

Department of Business Operations and Partnerships

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

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Education Committee will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Eastwood Park, Giffnock, on **Thursday, 6 February 2025 at 10.00 a.m.**

The agenda of business is as listed below.

Yours faithfully

Louise Pringle

LOUISE PRINGLE

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. PRESENTATION TO FACILITIES MANAGEMENT CLEANING SERVICE IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR BEST PERFORMER UK APSE AWARD

Presentation by the Head of Education Services (Performance and Quality Improvement)

4. EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON ST THOMAS' PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report by the Director of Education (copy attached, pages 3 – 24)

5. SPOTLIGHT ON DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE

Presentation by the Head of Education Services (Performance and Quality Improvement)

6. DRAFT STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2023 - 2024

Report by the Director of Education (copy attached, pages 25 – 68)

7. DRAFT LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025-2028

Report by the Director of Education (copy attached, pages 69 – 84)

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

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One of EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2025

Report by Director of Education

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON ST THOMAS' PRIMARY SCHOOL

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To inform Education Committee of the report by Education Scotland on St Thomas' Primary School.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) recognise and comment on the achievements of St Thomas' Primary school as outlined in Education Scotland's report; and,
- b) approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

BACKGROUND

3. St Thomas' Primary School was inspected by a team from Education Scotland in September 2024. The inspection covered key aspects of the work of the school and identified particular strengths and areas for improvement using the Education Scotland six-point scale and the self-evaluation framework *How Good is our School?*

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

5. The full model evaluates 4 quality indicators, with the short model focusing on 2. Both models include an evaluation of Learning, Teaching and Assessment and Raising Attainment and Achievement.

6. The school was inspected using the full model, with an evaluation for 4 quality indicators and a short report which details the strengths and areas for improvement. The report was published in January 2025 and is attached as Appendix 1. It has been issued to staff, parents, local elected members, the Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure and made available to the local community.

REPORT

7. In assessing the indicators of quality in the school, Education Scotland found 2 aspects of the work to be very good: leadership of change and ensuring wellbeing, equality, and inclusion; and 2 areas to be good: learning, teaching and assessment and raising attainment and achievement.

8. This is a positive report on an East Renfrewshire establishment, with the evaluations and report matching the department's evaluations and the improvement journey of the school.

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

- The new head teacher has brought stability and cohesion to St Thomas' Primary School through her effective leadership within a short timeframe. She led the school admirably through the transition to a new shared campus, where staff and children feel settled and motivated in their new environment.
- Senior leaders have very clear approaches to understanding children's learning and wellbeing needs. Staff focus on children who need extra support and working as a team, they meet children's needs very well.
- Almost all learners across the school demonstrate the school values consistently. Across the school there is a strong, positive and inclusive ethos, where children benefit from respectful and caring relationships with their peers and with staff.

10. It was particularly pleasing that the leadership by the relatively new head teacher was highlighted by the inspection team, along with the effective use of data to bring about improvement, especially for those experiencing poverty:

- *Since her appointment, the new head teacher has successfully implemented a period of stability, evidence-based school improvement and effective strategic leadership. Her appointment shortly preceded the school's move to a new shared campus and significant changes to the teaching team. Through her organised, calm and industrious approach, she has quickly created a cohesive, highly motivated and professional team.*
- *All staff understand clearly the social, cultural and economic context of the school community. Using careful and detailed analysis of school data, the head teacher carefully tracks the progress of key equity groups to help identify where targeted additional support is necessary. This process strengthens teachers' understanding of learners' needs and informs decisions on how to maximise the impact of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF).*

11. The inspection team identified 2 areas for improvement:

- Staff should raise attainment further by setting all learning experiences at the appropriate pace and level of challenge. This should ensure that all children make the best possible progress.
- Senior leaders should extend the range of moderation opportunities for staff to participate in, beyond the school. As staff develop their experience, this should lead to increased breadth and depth in children's learning.

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

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

14. Education Scotland will make no further reports in connection with the inspection of St Thomas' Primary School.

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

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

17. Education Committee is asked to:

- a) recognise and comment on the achievements of St Thomas' Primary school as outlined in Education Scotland's report; and,
- a) approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
6 February 2025

Convener Contact Details

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Appendices

1. [Education Scotland Report on St Thomas' PS](#)
2. St Thomas' PS Action Plan

Summarised inspection findings

St Thomas' Primary School

East Renfrewshire Council

21 January 2025

Key contextual information

St Thomas' Primary School is a denominational primary school serving the community of Neilston in East Renfrewshire. The associated secondary school is St Luke's High School in Barrhead. In March 2024, the school re-located to new, purpose-built premises. St Thomas' Primary School now shares Neilston Learning Campus with Neilston Primary School and Madras Family Centre. The current role is 146, arranged across seven single-stage classes.

The headteacher was appointed in June 2023. She is the fourth headteacher, including acting headteachers, in six years. During the 2023/24 session, there were significant staffing changes within the school. In August 2024, four new class teachers were appointed. At the same time, four members of staff, the acting deputy headteacher and the acting headteacher left the school. The senior leadership team now consists of the headteacher and one principal teacher.

38.2% of children live within Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles 3 and 4. The remaining 61.8% live in deciles 7 to 9. The school reports that 32% of children have additional support needs. This compared with 21% in primary schools in the local authority and 30% in primary schools nationally.

1.3 Leadership of change

very good

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

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

- Since her appointment, the new headteacher has successfully implemented a period of stability, evidence-based school improvement and effective strategic leadership. Her appointment shortly preceded the school's move to a new shared campus and significant changes to the teaching team. Through her organised, calm and industrious approach, she has quickly created a cohesive, highly motivated and professional team. Together they ensure that children benefit from an organised, welcoming, pleasant and comfortable environment. The commitment and professionalism of the staff reflect well the school values of love, faith and understanding.
- As the school community moved towards their relocation, senior leaders consulted effectively with children, parents, staff and partners on all aspects of the move, including the design of the learning environment. Children discuss confidently how they helped shape the new school and made short films about the new building to share with parents and partners. They celebrated the opening of the new shared campus with the community. Children, parents and partners praise the smooth transition, facilitated by all members of staff. Children settled well in the new environment. They had a good understanding both the layout of the school and the expectations of sharing a campus with a much larger group of children.
- Senior leaders reviewed the school's vision, values and aims in collaboration with the school community. Almost all children can articulate confidently the school values of love, faith and understanding and the school 'dispositions' of creativity, resilience, independence, curiosity, and bravery. Children and young people worked in partnership with the learning cluster to

create video presentations where children discuss and share their values. The aim of the learning community is to nurture every child's unique God given talents to enable them to flourish in a climate of high expectations, innovation and creativity. This belief underpins the work of everyone in the school.

- All staff understand clearly the social, cultural and economic context of the school community. Using careful and detailed analysis of school data, the headteacher carefully tracks the progress of key equity groups to help identify where targeted additional support is necessary. This process strengthens teachers' understanding of learners' needs and informs decisions on how to maximise the impact of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Senior leaders include information from the needs analysis in plans which enable teachers to respond effectively to children's needs. Key partners in the Joint Support Team include educational psychologists and relevant professionals from health or social work. They ensure a continued focus on improving outcomes for children who require additional support.
- Senior leaders use PEF very effectively to provide targeted support for identified children. They invite consultation with parents and discuss how they plan to spend PEF with members of the parent council, who are satisfied that it is spent wisely. The headteacher guides those staff leading on specific projects to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. There is clear evidence of a positive impact on identified children. For example, baseline measures were taken before children's involvement in a forest-based outdoor learning initiative, then after participation, throughout a school session. Children experienced improved relationships in school, increased confidence and engaged more enthusiastically in learning across the curriculum.
- At all levels, staff improve their own practice through critical reflection, by assuming leadership roles and professional learning. This includes training in areas such as trauma-informed practice, daily literacy learning, child protection and safeguarding. A few teaching staff undertake post-graduate study in areas which are relevant to children's needs. They identify masters-level courses and use their skills to work towards improved outcomes for children. All teachers engage in practitioner-enquiry research projects. They establish baseline measures and aim to measure the impact of specific interventions or teaching approaches. This is helping teachers to identify which aspects of their practice are having the most positive impact on children's learning. For example, teachers led on a recent initiative to provide identified children with access to outdoor learning incorporating bushcraft skills. Practitioner enquiry showed evidence that participation in learning across the school week improved. Participating children developed skills in teamwork, cooperation and increased their respect for and connection with the environment.
- Teachers link clearly their professional learning to the school improvement plan, which is relevant, appropriate and reflects the collective vision. Senior leaders worked with teachers and consulted with parents and children to identify appropriate improvement priorities for the school. Priorities have a strong focus on improving consistency across learning and teaching, promoting individual and collective self-evaluation and developing and sustaining the strong culture of inclusion.
- All teaching staff engage in regular self-evaluation through dialogue with the wider staff team and during individual discussions with the senior leaders. The highly-reflective teaching team are receptive to professional critical evaluation and are keen to work collaboratively to share expertise and best practice. The headteacher has protected time for collaboration within the teaching team. As planned, senior leaders should consult with staff on how this will best meet the needs of the newly formed team. Staff should work together to capitalise on the range of expertise and enthusiasm which is evident in the teaching team.

