- 11.2. This may involve ensuring that children and parents who require it have access to translation and interpreting services, sign language, etc. through the Education Department or Council's support services.

## **12. Monitoring Procedures**

- 12.1. The Head Teacher and the Child Protection Coordinator should regularly carry out self- evaluation of the setting's child protection procedures, using the appropriate nationally produced quality indicators.
- 12.2. This should include gathering evidence on the effectiveness of the setting's support

system from children, staff and parents. Any areas for improvement should be included in the setting's planning structures and if they involve another agency, communicated to the Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) or the Quality Improvement Manager (Child Protection).

- 12.3. The Education Department, through its quality assurance procedures, has a key role through Collaborative Improvement Visits to review and monitor the delivery of policy and general adherence to Revised Standard Circular No. 57.
- 12.4. The Quality Improvement Manager (Child Protection) will continue to work with Child Protection Co-ordinators to monitor child protection files in a sample of settings on an annual basis to ensure consistency with the Case File Management guidance available. The Quality Improvement Manager will oversee the process to ensure that all settings are involved at least every two years, however, settings will be encouraged to review on an annual basis. Where appropriate, consideration may be given to Support and Protection review activity.
- 12.5. The Education Department collates and monitors responses to questionnaires issued to staff, pupils and parents as part of a review or inspection of a school or centre and will discuss the responses to such with individual Head Teachers as part of the review process. Annual analysis of such will be discussed at Head Teacher forums on an annual basis.
- 12.6. The Director of Education has a strategic overview of the Child Protection Policy within the Education Department and attends the Chief Officer Public Protection meetings. The Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) has strategic and operational responsibility and is a member of the Child Protection Committee, which is a multi-agency group, with overall responsibility for Child Protection within East Renfrewshire Council.

### 13. Prevent

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Act) [Revised Prevent duty guidance: for Scotland \(2015\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) places a duty on local authorities to have, in the exercise of their functions, "*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*". Where schools have any such concerns they should seek initial advice from the Community Safety Manager, East Renfrewshire Council. In the event of a heightened or immediate concern the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.

## **Appendix 1- Definitions**

### **What is Child Protection?**

Child protection refers to the processes involved in gathering and assessing and planning what action may be necessary where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of harm. Child protection procedures should be initiated when police, social work or health professionals determine that a child may have been abused or may be at risk of significant harm.

*All agencies have a responsibility to recognise and actively consider potential risks to a child, irrespective of whether the child is the main focus of their involvement...Effective partnerships between organisations, professional bodies and the public are more likely if key roles and responsibilities are well defined and understood.*

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021 – updated 2023)

### **What is child abuse and child neglect?**

*Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Abuse or neglect may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be maltreated at home; within a family or peer network; in care placements; institutions or community settings; and in the online and digital environment.*

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021 – updated 2023)

While it is not necessary to identify a specific category of abuse when adding a child's name to the Child Protection Register it is still helpful to consider and understand the different ways in which children can be abused. The following definitions show some of the ways in which abuse may be experienced by a child but are not exhaustive, as the individual circumstances of abuse will vary from child to child.

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after.

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. 'Persistent' means there is a continuous or intermittent pattern which has caused, or is likely to cause, significant harm. Emotional abuse is present to some extent in all types of ill treatment of a child, but it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse.

#### **Child Sexual abuse (CSA)**

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is an act that involves a child in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. A child under age 16 cannot consent to sexual activity at all, so it cannot be claimed that the child consented or assented to such activity. Generally, the position for children aged 16/17 will depend on whether there is consent or a reasonable belief of consent. Some sexual offences, such as sexual abuse of trust (section 42 of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009) apply up to age 18 irrespective of consent. The offences of taking or possession of indecent photographs of children (sections 52 and 52A of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982) apply up to age 18, with certain defences related to those in established relationships where the child is reasonably believed to be 16 or over

#### **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

Child Sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a person under 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact. It can also occur through the use of technology.



**Criminal exploitation**

Criminal exploitation refers to the action of an individual or group using an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator. Violence or the threat of violence may feature. The victim may have been criminally exploited, even if the activity appears consensual.

**Child trafficking**

Child trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt, exchange or transfer of control of a child under the age of 18 years for the purposes of exploitation. Transfer or movement can be within an area and does not have to be across borders. Examples of and reasons for trafficking can include sexual, criminal and financial exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs, illegal adoption, and forced or illegal marriage.

