

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2025

Report by Director of Education

DRAFT STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2023 - 2024

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To inform Education Committee of the proposed contents of the Education Department's annual Standards and Quality Report for school session 2023 - 2024.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

**BACKGROUND**

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

4. The Local Improvement Plan, upon which this report is based, was approved by Education Committee in February 2023 and reflected the National Outcomes for Education, the Council's Community Plan and the department's contributions to the Council's Outcome Delivery Plan 2021 – 2024. The plan lists the expected outcomes and impact and is organised under the four main drivers that support the delivery of the department's vision 'Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving, through Excellent Experiences'.

5. Moving forward, we have aligned the Standards and Quality Report with the four key drivers of the Local Improvement plan - Empowerment and Leadership, Social Justice and Wellbeing, Pedagogy and Learning and Attainment, Achievement and Progress; evaluating the action taken and the improvements achieved as a result under these headings.

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

## **REPORT**

7. The department has undertaken a self-evaluation exercise which has informed the draft report. This evaluation has helped to outline our next steps which will be fed into the next Local Improvement Plan that is the subject of a separate report to Education Committee.

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

9. Evidence for the Standards and Quality Report is gathered annually through a range of activities designed to provide support and challenge to schools and ELC settings. Evidence for the 2023-24 report was gathered from the following sources:

- performance and questionnaire data
- reports on schools and early learning and childcare settings from the Quality Improvement Team; Education Scotland reports on schools and services
- reports on Early Learning and Childcare Settings by Care Inspectorate Scotland
- school and service improvement plans and Standards and Quality Reports

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

## **FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

12. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) comment on the content of the annual Standards and Quality Report; and,
- b) ask the Director of Education to make any amendments and take the necessary steps to produce and issue copies of the report for parents.

Mark Ratter  
Director of Education  
6 February 2025

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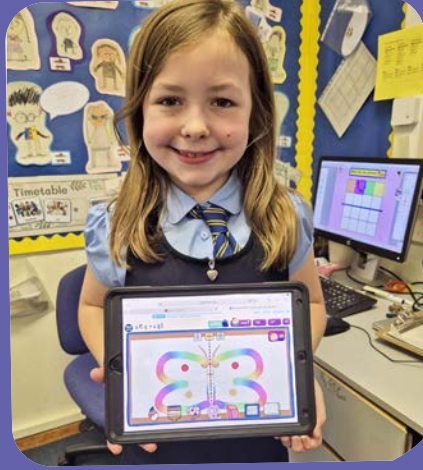
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**Appendix**

1. Draft Standards and Quality Report 2023 - 2024

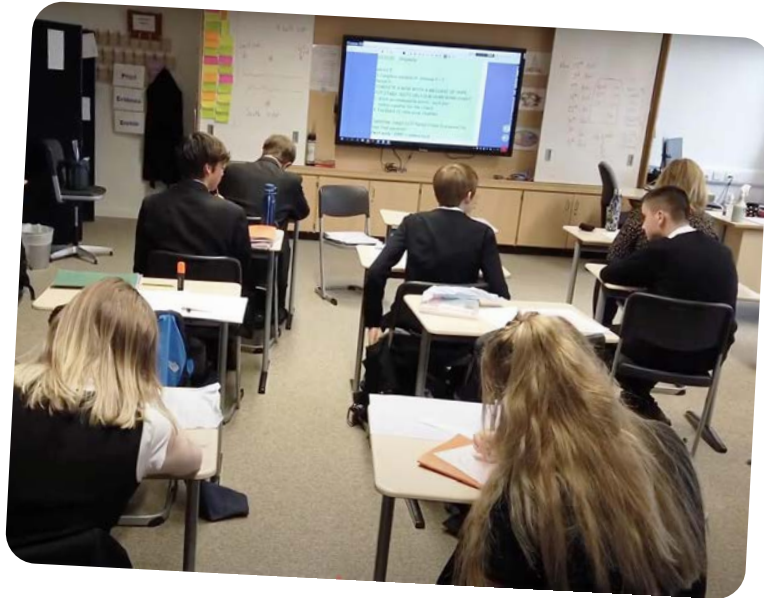
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# Standards and Quality Report 2023-24



Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences



<b>Foreword</b>	page 4
<b>Introduction</b>	page 5
<b>Background Information</b>	page 6
<b>Schools and Services Inspected</b>	page 7
<b>Empowerment and Leadership</b>	page 8
<b>Social Justice and Wellbeing</b>	page 12
<b>Pedagogy and Learning</b>	page 22
<b>Attainment, Achievement and Progress</b>	page 33



**EVERYONE  
ATTAINING**

**EVERYONE  
ACHIEVING**

**EXCELLENT  
EXPERIENCES**



# Foreword

This Standards and Quality report provides clear evidence of the Education Department, schools and services high performance and culture of continuous improvement. Providing the highest quality service is a commitment by the whole of East Renfrewshire Council, this report demonstrates this across the Education department and across our early learning and childcare settings, schools and services.

Through robust self-evaluation activities, the Quality Improvement Team have gathered evidence of the successes of the previous year and details of the progress made towards the expected outcomes as detailed in the Local Improvement Plan 2023 – 2026. They have also identified next steps for the department to ensure they continue to provide the highest quality of experiences for all our learners. These next steps will be undertaken over the next three sessions through implementation of our Local Improvement Plan 2025-28.

External evaluation is carried out by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate who, in visiting our schools and settings, commented very favourably on the practice they observed.



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

This report is an acknowledgement of the wonderful achievements of East Renfrewshire's Education Department, its early learning and childcare settings, schools and services and the improvement made in session 2023-24.

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







It is with great delight that I am to share the Standards and Quality Report 2023-24 which recognises the fantastic achievements of children and young people and the successes of our early learning and childcare settings, schools, services and staff.

The Education Department's vision of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences* continues to provide the focus for all that we do, as we seek to provide the highest quality education and services to children, young people and adults within East Renfrewshire. We have 4 main drivers to support our vision, Empowerment and Leadership; Social Justice and Wellbeing; Pedagogy; Learning and Attainment, Achievement and Progress. Our Standards and Quality report is structured under these drivers and details progress during session 2023-24 towards each of the target outcomes and impact as indicated in the Education Department's Local Improvement Plan. This report also demonstrates clearly the progress we have made towards the four national priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework.



I am always astounded by the many ways in which children and young people in East Renfrewshire are being supported through inspiring, excellent experiences which will help them to become healthy, active and confident citizens.

Our improvement journey is directed through our self-evaluation activities. This report forms part of this evaluation and enables us to identify and focus on our next steps to achieve our vision. These will be taken forward over the next three sessions through implementation of our Local Improvement Plan 2025-28.

I hope you find this Standards and Quality Report for 2023-24 provides you with a clear insight to how we work in partnership, set the highest expectations and ambitions for all in order that we deliver our vision and achieve excellence through equity for all.

*Mark Ratter*

**Mark Ratter,**  
Director of Education



# Background Information

## About the Education Department

In 2023-24, East Renfrewshire Council's Education Department provided an education service through seven secondary schools, twenty-four primary schools, of which thirteen have nursery classes, ten family centres and one school for children and young people with additional support needs. The Education Department also has responsibility for Adult Learning and Facilities Management.

## About the Standards and Quality Report

The Standards and Quality Report details the progress made towards achieving the outcomes and impact set out in the Education Department's Local Improvement Plan 2023-26. The Local Improvement Plan is the strategy that underpins the Education Department's vision of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*. The Local Improvement Plan is organised under the four main drivers that support the delivery of the department's vision – Empowerment & Leadership, Social Justice & Wellbeing, Pedagogy & Learning and Attainment, Achievement & Progress. To ensure the Standards and Quality Report has a clear focus on outcomes and impact on learners, parents and carers, staff and the community we have aligned the format to report under the 4 key drivers; evaluating the action taken and the improvements achieved as a result under these headings.



**Evidence for the Standards and Quality Report is gathered annually through a range of activities designed to provide support and challenge to schools and ELC settings. Evidence for the 2023-24 report was gathered from the following sources:**

- performance and questionnaire data
- reports on schools and early learning and childcare settings from the Quality Improvement Team;
- Education Scotland reports on schools and services
- reports on Early Learning and Childcare Settings by Care Inspectorate Scotland
- school and service improvement plans and Standards and Quality Reports

**This report is also informed by:**

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

The results of this self-evaluation will be used to plan the next steps, inform the main themes of our Strategic Equity Funding Plan 2023-26 and will be incorporated into the next Local Improvement Plan 2025-28.

## Schools and Services Inspected in 2023-24

During session 2023-24, a series of inspections took place to evaluate and report on standards and quality.

### Education Scotland

Education Scotland resumed their inspections in August 2023 and carried out national thematic inspections of inclusion and promoting positive behaviour, curriculum design and 1140 hours Early Learning and Childcare Expansion. Five East Renfrewshire establishments were selected for inspection:

- Kirkhill Primary School
- Carolside Primary School
- Cross Arthurlie Primary School
- Barrhead High School
- St Luke's High School

### Care Inspectorate

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

- Maidenhill Nursery Class

#### St Luke's High School, Education Scotland Inspection Report March 2024:

*“The highly skilled staff have developed high quality, creative and engaging approaches to learning and teaching. Young people, including those with additional support needs, attain well because of these different approaches. Staff, with the support of senior leaders, ensure that barriers to learning, participation and achievement are being effectively addressed. Young people are improving their attendance, engagement and achievements at school through the well-developed, individual targeted supports.”*

# Schools and Services Inspected

## Standards & Quality and Thematic Reviews

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

A Collaborative Improvement Visit took place to consider the impact made in implementing the Literacy Strategy (2017-2020) and highlight the progress made against the expected outcomes.

Establishments in the St Ninian's Cluster (Glenwood Family Centre, Our Lady of the Missions Primary School, St Cadoc's Primary School and Nursery Class, St Clare's Primary School, St Joseph's Primary School and St Ninian's High School) took part in the Cluster Collaborative Improvement Visit model. The focus of the visits was agreed collaboratively by the cluster and the visiting team and had a consistent focus on learning and teaching and raising attainment for all. Collaborative Improvement aims to promote partnership working to ensure that we achieve sustainable improvements for all children and young people, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Collaborative Improvement Visits took place in English and Technologies departments across all of East Renfrewshire's secondary schools.

# Empowerment and Leadership

## Leadership

Leadership development is a key area on the national policy agenda. The Education Department launched its new Leadership Strategy at a Head Teacher seminar in November 2023, setting out its continued commitment to providing detailed and robust Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) programmes for aspiring and experienced leaders, providing them with opportunities to develop knowledge and skills to adapt to the changing needs of educational establishments and their communities.

Senior leaders provide very effective leadership which enables our establishments to continuously improve. Our CLPL provision increases leadership capacity across all sectors and is supported through established coaching and mentoring programmes. Collaborative leadership opportunities are available across all educational establishments, and are key in supporting the culture of high achievement and ambition that we have for our learners.



During session 2023-24 the Education Department, supported by a team of Head Teachers, delivered the highly evaluated Aspiring Leaders programme for 15 school leaders while continuing to deliver an Operational Leadership programme which was open to all promoted staff. Almost all Aspiring Leaders completed a professional inquiry focussed on their leadership journey through the programme, and all noted development of key leadership skills and abilities. There continues to be a range of professional learning opportunities for staff to develop their leadership potential, for example through Masters Level learning as well as the Into Headship and Excellence in Headship programmes.