- Working with the school community, the headteacher has devised a strategy to raise attainment and achievement, which includes reviewing systems for quality assurance. She has implemented effective core systems to track and monitor children's progress. This is helping the newly formed team to understand and address gaps in children's learning. All staff demonstrate a focus on raising attainment for identified children. The headteacher should continue to monitor the effectiveness of this strategy to raise attainment of all.
- Children and families are involved in leading change within St Thomas' in a variety of ways. The transition steering group included children, parents and staff from both primary schools on the campus. They represented pupil and parent forums and influenced decisions about the new building. Working with the neighbouring school, this has developed into the new pupil parliament. This new representative group is fostering effective collaboration between the two school communities and provides a platform to enhance children's rights. Senior leaders have also introduced participatory budgeting, allowing children and parents to decide democratically on how portions of school funds should be spent. Within the school improvement plan, the headteacher has identified the need to establish further pupil leadership opportunities. As planned, senior leaders should work with children to use the 'How good is OUR school?' resource to help strengthen children's confidence in directing and supporting change.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment**good**

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

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

- Across the school, all staff create and maintain a very positive and nurturing ethos which is underpinned by the school's values. There is a strong focus on children's rights and promoting positive relationships. Links with neighbouring establishments are very positive and benefit the whole school community. Children behave well and are polite and respectful to each other, adults and visitors to the school.
- Almost all learners across the school demonstrate positive behaviour consistently. The ongoing development and application of the school's promoting positive relationships policy is supporting improvement in this area. Most children enjoy the tasks they are set and are respectful when they approach adults with questions or concerns. The positive ethos in the school reflects children's behaviour in lessons and at play times.
- Most children are enthusiastic and keen to learn. Across all stages, children experience a balanced combination of whole class lessons, independent working and opportunities to work in groups and with other children. All children benefit from class discussions and respond positively by contributing with relevant ideas and opinions. Teachers should ensure that all lessons are sufficiently challenging and provide children with more responsibility to lead their learning. This will allow children to learn at a quicker pace and support them to extend their learning in line with their interests and curiosity.
- In most lessons, teachers' explanations and instructions are clear. Almost all teachers share learning intentions and how children can be successful in their learning. In a minority of lessons, teachers are beginning to encourage and support children to co-create success criteria. Senior leaders should continue to support staff with this to ensure there is consistency and effectiveness in this area of teachers' practice.
- Children contribute effectively to the life of the school and wider community in a range of well-planned activities. In the 'Mini-Vinnies' group, children work together to help others in their school and local community. The group gathers items for distribution to those in need and helps to entertain local older adults at events held at the church hall. In Laudato Si, children take action to care for nature and learn about social and environmental issues. All staff value children's contributions and respond positively to their suggestions. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon.
- Most teachers meet the learning needs of children well, in particular for those children who require additional support. However, a few teachers are not yet providing learning activities that meet the needs of all children in the classroom including the most able. In most lessons, teachers set interesting work, at an appropriate level. In a minority of lessons, teachers spend too much time consolidating learning without giving children extra challenge.

- Most teachers use questioning well to assess children's understanding and build on prior learning. They should now enrich their questioning to include the use of higher order questioning and thinking time to scaffold, extend learning and challenge all learners.
- In the early stages, staff are beginning to use play pedagogy in line with national guidance. They are developing teaching approaches using play to support children to practise their skills in a range of contexts. Senior leaders support this well by providing time for professional learning and teacher collaboration. At the early stages, children would benefit from increased pace and challenge to support them to develop fully their learning. Teachers should add depth to learning by observing children playing, then providing well-timed interactions to develop and enhance children's learning.
- Teachers make appropriate use of technology to support children's learning. For example, they use interactive whiteboards to enhance learning activities. Children use digital tablets to take photographs and play games which reinforce learning. Teachers should continue to increase children's use of digital technologies across learning. For example, they should provide opportunities for children to undertake research and to develop their presentation skills.
- Teachers routinely take children's learning outdoors. There has been a particular focus on using outdoor skills to build children's resilience and emotional regulation. Staff use local woodland well to support identified children with their social, emotional and learning needs.
- In most lessons, teachers use formative assessment strategies to check for understanding. Staff provide children with feedback which supports their engagement and understanding. Across most classes, staff share written and verbal feedback to help children improve their work and inform next steps. As planned, senior leaders should continue to develop a consistent approach to what high-quality effective feedback looks like. This should improve the consistency of approach across the school and further strengthen children's understanding of themselves as learners.
- Staff plan appropriately over different timescales to meet the needs of learners and use a well-established assessment overview. Teachers should continue to explore and develop approaches to planning to ensure consistently high-quality learning experiences across all areas of the curriculum. Senior leaders use national benchmarks in professional dialogue with teachers, to support and challenge staff in moderating their professional judgements. Staff are beginning to work with colleagues within their cluster to inform moderation of their judgement of a level. As they develop their understanding and experience, this should lead to increased challenge, pace and depth in children's learning.
- Senior leaders meet regularly with teachers to discuss children's progress, achievement and attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. They use robust processes to monitor and evaluate children's progress. They identify effectively individuals and groups of children who have gaps in their learning. They plan well to provide effective interventions strategies and appropriate additional support. This includes planning for children facing additional challenges, for example children whose home language is not English and those living with financial hardship. Senior leaders and teachers evaluate the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve outcomes for identified learners. This helps to provide an accurate picture of children's attainment over time.
- Teachers are beginning to engage with colleagues across the cluster in the moderation of writing activities. This is helping staff to become more confident in their professional judgements in literacy. As planned, senior leaders should now support a wider range of moderation opportunities across all curricular areas within the cluster and campus settings.

2.2 Curriculum: Learning pathways

- The curriculum is shaped by the school's vision and Catholic ethos. Across all stages, children receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers use a range of local authority learning pathways to ensure progression in learning in literacy and English, numeracy and mathematics and health and wellbeing. Teachers plan for coverage and progression across the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) across all subjects. The curriculum supports children to build on their prior learning and allows teachers to tailor pathways to meet the needs of children who require additional support. Teachers should continue to ensure children have access to high-quality learning in relevant contexts, capitalising on opportunities for skills progression, challenge, personalisation, and choice. They should continue to make appropriate links across the curriculum with literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to help raise attainment.
- Learning which makes links across different subjects is well-planned in line with national guidance. The school's specific 'Big Question' approach supports personalisation and choice, through contextualised learning in an area of interest to the children.
- All teachers have a shared understanding of good quality outdoor learning and plan meaningful opportunities for this across the curriculum. Staff use a range of outdoor spaces well to facilitate outdoor learning experiences for children. This includes targeted wellbeing interventions in local woodlands. Teachers provide two hours of physical education each week, following local authority progression pathways.
- Well-planned transition work begins in P6 and continues into P7 in partnership with other schools in the cluster and the local secondary school. There are well-received, effective enhanced transition programmes in place for children who require additional support.
- There is a progressive programme of learning in French from P1 to P7. In P5-7, children are beginning to learn Spanish. Children learn their language skills in discrete lessons, then apply these throughout the week in other areas of the curriculum.
- Children in all classes receive regular religious education linked to 'experiences and outcomes for religious education in Roman Catholic schools' and the school follows guidelines for religious observance. Children learn about other faiths through a progressive learning pathway.
- Children in the upper school are beginning to link learner dispositions to skills for learning, life and work. As planned, staff should now introduce this across the school to ensure consistency and links to the world of work for all children.
- Learning for sustainability is embedded well across the curriculum through a focus on children's rights, global citizenship opportunities and environmental justice through Laudato Si.