**Neglect**

Neglect consists in persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. There can also be single instances of neglectful behaviour that cause significant harm. Neglect can arise in the context of systemic stresses such as poverty and is an indicator of both support and protection needs.

**Faltering growth**

Faltering growth refers to an inability to reach normal weight and growth or development milestones in the absence of medically discernible physical and genetic reasons. This condition requires further assessment and may be associated with chronic neglect. Malnutrition, lack of nurturing and lack of stimulation can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. For very young children the impact could quickly become life-threatening. Chronic physical and emotional neglect may also have a significant impact on teenagers.

**Female genital mutilation**

Female genital mutilation is an extreme form of physical, sexual and emotional assault upon girls and women involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Such procedures are usually conducted on children and are a criminal offence in Scotland. FGM can be fatal and is associated with long-term physical and emotional harm.

**Forced marriage**

Forced marriage refers to a marriage conducted without the full and free consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional abuse. Forced marriage is both a child protection and adult protection matter. Child protection processes will be considered up to the age of 18. Forced marriage may be a risk alongside other forms of so called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA). HBA includes practices used to control behaviour within families, communities, or other social groups, to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or 'honour'.

## What is harm and significant harm in a child protection context?

Child protection is closely linked to the risk of 'significant harm'. 'Significant harm' is a complex matter and subject to professional judgement based on a multi-agency assessment of the circumstances of the child and their family. Where there are concerns about harm, abuse or neglect, these must be shared with the relevant agencies so that they can decide together whether the harm is, or is likely to be, significant. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, introduces a legal duty for a wide range of public bodies and those commissioned or contracted to them to share such concerns. Through early and effective intervention and the sharing of wellbeing concerns it is hoped that crisis can be avoided in many cases.

Significant harm can result from a specific incident, a series of incidents or an accumulation of concerns over a period of time. It is essential that when considering the presence or likelihood of significant harm that the impact (or potential impact) on the child takes priority and not simply the suspected or reported abusive behaviour. It should be remembered that the threshold for referral to the Children's Reporter is not the significant harm threshold, but when it is considered that a child is in the need of protection, guidance, treatment or control and Compulsory Measures of Supervision might be necessary.

Protecting children involves preventing harm and/or the risk of harm from abuse or neglect. Child protection assessments are triggered when the impact of harm is deemed to be significant.

In assessing whether harm is or may become 'significant', it will be relevant to consider:

- the child's experience, needs and feelings as far as they are known
- the nature, degree and extent of physical or emotional harm
- the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect
- overall parenting capacity
- the apparent or anticipated impact given the child's age and stage of development
- extent of any premeditation
- the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism and any other factors that may increase risk to do with child, family or wider context
- what current protective factors are in place to reduce risk of harm

Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm – for example a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often, significant harm results from an accumulation of significant events, both acute and long-standing such as neglect that affects the child's physical and psychological development.

Significant harm is a matter for **professional judgement** and requires practitioners to make a decision about a child's needs, the capacity of parents or carers to meet those needs, and the likelihood of harm, significant or otherwise. In understanding risk it is important that the wishes, feelings and reactions of the child inform the assessment of need and risk.

**Appendix 2 – Useful Contact Numbers**

**Education**

Head of Education Services 0141 577 3481  
(Equality and Equity)

**Social Work**

Request for Assistance Team 0141 577 8300

Out of hours: Standby Social Work 0300 343 1505

Police Scotland – ask for the Public Protection Unit 101  
Barrhead Police Station 0141 532 6200  
Giffnock Police Station 0141 532 5700

Children’s Reporter (East Renfrewshire team) 0131 244 8201

Childline 0800 1111

ERC Child protection website: <http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/ercpc>

**Appendix 3 – Children’s Charter**

**Figure 1:** Expectations from children who may be involved in child protection processes.



## **Appendix 4 – Useful links**

### **Supporting documents and resources**

[National Practice Model - Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2021/06/16/National_Practice_Model_-_Getting_it_right_for_every_child_(GIRFEC).pdf)

[Supporting documents - National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 - updated 2023 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2023/06/16/Supporting_documents_-_National_Guidance_for_Child_Protection_in_Scotland_2021_-_updated_2023_-_gov.scot.pdf)

[Safeguarding: Domestic abuse information for educators | Resources | Education Scotland](#)

[Safeguarding - Child Sexual Exploitation \(CSE\) | Resources | Education Scotland](#)

[Safeguarding - Female genital mutilation \(FGM\) | Resources | Education Scotland](#)