Almost all (97%) teaching staff who responded to the local authority questionnaires during session 2023-24 agreed that they experience regular leadership opportunities.'

*"I have really enjoyed this leadership programme. I benefitted from participating in the range of seminars, hearing from experienced Head Teachers and discussing leadership with peers. I thought that the enquiry was a great way to focus my thoughts on how I have had to adapt my skills over the year."*

**Aspiring Leaders Programme Participant**

## Newly Qualified Teachers

47 primary and 60 secondary probationer teachers successfully completed their one year Teacher Induction Scheme placement in June 2024 with all achieving the GTCS Standard for Full Registration. All probationer teachers successfully completed a professional inquiry during the course of the session, with support from the Quality Improvement Team and school staff, and their findings were shared at a showcase event in May 2024.

In focus groups carried out towards the end of their placements, probationer teachers commented that professional learning experiences provided by the local authority and their own schools had developed their professional values, knowledge and skills, and that they were very well supported at this early stage of their teaching career.

*"Everyone I have come in contact with has been hugely supportive and helped me to develop."*

**Probationer Teacher**

## Research Hub

In a continuing partnership with the University of Strathclyde, a Research Hub which provided training and ongoing support for practitioners on appropriate and impactful professional inquiry was established at St Luke's High School.

Learners in the broad general education and senior phase also had the opportunity to participate in a learning experience with Strathclyde University. A group of pupil leaders from S1 – S6 had the opportunity to work closely with academic staff from the University to develop their skills as researchers in order to drive forward self-evaluation and school improvement using the themes of How Good Is Our School. The team of pupils took part in nine workshops throughout the year and can now articulate the tangible benefits to their skills development. As a result, pupil researchers had the skills and confidence to train the next group of pupil leaders to engage in enquiry and lead school improvement.

*“Teaching staff in St Luke’s have a long-established and successful track record of engaging in collaborative inquiry in relation to improving learning, teaching and assessment. Therefore, we used the partnership with Strathclyde University to widen the focus of our enquiry work beyond learning and teaching. We used the Research Hub to further develop our approaches to promoting inclusion and recovery in a post-Covid landscape. Staff welcomed the opportunity to focus on measuring data, research approaches and working collaboratively to design effective interventions.”*

**Christine Downie, Head Teacher**

*“I have learned how to take initiative and carry out a research project with a partner. This has improved my confidence as I have had to interview students and teachers to find out information relevant to my topic.”*

**Participating Pupil**

**St Luke's High School**  
@StLukesHigh

Well done to S1 pupil researchers Millie & Ewan who visited P7 @StMarksPrimary1 to gather data for their research project with Strathclyde uni @StrathEDU. @kate\_wall98. They did a fantastic job presenting to P7 & speaking to them about their research project & experience of S1.

Strathclyde Glasgow

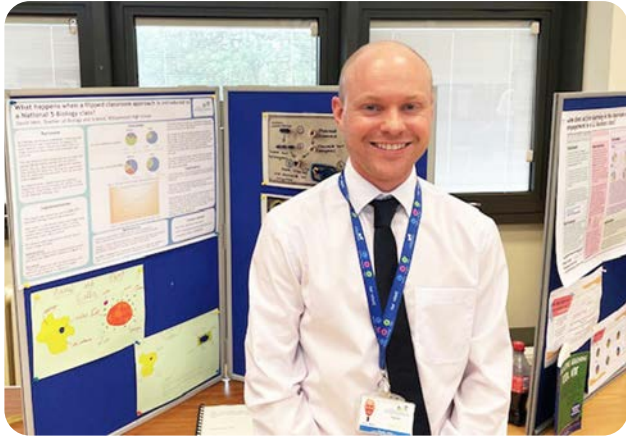
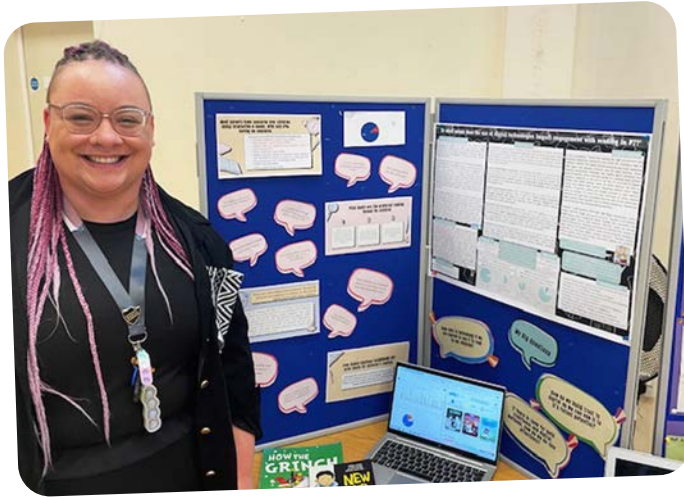
**St Luke's Transitions**  
Pupils as Researchers  
In collaboration with Strathclyde University  
By Millie and Ewan



Almost all teaching staff (97%) who responded to the local authority questionnaire during session 2023-24 agreed that their professional learning enabled them to reflect on and improve their practice.

*“These sessions were extremely useful and purposeful..... it will benefit my learners going forward.”*

**Participant, Literacy Training Programme**



## Professional Update

Professional Update is a scheme of re-accreditation for teachers, which ensures the highest standards are maintained in Scottish schools. All teachers who completed their Professional Update in 2023-24 evaluated the impact of their professional learning in terms of their own learning, and agreed that this had improved their practice and the experience of pupils.

## Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy (PIE)

Family Centred Approaches is a self-evaluation framework used by our education establishments to assess how well they involve and engage with families across their communities. Five more early learning and childcare settings achieved Gold Family Focused status this year: Arthurlie Family Centre, Calderwood Lodge Family Centre, Carlibar Family Centre, Glenwood Family Centre and Hazeldene Family Centre. In addition, six more primary schools achieved Gold status: Busby Primary, Netherlee Primary, Our Lady of the Missions Primary, St Cadoc's Primary, St Clare's Primary and St Joseph's Primary. Our first secondary school, St Ninian's High School, achieved silver accreditation in 2023-24.

In partnership with Education Scotland, our education establishments were supported to further develop their family learning approaches. This has led to the establishment of a family learning collaborative inquiry group. The group will present the findings of their inquiry to PIE Coordinators and Head Teachers during session 2024-25.

A policy on Class Organisation in Primary Schools was developed following consultation with learners, parents and head teachers. This has led to increased transparency and consistency across the local authority as children are supported to move between stages at the end of the school year, in particular during classification and the forming of classes.

## Professional Learning

Between August 2023 and June 2024, a wide range of courses were facilitated by the Quality Improvement Team and Educational Psychology Service. Training programmes focussing on Assessment and Moderation, Literacy and Numeracy have significantly increased the confidence of practitioners to improve learning, teaching and assessment. Evaluations of courses facilitated by the Quality Improvement Team demonstrated that almost all participating staff experienced increased levels of confidence that would lead to a positive impact on learners. Significant numbers of teachers participated in professional learning facilitated by the West Partnership, and our schools and ELC settings continue to share their professional learning across and beyond their clusters.

For the 235 courses offered through CPD Manager, evaluations showed that almost all respondents (95%) noted a positive impact on their knowledge, skills or confidence as a practitioner as a result of their participation. The overall number of participants in the above courses reduced from the previous session, but the proportion of positive evaluations increased.

## ‘Improving Our...’ Programmes

The Regional Improvement Collaborative: West Partnership’s (WP) ‘Improving Our...’ (IO) programmes are well established in East Renfrewshire. Members of the Quality Improvement Team work alongside members of the WP team to deliver the ‘Improving Our Classroom’ (IOC) Masters Level learning programme to teachers in the primary and secondary sectors. In 2023-24, 13 teachers participated in the programme and submitted a Case Study of Improvement which detailed the impact of their learning on pupil attainment.

When evaluating the programme 100% of participants stated that the changes they made to their practice had improved pupil confidence and their engagement with learning. All participants felt that their participation in the programme had improved their understanding and use of data to support improvements in their classrooms.

Two primary schools and one secondary department participated in the other IO programmes - ‘Improving Our School’ and ‘Improving Our Department’ - where classroom practitioners are placed at the heart of school improvement and the focus is on self-evaluation at classroom level to bring about improvement in attainment and pedagogical approaches.

*“As a result of being involved in IOD the staff are really keen to interrogate data on a much deeper level and it has helped them see the bigger picture and how the learners are progressing in our subject but also in other areas across the whole school. It helps us to plan more effectively for the wider achievements of the young people and ensure they have the best pathways on offer to them and also allows us to plan ahead for alternative pathways where required.”*

**IOD Participant Principal Teacher**

*“The teaching sprints have provided me with new tools and strategies that I can use for years to come....”*

**Participant, Teaching Sprints**

*“I have incorporated new metacognitive strategies and implemented jigsaw and plan, monitor, evaluate. I have also embedded differentiation through scaffolding into my regular practice. My use of Learning Intentions (LI) and Success Criteria has also been transformed and I have moved away from content based LIs to more skills based, which has allowed me to plan lessons more creatively.”*

**IOC Participant**

*“This experience has had a hugely positive impact on my skills and confidence.”*

**IOC Participant**

*“This will inform my teaching and I will be more adaptive in the moment.”*

**Participant, Adaptive Teaching Workshop**

## What are we going to do now?

- Continue to implement the revised leadership strategy and the Council’s People Strategy.
- Review and update Parental Engagement and Involvement Strategy 2025-2028.
- Review and update Career Long Professional Learning Framework 2025-2028.
- Continue to prioritise staff agency to support with the reduction of workload and bureaucracy in all establishments.
- Review and update the Devolved School Management scheme to support leadership of resources and alignment with ELC and school improvement priorities.

# Social Justice and Wellbeing

## Social Justice Strategy 2023-26

Session 2023-24 was the first year of the department's Social Justice Strategy. The Strategy and accompanying Social Justice Framework outline practical guidance for schools on promoting equality, diversity and inclusiveness through six key areas of practice: curriculum design; learning, teaching and assessment; relationships; professional learning and development; recruitment and retention; and use of resources.

A wide range of collaborative improvement activities and professional learning sessions took place throughout the year to advance the strategy. In 2023-24 these were focused on:

- Using Pupil Equity Funding effectively to improve education outcomes
- Using collaborative self-evaluation approaches to identify local barriers to stakeholder involvement
- Supporting bilingual learners and their families
- Decolonising the curriculum
- Culturally responsive learning and teaching
- Responding effectively to racist incidents
- Learning for Sustainability
- Sharing strong existing practice across establishments.

Over 260 practitioners attended and highly evaluated equality and diversity-focused twilight professional learning sessions led by the Quality Improvement Team.

The QI Team gathered a range of data about current staff skills and practice in areas relevant to social justice, in partnership with school Equalities Coordinators. This has created a baseline that will allow schools and the education department to evaluate progress with the strategy moving forward and achieve a deeper level of analysis of strengths and areas for further improvement across establishments. As a result of this work, educational establishments are aligning their

self-evaluation and planning for improvement in equality and social justice more closely to wider strategic aims across curriculum, learning and teaching.