2.7 Partnerships: Impact on learners – parental engagement

- Senior leaders and staff have developed highly effective partnerships with parents. They develop positive relationships with families, based on mutual respect and trust. Staff are fully committed to supporting all children and families. Parents appreciate that staff know their children very well as individuals, and that this contributes to the welcoming, nurturing ethos. Almost all parents report that they feel their child is safe. They recognise that the school offers a supportive learning environment for children.
- Staff communicate effectively with parents through newsletters, weekly spotlight emails, a website, an online learning tool and social media. Parents support the school well by attending planned events. These include Meet the Teacher, class Masses, workshops about learning and Health and Wellbeing and 'Tea, Toast and Prayers.' Parents enjoy these events, and a few would like further opportunities to learn alongside their child at school.
- Parents receive information about the work of the Parent Council through social media and email. The Parent Council engages well with the school. They raise funds to enhance learning opportunities and to reduce the Cost of the School Day. They are consulted about and support school improvement priorities.
- A few parents would like further advice on how their children's progress is assessed and would like more information about what their children are learning within the 'Big Question' approach.

2.1 Safeguarding

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

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

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

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- Across the school there is a strong, positive and inclusive ethos. Children benefit from respectful and caring relationships with their peers and with staff. As a result, children are nurtured and safe. Almost all children are proud of their school and have a sense of belonging to the school community.
- Children's wellbeing is supported well by strong relationships, which are built on trust and respect. Children feel valued and safe at school. Almost all children and parents either agree, or strongly agree that staff treat children fairly and with respect. Almost all agree or strongly agree that the school helps children to feel confident and that staff know the children very well. Children understand the school's commitment to upholding their human rights and have received accreditation for their work in this area. Older children articulate their knowledge of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and why it is important to be kind and show respect.
- Supportive and patient staff work with a few children who struggle to maintain a full day in the busy classroom environment. Staff create interesting, high-quality experiences for children who require support to regulate their behaviour and maintain positive interactions with their peers. During 'community connections', identified children spend time learning key life skills in the community. For example, they practice socialising in public spaces, using public transport and paying for services with money. For children who require this additional support, their learning is divided well to ensure a balance of classroom-based activities and healthy outdoor experiences.
- Children appreciate the benefit of maintaining loving, caring and understanding relationships. All staff have a collective understanding of the wellbeing indicators. Children understand and use the language of the wellbeing indicators to explain how they feel and what they need. Teachers effectively monitor children's wellbeing and protect times throughout the week where there is a special focus on how children are feeling. Every child engages in sessions known as the Monday Motivator, Wednesday Wonder and Friday Focus. They discuss how they are feeling in relation to the 'dispositions' of creativity, resilience, independence, curiosity, and bravery. Every child experiences a nurturing environment, enabling them to flourish in a climate of high expectations, innovation and creativity.
- Senior leaders have an analytical and systematic approach to understanding children's needs. They invite families to contribute their ideas about how the school can help improve children's wellbeing. Families regularly approach the school to discuss concerns about their children and feel that they receive prompt responses, helping to resolve any issues. Children participate in a wellbeing audit once per term. This measures the extent to which children are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, respected, responsible and included. Senior leaders analyse the results

and devise targeted plans in response to any concerns. Identified children receive emotional support to improve their wellbeing. They participate in wellbeing group sessions, engage with agencies such as ‘families first’ or have individual check-in sessions with staff appointed to lead on wellbeing. As a result, children have a space to talk about any adversity or problems they face and are learning coping skills for their future.

- All children benefit from universal support through a responsive wellbeing curriculum, relevant policies and nurturing practice. Targeted support is planned using detailed Children’s Wellbeing Plans (CWPs), which are reviewed and updated termly, or more frequently as necessary. Senior leaders collaborate with class teachers to produce CWPs, which document and plan for the needs of individual children. Staff collaborate with partners in social work, educational psychology, allied health and local voluntary organisations. Partners are carefully selected to meet the needs of children as detailed in their CWPs. Senior leaders employ a wide range of interventions to support learners’ wellbeing needs. These include small group support for social communication, emotional regulation and fine and gross motor skills. Forest-based outdoor learning, mindfulness sessions and individual check-ins help children increase emotional security and learn skills to regulate their emotions.
- Wellbeing is a key component of the transition process. Senior leaders ensure that relevant information about children’s emotional and social development is shared between stages as well as early years establishments and secondary schools. This helps staff to give children the best possible start in their new surroundings.
- Staff have a very good understanding of their statutory duties and responsibilities to improve outcomes for children. Through annual mandatory training, all staff are familiar with key documents and policy guidelines about child protection, professional codes of conduct, and data protection. Clerical staff share child protection guidance with staff and visitors. Senior leaders provide adults with relevant key information for working with children who have specific needs. This leads to staff supporting children confidently, keeping them safe and protected. Senior leaders record any wellbeing and safeguarding concerns, and any related actions are undertaken timeously and effectively.
- The inclusive, nurturing atmosphere helps children feel a sense of belonging. Children feel valued, included and involved in the life and work of the school. Across the school, children celebrate diversity and promote respect for all faiths. Children independently explore concepts such as resilience, culture and religion through a variety of interesting books, which are prominently displayed in classrooms.
- School staff liaise closely with colleagues from the Carlibar Communication Service to plan jointly for a few children who attend both establishments. This ensures that staff from both establishments understand and meet children’s needs well. It also supports teachers to build on progress made in both settings and to review and set relevant targets for children’s learning. A few identified children enjoy time in ‘The Nest’ where they benefit from small group learning and an enhanced nurturing environment.
- All staff have established very positive partnerships within the community and these have a positive influence on the experiences children receive. Senior leaders and staff work very well with a wide range of agencies and community partners to support both children and families. Senior leaders have forged effective partnerships with the local uniform bank, St Thomas’ Parish, Society of Saint Vincent De Paul (SVDP), the local Credit Union and East Renfrewshire Council Money Advice and Rights Team. These partners support senior leaders to minimise the cost of the school day. Families can access advice on areas such as financial benefits,

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healthy sleeping patterns and positive parenting. Across the school, staff value and respect the dignity and privacy of all families within the school community.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement**good**

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

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

- Overall, children's attainment in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics is good. Most children are achieving expected CfE levels in reading, writing, talking and listening and numeracy. At all stages, a few children are working beyond expected levels of attainment. Most children who require additional support are making good progress from their prior levels of learning. A few children at each stage could make better progress if learning was consistently set at the right level of difficulty for them.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, children make good progress in reading, writing and listening and talking.

Listening and talking

- At early level, most children listen well to instructions, for example in following the class routines. Most listen and chat to each other with interest and take turns, as they play and learn in small groups. A few children at early level need prompted to listen well to others and respect others' viewpoint. They should continue to develop further their skills in listening and talking through play. At first level, most children are developing the skills of turn taking in group work. They understand the difference between fact and opinion. They are ready to learn more about how to decide if a source is reliable. At second level, children share their opinions well and are respectful. They build on the ideas of others and can present effectively at assemblies and in short films.

Reading

- At early level, children are developing their knowledge of initial sounds. They are beginning to use their knowledge of sounds, letters and patterns to read simple words. At first level, children are developing their sight vocabulary of common words and their dictionary skills. They practice 'choral reading' to enhance their confidence reading aloud. Most children are keen to have more opportunity to read aloud as an individual. At second level, children use key reading skills such as predicting, inferring and summarising well. They read with fluency, understanding and expression using appropriate pace and tone.

Writing

- At early level, children are mark-making and have opportunities for emergent writing through play. They create drawings to share their stories and feelings. They should practise forming lowercase letters legibly using a pencil, to increase their control and confidence. At first level, children check their writing to ensure it makes sense. They should continue to make use of spelling strategies when spelling familiar and unfamiliar words. At first and second level, children plan their writing and use feedback to improve their writing. At second level, they use grammar and punctuation skills appropriately to enhance their writing. For example, they understand similes, metaphor and use alliteration to enhance their writing.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, children make good progress in numeracy and mathematics.

Number, money and measure

- At early level, almost all children recognise, write, count and order numbers within 10. All children are developing their number bonds to 10. A minority of children at early level are developing number bonds beyond 10. Children should now work on counting back from 10 and beyond and writing numbers beyond 10. They should focus on developing the formation of the numbers correctly. At first level, children confidently round to the nearest 10 or 100 and understand place value to hundreds, tens and units. They would benefit from more practice of written calculations with exchange and in recalling times tables. They are confident with money and have a good understanding of budgeting in real life contexts. At second level, children confidently partition numbers and understand place value well. They are confident in multiplication and now need to apply this knowledge to understand better division calculations. They have a good understanding of budgeting and how technology has changed the way we pay for items.