[Prevent duty guidance | Resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

[Prevent radicalisation and extremism | Resources | Education Scotland](#)

[Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

[The Promise](#)

### **Legislation**

UNCRC

United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child (incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024

Legislation defining certain offences against children

- [Children and Young Persons \(Scotland\) Act 1937, section 12](#)
- [Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)
- [Female Genital Mutilation \(Protection and Guidance\) \(Scotland\) Act 2020](#)
- [Sexual Offences \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)
- [The Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)
- [Human Trafficking and Exploitation \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#)
- [Civic Government \(Scotland\) Act 1982](#)
- [Children \(Equal Protection from Assault\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#)

Legislation on managing adults who may pose a risk to children

- [Criminal Justice and Licensing \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#)
- [Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)

- [Domestic Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#)
- [Protection from Abuse \(Scotland\) Act 2001](#)
- [Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#)

Legislation on criminal proceedings and witness supports

- [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#)
- [Victims and Witnesses \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
- [Age of Criminal Responsibility \(Scotland\) Act 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Forensic Medical Services \(Victims of Sexual Offences\) \(Scotland\) Act 2021](#)

Additional legislation

- [Children \(Scotland\) Act 2020](#)
- [Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#)
- [Children's Hearings \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)
- [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
- [Disclosure \(Scotland\) Act 2020](#)
- [Mental Health \(Care and Treatment\) \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#)
- [Anti-social Behaviour \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#)
- [Adult Support and Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
- [Adoption and Children \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Forced Marriage etc. \(Protection and Jurisdiction\) \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)/Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Islands \(Scotland\) Act 2018 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE22 August 2024Report by the Director of EducationEDUCATION DEPARTMENT END-YEAR REPORT 2023/24**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to update and advise Education Committee of the end-year report on the performance of the Education Department throughout 2023/24.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. Education Committee is asked to note and comment on the content of the report as a summary of the Education Department's performance throughout 2023/24.

**BACKGROUND**

3. The Education Department has a well-embedded approach to continuous improvement across the entire department, with Education Committee regularly receiving reports on various aspects of performance at both a departmental and individual establishment level. Throughout the last year, in addition to the [Standards and Quality Report](#) summarising educational performance, reports have been considered on the [progress towards priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework](#) and [Scottish Attainment Challenge](#), a review on the [impact of Pupil Equity Funding](#) and the [Early Learning and Childcare Annual Report](#) amongst others.

4. In addition, over the last year, individual Education Scotland inspections have been undertaken across a number of schools within East Renfrewshire, with the reports on the inspections of [Barrhead High School](#), [St Luke's High School](#) and [Kirkhill Primary School](#) having subsequently been considered by Education Committee. These reports have all been particularly strong, highlighting the continued strong performance of our schools. In addition, Care Inspectorate inspections of both Glenwood Family Centre and Overlee Family Centre have highlighted sector leading practice, with both centres being asked to share such practice nationally.

5. The department's progress in achieving both the critical activities and the performance indicators in the Council's Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) is reviewed on a six-monthly basis through internal reporting. These reports are presented at regular performance review meetings, attended by the Chief Executive and the Education Leadership Team (ELT), providing the opportunity for discussion around the key achievements and aims for the following year.

6. End-year reports are prepared and presented to Education Committee to provide a summary of the department's performance in contributing towards to the ODP over the last

year, as well as setting out the priorities for the year ahead. The [end-year report for 2022/23](#) was considered by Education Committee in August 2023.

7. A full report on the ODP, encompassing all activities and indicators across the Council, is due to be considered at a forthcoming Council meeting.

## REPORT

8. The Education Department's end-year report 2023/24 (appendix 1) sets out a high-level summary of the department's performance, categorised as follows:

- **Outcomes** – these provide an overview of the department's performance, both in the progress towards achieving critical activities contributing to wider outcomes, and in performance indicators. All critical activities are linked to wider strategies and plans from across the Education Department.
- **Customers, Efficiency and People** – these focus on key targets aimed at improving the performance and effectiveness of the department.

9. Importantly, the report relates to the 2023/24 organisational year (April 2023 to March 2024) and, as such, does not align with the regular academic year reporting cycles. As this end-year report was completed in April 2024, prior to the end of the school session, full year data was not available for 2023/24. This means that many of the indicators within the report relate to the 2022/23 session, the latest for which full data is available. Attainment performance for the 2023/24 session will be reported to Education Committee through the annual presentation on educational outcomes and SQA performance and through the department's Standards and Quality Report at a future date.