*"This has provided a focus for our School Improvement Plan for next year and stimulated discussion surrounding focus groups."*

**Equalities Coordinator**

*"This was a great way to try and understand the challenges bilingual learners face in the classroom."*

**Participant, Supporting Pupils with EAL in Reading**

*"We are reviewing our curriculum rationale as a school, and this will play an important part in our strategic approach to this."*

**Participant, Decolonising the Curriculum**

## Health and Wellbeing

All East Renfrewshire educational establishments adopt a Health Promoting approach to safeguarding the health and wellbeing of our children, young people and families.

In questionnaires, most pupils (85%) agreed that the staff supported them with their wellbeing and most parents (85%) agreed that the staff support their child's emotional and mental wellbeing.



**100% of ERC establishments evaluated How Good Is Our School? / How good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare? QI 3.1 (Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion) as good or better in 2023-24.**

Following consultation with learners in all secondary schools, a working group produced a Personal Social Education Skills Framework which has been used to plan progression within experiences and outcomes relating to health and wellbeing (HWB). The framework promotes and supports effective learning and teaching approaches which is based on real life, and stimulates the interests of learners. Across schools there is a particular focus on mental and emotional wellbeing with staff participating in professional learning to build their capacity to support children and young people's health and wellbeing.



In session 2023-24, the education department supported a series of collaborative improvements visits across English and Technologies Departments. Staff in each of our seven secondary schools worked together in order to support their self-evaluation processes. The report highlighted a number of strengths and next steps with a focus on continuing to develop the HWB curriculum in the Broad General Education.

## Educational Psychology Service

The Educational Psychology Service continues to make a unique contribution to the delivery of key strategic objectives within Education and in partnership with Children's Services. The EPS provides consultation and advice, assessment, intervention, training, research and policy development within an ecological context. There has been continued work with children and families, across all local authority educational establishments, which has included areas such as Healthier Minds, LearnWell and the Early Years Outreach Service.

148 children, young people and/or families were supported by the Healthier Minds team and 145 were referred to our commissioned youth counselling service with the most common reasons for referral being anxiety, low mood, self-harm and suicidal ideation.

97% of the children and young people who received support from the Healthier Minds team reported improved outcomes and 100% parents and carers who completed the parental evaluation reported that they would recommend the service to others.

To build capacity to support children and young people's emotional wellbeing throughout the authority we commissioned an additional cohort of 18 staff (Education & Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP)) to complete the Cross Reach Counselling Skills Approach course. This was highly evaluated with staff reporting they feel more confident to support a young person in distress.

Through the Healthier Minds Network there have been 15 professional learning sessions, covering a range of topics, provided for over 200 staff from Education, HSCP and third sector organisations.

The Learn Well Service continues to support young people (S1-S4) with their learning and wellbeing during periods of significant, long-term Emotionally Based School Absence (EBSA). These young people have a wide range of additional support needs, most commonly relating to autism, mental health challenges, and or trauma. 100% of the young people supported by the service who completed an evaluation agreed that they enjoyed working with Learn Well and have good relationships with the adults. 100% of parents/carers indicated that their young person had benefitted from engaging with the service and 92% said that there had been a benefit to the whole family.

*"X has benefitted from Learn Well, in particular it has helped her to interact with others and to be more comfortable leaving the house. In particular she has developed some friendships through her engagement in a dungeons and dragons group which Learn Well helped to establish."*

**Parent**

Staff highly evaluate the support offered and report increased engagement and participation by young people accessing support.

The Learn Well Service also works to build capacity within our schools. This session, 23 pastoral care teachers across the secondary sector received training in the application of our local EBSA guidance. Almost all practitioners agreed or strongly agreed that the training supported their practice, that they had learned helpful information about EBSA which would help them fulfil their role in supporting children and young people who find it difficult to attend school.

*"Prior to Learn Well working with X, she did not leave the house or engage with anyone outwith her family. It took a long time for X to come out of her shell and engage with the LW Teacher, but thanks to her persistence and patience, X started to engage and has formed a strong relationship. Other services have given up before a relationship could be formed. Learn Well have been the only service to successfully build a relationship with her."*

**Parent**



## Early Years Outreach Service

The Early Years Outreach Service (EYOS) has been developed under the leadership and direction of our Educational Psychology Service with the following aims:

- To enhance the support available to children aged 2-5 years with additional support needs particularly affecting language and communication, learning and emotional regulation;
- To build capacity in early years practitioners to promote and develop skills in children with ASN; and,
- To promote the knowledge and confidence of parents and carers to support their children's development.

The EYOS Team includes 3 Child Development Officers and 4 Playworkers who are led and supported by a Senior Educational Psychologist. Staff are trained and experienced across a number of evidence-based approaches. During session 2023-24, 41 children were supported within fourteen early years establishments including two Partnership settings.

*“EYOS has been so beneficial as it has given children 1:1 support. It has helped the staff team feel more confident in their approach and has given them more knowledge and skills and different strategies to try. The team have always been there to answer questions and give regular updates. Thanks for all you hard work in our setting.”*

**ELCC Head Teacher**

*“EYOS has supported us in many ways and ensured that I understand the correct strategies to use to support A. They have provided opportunities for us to fully understand A's needs and the most effective ways to support him.”*

**Early Years Practitioner**

100% of parents surveyed reported that their child has benefitted from EYOS support.

*“Thank you for all your support over the past year, it has been really appreciated. We have seen an improvement in M being able to recognise his emotions and deal with them a lot better.”*

**Parent**

*“EYOS have provided us with strategies and tools to support H and help him through daily life and how to cope with changes to routine as things come up in our daily program. He can maintain a more even temperament and is more content in daily life.”*

**Parent**



## Additional Support for Learning

This session, the four work streams which were established to take forward the recommendations of the ERC review of Additional Support for Learning (ASL) continued to lead many of the developments in relation to inclusion. Staff from across all establishments are involved in the work reviewing ERC processes and policies and developing provision to ensure we meet the needs of the pupils in East Renfrewshire.

Professional learning has continued to be a focus of this work with staff training (Keeping Trauma in Mind) delivered to 85 participants in partnership with Education Scotland. Eight members of ERC staff have also participated in Training for Trainers and have supported delivery to a further 87 Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs). This has had a positive impact, with 100% of PSAs reporting on the value of this training and agreeing that they are likely or very likely to implement the learning from the training into their practice.

Our newly established communication support centre within Carolside Primary School welcomed its first learners in August 2023 and was highly commended by Education Scotland (HMIe) as part of the inspection process.

## United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) has been delivered in partnership with the West of Scotland Development Education Centre, UNICEF and through the West Partnership to raise awareness of Children's Rights, linked to the UNCRC Bill. Most pupils (88%) in local authority questionnaires agree that their school helps them to understand their rights. In recent school accreditation visits which have led to Rights Respecting Gold Awards for Carolside Primary School, Hillview Primary School and McCready Family Centre, UNICEF highlighted the knowledge of rights across the establishment's community and a strategic approach to embedding right based approaches at the core of the establishment's ethos.

Following a successful bid for Scottish Government funding, in partnership with East Renfrewshire's Community Learning and Development (CLD) team, an East Renfrewshire Young People's Rights Committee has been established. This involved workshops being delivered in all secondary schools and with our Primary Pupil Council, with the aim of increasing awareness of children's rights and achieving a wide and representative membership of the committee.

Our enhanced nurture provision within Carlibar Primary School, the DEN, opened in September 2023 providing support to children across the academic session.

At the DEN the curriculum support children through relational pedagogy which is based on connection, attunement and trust and incorporates structure, high expectations and a focus on a sense of achievement. Children have opportunities to engage in flexible and responsive learning experiences which meet their individual needs through play and outdoor education. A key aspect of the curriculum is to support social and emotional needs in order that children develop skills for life and learning.

In response to current and forthcoming changes in legislation and national and local policy, a number of key staff with accredited extensive training and professional learning in Behaviour Support Strategies have delivered training and support to colleagues in other schools in de-escalation strategies and appropriate and proportionate physical intervention. Training was delivered to 33 staff based in 11 schools and outreach service in session 2023-24, compared to 23 staff in 5 schools last session. Staff report positively on the impact of this training on both their skills and on their confidence. There is a focus on de-escalation strategies which help influence behaviour as opposed to physical interventions.

There has been further development of training materials for all educational establishments with a focus on:

- Understanding behaviour
- Communication
- Proactive and active approaches
- Reactive approaches (not physical intervention)
- Calming and de-escalation
- Personal safety

Following the publication of the *Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research Report*, the Violence to Staff forum was established. This forum consists of Education department staff, Head Teachers and school staff, Union representatives, and officers from Health and Safety and HR. The forum has collaborated to produce guidance to support colleagues following incidences of violence in all educational settings and to ensure that all staff and children and young people involved are effectively supported post incident.

### NIF Priority 2

**Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.**



## Corporate Parenting and Young Carers

All establishments put the needs of care experienced children and young people at the heart of their improvement agenda. Ongoing awareness raising sessions with Head Teachers, DHTs and ASN Co-ordinators on our Corporate Parenting duties and what it means to be ‘a good parent’ are pivotal. We have been working with the West Partnership to provide a suite of training materials for staff in schools to ensure that our care experienced children and young people receive the right support and nurture from all of our staff in our educational establishments. Training for Trainers has been provided for key staff in all establishments who will deliver the *Keeping the Promise Award* to all staff in all settings.

Most primary and all secondary schools continue to engage with Young Carer development workers who deliver at assemblies, provide workshops and drop-in sessions for pupils, and training for staff. This engagement has led to an increase in the number of carers being identified by schools and being supported by the Carers Centre. In March 2024, primary schools participated in an event held at Eastwood Theatre to celebrate Young Carers Action Day, sharing their experiences and hearing from other supporters and contributors.

### OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

Aspiring chef Amber Rissman, from Mearns Castle High School, was recognised in the extra-curricular award category. Having won the Scottish Springboard future chef competition, Amber has gone on to train with a range of high-profile chefs. Valuable experience has been gained at the 2 Michelin star restaurant Andrew Fairlie at Gleneagles, as well as working alongside Scotland’s National Chef, Gary Maclean, at the prestigious One Devonshire Gardens.



## Provost Debate

The Provost chaired a series of debates involving Primary 7 pupils in all East Renfrewshire primary schools, in the Council Chambers during March 2024. The debates were paused following Covid, with the return providing an opportunity to refresh the format, incorporating hybrid technology allowing children to participate either in the council chambers or in the classroom. The same motion, linked to the Digital Learning and Teaching strategy, was provided for all schools: *Digital technology and Artificial Intelligence are making our lives better*. An evaluation of the debates, involving children and staff, was very positive around the opportunity to develop literacy skills around talking and listening, while also investigating the advantages and disadvantages of digital technology.

*“Pupils were very impressed with the experience of being at Eastwood Headquarters. They loved being in the council chambers and the process of the debate.”*

**P7 Teacher**

## NIF Priority 1

**Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.**

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

In the Community Service award category, Eastwood High pupil Sana Iqbal was praised for her three years of service to the Police Scotland Youth Volunteers (PSYV). Having helped at major events all around Glasgow, Sana has so far amassed 167 hours of volunteering, which has seen her rise to a Senior Youth Volunteer at the PSYV due to her natural leadership qualities and dedication.