Shape, position and movement

- At early level, children are developing their understanding of simple two-dimensional shapes and identify them in their environment. At first level, children identify right angles, and the main features of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They would benefit from further challenge in this area. At second level, children identify right, acute and obtuse angles. Teachers should help them develop further their knowledge of complementary and supplementary angles and use this knowledge to calculate missing angles.

Information handling

- At early level, children are developing their knowledge of colour, shape, size and other properties to match and sort items in a variety of different ways. At first level, most children understand well different types of information handling and how to use these appropriately. They organise and display data effectively using tables and bar graphs. At second level, children collect, organise and display data accurately in a variety of ways, for example, creating surveys, tables, bar graphs, line graphs, and simple pie charts.

Attainment over time

- The headteacher is closely tracking the progress and attainment of children who face single and multiple additional barriers to learning. Senior leaders make good use of this data to allocate PEF efficiently to accelerate progress for these learners. A few of these learners make very good progress in their attainment over time. School data indicates that attainment has been steady for most learners. Children with additional support needs make good progress in their attainment and achievement over time.
- In session 2022/2023, there was 90.7% attendance, which was in line with the national average. There were no exclusions during that period. The headteacher closely monitors attendance and takes appropriate action to address absence. She works proactively with families to ensure attendance issues are addressed. This helps improve outcomes for children as they are in school more often. Attendance in the school has improved over the past year. This is most notable for identified children receiving support. There is a focus on working with families to support improved attendance and staff have introduced robust processes and procedures to maintain improvements.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children are proud of their achievements and celebrate these at whole school events and within classes. Staff encourage families to recognise and celebrate children's achievement

through online platforms and through the weekly 'spotlight' communications. Parents can click on a link in the weekly newsletter to inform school staff of their child's achievements at home and in the community. Monday morning assemblies provide a space to celebrate children's achievements and for them to practise their faith.

- Learners in P4 and P7 celebrate receiving sacraments which are important milestones in their spiritual development. In P6 and P7, learners are actively involved in the Pope Francis Faith Award. Across the school, the strong focus on learning for sustainability provides children with opportunities to be responsible citizens and effective contributors by improving the environment.
- Children achieve success in a variety of sports across the community, winning awards over the last few years at the Neilston Cattle Show. Children's participation in sport and after school activities is tracked and there are successful efforts to target those who are not as active. Staff are beginning to track and monitor the skills children are developing from these activities. Children are increasingly taking up new opportunities. In session 2023-2024, the uptake rose from 43.5% the previous year to 69.1%. Senior leaders plan to ensure this continued tracking of achievement leads to all children applying skills learned at school in a different context.

Equity for all learners

- The headteacher consults with staff and parents on how to use PEF effectively. She uses PEF to provide additional staffing to support successful, targeted interventions in health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. Through careful analysis, the headteacher can demonstrate that interventions are helping to accelerate progress towards closing the gaps in learning for identified children.
- All staff know children and families very well and have a good understanding of the socio-economic background. They are aware of their personal circumstances and potential barriers to learning. They ensure the cost of the school day is reduced through initiatives such as 'pre-loved' stalls. A breakfast cart is available for children at the start of the school day. Children and families have been involved in participatory budgeting, allocating money for educational trips. This supports all children to be included in the life of the school. Senior leaders assist families to access resources and agencies that can provide the right support.

Explanation of terms of quantity

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

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

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



| Area for Improvement | "Staff should raise attainment further by setting all learning experiences at the appropriate pace and level of challenge. This should ensure that all children make the best possible progress." | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| Impact/Outcomes | Action | Personnel | Timescale | Resources | Monitoring/Evaluation |
| <p>Effectively differentiated learning experiences, with appropriate pace and challenge for all learners.</p> <p>The needs of all learners being met, including the most able, leading to accelerated progress and the raising of attainment</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engage staff in systematic data analysis to identify next steps in learning for all Develop collaborative forward planning across levels to ensure consistent expectations and appropriate pace at all stages Develop an approach which ensures rigorous tracking of the progress of more able pupils Ensure a discreet focus on differentiation, pace and challenge within quality assurance through triangulation of SLT and peer learning visits, learner evidence, professional dialogue etc.) Include 'Fact, Story, Action' Model as part of ongoing professional dialogue and target setting process | <p>Teaching Staff</p> <p>SLT</p> <p>M. Kane (HT)</p> <p>SLT</p> <p>Teaching Staff</p> <p>SLT</p> | <p>January 2025</p> <p>Ongoing April-October 2025 (Transition) Tracking Periods</p> <p>January 2025- December 2025</p> <p>Termly</p> | <p>Education Scotland Moderation Cycle</p> <p>Filemaker Pro</p> <p>HGIOS</p> <p>GTCS Professional Standards</p> <p>National Benchmarks</p> <p>Forward Plans including ERC Skills Planners</p> | <p>Assessment and Performance Information</p> <p>Data Analysis</p> <p>Forward Plans</p> <p>QA Procedures</p> |
| <p>Enhanced practitioner capacity to design and implement differentiated playful learning experiences that meet the diverse needs of all learners</p> <p>An increase in pupil engagement, motivation and progress within Early and First Levels</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on differentiation, observation techniques and the effective use of floor books within a playful pedagogy framework Establish a common language and shared understanding of differentiation, observation and assessment amongst P1 and P2 staff through collaborative planning and reflection Implement a structured observation system for observing children's play Establish a floor book protocol with guidelines that effectively document children's learning and progress over time | <p>P1 CT</p> <p>P2 CT</p> <p>C. Kearney (PT)</p> | <p>Termly Focus</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>January 2025- June 2025</p> <p>June 2025 – December 2025</p> | <p>Play Scotland Realising the Ambition</p> <p>Education Scotland: Early Years Toolkit</p> <p>Froebelian Principles</p> <p>ERC Early Years</p> <p>GLOW Site</p> | <p>Short-Term Target Setting</p> <p>Sharing of Practice – particularly Madras FC</p> <p>Quality Assurance Procedures</p> <p>Floor Books and Observation Schedules</p> |

| Area for Improvement | “Senior leaders should extend the range of moderation opportunities for staff to participate in, beyond the school. As staff develop their experience, this should lead to increased breadth and depth in children’s learning.” | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| Impact/Outcomes | Action | Personnel | Timescale | Resources | Monitoring/Evaluation |
| <p>A culture of professional learning and collaboration.</p> <p>Increased consistency of professional judgement of learners’ progress towards, and achievement of, a level.</p> <p>Increased breadth and depth in learning experiences.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce ‘Solution Circles’ to encourage dialogue and support amongst staff 2. Moderate learner progress across levels in collaboration with Neilston Primary School and Madras Family Centre (Early Years Transition) 3. Peer learning visits aligned with whole-school focuses on differentiation and effective questioning and feedback 4. Engage in peer and cluster moderation of Writing 5. Campus moderation of performance information to ensure equity of experience within the community 6. Engage in ERC’s Collaborative Learning Networks (CLN) | <p>Teaching Staff M. Kane</p> <p>Teaching Staff</p> <p>Teaching Staff SLT</p> <p>Cluster Colleagues Campus Staff SLT</p> <p>Teaching Staff</p> | <p>From January 2025</p> <p>From January 2025</p> <p>January-June 2025</p> <p>August 2025-June 2026</p> <p>January-June 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Solution Circles – Forrest, Pearpoint and Colleagues</p> <p>Education Scotland Moderation Cycle</p> <p>PM Writing Performance Information PowerBi</p> | <p>Learning Visit QA Evaluations Moderation – Process and Outcome Documentation Samples of Writing Analysis of Performance Information through Power Bi</p> |

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

Convener Contact Details

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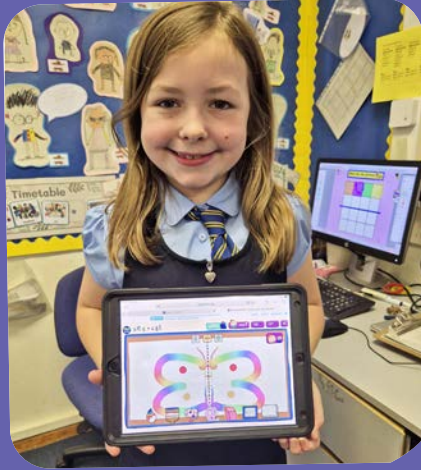
Report Author