10. Ahead of 2023/24, the ODP was reviewed, taking into account that many of the previous activities had been completed or overtaken. As such, new critical activities and indicators were developed for the 2023/24 version of the ODP. To ensure alignment with the wide-ranging work already being undertaken across the department and to avoid duplication, all intermediate outcomes and activities have been identified from existing strategies and plans already in place. As such, many of the indicators and activities will also be reported through other regular updates considered by Education Committee.

11. For each of the indicators included within the ODP, targets have been developed and are outlined in the appendix. Whilst the department has sought to provide consistency in the timescales of such targets, given the national reporting requirements, this has not always been possible to achieve. For each of the 3-year stretch aims, intermediate targets have been developed and these have been previously reported to Education Committee in September 2023. Performance against such intermediate targets will be reported through regular updates to a future Education Committee.

12. The Education Department has continued to work towards achieving the vision of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*. With clear actions in place, set out through the overarching Local Improvement Plan, the key priority has remained the ongoing work towards closing the poverty related attainment gap, including a strong focus on supporting those with lower attendance and those experiencing emotionally-based school absence (ESBA) given the impact this has on wider educational outcomes. Through the use of Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) and Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), the department, schools



and early learning and childcare settings have maintained a strong focus on ensuring the most disadvantaged learners continue to be supported. Further key highlights across each area reported through the end-year report include:

### **Outcomes**

- ✓ In 2022-23, the highest ever proportion of pupils leaving East Renfrewshire schools went on to Higher or Further Education, work or training, with 98.7% in a positive destination. This is the highest level across Scotland, exceeding the national average of 95.9%.
- ✓ In 2022-23, ERC was the highest performing local authority in literacy and numeracy attainment at P1, 4 and 7 combined and at S3.
- ✓ Continuing to be the highest performing local authority at the senior phase in 2023, with the performance across almost all measures significantly outperforming both the virtual comparators and national averages. This has included the best ever performance within East Renfrewshire for pupils achieving National 5 awards in S4.
- ✓ Launch of new resources and professional learning to support self-evaluation and learning, teaching and assessment.
- ✓ Highest attendance rates nationally in 2022-23, however, this remains a key priority for the schools to continue to improve on.
- ✓ Opening of the new Neilston campus, bringing together Neilston Primary School, St Thomas's Primary School and Madras Family Centre in a new, state of the art campus.
- ✓ Support for families across East Renfrewshire through Adult Learning programmes such as Multiply which supports adults to increase confidence in using numbers and maths in everyday life; focusing on developing literacy skills through the delivery accredited courses for families, residents and our workforce; and the provision of ESOL for newly arrived families displaced from Hong Kong and Ukraine.
- ✓ Facilities Management services recognised nationally across catering and cleaning, including the best performance in Scotland across meal uptake indicators.

### **Customers**

- ✓ Very high levels of customer satisfaction reported through the 2024 Citizens' Panel, continuing with consistently high performance reported through previous years.
- ✓ Continued strong performance in customer-facing services, including 100% of applications for early learning and childcare receiving their first choice preference of either setting or attendance pattern through the annual allocation process.
- ✓ Continuing to embed digital approaches to customer engagement and communication, including through the ongoing development of ParentsPortal and Gov.notify to maintain a 'digital first' approach.

### **Efficiencies**

- ✓ Continued high performance in invoice processing timescales, performing significantly above both the Council-wide figure and target figures.

### **People**

- ✓ The HealthiER Minds service has continued to provide essential health and wellbeing advice and support to staff, pupils and parents, with 308 referrals supported through a range of partnerships and 97% of children and young people referred reporting improved outcomes.
- ✓ Implementation of the department's new Leadership Strategy.

- ✓ Teacher and local government absence rates were 5.81 days and 12.08 days respectively. This is a small increase on the figures in 22/23, which were 5.53 days for teachers and 11.97 days for local government staff.

