

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE25 August 2022Report by Director of EducationEDUCATION DEPARTMENT END-YEAR REPORT 2021/22**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to update Education Committee on the end-year performance of the Education Department for 2021/22.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Education Committee is asked to comment on and note the report as a summary of the Education Department's end-year performance for 2021/22.

BACKGROUND

3. The Education Department has a strong commitment to continuous improvement and regularly provides reports to Education Committee on various aspects of its performance through a range of different indicators across education establishments and other departmental support functions. In addition to the annual [Standards and Quality Report](#), the department provides a number of additional updates, including regular reports on the progress with the priorities of the [National Improvement Framework](#) and [Early Learning and Childcare](#). Further reports on specific initiatives, for example, [Developing the Young Workforce](#), [Mental Health and Wellbeing](#) and Pupil and Strategic Equity Funding are also considered by committee as appropriate.

4. More specifically, the Education Department's progress in achieving the performance indicators and critical activities in the Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) is reviewed on a six monthly basis through departmental reports. These reports are presented at regular performance review meetings, attended by the Chief Executive and Education Leadership Team, with ongoing performance and consideration of the key activities for the following period discussed.

5. End-year reports are prepared and presented to Education Committee to provide a summary of the department's performance across the previous year and set out the priorities for the year ahead. [The end-year report for 2020/21](#) was considered by Education Committee on August 2021.

6. A full report on the progress towards achieving the indicators and critical activities has been considered by Council in June 2022. In addition, the department's performance in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) has also previously been considered by Cabinet.

REPORT

7. The Education Department's [end-year report 2021/22](#) sets out a high level summary of the performance under the following key areas:

- Outcomes – these provide a statistical overview of the department's performance, outlining results for the benefit of customer and the local community. This includes relevant Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicators;
- Customers, Efficiency & People – these focus on a range of activities and targets aimed to improve the performance and effectiveness of the department.

8. Given the timing of the end-year report, the majority of the data regarding school performance and attainment relates to the previous academic session. For example, the end-year report for 2021/22 was completed in May 2022, prior to the end of the academic session. As such, full data is only available for the 2020/21 school session. The 2021/22 academic performance will be reported to the Education Committee through the annual presentations on educational outcomes and through the departmental Standards and Quality Report.

9. Given the challenges posed by Covid-19 and the extended period of school closure, no targets were set for 2020/21. The performance measures for 2020/21 are being used as baselines for the development of future targets which remain under review. Targets (stretch aims) for 2022/23 will be shared at a future Education Committee.

10. Whilst schools and nurseries remained open throughout 2021/22, there continued to be significant levels of disruption due to the ongoing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. As highlighted through previous Council reports, the department continued to make good progress with the focus on recovery, however, the level of ongoing disruption cannot be understated as schools and nurseries sought to continue to focus on supporting children and young people with their learning and wellbeing. In particular, the emergence of new variants throughout 2021/22 significantly impacted on both pupil and staff absence. Whilst usually short term in nature, given the guidance in place throughout the period, establishments often experienced significant numbers of pupils and staff absent at any one time, presenting substantial challenges to the ongoing recovery. This remained a challenge throughout the year despite the removal of restrictions from spring onwards.

11. The department's *Building Back Better and Fairer* framework set out the key priorities for schools and services to support children and young people with their learning and wellbeing during 2021-22, complementing the activities set out within the department's Local Improvement Plan (LIP). Purposefully, the framework was designed as a single page, providing a clear simple summary of next steps for improvement.

12. Despite the significant levels of disruption and challenge, both the department and individual establishments continue to perform to a very high standard in their work towards achieving the department's vision, *Every Attaining, Everyone Achieving Through Excellent Experiences*. Key highlights in each area include:

Outcomes

- ✓ Completion of the department's ASN review, with recommendations being taken forward, including through the current consultation exercise, subject to available resources.
- ✓ Very strong S4, S5 and S6 SQA results with the highest performance in Scotland across all 10 LGBF attainment indicators.
- ✓ Continued very high percentage of leavers going on to positive destinations across all equity groups, with a marked increase in young people going in

to employment, and the highest performance in Scotland in the participation measures (97.2% - 5 points above the national average).

- ✓ Rollout of universal free school meal provision to all P4 and P5 pupils, as well as the introduction of meals for all children in early learning and childcare accessing their statutory entitlement.
- ✓ Continued strong performance of facilities management recognised through the national APSE awards.