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Appendix

1. Draft Standards and Quality Report 2023 - 2024

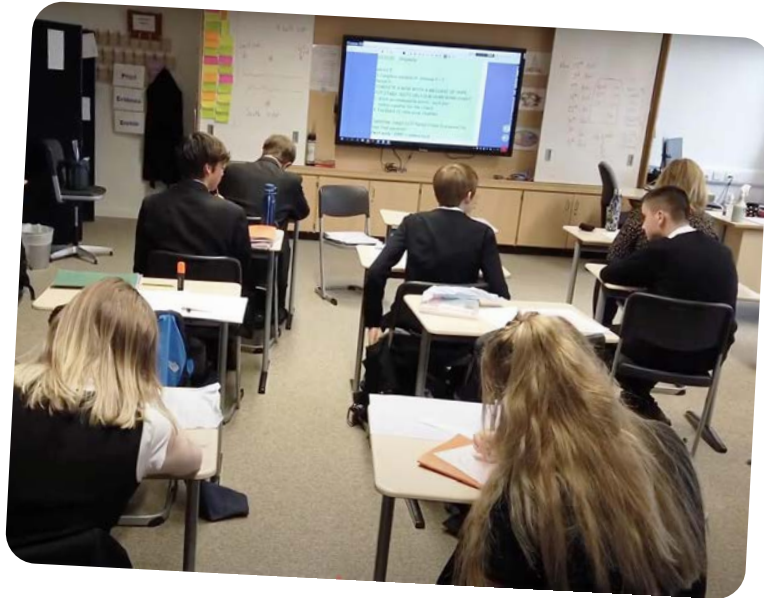
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Standards and Quality Report 2023-24



Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences



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**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



Introduction



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.

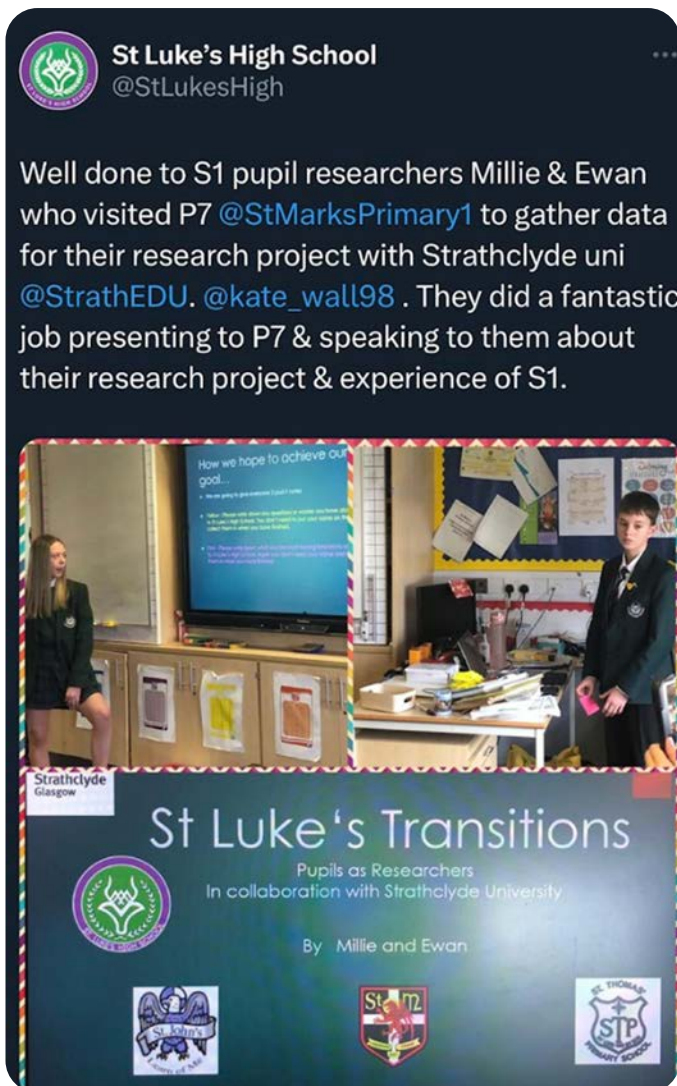
Learners in the broad general education and senior phase also had the opportunity to participate in a learning experience with Strathclyde University. A group of pupil leaders from S1 – S6 had the opportunity to work closely with academic staff from the University to develop their skills as researchers 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.”

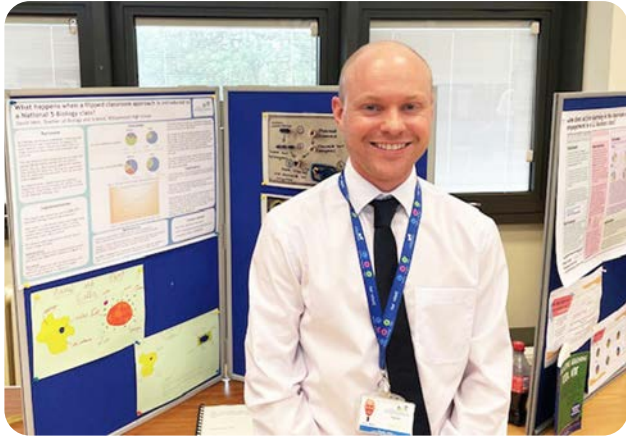
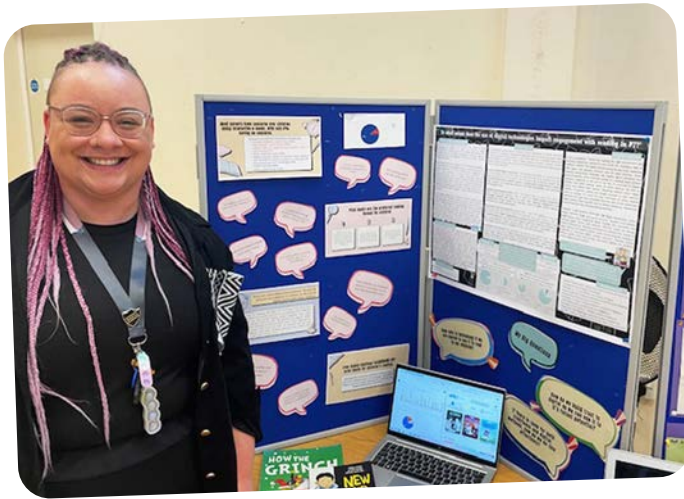
Participating Pupil



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.”

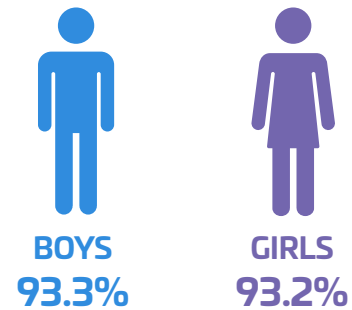
Attendance

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.

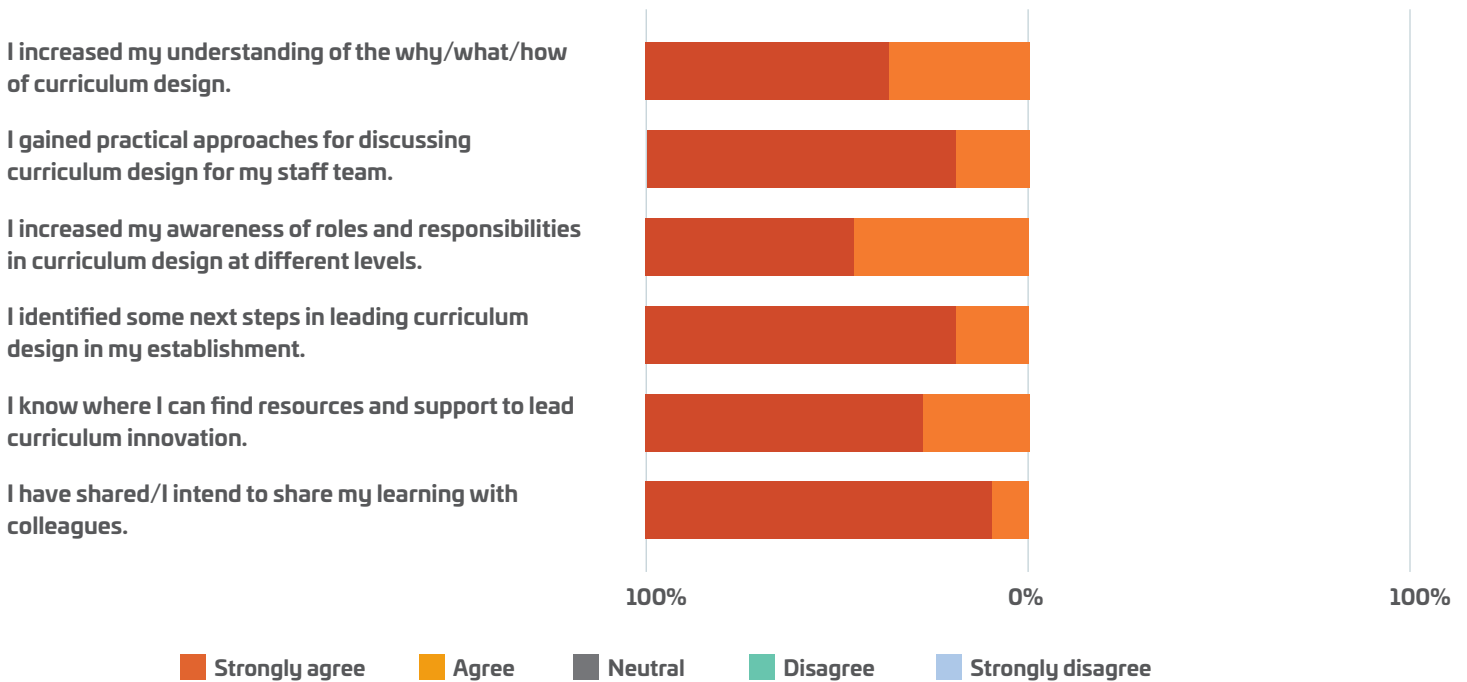
The United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply programme, which focusses on improving maths and numeracy skills and confidence for adults, provided 15 courses with 94 adults registered across all of the interventions. Learning opportunities on offer included; 3 SQA courses, Nutrition with Numbers, 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