13. As has previously been reported to Education Committee, the department's Local Improvement Plan 2024-27 sets out the key areas for improvement over the next three years, with a clear focus on improving outcomes for all learners and the impact we expect to have on the experiences of the children, young people and adults who attend our schools and use our centres and services. This plan, in addition to the various other strategies and plans which have previously been reviewed and considered by Education Committee, purposefully align closely to the activities set out in the ODP. Key priority activities for the year ahead include:

- Continue to be the highest performing mainland local authority, continuing to improve attainment through the Broad General Education and Senior Phase, and continuing to work towards closing the poverty related attainment gap between our least and most disadvantaged children and young people.
- Strengthening approaches to self-evaluation using *How Good is our Education Authority?*
- Improving school attendance figures through the continued implementation and growth of the Learn Well Service, including supporting children and young people facing emotionally-based school absence (EBSA).
- Continuing to support our staff to develop through the implementation of the department's Leadership Strategy and the Council-wide People Strategy.

## **FINANCE & EFFICIENCY**

14. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

## **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

15. Whilst this report focuses specifically on the Education Department's contribution to the delivery of the ODP, it is recognised that the ongoing continual strong performance is only achieved through the excellent, well-established partnership working across the Council and with external partners.

## **CONCLUSION**

16. This report summarises the performance of the Education Department throughout 2023/24. Whilst specifically focussing on the department's contribution towards the Council-wide Outcome Delivery Plan, the report clearly sets out the wide-ranging work being undertaken across the department, schools and early learning and childcare centres in seeking to achieve the vision of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*.

17. Building on the strong performance throughout 2023/24, the report outlines the intended next steps, detailed through the Local Improvement Plan, to continue to achieve the best outcomes for all learners and work towards closing the attainment gap between our most and least disadvantaged children and young people.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

18. Education Committee is asked to note and comment on the content of the report as a summary of the Education Department's performance throughout 2023/24.

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22 August 2024

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Appendix 1: End-Year Performance Report 2023/24

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## Education Department End-Year Performance Report 2023/24

This report includes an update on the Education Department's indicators and activities in the ODP. Note: Following the national approach, school attainment, attendance and exclusion data in the plan refers to the relevant academic year rather than the financial year.

PI Status of last available data:	
	Off target
	Target still to be achieved
	On Target
	For information only (no target set)

### 1. Community Plan Outcomes

#### 1. All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure childhood and succeed



##### 1.3 Children and young people are cared for, protected and their wellbeing is safeguarded

#### 1. An increase in activities which support prevention and early intervention, improve outcomes and reduce inequalities – Critical Activities

Activity	Progress Bar	Due Date	Latest Note
Strengthening parental involvement and representation in the life and work of schools and early years settings	60%	2025/26	Progress has been made across the 3 key areas of the Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy (22-25): communication, collaboration and consultation. Communication: professional learning for staff resulting in handbooks adhering to NIF principles as evidenced through a recently completed audit. Collaboration: continuing increase in accreditation of Family Centred Approaches (15 ELC settings with gold, 9 primary schools with gold and one secondary school with silver). Consultation: continued improvement in consultation approaches, evidenced through recent HMIE inspection Reports.
Implementing the Promise and the principles of the Getting it Right for Every Child refresh across all schools and classrooms	75%	2025/26	Promotion of The Promise has been undertaken with key staff, with the development of a Training for Trainers programme and the launch of the Keeping the Promise Award set to be rolled out from 24/25.

Activity	Progress Bar	Due Date	Latest Note
			<p>Work has been undertaken to build staff understanding, knowledge and skills in relation to trauma-informed practice, with the Keeping Trauma in Mind programme having delivered training to Pupil Support Assistants. A further programme, Still Keeping Trauma in Mind has been developed and is set to be rolled out from the forthcoming session.</p> <p>Systems in relation to data collection, tracking and monitoring have also been reviewed and are set to be refreshed next session to support a more targeted focus on improving outcomes for all children and young people.</p>
Supporting and challenging schools and early learning and childcare settings to adopt collaborative self-evaluation and consultation approaches to identify local barriers to stakeholder involvement and address these	40%	2025/26	<p>Data gathering to establish a baseline has been completed, with Equalities Co-ordinators having now met to discuss results and share practice in collaborative self-evaluation to inform next steps.</p> <p>The establishment of parent equalities groups has continued with strong qualitative evidence of positive impact. This will continue to be supported by the Principal Teacher (Equality, Diversity and Sustainability) from August 2024.</p>
Creating a Wellbeing Hub to improve attendance and engagement with learning	85%	2025/26	<p>The Learn Well Service continues to develop, with a focus on data collection, including the views of service users, to plan for improvement. Evaluative tools have been developed and utilised, with the data to help inform how we report on progress and to develop the service to be responsive to need.</p> <p>Work continues to deliver Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) to staff in schools to ensure emotionally-based school absence is identified and supported and to work preventatively with young people exhibiting anxiety concerning their attendance at school.</p>
Expanding and enhancing the Healthier Minds Service to ensure it supports all children, young people and families	60%	2025/26	<p>Healthier Minds continues to offer support to children and young people with mental health, with 308 referrals from July 2023 – March 2024. Support has been provided through RAMH, Healthier Minds Team, school nursing, Children 1<sup>st</sup> and CAMHS. With a lower number of males being referred, the team have delivered professional learning to support staff to understand and identify male mental health needs and support.</p> <p>15 sessions have been delivered on different themes, supporting 164 staff across Education, HSCP and the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector.</p> <p>Through the Strathclyde Wellbeing Scale used to measure impact, 97% have reported improved outcomes.</p>