45

## Equalities Coordinators Network

The Equalities Coordinators Network are members of school leadership teams with responsibility for leading on equality and social justice in every establishment. Throughout 2023-24 they met regularly to undertake professional learning on current equality issues and share effective practice to promote equality and social justice. Facilitated by the Quality Improvement Team and third sectors partners, focused sessions took place on:

- Culturally and socially responsive practice
- Preventing and responding effectively to bullying, prejudice-based bullying and racism
- Using data to evaluate impact in equality-focused work
- Learning for sustainability and social justice.

This continued professional learning offer has provided all establishments with the knowledge to review their practice and update policies as appropriate.

*“The session on culturally and socially responsive practice has had a positive impact on our ongoing work on curriculum design and was helpful in challenging us to think about the “lens” through which we view events & teach.”*

**Equalities Coordinator**



## Bullying, Prejudice-based Bullying and Racism

All East Renfrewshire schools work to promote respect, equality and positive relationships. Where an incident of bullying or racism does occur, school staff are supported to respond sensitively in ways that prioritise children's rights and wellbeing while also creating a safe space for learning.

During session 2023-24 the department worked collaboratively with senior school leaders, child protection coordinators and equalities coordinators to increase consistency in the recording of incidents of bullying, prejudice-based bullying and racism. Refreshed guidance for establishments was developed in partnership with key school staff and professional learning and support was provided via head teachers' meetings and network meetings. 170 teachers and Child Development Officers (CDOs) attended anti-racism training sessions provided by the Quality Improvement Team, which were very highly evaluated for their practical focus and impact on daily practice. The Equalities Coordinators Network took part in a focused session on anti-bullying and anti-racism led by the Quality Improvement Team, with support from national anti-bullying organisation RespectMe. In addition, all head teachers and heads of centre participated in a discussion led by Education Scotland on anti-racism. As a result, practitioners report increased confidence in discussing and responding to challenging issues around race and promoting anti-racism in their establishments. This work is also helping schools to ensure establishment policies and processes are robust, up-to-date, and lead to positive learning environments for all.

The total number of bullying incidents increased in 2023-24 from 102 incidents to 177 incidents. The number of recorded incidents of racism increased from 61 to 87. It is likely that these increases reflect an improvement in practitioners' understanding of the processes for recognising, responding to, and recording bullying and racism. Ongoing work will continue to establish accurate baseline data, which will be used to support further improvements in how we recognise and support young people experiencing bullying behaviours and racism.

*"Recognising where we are on our own anti-racist journey is vital to see what progress we still need to make. The biggest impact for me was the difference between 'not racist' and 'anti-racist'; I am going to use this knowledge to better support colleagues, but most importantly for my pupils."*

**Participant, Anti-Racism in Learning and Teaching Series**

## Anti-bullying

Ongoing professional learning and training has led to an increased understanding by staff on incidences of bullying behaviour, how to record these and most importantly address them to support all children and young people involved.

The Education Department continues to work in partnership with the Violence Against Women (VAW) and Girls Partnership and have provided schools with guidance on dealing with Gender-Based Violence in Schools in order to raise awareness of and reduce incidences of gender-based violence.

All secondary schools have staff and senior pupils trained in delivering the Mentors in Violence Prevention programme. Four members of school staff have participated in Education Scotland's Training for Trainers programme and have delivered training to a further thirteen members of staff in schools. Evaluations of the professional learning provided by ERC staff have been very positive, demonstrating an increased awareness of the issues relating to this subject.

Professional learning for staff in educational establishments is provided at Child Protection Coordinator meetings and through the multi-agency Public Protection Calendar, ensuring all staff in all establishments are able to respond appropriately to child protection concerns.

## Pupil Equity Funding

A Thematic Review of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) was undertaken during the summer term 2023 and the outcomes of this were shared with all head teachers in August 2023. The strengths and areas for improvement identified by the review were used throughout 2023-24 to support and challenge schools to further improve outcomes for children and young people affected by poverty.

Key activities included:

- Targeted support from the QI Team and Education Scotland Attainment Advisor to support schools to develop robust plans and effective measures of impact
- Support for Equalities Coordinators to expand the range of data used to measure impact and identify areas for further improvement
- Opportunities for peer evaluation, support and challenge through head teacher PEF Quads supported by the QI Team
- A relentless focus on outcomes for children and young people in key equity groups in analysis of attendance and attainment data.

Analysis of the PEF Quads process in 2023-24 highlighted the following:

- Almost all PEF plans were clearly based on contextual data and evidence
- There was growing confidence amongst head teachers to define SMART targets and identify a wider range of evidence-based interventions
- There was evidence demonstrating increasing awareness of, and use of, wider poverty risk factors to plan support for children and young people.

Effective approaches to quality assurance at authority level are supporting and challenging schools to work closely with families to improve attendance overall and reduce the gap in attendance levels of children from the most and least affluent households. All schools have individual attendance stretch aims and some have used PEF for evidence-based interventions to improve attendance e.g. recruitment of family liaison workers. PEF Reports show that a variety of wellbeing and attendance supports are helping to increase the attendance of young people across the authority area, and that this is having a positive impact on their readiness to learn.



### Barrhead High School, Education Scotland Inspection Report January 2024:

*“A sector-leading approach to developing and sustaining partnership working ensures that the needs of individuals and groups of young people are very well met. Young people and their families are fully involved in decisions about interventions and targets as they work towards improved wellbeing outcomes. Partners feel that they are fully involved in discussions about meeting young people’s needs and regard the school’s engagement with them as brave, creative and productive.”*

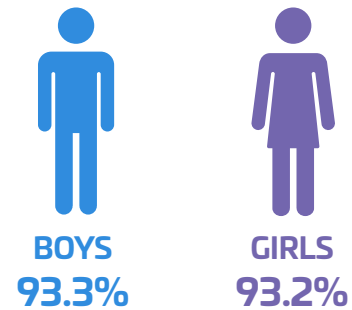
## Attendance

Attendance of children attending primary school has improved over the past two years (2022-23 and 2023-24) with overall values reaching 94.4% and 94.8% respectively, however this was 1.2% below the East Renfrewshire stretch aim set for this measure. The average attendance in the primary sector remains above the latest available national value of 92.2% in 2022-23. The highest recorded attendance groups in 2023-24 were P3 and P6 girls followed closely by P3 and P5 boys.

Attendance within the secondary sector is calculated for S1-S5 only. The average overall secondary attendance has reduced over the past three years to its lowest value of 91% in 2023-24; this was 2.5% below the East Renfrewshire stretch aim set for this measure. The average attendance of girls has remained relatively consistent over the past three sessions whilst the average attendance of boys has reduced by a further 0.1% to 90.4% in 2023-24. The highest recorded attendance stage in 2023-24 was S1 with both the boys and girls having the highest attendance of all other stages at 93.3% and 93.2% respectively. The attendance of learners entitled to free school meals and in the most deprived quintile remained similar to 2022-23 at 83.9% and 85.3% respectively.

Attendance stretch aims were identified for primary and secondary pupils. Attendance targets of 96% for primary and 93.5% for secondary were set. Improvements were recorded for all pupils in primary, with those living in quintiles 1 and 5 increasing at a similar rate, consequently the stretch gap remained the same at 5.2%. Overall attendance in the secondary sector remained relatively unchanged at 91.0%, a decrease of 0.1% from 2022-23. Pupils living in quintile 1 recorded an attendance rate of 85.3% and those living in quintile 5, 92.3%.

The Strategic Equity Plan 2023-26 has a clear focus on children and young people's readiness to learn through focussing on attainment, inclusion, participation, engagement and attendance. Stretch aim performance, along with qualitative evidence has been used to identify priorities and updated stretch aims.



**Highest recorded attendance stage in 2023-24 was S1**





## Exclusions

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

In 2023-24, there were no permanent exclusions. The rate of exclusions in East Renfrewshire has remained low, however there was an increase in the overall number of exclusion incidents from 2022-23.

Overall exclusions across the primary and secondary sector increased to a rate of 3.5 exclusion incidents per 1000 pupils with 11.2 half-days being lost per 1000 pupils, an increase from 3.2 and 10.3 respectively in 2022-23. Exclusion rates in 2023-24 are significantly lower than the national value of 16.6 exclusion incidents per 1000 pupils.

In 2023-24 there was one exclusion incident in the primary sector, giving a rate of 0.1 exclusion incidents per 1000 pupils with 0.2 half-days lost per 1000 pupils. Nationally, the exclusion rate in the primary sector is 4.5 incidents per 1000 pupils.

There were 61 exclusion incidents in the secondary sector in 2023-24, an increase from 55 incidents in 2022-23. Consequently, the rate of exclusion in the secondary sector increased to 7.3 exclusion incidents per 1000 pupils with 23.6 half-days lost per 1000 pupils (up from 6.7 incidents per 1000 pupils and 21.4 half-days lost per 1000 pupils in 2022-23). The local authority exclusion rate for 2022-23 is significantly lower than the national value of 31.5 incidents per 1000 pupils.

There were no exclusions of pupils from Isobel Mair School or from within our Care Experienced community in 2023-24.

## What are we going to do now?

- Implement the Strategic Equity Plan 2023-2026 and support and challenge school use of the Pupil Equity Fund.
- Continue to implement the recommendations from both the National ASL review and the department's ASN review, with a focus on empowering ELC settings and schools to ensure their curriculum is holistic, flexible and inclusive, preparing children and young people for life and work.
- Continue to implement the Social Justice Strategy 2022-2026.
- Introduce a Health and Wellbeing Tracking Tool to identify and support emotional and mental wellbeing and positive relationship needs of children, young people and families.
- In partnership with colleagues across the Council, continue to implement The Promise, updated Child Protection Guidance, UNCRC, our Corporate Parenting Policy, Child Poverty Action Plan and the GIRFEC refresh.