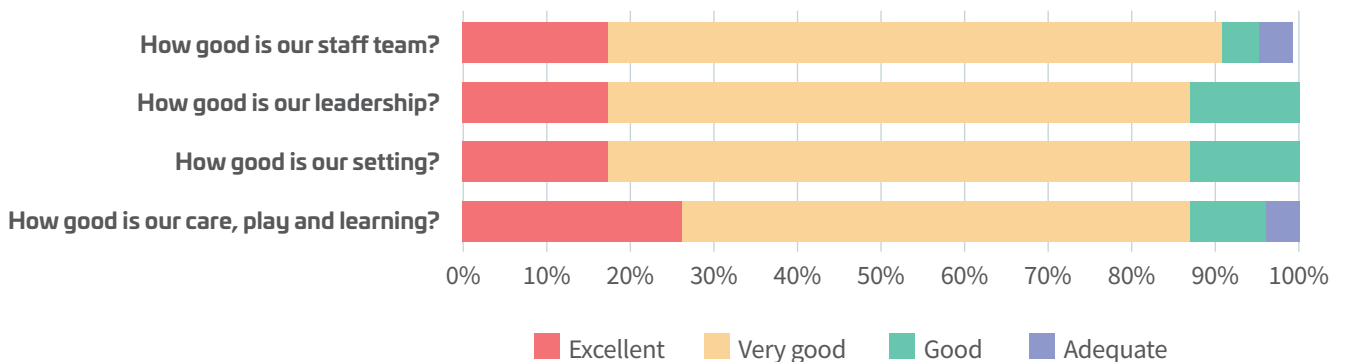
Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and 1140 hours

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.



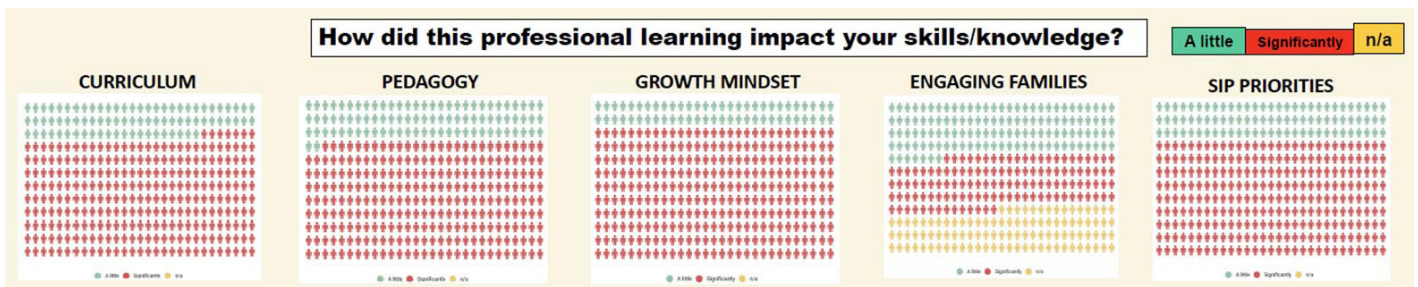
China Immersion Trip

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.

‘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.



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;
- 92%** of children and young people said that their school helps them to understand and respect other people;
- 99%** said that their professional learning enables them to reflect on and improve their practice;
- 91%** agreed that they have opportunities to take part in school committees or groups;
- 85%** agreed that they are given regular leadership opportunities;
- 84%** feel that they are given the opportunity to influence what and how they learn;
- 93%** of parents and carers said they were satisfied with their child's school/setting;
- 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.
- 95%** said that staff treat their child fairly and with respect;

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.

Attainment, Achievement and Progress

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.

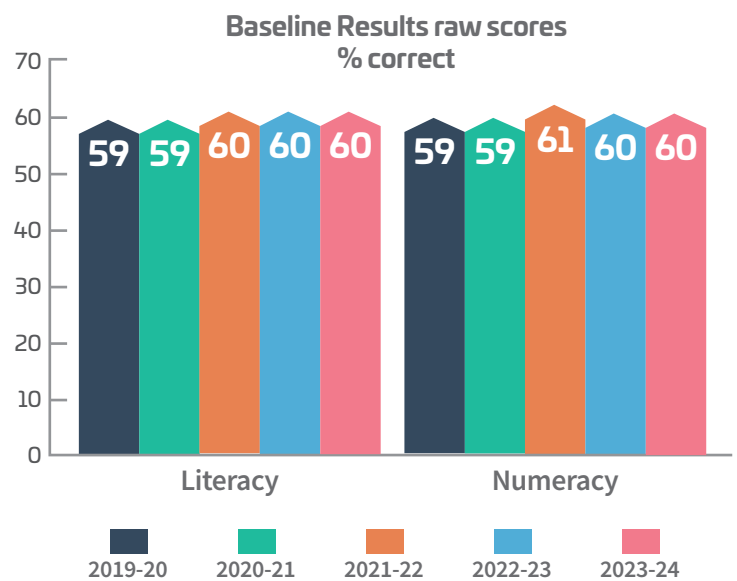
Raising Attainment and Achievement

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'.

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.

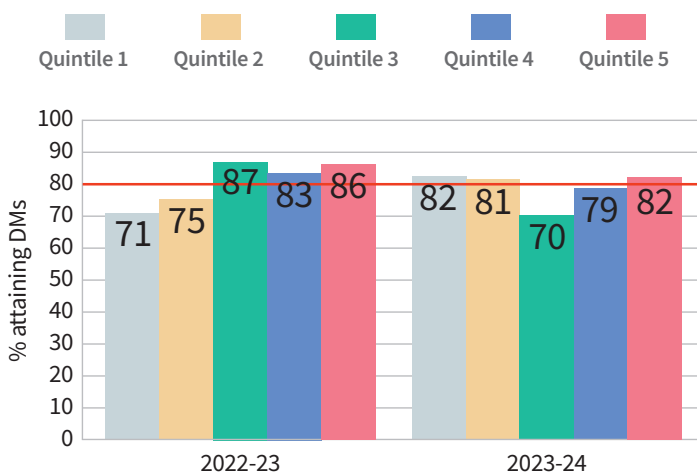


Baseline assessment data in 2023-24 highlighted a gap between the attainment of those living in SIMD Quintile 1 and those in Quintile 5. This poverty related attainment gap has remained at approximately 8 points for both literacy and numeracy.

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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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEETHURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2025Report by Director of EducationDRAFT LOCAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025 - 2028**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is to seek Education Committee approval for the Education Department's draft Local Improvement Plan 2025 - 2028.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Education Committee is asked to approve the attached draft Local Improvement Plan 2025 – 2028.

BACKGROUND

3. Members will be aware of the previous [Local Improvement Plan 2024 – 2027](#). The Standards and Quality Report 2023 – 2024, provides an indication of the next steps the department, its services and educational establishments will take to ensure continuous improvement over the next few years.