Customers

- ✓ Strong focus on all learners and their families, again receiving an outstanding Customer Service Excellence report, with 31 compliance plus points for the second successive year.
- ✓ Focus on improving the customer journey, with continued digitisation improvement of key frontline services, including early learning and childcare and school admissions.
- ✓ Significantly high levels of satisfaction as expressed through the Citizen's Panel, with 95% and 94% of respondents rating primary and secondary education respectively as 'very good' or 'good'.
- ✓ Adapting to the 'new normal' within schools and nurseries, particularly around the opportunities for renewed approaches to parental communication and engagement.

Efficiency

- ✓ Successful rollout of Parentsportal across all primary and secondary schools, with 91% of all pupils now registered, the highest level in Scotland.
- ✓ Continued improvement in invoice payment timescales, significantly above the target position and strong performance compared to overall Council position.
- ✓ Review of systems to ensure renewed strong performance in enquiry and complaint response timescales.
- ✓ Ongoing efficient use of resources as evidenced by continued above average performance in terms of cost per pupil place (13th for pre-school, 4th for primary school and 16th for secondary school).

People

- ✓ The Healthier Minds service continues to provide health and wellbeing advice to pupils, staff and families, recognising the impact the pandemic continues to have on wider wellbeing. There have been a total of 664 referrals from the launch in November 2020, with only 77 re-referrals during this time.
- ✓ Supporting staff through the introduction of hybrid working as part of the Council-wide *The Way We Work* project.
- ✓ Continued focus on the digital upskilling of staff in response to the opportunities and challenges offered through remote learning.

13. Building on the progress outlined above, the department's [Local Improvement Plan 2022-25](#) sets out the high level areas for improvement for all services and education establishments, including the actions we will take over the next three years to achieve the expected impact and outcomes. This is informed by the Outcome Delivery Plan, including the targets and indicators used to measure the impact of our work.

14. Priorities for the next year include:

- Promoting a universal approach to improving outcomes, with a clear intent on raising the bar for all learners across our establishments. However, we will continue to employ targeted approaches to support specific equity groups and schools with a larger proportion of children and young people living in poverty. Notably, this includes the use of new Strategic Equity Funding, Pupil Equity Funding and the Care Experienced Children and Young People Attainment Fund to continue to drive improvement.
- Supporting schools and nurseries with the implementation of the findings of the ASN review.
- Continuing to support children and young people to recover from the impacts of the pandemic, with a specific focus on health and wellbeing and targeting those pupils who continue to experience challenge in returning to school.
- Improvement to customer journeys and departmental efficiencies through the ongoing development of the department's change programme in conjunction with the Digital Transformation programme.
- Continue to invest in staff wellbeing across all levels, including tackling workload and bureaucracy across establishments and implementing the recommendations of the Council's *The Way We Work* programme.

FINANCE & EFFICIENCY

15. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. All finance and efficiency implications are met from the existing departmental resources.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

16. Whilst this report focuses specifically on the Education Department's contribution to the delivery of the ODP, it is recognised that the ongoing continual strong performance is only achieved through the excellent, well-established partnership working across the Council and with external partners. This has been particularly highlighted throughout the challenging circumstances of the last few years and the valued contributions that partners have made to ensure that our learners, staff and families can continue to benefit from our services.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

17. The department has a well-established self-evaluative approach across all areas of work and will continue to take the necessary steps to achieve ongoing strong performance and improvement in the key areas outlined above.

CONCLUSION

18. This report summarises the Education Department's end-year performance for 2021/22. The department has continued to recover from the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, with a focus on supporting children and young people with their learning and wellbeing and the report outlines a sustained strong performance across all measures.

19. The performance of this year sets a strong baseline for future targets and this report outlines the ambitious improvement plans in place across the department, as we continue to support ongoing recovery from the pandemic, to ensure we can continue to deliver further improvement.

RECOMMENDATION

20. Education Committee is asked to comment on and note the report as a summary of the Education Department's end-year performance for 2021/22.

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25 August 2022

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Local Government Access to Information Act 1985

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Background papers

1. [Education Department End-Year Report 2021/22](#)
2. [East Renfrewshire Council's Outcome Delivery Plan 2020-23](#)
3. [Standards and Quality Report 2020/21](#)
4. [Progress Report on the Priorities Associated with National Improvement Framework \(September 2021\)](#)
5. [Early Learning and Childcare Annual Report 2021/22 \(June 2022\)](#)
6. [Update on Developing the Young Workforce and Implementation Plan 2022-25 \(June 2022\)](#)
7. [Mental Health and Wellbeing in Children's Services \(March 2022\)](#)

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