### 1.3 Children and young people are cared for protections and their well-being is safeguarded. – Critical Indicators

PI Description	2022/23	2023/24		Status	Notes and benchmark
	Value	Value	Target		
Percentage attendance for Looked After Pupils (Primary and Secondary)	89.9%	-	90.0%		Data for 23/24 not yet available.
Proportion of P1 children who have reached all of the expected milestones on entry to school	82.7%	-	85.0%		Data for 23/24 not yet available.



## 2. East Renfrewshire residents are healthy and active and have the skills for learning, life and work

### 2.2 Children and young people are included – Critical Activities


#### 1. A sense of belonging and identity for children within their school and local community

Activity	Progress Bar	Due Date	Latest Note
Implementing the UNCRC to improve participation of all children in decision making	50%	2025/26	The UNCRC Implementation Group has secured funding from the UNCRC Innovation Fund to develop participation of young people from underrepresented groups. A successful application has been made to work with 'My Rights My Say' to develop professional learning for ERC staff on effective engagement and participation with children who have additional support needs. Work has begun on developing this professional learning. The UNCRC page on website has been developed to raise awareness and access to resource and a suite of CLPL is being developed to upskill staff. Schools are engaging with children and young people using participatory budgeting models to support children's participation in decision making.
Implementing the recommendations from both	75%	2025/26	Work continues on delivering the recommendations from the ASN review. Staff from across all education

Activity	Progress Bar	Due Date	Latest Note
the national ASL review and the department's ASN review, including providing professional learning around inclusive practice in ELC settings and schools			sectors are contributing to the workstreams and are leading sub-groups to take forward particular aspects of improvement. Professional learning continues to be a particular focus with work having been undertaken to develop a programme for the forthcoming 24/25 session.
Providing professional learning opportunities to increase knowledge and skills in: planning curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment to recognise value and include diverse identities; supporting bi-lingual learning; anti-racist education; and LGBT inclusive education	60%	2025/26	Professional learning opportunities across EAL support (English as an additional language), anti-racism and culturally responsive practice has been refreshed and a comprehensive programme is underway. An online resource has been developed through the department's intranet, hosting practical learning and teaching resources and professional learning materials, with over 100 staff now members of this resource. Work continues with Equalities Co-ordinators to provide effective professional learning opportunities and identify further support needs.
Updating policies on racism and prejudice-based bullying	100%	2025/26	A refresh of the guidance provided to schools has been completed and was distributed to all schools in early 2024.
Supporting and challenging schools to reduce the cost of the school day	50%	2025/26	A majority of schools have engaged with Cost of the School Day resources, with 50% of schools and ELC settings reporting they have undertaken audits with stakeholders. Building on this, further professional learning focussed on poverty-aware practice will be taken forward across all sectors in the new session.

PI Description	2022/23	2023/24		Status	Notes and benchmark
	Value	Value	Target		
Number of exclusions per 1,000 pupils - Primary. (4 year average target to 25/26 of 0.3 per 1000 pupils).	0.1	-	0.3		Data for 23/24 not yet available.
Number of exclusions per 1,000 pupils - Secondary (4 year average target to 25/26 of 0.3 per 1000 pupils).	6.7	-	5.5		Data for 23/24 not yet available.



PI Description	2022/23	2023/24		Status	Notes and benchmark
	Value	Value	Target		
Number of ERC schools with Rights Respecting Gold Award	13	15	15		There has been an increase in 2 on last year, achieving this year's target of 15. The department continues to set further increased targets in subsequent years.