# Pedagogy and Learning

  
100%  
good  
or better

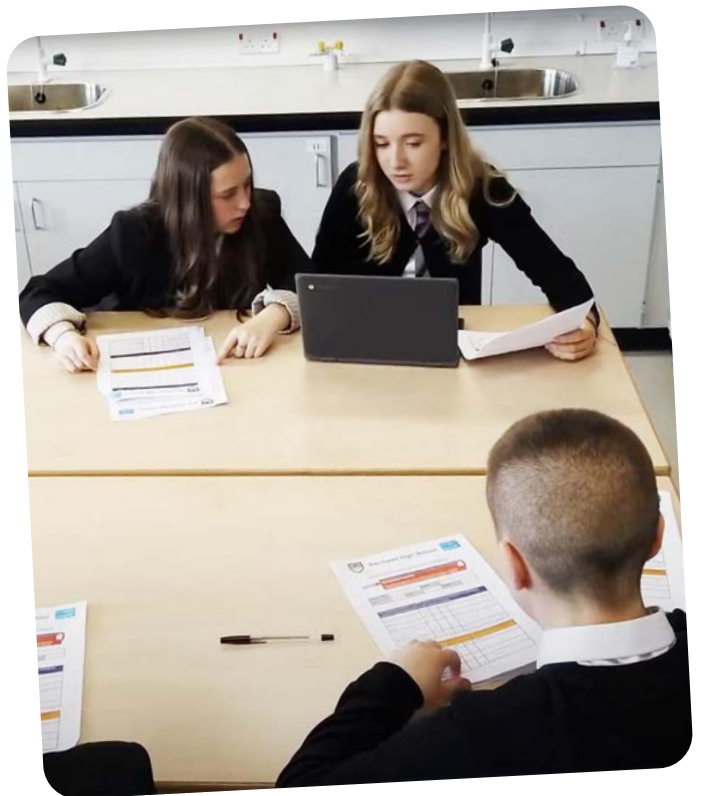
  
63%  
very good  
or better

**In 2023-24, 100% of schools self-evaluated their provision as 'good' or better for learning, teaching and assessment with 63% evaluated as 'very good' or better.**

## Assessment and Moderation

Quality assurance and moderation remains a key priority in East Renfrewshire and the National Improvement Framework. The Education Department has had a significant focus on developing a shared understanding of standards through a range of moderation activity and professional learning opportunities over the past 11 years and is committed to continuing this work across all sectors. Collaborative Learning Networks (CLN) provide a structure for practitioners in early years, primary and ASN settings to focus on progression within and across Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels. The CLN model supports collaborative planning of learning, teaching and assessment, and multi-layer moderation activity throughout the academic session.

780 practitioners across early years, primary and special sectors, including a specific network for primary Depute Head Teachers, worked collaboratively within a similar curriculum level or specialist subject area. Practitioners created meaningful learning networks with colleagues from across the local authority and engaged in focused professional learning to support their understanding of key national and local messages linked to assessment and moderation. When surveyed 98% of participants indicated that this was a meaningful way to discuss progression and standards within a curriculum level and 99% agreed it was beneficial to discuss learning, teaching and assessment with colleagues working at the same curriculum level from other establishments.



In the secondary sector, approximately 600 practitioners worked in CLN with colleagues from their subject across the 7 schools and engaged in high quality dialogue about different types of assessment. 98% indicated via evaluations that the professional dialogue increased their understanding of different approaches to assessment within the Broad General Education and 99% valued the opportunity to meet with colleagues and make connections beyond their own establishment.

There is a comprehensive programme of CLPL on offer linked to all aspects of the learning, teaching and assessment cycle for all practitioners. 112 newly qualified teachers engaged with a session focused on effective learning, teaching and assessment. All participants indicated an increase in confidence to develop effective questioning techniques and 98% increased confidence in providing effective feedback to learners.

'Excellent Experiences for All' is a framework for learning, teaching and assessment in East Renfrewshire and is used by all educational establishments to support staff in delivering experiences and securing outcomes of the highest quality for all learners.

The commitment to provide high quality CLPL alongside the department's learning, teaching and assessment framework is leading to improved experiences for children and young people.

## Literacy and English Strategy

In session 2023-24, the recommendations from the Collaborative Improvement Visit (CIV) carried out across a range of establishments informed the development of a refreshed strategy for Literacy and English 2024-27.

The CIV 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 refreshed 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. 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.

### OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

Isobel Mair pupil Jason Gray won his award in the Creativity category for his work in the electronic dance music genre, Jason is a composer, performer and producer of many music tracks and uses the latest technology to lay down the beats. Jason, who has already created an album of tracks, is dedicated to his music and is self-taught, making him an inspiring role model for anyone wishing to pursue a creative dream.



## Numeracy & Maths Strategy

A comprehensive CLPL programme is ongoing to support the aims of the Numeracy and Maths strategy (2023-26). Staff across sectors were provided with opportunities to engage in activities with Education Scotland, Young Enterprise Scotland (Scotland's Financial Schools), West Partnership and our ERC Maths Champions Network/ PT Subject Group. There are trained 'Maths Champions' in each establishment who are provided with support to lead in this area. Regular network meetings allow for the sharing of good practice and continued professional learning opportunities for the identified staff across the authority. The ERC Numeracy & Maths Hub continues to be updated regularly with support, guidance and research to support learning, teaching and assessment in this curricular area. This is contributing to the capacity and confidence of staff to teach Numeracy and Mathematics.

From August 2023, a full time teacher was seconded (using Covid reserves funding) to support learners across a range of primary schools to reduce any gaps in learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a key focus on equity groups. 152 learners across P2 – P7 were targeted in 6 schools and were supported in developing their numeracy skills, developing more positive attitudes towards numeracy and mathematics, and increasing confidence in their own capabilities. All learners involved made progress with their numeracy and maths goals.

## Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy

Our refreshed Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy 2024-27 was approved by Education Committee in November 2023.

100% of our schools have achieved the Digital Schools Award, an externally recognised three-step programme which assesses and recognises excellence in the use of digital technology in schools. East Renfrewshire Council is the first local authority in Scotland to achieve this standard across all schools.

*“Digital technology is very effectively used by staff and young people across the curriculum to enhance the learning experience. This has led to the school becoming a mentor school for schools in the local authority.”*

**St Luke’s HS, Education Scotland Inspection  
Mar 2024**

A Principal Teacher: Equity (Digital Inclusion) was recruited as part of the Strategic Equity Funding Plan 2022-26. The PT plays a key role in implementing the above strategy and building the confidence and capacity of staff to make the full curriculum accessible for children with specific barriers to learning.

During 2023-24, East Renfrewshire worked with Education Scotland to develop accessibility features of devices in classrooms. The enhanced use of these accessibility features has increased direct access to learning for learners with Additional Support Needs. Learners with English as an Additional Language (EAL) benefit from software such as translated subtitling within PowerPoint Online, translation features within Google Workspace for Education and the use of Immersive Reader. Investment in resource and training from the department has ensured the use of such features are becoming routinely used in classrooms and have been shown to help EAL learners to more effectively contribute to learning activities in our schools.

Practitioners have accessed a range of CLPL opportunities that allow them to make the most effective use of digital technology to enrich learning and teaching and develop the digital skills of their learners. Devices from our Digihub are loaned to schools with support provided by the Principal Teacher: Equity (Digital Inclusion) to ensure they are used to best effect. Platforms such as the Digihub Digest and ICT Coordinators’ meetings are used to

disseminate information about innovative and emerging technologies. All education establishments have a trained Digital Leader with the ability to share practice to facilitate professional learning in the appropriate and effective use of digital technology. In March 2024, a Digital Leaders Conference was hosted by Giffnock Primary School, with pupils from across East Renfrewshire sharing their digital learning experiences with their peers and staff. Collaboration between schools stemmed from this event, with a few staff and pupils having follow up sessions.

Digital surveys carried out during 2023-24 demonstrate that most learners (86%) agree that digital devices help them learn in the classroom / playroom and most practitioners (82%) agree that relevant professional learning in digital technology has positively impacted on their practice.

Supplementing formal education, extra-curricular digital clubs target learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. Grant funding awarded to East Renfrewshire Council through the Digital Xtra Fund during 2023-24 was used to deliver the DigiSTEM Club for identified learners from Carlibar and St. John’s Primary Schools.



## Adult Learning

During 2023-2024, Adult Learning Services successfully delivered a wide range of learner centred courses and programmes. Overall numbers increased significantly this year with 200 adults engaging with a range of programmes. 82 adult learners identified work related learning goals and 99% achieved these.

Staff also delivered a range of learner centred courses for parents to meet their identified needs including, English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) for Parents (and online hub), Family Learning Cafés, Wellbeing for Parents group and Incredible Years. 86 parents identified family learning goals and 98% reported improved skills and confidence in relation to these.

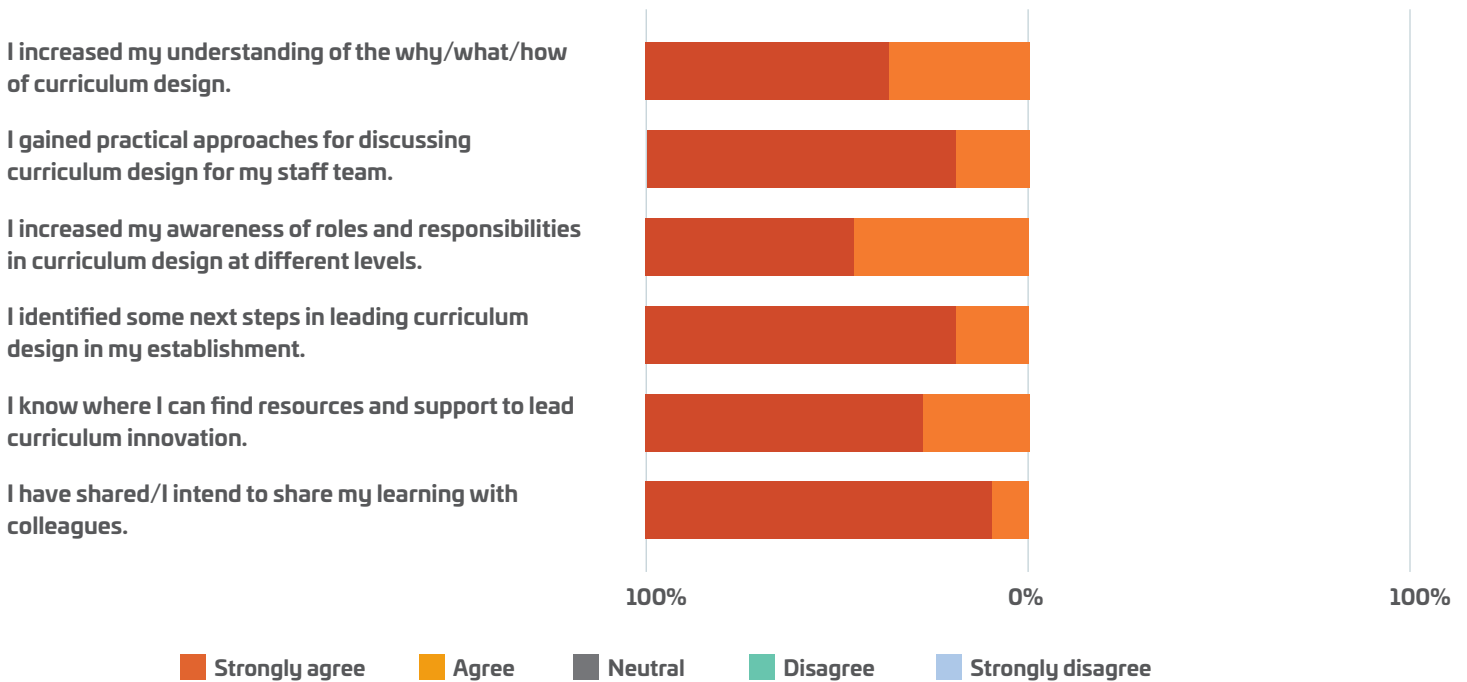
The United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply programme, which focusses on improving maths and numeracy skills and confidence for adults, provided 15 courses with 94 adults registered across all of the interventions. Learning opportunities on offer included; 3 SQA courses, Nutrition with Numbers, Financial Numeracy, ESOL and Numbers, Maths & Health course (as well as general numeracy courses. Multiply staff delivered a range of courses targeting parents. In partnership with Mearns Primary, a need was identified for a SQA Maths course in the school with 11 parents gaining accreditation from National 3 and progressing to complete National 5 Maths. A family learning course was also developed and delivered, Learning Maths Together, for parents and their children in P5, P6 and P7.

