

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 22 March 2022

BY: Executive Director for Education and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Positive School Leaver Destinations 2020/21

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the current School Leaver Destination Return report (SLDR) and Participation Measure, including an overview of the interventions implemented to sustain and improve East Lothian Council (ELC) positive destinations.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations, for all young people, is one of the key priorities in the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education. The initial destination of school leaver's data (SLDR) is used by schools and Education Authorities, across Scotland, to monitor progress in improving the proportion of school leavers into positive and sustained destinations. The data for initial post school destinations (SLDR) provides information on the outcomes for young people as recorded in October 2021, approximately three to ten months after leaving school.
- 3.2 The data on initial post-school destinations for 2020/21 was reported nationally and published by the Scottish Government on 22 February 2022: [Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, No. 4: 2022 Edition - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-for-attainment-and-initial-leaver-destinations/2022-02-22/summary-statistics-for-attainment-and-initial-leaver-destinations-no-4-2022-edition-2022-02-22.pdf)

3.3 This report compares East Lothian initial school leaver destinations (SLDR) with the Virtual Comparator and the National Establishment (i.e. national average). The Virtual Comparator takes the characteristics of each pupil in East Lothian and matches them to 10 similar pupils from schools in other local authorities across Scotland.

3.4 This report sets out how ELC has performed over the three-year period 2018/19 to 2020/21. The main highlights for East Lothian in 2020/21 are provided in paragraph 3.7.

3.5 Summary of Results for East Lothian 2018-2021

3.5.1 Positive Destinations, prior to the pandemic in 2018-19, was 95.8%. For the 2019-20 cohort, the initial snapshot result was 92.5% which reflected the early impact of the pandemic. The follow up report, after all individuals were tracked and supported into positive destinations was 93.5%. This placed us 10th out of 32 local authorities (LAs) and above the national average. East Lothian Works (ELW) and partners have guaranteed that every school leaver and those up to the age of 19, are allocated a dedicated key worker, to track and support young people into a positive destination.

3.5.2 The most recent statistics record an increase in East Lothian's positive destinations from 92.5% in 2019/20 to 96.1% in 2020/21, an increase of 3.6% which is above the national average of 95.5%.

3.5.3 Our Participation Measure for 16-19 year olds (the statistic which records positive destinations 3 years after the school leaver date) is currently 92.5% compared to a national average of 90.4%. This placed ELC 7th out of 32 local authorities, an improvement from the 10th position that was recorded in January 2021 (94%).

3.5.4 East Lothian is consistently above the national average for Participation across all ages:

Age 16	ELC - 98.7%	National - 98%
Age 17	ELC - 95.9%	National - 93.8%
Age 18	ELC - 89.1%	National - 87.2%
Age 19	ELC - 85.6%	National - 81.9%

3.6 Over the last two years, ELW has undergone a full Service Review to ensure the service could meet the current needs for employability support. This has been continually reviewed in light of the impact of the pandemic. In addition, a number of new initiatives have been introduced, designed to support transitions and better meet the needs of East Lothian young people:

- i. All Secondary Schools now operate a 'Common School Day' and timetable structure. Further planned engagement with Education Scotland around Curriculum Rationale will enable schools to broaden their opportunities for inter-school collaboration and sharing of resources. Digital connectivity can be also be further utilised to enhance learning.
- ii. The Education Service continues to support a wide range of Further Education and Training opportunities through the School to College Partnership with Edinburgh College. We are currently developing an early intervention programme which will be designed to support young people who are risk of disengagement and their families, to engage in active skills based learning, Employability, Further and Higher Education.
- iii. Education, through ELW, offers a portfolio of work-based Foundation Apprenticeships, in partnership with businesses across East Lothian, Midlothian and Edinburgh. These courses have been successfully delivered digitally, throughout the COVID19 pandemic. ELW have developed a sector leading Foundation Apprenticeship in Scientific Technologies, in partnership with regional businesses and Higher Education. This program was acknowledged as an example of very good practice by Education Scotland. This year the program has been expanded in all six secondary schools, to offer an uplift to the National Progression Award (NPA) 6 in Chemistry, which is equivalent to a Higher qualification. Around 80 pupils are on track to achieve both the Higher Chemistry qualification and the additional NPA award.
- iv. ELW have developed and implemented the 'Workforce for the Future Strategy', utilising the external funding from the Scottish Government's Young Person's Guarantee grant, to demonstrate East Lothian Council's commitment to develop the highest quality of employability support, work based learning and jobs; both within the Council and in businesses across East Lothian through Employment Recruitment Incentives. Since the end of 2021 £550,000 of funding has been committed, supporting departments to commence 10 Modern Apprenticeships, with a further 16 opportunities in the pipeline; including Paid Work Experience, Graduate Internships and Traineeships.
- v. ELW have developed and are in the process of implementing a program called 'Employability+', which has been created to address the recommendations from the ['Decreasing the Disability Participation Gap'](#) 2018 report, by ENABLE Scotland (ES). The programme aims to address the key equity issues for people with a disability, highlighted in the report. The programme will deliver targeted and individually tailored employability sessions to senior phase young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN). This work should support young people to the have the ability to successfully engage with employment, apprenticeships or Further Education. In addition, and in partnership

with Edinburgh College, ELW offer access to the 'Introduction to College' program, providing supported certificated qualifications for pupils with ASN. These courses take place on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Many of these pupils make a successful transition and continue on this pathway post school. Eighteen East Lothian pupils are currently enrolled on the program.

- vi. Winter and summer leaver programmes have been developed, utilising the 'No One Left Behind' provision (6 months prior to leaving school). These group programmes are delivered within East Lothian secondary schools, and are offered to young people who have intimated that they are leaving school, either in the summer or at Christmas. These programmes support pupils to achieve a positive destination.
- vii. The 'New Leavers Programme' is a partnership programme, delivered over the period of one year, to senior phase school pupils. The programme enhances employability skills and boosts qualification portfolios. A wide range of certificated level 4 and level 5 courses are delivered in collaboration with external partners and training providers. Courses include Construction Skills, Customer Service: Principles and Practice and Early Years and Childcare. This also includes our newly developed SQA accredited Personal Development Award, at Level 3/4.
- viii. ELW have successfully partnered with The Ridge (Dunbar) to deliver Construction & Rural Skills training. The training commences in S3 with various units at SCQF Level 4, moving onto a full National Progression Award SCQF Level 5 Construction Skills for senior phase pupils. Currently we have 23 S3 pupils and 12 senior phase pupils participating. This is in line with the SDS identified growth sectors that are being experienced both nationally and regionally. In addition to the above The Ridge also delivers an SCQF Level 4 in Rural Skills to senior phase pupils, currently we have 5 participating. Our capacity to deliver Construction and Rural Skills in the North of the County will be greatly expanded in August 2023, with the completion of the Wallyford Learning Campus, where we have partnership plans with the British Engineering Services Association (BESA), Edinburgh College, The National Farmers Union (NFU) and The Scottish Rural College (SRUC). This training facility should be an economic attractor for Building Service firms and open access to in excess of 300 Modern Apprenticeships.

3.7 Next Steps

- 3.7.1 Whilst the impact of the pandemic has been significant for our young people, we remain focussed on continuing to build on our very good progress and embedding the employability programmes that are in place to support young people in to a positive and sustained destination. We will continue to focus on improving the numbers of school leavers and those

up to the age of 19, who live in the most deprived areas, to move on to a positive and sustained school leaver destination.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct policy implications associated with this report.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial - none

6.2 Personnel - none

6.3 Other – none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 [Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, No. 4: 2022 Edition - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

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