## 2.3 Children and young people raise their educational attainment and achievement and develop the skills they need

### 1. Improved attainment in the broad general education and senior phase \_Critical Activities

Activity	Progress Bar	Due Date	Latest Note
Supporting and challenging schools to use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) effectively to improve education outcomes	70%	2025/26	Almost all PEF plans for 2023-24 include a focus on improving the wellbeing and readiness to learn of pupils living with poverty. The department is working in partnership with MART (Money Advice and Rights Team) to expand financial advice for families within schools. All Head Teachers have engaged with additional support and challenge via peer PEF Quad Groups in February 2024, with further analysis now underway to inform next steps and planning advice for session 24/25.
Implementing the Numeracy and Mathematics (N&M) and Literacy Strategies	60%	2025/26	A review of the impact of the Literacy Strategy is complete, with a report set to be considered at a future Education Committee. Evidence has been gathered from a range of visits across each sector, and analysed by a collaborative team to determine the impact and inform the development of the new strategy. An updated strategy will be launched early in the 24/25 academic session. The Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy was launched at the start of the 23/24 session. The implementation of identified actions is ongoing with a comprehensive programme of professional learning underway. Questionnaires to establish a baseline of attitudes to numeracy and mathematics were completed by staff and pupils in January 2024.
Investing Strategic Equity Funding to provide high quality professional learning on the teaching of reading, writing, talking and listening, numeracy and mathematics	50%	2025/26	The department continues to provide a universal professional learning programme which supports the teaching of reading, writing, talking and listening and numeracy and mathematics, with dedicated Principal Teachers planning and implementing a range of opportunities for staff to develop in their skills and understanding of the curriculum and pedagogy in these areas. In addition a targeted approach, using attainment

Activity	Progress Bar	Due Date	Latest Note
			data, was introduced at the beginning of session 2023/2024, with intensive literacy and numeracy support provided to schools.



## 2. Increased participation in wider achievement activities – Critical Activities






Activity	Progress Bar	Due Date	Latest Note
Continuing to work in partnership with ELC settings, schools and ER Culture and Leisure Trust to ensure all children and young people have high quality opportunities for achievement that are recognised and celebrated.	75%	2025/26	<p>Launch of the EmpOUR programme, designed around the key concepts of: promoting a sense of belonging; developing confidence; supporting wellbeing; and inspiring girls and young women, all with the aim of removing barriers in place for female participation in sport and physical activity. 24 pupils from secondary schools have been selected as Girl Ambassadors, having completed training on delivering the EmpOUR programme across schools.</p> <p>Successful Convener's Awards in March 2024, recognising outstanding achievements across a range of categories with 44 awards presented across sport, creativity, extra-curricular personal achievement, advocacy and community service. An additional peer-nominated award was introduced, following pupil feedback, enabling pupils to nominate one of their peers for outstanding contribution to the life of the school community.</p>


## 3. A curriculum which enables all learners to be successful, confident, responsible and effective – Critical Activities

Activity	Progress Bar	Due Date	Latest Note
Working in partnership with school Developing the Young Workforce Co-ordinators to support them to work with employers to promote greater understanding of numeracy and maths as an essential skills for learning, life and work	60%	2025/26	<p>Our DYW Team, in partnership with DYW coordinators, lead employer engagement events to further strengthen links with employers and ensure that all our secondary schools have effective and sustainable partnerships with a range of employers. Key literacy, numeracy and wider meta-skills to support sustainable employment forms part of the discussions at these events.</p> <p>1,353 young people (98.7%) leaving East Renfrewshire schools in 2022/23 achieved a positive destination. This is the highest proportion ever recorded in East Renfrewshire, the highest positive destination rate of any local authority in Scotland and comparing favourably to the national average of 95.9%. Of the 17 school leavers who were in a negative destination, none</p>



Activity	Progress Bar	Due Date	Latest Note
			were in the “unknown” category. This demonstrates the strong partnership working that exists between key school staff, SDS, WorkER and our DYW team.
Introducing an Effective Learning and Teaching Collaborative learning programme to improve learning and teaching	90%	2025/26	An online learning, teaching and assessment self-evaluation tool has been developed with an associated professional learning programme. This was launched in October 2023 and showcased at a recent Education Committee (April 2024). Early indicators suggest that this is providing very effective support to schools both in terms of prioritisation of their improvement focus and providing high quality resources to support the building of staff capacity.
Implementing the Digital Learning and Teaching and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics strategies.	40%	2025/26	The Primary Science Development Officer (PSDO) has taken forward a wide range of planned activities that raised the profile of STEM education in East Renfrewshire. These have supported the building of capability and capacity of staff through highly effective professional learning opportunities, the development of practitioner networks to share good practice and improved learner and family engagement in Science education. As a result of recent Collaborative Improvement Visits in Secondary, secondary Science teachers are in the process of critically reviewing the Broad General Education to strategically plan curricular improvements. The new Digital Learning & Teaching Strategy was approved by Education Committee in November 2023 and has subsequently been shared with Head Teachers, Parent Council Chairs and Digital Pupil Leaders outlining the next steps.