4. The draft Local Improvement Plan takes full account of '[A Place to Grow](#)' East Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership's new vision, which sets out the Council's shared hopes and aspirations between now and 2040 so that East Renfrewshire is a place where everyone can flourish, thrive and grow. The department's Strategic Equity Plan and the National Improvement Framework (NIF) priorities have also been incorporated into the plan.

REPORT

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

6. The Education Department's vision of *Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences*, is about making a difference by improving outcomes for all, no matter the barriers to learning and achievement.

7. This plan is the strategy that underpins our vision; the how and what of ensuring *Everyone Attains, Everyone Achieves through Excellent Experiences*. Four key areas have been identified as the main drivers of the plan:

- Empowerment and Leadership
- Social Justice and Wellbeing
- Pedagogy and Learning
- Attainment, Achievement and Progress

8. Each driver is closely aligned to the National Improvement Framework 2025 and details the key outcomes, impact and activities across the department for 2025 – 2028.

9. The expected outcomes and impact are organised under these four key areas and have been reviewed and amended to reflect the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and the results of the department's ongoing self-evaluation.

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

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

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

13. The timescale for the implementation of the plan is school sessions 2025 – 2026 to 2027 – 2028. The department will continue to report on the progress it has made with its Local Improvement Plan.

FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

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

EQUALITY, FAIRNESS AND RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EFRIA)

15. In developing this plan an equalities, fairness and rights impact assessment (EFRIA) has been carried out and the EFRIA evaluated the proposal as having: no adverse impacts; the potential to advance equality and foster good relationships; and the potential to advance children's rights.

CONSULTATION

16. Under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, education authorities are required to consult with pupils, staff, parents and all other interested parties on their priorities for improvement for the ensuing year. To this end, the department has consulted with pupils, staff and parents prior to the draft publication.

17. In addition, following approval by Education Committee, the department will issue the appended draft plan to all schools, parent councils, service managers and partners to gather additional views of all stakeholders. Thereafter, the plan will be amended as appropriate, finalised and issued to schools, services and stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION

18. Education Committee is asked to approve the attached draft Local Improvement Plan 2025 – 2028.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
6 February 2025

Convener Contact Details

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Appendix

1. Local Improvement Plan 2025 - 2028

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Local Improvement Plan 2025-28

East Renfrewshire Council Education Department



Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences



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Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences

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Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences in Action

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Social Justice and Wellbeing

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Foreword

I am delighted to present the Education Department's Local Improvement Plan for 2025–2028. Aligned with the Council's A Place to Grow, this plan outlines our steadfast commitment to delivering highest quality services to residents and sets ambitious goals that reflect our hopes and aspirations for all learners and community members.

We are genuinely proud of East Renfrewshire's educational achievements. Since East Renfrewshire's establishment in 1996, our focus has remained on raising attainment and supporting the success of every child and young person. As the Convener for Education, Equalities, Culture and Leisure, I am deeply invested in the progress of each learner, but I recognise that some groups still require additional support to reach their full potential.

We have a duty to realise the Education Department's vision of "Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences," ensuring positive outcomes for all learners, regardless of barriers they may face to their learning and achievement.

In a time with ever-constrained finances, we are committed to making fair, strategic choices—allocating resources to boost achievement and support those who need it most, while continuing to lift standards for all.

This plan provides a structured and forward-looking approach to drive improvement, elevate performance, and achieve success. I wholeheartedly commend it to you, and invite parents, carers, and all our partners to collaborate with our ELC settings, schools, and services to help us reach the goals set forth.



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



Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences

Each year the Education Departments' Quality Improvement Team and Service Managers carry out an extensive audit to identify strengths and areas where further improvement is required. Our Standards and Quality Report for 2023-2024 highlights the very good progress we have made in relation to our vision. This plan sets out our priorities and key activities from 2025 to 2028, ensuring that we continue building on this solid foundation.

Our attainment levels remain among the highest in the country, with recent leaver destinations reaching a record 98.7% of students moving into positive outcomes. Our establishments offer a broad and varied curriculum that nurtures the talents, skills and interests of our learners.

To maintain these high standards, we must remain focused on delivering an excellent education and improving outcomes for all learners, particularly those who need us most. High expectations and continuous improvement has always been at the heart of our efforts in East Renfrewshire, driving change raising standards.

My vision for East Renfrewshire remains for it to be a world-class learning environment, where Everyone Attaining and Everyone Achieving is not just an aspiration but a daily reality. This means cultivating positive values and attitudes across our ELC settings, schools, and services. By sparking a love of learning, we aim to inspire curiosity, creativity, and a dedication to lifelong education. We want our children and young people not only to reach high levels of academic success but also to grow as individuals, learners, contributors and citizens. To achieve this, our early years settings and schools are dedicated to continually updating and tailoring curricula to meet learners' needs, while maintaining a strong focus on high-quality learning, teaching, and assessment. This commitment will help us continue providing Excellent Experiences for all children and young people.

This plan is our strategy for realising our vision. It defines the how and what behind "Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences." Four key areas have been identified as the drivers of the plan, each closely linked to the 2025 National Improvement Framework, outlining the outcomes, impact and activities for the Department for 2025–2028.

Collaboration is essential for the success of this Local Improvement Plan, requiring a 'unity of purpose' throughout our learning system as we seek to enhance experiences and outcomes for all children and young people. Fundamental to this unity are the Council's values of trust and kindness. Going forward, demonstrating these values in tangible, everyday ways will be fundamental in ensuring we continue to create a supportive and ambitious culture in which everyone can thrive.

Thank you all, in advance, for your dedication and contributions to East Renfrewshire's continued success.



Mark Ratter
Director of Education



Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences in Action

To enable us to achieve our vision, we have continued to engage with our pupils, staff and parents in support of our identified four priorities for 2025 - 2028. Our Local Improvement Plan for 2025– 2028 is organised under these areas.

The Local Improvement Plan outlines the high level areas for improvement for all services, ELC settings and schools and is informed by the Council's 'A Place to Grow' strategic plan. Links between the National Improvement Framework priorities and outcomes have been incorporated into the plan. The West Partnership Improvement Plan 2024/25 sets out the areas that the eight Local Authorities will collaborate on regionally to support and challenge establishments to improve.

The plan lists the expected outcomes and impact under the four key priorities. It contains a list of high level areas for improvement and outlines the actions we will take over the next three years to achieve the expected impact and outcomes.

The list is extensive but it is not intended that each ELC setting, school or service should include every strand, or even every key area, in its improvement plan for the next three years. The purpose of this Local Improvement Plan is to help and guide individual settings, schools and services in planning for improvement, not to prescribe what those improvements should be or how they should be taken forward.



The East Renfrewshire Education Department has worked to develop an empowered and interconnected educational system that prioritises excellence and equity for all children and young people. Our commitment is to empower minds, shape futures, and inspire lifelong learning through exceptional education. Our ELC settings, schools, and services have been given the autonomy, responsibility and accountability—within adaptable frameworks of support and guidance—to drive improvements tailored to their unique needs.

Through self-evaluation and the Local Improvement Plan, which aligns with both local and National Improvement Framework priorities, leaders can pinpoint specific areas for development. To support this, we will facilitate professional learning and leadership initiatives that build improvement capacity across all levels, with a strong focus on teaching quality, curriculum design, and achieving positive outcomes for all learners.

Collaboration across and beyond our ELC settings, schools, and services fuels our shared progress, helping us realise our aspirations for learners, families, staff, partners, and the broader school community.

National Priorities

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

| Expected Outcome / Impact (what we will measure and report on) | Activities (what we will do to bring about improvement) |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ethos of high expectations and achievement in every school and service. • A skilled and confident workforce. • A culture of professional enquiry in all establishments. • One hundred percent of ELC settings and schools evaluated as ‘good’ or better for leadership of change. • Higher levels of parental engagement in their children’s learning and in the life of the school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |

Relationships across the educational system are fundamental. We need to foster a culture where children and young people are genuinely heard, with their views respected and acted upon by a skilled, confident, and compassionate workforce.

East Renfrewshire’s Healthier Minds Framework supports this by providing children, young people, families, and staff with the tools and guidance needed to promote mental wellbeing. Everyone involved in young people’s lives has a role in creating an environment where mental health is prioritised and supported.

The Social Justice Framework in East Renfrewshire highlights that promoting equality isn’t a separate task but an integral part of the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment. As we cannot predict future societal changes, we are building an educational system rooted in equality, equity, and children’s rights.