33 adults, including East Renfrewshire Council and East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust staff, have successfully completed a range of SQA Maths courses with 6 people moving into employment or training programmes/apprenticeships.

## Leading Curriculum Design and Improvement

A group of seven primary school Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) worked with the Quality Improvement Team from October to December 2023 to explore approaches to leading staff in effective curriculum design and improvement. Three sessions on the Why, What and How of curriculum design provided resources and practical activities to use with staff teams, as well as opportunities for Senior Leadership Teams (SLTs) to refresh and extend their own knowledge and skills. A final joint session with head teachers supported SLT to collaboratively plan their next steps to improve the curriculum at establishment level. Following the course, PT and DHT participants reported increased understanding and confidence to lead curriculum improvement in their schools.

*‘It was extremely beneficial to have protected time to discuss our current approach to curriculum design and the next steps required to further improve this.’*  
**DHT participant**



## ‘Looking Outwards’ Curriculum Day

A professional learning day focused on ‘Looking Outwards’ took place in May 2024. The event aimed to support quality, creativity and innovation in curriculum design and improvement. The event was attended by 36 East Renfrewshire DHTs with leadership responsibility for curriculum in primary and secondary schools, along with ten guests from other local authorities and partners from Education Scotland, Community Learning and Development and Youthlink Scotland. A series of workshops were led by the participants to share knowledge, practice and learning about the ‘How’ of curriculum design. Round table discussions focused on ‘being clear on practical approaches’ and ‘using meaningful learning networks’ as key processes in curriculum innovation. Evaluations of the event were very positive with 100% of respondents stating that they intended to share their learning with others. Qualitative feedback from attendees is now being used to shape future support for curriculum design and improvement.

*“Excellent opportunities to hear from other practitioners from different authorities. Speakers were honest about their challenges and successes. They had models for implementation and refreshing to hear about down to earth ideas that busy staff can try.”*

**Participant, Looking Outwards**

*“The relationships and connections built will help to strengthen partnerships and collaborative working across the authority.”*

**Participant, Looking Outwards**

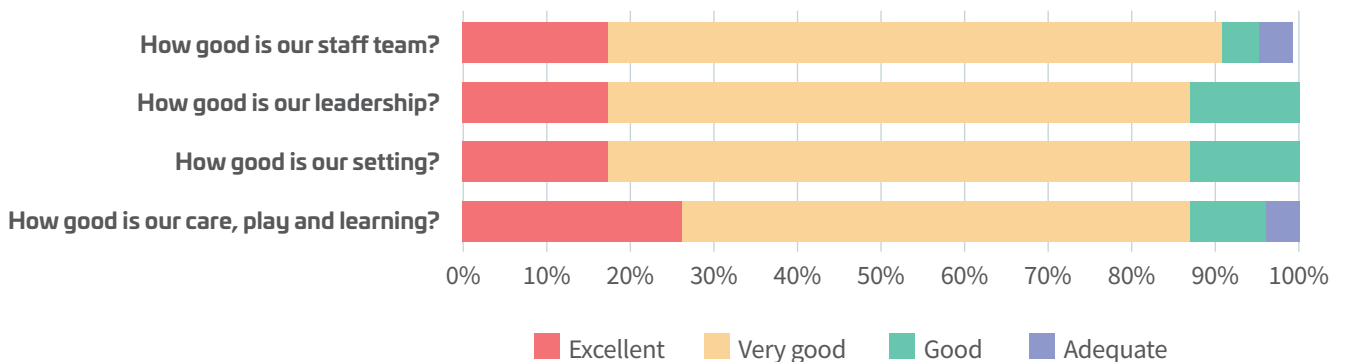
## Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and 1140 hours

All nursery places are allocated using the published priorities with a ballot being held where demand exceeds space available. In session 2023-24, the majority of parents indicated that the setting was more important to them than the model they were allocated. 95% of families applying for ELC were allocated their first choice of setting, rising from 94% in the previous year. 84% also received their first choice of model which is an 8% increase from 2022-23.

The quality of ELC in our local authority settings continues to exceed the National Standard in most settings with (88%) achieving evaluations of very good or better across all key questions as shown in the chart below. This compares very favourably with data published by the Care Inspectorate which shows that nationally 29% of settings, up to 31 March 2024, had evaluations of very good or better across all key questions.

East Renfrewshire continues to invest in its current workforce to ensure that all our staff are highly skilled and motivated. Our staff continue to benefit from our involvement in the West Partnership professional learning opportunities. In addition, the West Partnership has formed a relationship with Edinburgh University, allowing us to access high quality professional learning linked to current research, policy and theory underpinned by the principles of Friedrich Froebel. A further 2 practitioners from our schools and nurseries benefitted from this opportunity in 2023- 24, bringing the total number of Froebelians currently working in East Renfrewshire to 60, with 10 going on to develop their practice further by participating in the Froebelian Futures Leadership programme.

### Care Inspectorate Grades in East Renfrewshire Council Early Learning and Childcare Settings



## Languages Leaders Network

The Languages Leaders Network is a group of practitioners who lead on promoting high-quality language learning in every primary establishment. In October 2023, the network expanded to include the early years sector, taking the number of Languages Leaders across East Renfrewshire primary schools and early years centres to 41. This development will help to further enhance continuity and progression in language learning experiences for children from 3-18.

This session the network focused on learning and teaching approaches to ensure excellent experiences in Modern Languages, with a specific focus on motivating learners through gamification, exploration and investigation, and making global connections. Work also continued to enact and embed updated P6-7 French curricula, with Languages Leaders in several clusters working in partnership with the Quality Improvement Team to develop and deliver their own in-house professional learning for P6-7 teachers across their cluster schools.

All network meetings included a strong focus on effective leadership of languages at establishment level as well as time for cluster self-evaluation of progress and collaborative planning of next steps. From 2022 to 2024, 23 primary and early years practitioners have been awarded GTCS Professional Recognition for Leadership of Languages. As a result, almost all primary schools have made significant improvements to the challenge, enjoyment and relevance provided by language learning experiences.

Representatives from almost all high schools joined the Languages Leaders Network showcase event in May 2024. This created a valuable opportunity for staff across sectors to discuss P7-S1 progression in each cluster. As a result, staff in several clusters have made further plans to work collaboratively across sectors to improve progression next session.

Through this programme practitioners and leaders have increased opportunities to look outwards and connect with networks of ELC settings across Scotland. The professional inquiry and evaluation work undertaken enhances participant's knowledge of child development leading to improved experiences in nursery and primary classrooms for children.

This group of knowledgeable and nurturing educators worked with their children and teams to create cardboard box displays illustrating the developments in each of their settings inspired by their Froebelian practice.



## ELC Leadership Event

Senior leaders in ELC benefitted from a bespoke leadership seminar. This was supported by Education Scotland with contributions from our own leaders who shared their improvement journeys with others. All in attendance evaluated the event positively and welcomed the opportunity to learn from their peers, 100% agreed that it was a worthwhile use of their time as head teacher. In addition to gaining ideas to implement in their own settings, they also suggested follow up professional learning sessions for staff which will be facilitated next session.

*“Excellent opportunity to take time to talk and learn from one another. Sometimes I feel like I attend CLPL and have a huge list of jobs to do once back in the centre. On this occasion I felt that the showcasing was realistic and you could take what you needed, depending where your staff team are and use the ideas and information as part of our manageable improvement cycle.”*

**Participant, ELC Leadership Event**

## Professional Learning in Modern Languages

The Quality Improvement Team provided a wide range of professional learning opportunities that supported class teachers to develop children’s foreign language skills including:

- Practical French
- Spanish for P5-7
- Using Digital Technologies to Enhance Language Learning
- The Multilingual Mindset
- 1+2 for NQTs
- Facilitation of national opportunities such as OU TELT and SCILT Languages Leadership Programme.

The ERC online platform for languages, Lingualab, was further developed to ensure relevant supporting resources linked to the early years and primary curriculum are easily available across French, Spanish, Chinese, Urdu and Gaelic, as well as useful professional reading materials about high quality learning, teaching and curriculum for all stages.

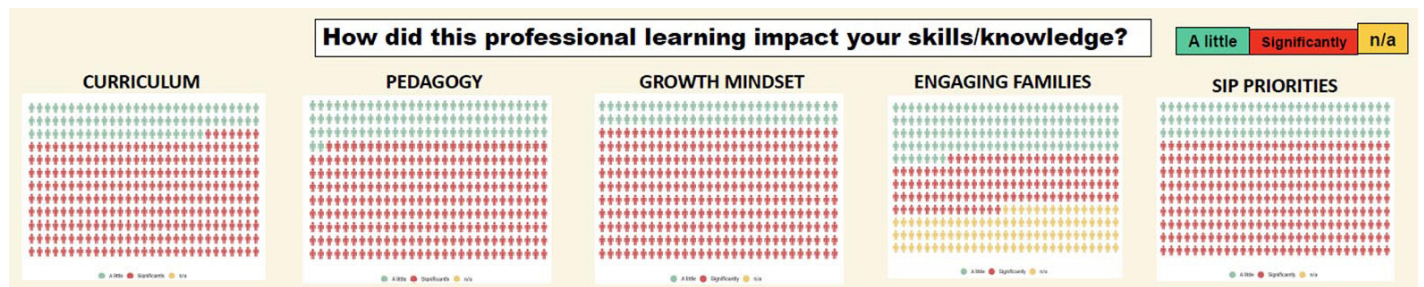


*‘I’m much more confident in teaching French in my class and helping others do the same. The pupils in my class now expect to do some French each day and are enjoying doing so.’*  
**Participant, ERC French CLPL**

As a result, establishments across all sectors were able to access tailored support to create a positive languages culture in their school or setting. In particular, participants rated the impact on school improvement planning, curriculum and growth mindset very highly. Practitioners also reported that increased confidence in pedagogy for teaching languages was leading to more consistent learner experiences of their L2 and L3 entitlements across schools. 17 practitioners opted to further build on this work by focussing on modern languages learning and teaching in their collaborative learning networks.

## China Immersion Trip

In July, 7 pupils from St Ninian’s and Barrhead High Schools travelled to China with pupils from across Scotland to take part in the China Bridge Immersion visit, jointly organised by the Confucius Institute for Scotland’s Schools (CISS) and Tianjin Municipal Education Council. During the trip, pupils further developed their Mandarin skills by taking part in language classes in Tianjin Normal University campus. Pupils were presented with their SQA accredited China Bridge Award at the end of their week of learning. In addition, the young people took part in a wide range of inter-cultural activities including a sports day together with Chinese pupils from our partner school, dumpling making with Chinese families and sightseeing in and around Beijing. The group made friends with other Chinese language learners from across Scotland as well as with Chinese young people from our partner school in Tianjin. All participants thoroughly enjoyed the experience and have been inspired to continue their learning of Mandarin.