PI Description	2022/23	2023/24		Status	Notes and benchmark
	Value	Value	Target		
Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels: Numeracy (P1, 4 and 7 combined)  (3 year stretch aim 23/24 – 25/26 of 93.5%)	91.2%	-	93.5%		In 22/23, 91.2% of primary pupils achieved or exceeded expected CfE levels in numeracy. This shows an increase on the previous year as schools have continued to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. This compares very well with the national figure of 79.6 % in 22/23.  Target set for 23/24 onwards.
Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels: Literacy (P1, 4 and 7 combined)	87.6%	-	90.3%		In 22/23, 87.6% of primary pupils achieved or exceeded expected CfE levels in literacy. This shows an increase on the previous year as schools have continued to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. In response, the


PI Description	2022/23	2023/24		Status	Notes and benchmark
	Value	Value	Target		
(3 year stretch aim 23/24 – 25/26 of 90.3%)					department's writing guidance and CLPL offer to schools was updated and is being used to support schools moving forward. This compares very well with the national figure of 72.7% in 22/23.  Target set for 23/24 onwards.
Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels: Numeracy (P1, 4 and 7 combined) - Gap between Q1 and Q5  (3 year stretch aim 23/24 – 25/26 of 10.2%)	24.6%	-	10.2%		In 22/23, the gap between the proportion of pupils in Q1 v Q5 achieving or exceeding the expected CfE levels in numeracy decreased slightly. The refreshed Numeracy and Mathematics strategy looks to address this. The national figure for the gap between Q1 and Q5 is 17.0% in 22/23.  Target set for 23/24 onwards.
Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels: Literacy (P1, 4 and 7 combined) - Gap between Q1 and Q5  (3 year stretch aim 23/24 – 25/26 of 10.5%)	27.7%	-	10.5%		In 22/23, the gap between the proportion of pupils in Q1 v Q5 achieving or exceeding the expected CfE levels in literacy decreased slightly. The national figure for the gap between Q1 and Q5 is 20.5% in 22/23.  Target set for 23/24 onwards.
S6: Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at L6 (S6/S4)  (2022-2026 target)	69.6%	-	66.0%		In 2022/23, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF L6 by the end of S6 remained static at 69.6%. This is above the target of 66%. This compares very favourably to the national figure of 38.5%.
Proportion of S4 pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF L5 (S4/S4)  (2022-2026 target)	87.1%	-	83.0%		In 2022/23, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF L5 in S4 increased by nearly 4 points to 87.1%. This is above the target of 83%. This compares very favourably to the national figure of 54.1%.
Percentage of S4 roll with Insight points of 263 or fewer.	4.8%	-	5.6%		The percentage of S4 pupils with total Insight point scores of 263 or fewer (equivalent to eight "Pass" awards at National 4) decreased

PI Description	2022/23	2023/24		Status	Notes and benchmark
	Value	Value	Target		
(2022-2026 target)					to 4.8% in 2022/23, falling well within the target of 5.6%.
S4: reduce gap between most and least deprived achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF level 5 (2022-2026 target)	39.5%	-	30%		The gap between the proportion of young people achieving 5 or more SCQF level 5 qualifications in SIMD Q5 compared to Q1 increased by 7 percentage points in 2022/23 to 39.5%. Although increasing, this continues to remain below the national figure of 40.8%.

## Customer

PI Description	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	Status	End Year update
	Value	Target	Value	Target	Target		
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one (EDU)	5.0	5	5.1	5	5		There has been a slight decrease in performance, with the department now falling 0.1 above target.
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at investigation (stage 2) (EDU)	19.7	20	20.5	20	20		There has been a slight decrease in performance, with the department now falling 0.5 above target.

## Efficiency

PI Description	2022/23	2023/24		Status	Notes and benchmark
	Value	Value	Target		
Payment of invoices: % invoices paid within agreed period (30 days)	98.9%	98.3%	90%		Continue to perform significantly above target and above wider ERC performance.

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