Our focus remains on improving equity and representation across six key areas: resource allocation; learning, teaching, and assessment practices; relationships with learners, families, and the community; recruitment and retention strategies; professional growth; and curriculum design. Through these, we aim to meet the needs of all within East Renfrewshire’s ELC settings, schools, and services.

Continuing to enhance inclusive practices is essential, ensuring that every pupil experiences a learning environment tailored to their unique needs in a way that is meaningful and engaging. Achieving this requires commitment, flexibility, creativity, and a high level of dedication. Our Educational Psychology Service is crucial in this effort, supporting students, families, and staff alike, and equipping educators to meet diverse learner needs. Alongside resources, the attitudes, values, mindset, and wellbeing of our staff are equally important for creating an inclusive, supportive environment.

National Priorities

- **Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education**
- **Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing**
Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

| Expected Outcome / Impact (what we will measure and report on) | Activities (what we will do to bring about improvement) |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rights based culture, centred on Getting It Right For Every Child. • Practices and experiences which ensure that the needs of children, young people and adults are identified and addressed. • Maintain and, where possible, improve upon the already low exclusions and high attendance rates in our schools, especially for care experienced children and young people. • Maintain and, where possible, reduce the number of children and young people reporting they experience bullying and/or racist behaviour. • A positive culture in health and wellbeing in every school and service. • Resources which lead to improvements for learners and service users. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |

Children and young people need to develop the skills, adaptability, and resilience to handle the challenges they will face in the future. While knowledge remains essential, we need an education system that equips learners to access, apply, and build on that knowledge. This system should inspire and motivate, instilling a lifelong passion for learning and an identity as active, capable learners. Our goal is not only to achieve high standards in qualifications but to empower students with the skills and mindset to keep learning beyond their school years.

To achieve this, we must ensure high-quality teaching practices from early years through to the senior phase, supported by a curriculum that is relevant, adaptable, and responsive. While maintaining a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing, we also need to streamline other areas to fulfil Curriculum for Excellence’s vision. This approach emphasises a skills-based curriculum that fosters creativity, curiosity, problem-solving and other transferable skills.

Investment in professional learning will further support educators, particularly in the secondary sector, in balancing the integration of knowledge and skill development.

We will continue to work closely with ELC settings and schools to review and enhance their curricula and learner pathways, ensuring alignment with the seven design principles of Curriculum for Excellence: challenge and enjoyment, breadth, coherence, personalisation and choice, relevance, progression, and depth.

National Priorities

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

| Expected Outcome / Impact (what we will measure and report on) | Activities (what we will do to bring about improvement) |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ethos of high expectations and achievement in every school and service. • A culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement in all schools and services. • A skilled and confident workforce. • A culture of professional enquiry in all establishments. • One hundred percent of ELC settings and schools evaluated as ‘good’ or better for learning, teaching and assessment. • A consistently high satisfaction level of residents engaging with our services. • A curriculum which enables all children, young people and adults to be learners, individuals, citizens and contributors in school, their work, their community and internationally. • Learners’ experiences support them to develop their creativity, curiosity, problem solving, critical thinking, sense making and personalities. • An increase in opportunities for young people to develop knowledge, understanding and the skills for life and active participation in a global multicultural society and Scotland’s place in it. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |

Attainment, Achievement and Progress ⁸¹

The Education Department in East Renfrewshire is deeply committed to supporting every child and young person to flourish. Our mission is clear: to create the conditions and learning experiences that allow each learner to thrive. We set ambitious goals and strive to be Scotland's top-performing mainland authority in both Curriculum for Excellence and Senior Phase outcomes. Attainment reflects not only the knowledge and skills gained but also fosters a sense of achievement, confidence, and opens up pathways for further growth and new opportunities.

To meet these goals, our curriculum and teaching methods are tailored to match the unique needs of our learners, ensuring the right balance of challenge and support for each student to make meaningful progress and reach their potential.

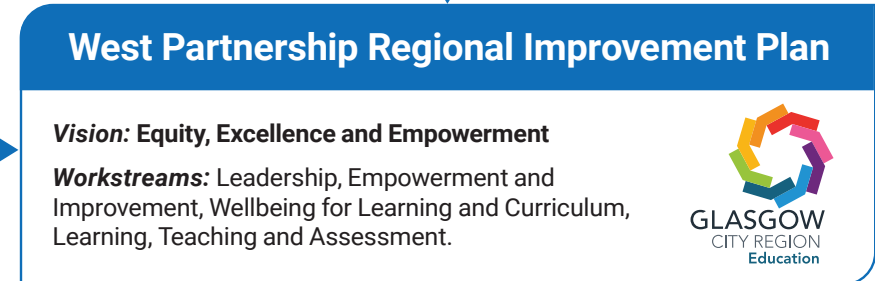
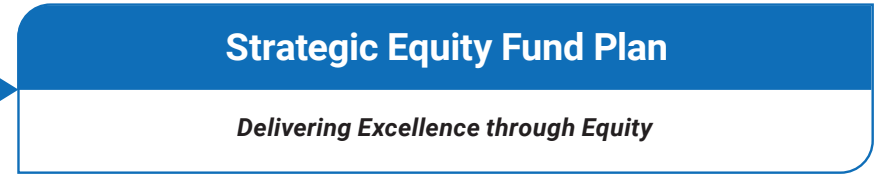
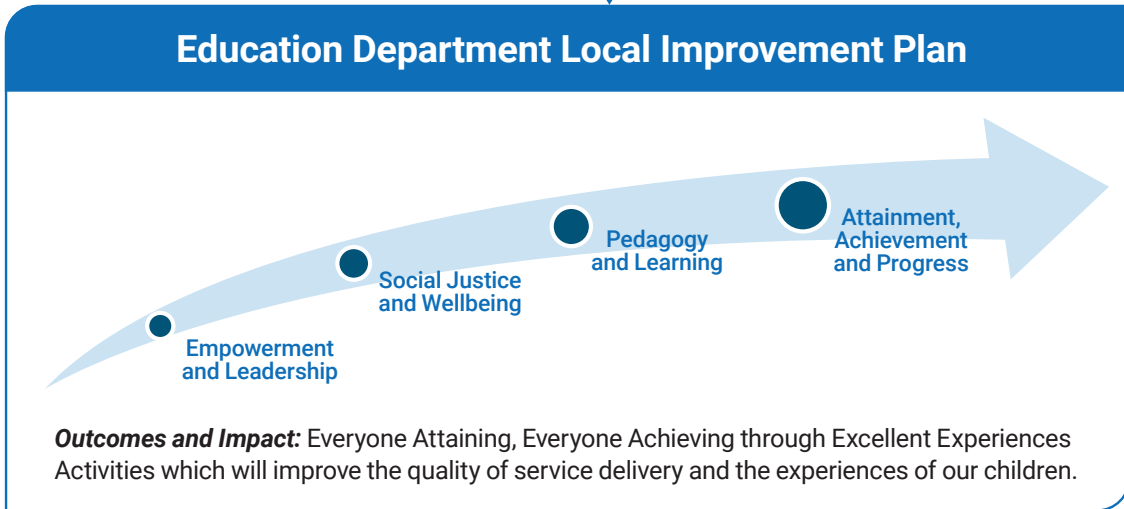
We are committed to fostering a culture of achievement, high expectations, and continuous improvement across all ELC settings, schools, and services, aiming for all children, young people, and adults to achieve at their highest possible level. Recognising that not all learners have the same opportunities, we place equity at the core of our approach. We will ensure our ELC settings, schools, and services have the resources needed to make a meaningful difference, particularly for those who require extra support.

National Priorities

- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
- Improvement in achievement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

| Expected Outcome / Impact (what we will measure and report on) | Activities (what we will do to bring about improvement) |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the highest performing mainland council area as measured by national examinations for school leavers. • Improved attainment in the senior phase. • An increase in the number of pupils, school leavers and adults with well-developed employability skills. • Be the highest performing mainland council area as measured by Curriculum for Excellence levels. • Improved literacy and numeracy attainment throughout the years of the broad general education. • Achievement of Stretch Aims. • One hundred of ELC settings as 'good' or better for securing children's progress. • One hundred of schools as 'good' or better for raising attainment and achievement. • An increase in activities which support prevention and early intervention, improve outcomes and reduce inequalities. • An improvement in the percentage of young children reaching all of the expected developmental outcomes on entry to primary school. • Continue to be the highest performing mainland council area as measured by initial school leaver destinations. • Continue to be the highest performing mainland council area as measured by the annual participation measure for school leavers. • An increase in the percentage of pupils agreeing they have opportunities to celebrate personal achievements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |

Plan Structure







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