## Gaelic Medium Education

The Council opened its first Gaelic Medium Education provision at Thornliebank Primary School in August 2023. Beginning with the establishment of a Primary 1 class in session 2023-24, Bunsgoil Gaidhlig Thornliebank will expand over coming years in a phased approach. School staff worked in partnership with the Quality Improvement Team and third sector partners throughout the session not only to develop excellent learning experiences for the new Primary 1 class, but also to integrate the Gaelic provision within the life and work of the school as a whole. Gaelic learning experiences for other classes, whole-school cultural events focused on celebrating diversity, and wider opportunities within the community such as Gaelic Bookbug, have helped the provision to quickly establish itself as an important part of the school's identity. Throughout the session the education department promoted the availability of Gaelic Medium Education across all early years establishments and enrolment for August 2024 has significantly increased.



## Instrumental Music Service

In the last session, just over two thousand pupils have taken up instrumental tuition, become members of the choir or participated in Singing, Games and Rhymes classes.

This was celebrated in March 2024 through a showcase concert in Paisley Town Hall with 575 performers. There were string orchestras, concert bands, choirs, pipers and a clarsach ensemble. This was the first showcase concert since 2019 and demonstrated the talents of the very young right up to performers who are planning on a future career in music.



## Holocaust Memorial Day

In January 2024, the memorial event, held at the Calderwood Lodge and St Clare's Primary School joint campus, was an evening of music and stories which highlighted the true horror of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides.

There were musical performances from pupils across all secondary schools and pupils from St Ninian's and Mearns Castle High Schools spoke of their learnings through the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Anne Frank Trust.

*"I wanted to email to say how lovely the concert was yesterday, it was so well organised and the music students produced was brilliant. The junior and senior ensembles and choirs were amazing and are testament to the excellent teaching they are receiving from your service"*

**Parent attending the showcase**



## Questionnaire Data

Statistics gathered from questionnaires in 2023-24 showed that:

**92%** of teachers stated that they are given the opportunity to learn and share practice with colleagues from other schools;

**99%** said that their professional learning enables them to reflect on and improve their practice;

**85%** agreed that they are given regular leadership opportunities;

**93%** of parents and carers said they were satisfied with their child's school/setting;

**95%** said that staff treat their child fairly and with respect;

**92%** of children and young people said that their school helps them to understand and respect other people;

**91%** agreed that they have opportunities to take part in school committees or groups;

**84%** feel that they are given the opportunity to influence what and how they learn;

**90%** of parents and carers feel that staff know their child as an individual and 85% feel that staff support their child's emotional and mental wellbeing.

## Resources and Investment

Most early years' settings and schools undertook some participatory budgeting (PB) activity during the session. Projects taken forward cover a wide range of categories including outdoor learning, health and wellbeing, digital learning, educational excursions and improvements to the learning environment. For example, within Giffnock Primary school various projects were taken forward following consultation and collaboration with the Parent Council, School Parliament and direct consultation with specific groups of children. These included a shed to provide safe storage of bikes/toys, the purchase of STEM resources, outdoor equipment the installation of a new digital sound system for enhanced pupil experience. At St Ninian's High School a new pupil support hub was completed following a PB exercise.

### Cross Arthurlie Primary School, Education Scotland Inspection Report September 2024:

*“Senior leaders and staff have created a calm and nurturing ethos across the school. Children benefit from a constructive and positive learning environment. Staff are very effective in ensuring that children's experiences are underpinned by the school values of kindness, respect and confidence. As a result, relationships between children and staff are very positive and respectful.”*



## Facilities Management

Janitorial, cleaning and catering services have continued to provide the highest possible levels of service and standards to all educational and wider council establishments over 2023-24, despite the challenging and reduced financial envelope in which the service has operated within.



### School Provision

During 2023-24, working collaboratively with cross council colleagues, the Education Department oversaw the completion of a number of significant and critical capital investment projects. These projects ensure that we continue to enhance our education estate to provide optimum learning environments with sector leading facilities to our learners, staff and wider communities and ensure sufficiency of places where there is such a demand. The projects include:

- With an ageing school estate, further capital investment has allowed for essential planned multi-year lifecycle replacement works to take place at establishments across the council, focussing on roofs and boilers. This is pro-active action towards ensuring that our hard-working buildings are appropriately maintained.
- The opening of the Neilston Learning Campus in March 2024, which saw St Thomas' and Neilston Primary Schools and Madras Family Centre take up residence in the new state of the art facility mid-year. The site is not yet fully complete with phase 2 of outdoor landscaping, play areas and sporting facilities expected to be completed in late 2024.
- A two classroom extension at Isobel Mair School to provide additional places for our learners.
- The replacement of 4G sports surfaces at St Luke's and Eastwood High Schools.
- The redevelopment and repurposing of an area of St John's Primary School previously used as office space by the council's Leisure Trust, to create St John's Nursery Class. Accepting children from August 2024, the additional early learning and childcare spaces and additional flexibility for families, will initially provide 60 places for two, three and four year olds, with a capacity allowing an increase to 90 if required.



As in previous years, Janitorial and Cleaning Services and Catering Services have been nationally recognised by the United Kingdom's Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) at its national awards following external validation of the services exceptionally efficient and high-quality standards of service.

The very successful janitorial and cleaning service was once again nationally recognised as a finalist in the best performer for building cleaning category, having been an APSE finalist in each of the last 5 years.

The excellent standard of catering service provided to our children and young people was also recognised by APSE and was a finalist in the best performing catering service category.

Food for Life has been successfully achieved for the 11th year in succession along with the rigorous assessment process to become the only council in Scotland to achieve Coeliac UK accreditation which reassures our young people that need a gluten free school meal on a daily basis. The catering service also won the ASSIST Grab and Go meal award for 2023, the final submission was chosen by the young people within our secondary sector.



The Department was delighted that June Cormie, Catering Manager at Barrhead High School, won the PSC (Public Sector Catering) Catering Manager of the Year. This award sees nominations from the entire UK public sector including health care, prisons and private sector providers so the award is highly significant. June's award reflected numerous projects she has led to support staff and children and young people across East Renfrewshire.

Barrhead High school also won the School Food Award team category at the Scottish School Food Awards for the second year in row competing against both local authority and private sector school meal providers.

The Facilities Management services went above expectations to successfully move Neilson and St Thomas' primaries and Madras Family Centre into their new campus home earlier this year. The opening or transitioning of a school would normally take place over the summer holiday period, however despite the move taking place in March, the team excelled in getting the building ready over the course of a long weekend to welcome learners and staff.

The Catering Service works in collaboration with education establishments to ensure fulfilment of the statutory duties of the Health Promotion and Nutrition Act 2007, ensuring that all schools are health-promoting and comply with nutritional regulations. Throughout the year the Catering Service supported leadership teams in primary and secondary schools as part of their inspections by HMIE. The service and schools received very positive feedback from HMIE inspectors on the quality of meals, meeting learners' need, service delivery and dining experiences.

## What are we going to do now?

- Build an assessment capable profession to enable reliable and rigorous tracking of pupil progress in all curricular areas and the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.
- Continue to implement the Numeracy and Mathematics Strategy 2023-2026.
- Continue to implement the Literacy Strategy 2024-2027.
- Continue to implement the Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy 2024-2027.
- Continue to seek investment to improve the indoor and outdoor learning environment for all our children and young people and expand provision as required.

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

Throughout 2023-24, learners, staff members and partners demonstrated a range of achievements. There is an ethos of achievement and high expectation within a culture of self-improvement within all our educational establishments. Children and young people are active, involved and motivated and supported well and provided with opportunities to ensure they succeed. Equity is at the heart of East Renfrewshire's education strategy and attainment results reflect the work of teachers to vigorously support all pupils. The department has rigorous and highly effective approaches to monitor and track the equity of provision for young people across our schools. The analysis of outcomes for children and young people in the key equity groups is a central feature of our approach to self-evaluation and quality improvement. The Education Department and schools use data regularly to raise awareness, monitor progression, build leadership capability and capacity, plan improvement activities, and set targets.

## Raising the bar and closing the gap

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

## Raising Attainment and Achievement

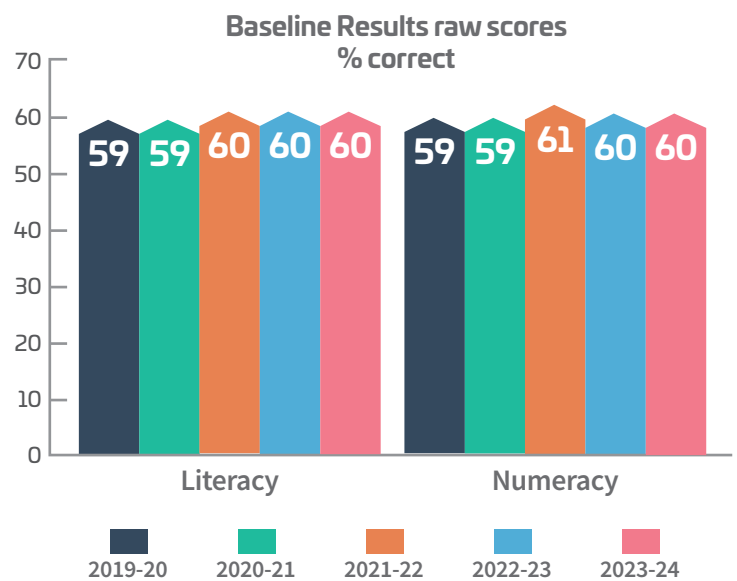
As part of the Education Department's annual improvement planning and reporting cycle, all ELC settings evaluate their performance against key quality indicators for How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare? with schools evaluating against indicators from How Good Is Our School4? The Quality Improvement Team work together with Head Teachers to ensure that each school's self-evaluation is rigorous and takes account of a wide range of evidence gathered from diverse sources and involving all stakeholders.

In 2023-24, 100% of schools continued to evaluate their progress as 'good' or better for raising attainment and achievement. 63% were evaluated as 'very good' and 9% as 'excellent'.

# Attainment, Achievement and Progress

## Baseline Performance

A Baseline Assessment has been in place since 2005-06 to assess children's attainment in literacy and numeracy on entry to primary one. In contrast to the Developmental Milestones, overall performance in literacy and numeracy remains consistent with previous years as shown in the chart below.

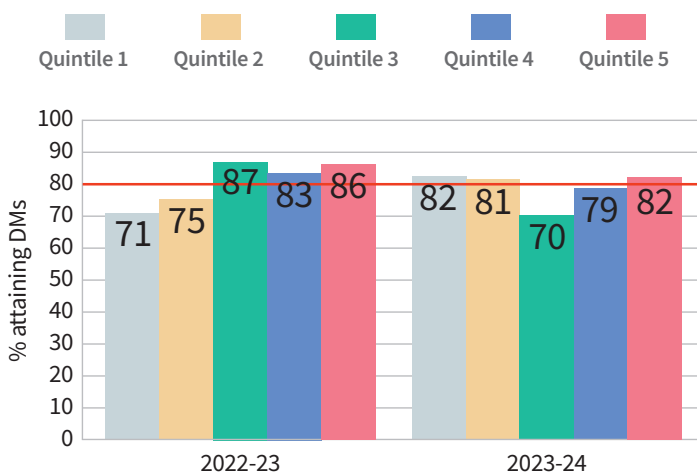


Baseline assessment data in 2023-24 highlighted a gap between the attainment of those living in SIMD Quintile 1 and those in Quintile 5. This poverty related attainment gap has remained at approximately 8 points for both literacy and numeracy.

## Developmental Milestones

Since 2013-14 data has been gathered on the percentage of children achieving the expected levels of development on entry to primary 1. The following developmental components are assessed: Social, Emotional, Attention, Speech, Expressive Language, Receptive Language, Communication, Gross Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills and Behaviour. This session 80% of children achieved their developmental milestones, this is a decrease of 3% on the previous year. The chart below shows the breakdown of performance in developmental milestones by SIMD Quintile.

### Developmental Milestones: History: by SIMD: 2022-23 to 2023-24



SIMD Decile: Percentage of pupils in decile group

As shown in the chart above, the percentage of children in SIMD Quintiles 1 and 2 achieving developmental milestones has increased significantly from the previous year. Whilst there has been a small decrease in the percentage of children achieving developmental milestones in SIMD Quintiles 4 and 5, it is in SIMD Quintile 3 that the most significant change in performance can be seen.

## Curriculum for Excellence Judgements

In 2023-24 almost all pupils in P1, P4 and P7 combined, achieved the appropriate Curriculum for Excellence level of attainment in the Broad General Education as measured by teacher professional judgement of progress in reading and talking and listening, with almost all pupils attaining the expected level in numeracy and writing. The proportions of East Renfrewshire pupils in P1, P4 and P7 combined achieving the expected level in these curricular areas, are significantly higher than the latest published national proportions (2022-23).



### Kirkhill Primary School, Education Scotland Inspection Report March 2024:

*“Relationships between children and staff are highly positive. Across the school community, these trusting and respectful relationships are demonstrated clearly as children work and play together. Children’s learning is underpinned by the school values of perseverance, resilience, respect, optimism, unity and diversity (PROUD). These values are used well by staff to encourage children to succeed and as a result, children’s behaviour is of a very high standard. Almost all children are eager participants in their learning. They are highly motivated and ambitious to succeed. Children are confident and articulate, and speak positively about their learning.”*

## Teacher Professional Judgements

Based on P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	ERC 3 Year Average 2021-22 to 2023-24	National Average 2023-24
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Reading	89%	91%	93%	91%	80%
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Writing	87%	90%	91%	89%	76%
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Talking & Listening	93%	94%	95%	94%	87%
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Numeracy	90%	91%	92%	91%	80%

Literacy and Numeracy stretch aims were identified for primary pupils. Overall targets of 89.5 for Literacy and 93% for Numeracy were set, with improvement towards these targets recorded at 89.3% and 92.2% respectively. Whilst overall attainment in these curricular areas has increased, the most significant increase impacted those living in SIMD Quintile 1 and consequently the stretch gap between the most and least deprived reduced from 27.7% in 2022-23 to 20% in Literacy, and from 24.6% in 2022-23 to 14% in Numeracy.

Based on S3 pupils	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	ERC 3 Year Average 2021-22 to 2023-24	National Average 2023-24
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level – Reading	97%	96%	97%	96.7%	90%
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level – Writing	97%	96%	97%	96.7%	90%
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level – Talking & Listening	97%	97%	97%	97%	91%
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level – Numeracy	98%	98%	97%	97.7%	90%

Based on S3 pupils	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	ERC 3 Year Average 2021-22 to 2023-24	National Average 2023-24
% Attaining Fourth Level - Reading	83%	83%	85%	83.7%	63%
% Attaining Fourth Level - Writing	83%	84%	85%	84%	61%
% Attaining Fourth Level – Talking & Listening	82%	86%	87%	85%	64%
% Attaining Fourth Level - Numeracy	84%	82%	86%	84%	65%

## Senior Phase Attainment

### Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Attainment

Stretch aims were identified for senior phase learners leaving school with 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 5 and 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 6. The overall stretch aims set were 96.4% and 87.9% respectively, with this attainment data due to be published on INSIGHT in February 2025.

For the 2023-24 session, the gap in performance between the most and least deprived (Q1 v Q5) S4 learners achieving 5 or more SCQF level 5 awards decreased from 39% to 35% from 2022-23; this compares favourably to the Virtual Comparator (44%) and National average (40%) for the same measure in 2023-24.

The proportion of S4 learners in receipt of free school meals achieving 5 or more SCQF level 5 qualifications reduced slightly to 51% this year from 55% last session, which is still significantly higher than the national figure of 24.8%.



## SQA

Pupils across East Renfrewshire excelled in SQA qualifications with another year of very high levels of attainment across S4, S5 and S6. This session, S5 learners achieved the highest ever recorded proportion passing five or more qualifications at Higher level. These achievements are a tribute to the hard work and commitment of pupils, and the collected efforts and support of their parents and school staff.

Key achievements include:

- 96% and 94% of S4 pupils achieved 5 or more National 3 and National 4 awards respectively.
- 77% of S4 pupils attained 5 or more passes at National 5 or better.
- 71% of S5 pupils attained 3 or more passes at Higher.
- 52% of S5 pupils attained 5 or more passes at Higher, which is our best ever result.
- At Advanced Higher Level, 42% of S6 pupils achieved one or more passes.
- Mearns Castle High School learners achieved their second highest proportion of S4 learners achieving 5 or more passes at National 5.
- Woodfarm High School learners achieved their second highest proportion of S5 learners achieving 1 or more passes at Higher level.
- Woodfarm and Williamwood High School learners achieved outstanding S5 results for 3 or more and 5 or more passes at Higher level – their best ever results.
- Barrhead High School learners achieved their second highest proportion of 5 or more passes at Higher level in S5.
- St Luke's High School and St Ninian's High School learners increased the proportion of 3 or more and 5 or more Higher passes in S5 compared to last year.
- Eastwood High School learners increased significantly the proportion of 3 or more and 5 or more Higher passes by the end of S6 compared to last year.

### NIF Priority 5

**Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy.**



## Developing the Young Workforce

'The Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) plan continues to focus on curriculum, collaboration and equity. We develop and nurture relationships with employers to support learner experiences and broaden learner pathways. A priority of the DYW School Coordinators is to work with employers to allow our young people to demonstrate and apply these skills in different contexts. In May 2024, a successful Employer Engagement event was held to facilitate new networks and partnerships between DYW School Coordinators and local employers. Over the course of the session 2023-24, and taken from the Scottish Government database where we record these, a total of 1142 work based learning and employer engagement opportunities were organised across our secondary schools, involving 508 employers and with a combined audience of 11425 pupils. All of the above figures are increases on the previous session, and the number of targeted learners with additional support needs involved in these opportunities has also increased.

Our partnership with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) has ensured that our young people, staff and parents receive the most up to date, relevant labour market information to support their learner pathways. Education Scotland and SDS supported the Education Department to offer professional learning on Developing the Young Workforce to all probationer teachers. The approach to developing children's employability skills, including through the SDS Meta Skills framework, in Mearns Primary School was showcased; an increasing number of establishments are embedding this skills framework.'

### NIF Priority 4

**Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.**



## Vocational Education

Vocational Education continues to contribute to the achievement and attainment of young people in the senior phase and supports them to develop skills for the workplace or Further Education in the future. In 2023-24, East Renfrewshire offered more than 60 courses, ranging from SCQF Levels 1 to 8 and provided by a wide range of partner Further Education providers. The progress of our young people is closely monitored to ensure successful outcomes for every young person undertaking a vocational course. This tracking is possible due to the support of college partners and training providers who work well with us to maintain pupil progress and intervene where appropriate, offering further support as required. In 2023-24, 303 learners experienced a positive outcome from their vocational learning, representing 81% of the cohort who started courses on this programme. This represents a decrease from the 377 successful learners (82% of the cohort) in 2022-23, due largely to industrial action throughout 2023-24 which has now stopped.'

## Annual Participation Measure (APM)

As agreed by Scottish Ministers, the Annual Participation Measure (APM) has been adopted in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework as the measure of young people's participation in education, employment, training or other positive post school destination. In 2024, 96.9% of East Renfrewshire 16-19 year olds were participating in a positive outcome, well above the national figure of 92.7% and the highest proportion of any mainland authority of young people actively participating in society in a positive way. A stretch aim of 91.5% of young people living in SIMD Quintile 1 was set and this was exceeded with 95.5% of young people recorded as participating. Similarly, the stretch aim of 98.4% for young people in SIMD Quintile 5 was met with 98.5% recorded, reducing the poverty related attainment gap- from 7.3% to 3%.



## School Leaver Destinations

The highest ever proportion of pupils leaving East Renfrewshire schools went on to university, college, work or training. A total of 1353 young people left East Renfrewshire schools in 2022-23, and in statistics published by the Scottish Government it has been confirmed that 1336 (98.7%) had made a positive next step in their development. This is the highest proportion ever recorded in East Renfrewshire, with the previous best being 98.5% in 2021-22. It is the highest positive destination rate of any local authority in Scotland and well exceeds the national average of 95.9%. East Renfrewshire has compared favourably against the virtual comparator and national averages for this measure over the past five years.

In all of East Renfrewshire's secondary schools, more than 98% of school leavers achieved a positive destination. In Barrhead High School and Woodfarm High School, 100% of their leavers moved into a positive destination.

From summary statistics for follow-up leaver destinations for the same 2022-23 cohort, 97.5% of East Renfrewshire school leavers were in a positive destination in April 2024, our highest ever proportion and comparing favourably to the national rate of 92.8%. These are the latest figures on 2022-23 leavers, as reported on February 2024.

### NIF Priority 3

**Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.**

*“The support I got from positive pathways was completely unlike the support I was able to get anywhere else. The one-on-one and absence of pressure to move forward before I was ready was exactly what I needed. It was an entirely safe space where I was able to make steps forward, however small, knowing there was no expectations on me. I was supported all the way, and every bit of progress I made was recognised. The achievements I have made since then, like going to college and gaining lots of independence and confidence, seemed impossible to me before I went to Positive Pathways. But now they seem like only the beginning, as I look to my future and can now see endless possibilities. There is no doubt in my mind that this would not have been possible without Positive Pathways.”*

**Participating Pupil**

## Convener’s Awards for Outstanding Achievement

The Convener’s Awards for Outstanding Achievement were celebrated in Clarkston Hall in March 2024, with almost 90 young people and groups from across the authority recognised for outstanding achievements in various fields such as sports, creativity, personal achievement, community service and advocacy.

Councillor Andrew Anderson, Convener of Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure, presented all the winners with a certificate and commemorative award. “It’s always fantastic to celebrate such a wide range of achievements by pupils from across all our schools and this is an event I look forward to each year. In every category, it is clear that the pupils have shown dedication and commitment to their chosen pursuits. All of the winners should be incredibly proud of themselves, they are a credit to not only themselves but their families and their school.”

## What are we going to do now?

- Continue to support and challenge ELC settings and schools to be data informed in their approaches to lifting attainment for all.
- Review and update the Developing the Young Workforce Action Plan 2025-2028.
- Offer a range of learning opportunities for adult learners to gain skills for learning, life and work.
- Central administrative support services and Facilities Management will continue to effectively contribute to departmental and educational establishments’ improvement priorities.
- Continue to work in partnership with ELC settings, schools and ERC Culture and Leisure Trust to ensure all children and young people have high quality opportunities for achievement that are recognised and celebrated.





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