



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

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**TUESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2021
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING FACILITIES**

Committee Members Present:

Councillor F Dugdale (Convener)
Councillor S Akhtar
Councillor J Findlay
Councillor A Forrest
Councillor N Gilbert
Miss G Gillan, EIS
Councillor J Goodfellow
Councillor J Henderson
Councillor F O'Donnell
Rev G Sheridan
Councillor J Williamson

Council Officials Present:

Ms L Brown, Executive Director of Education and Children's Services
Ms N McDowell, Head of Education
Dr L Binnie, Principal Educational Psychologist
Ms J Boyle, Education Support Officer – Inclusion and Wellbeing
Mr N Craik-Collins, Education Service Manager
Ms K Haspolat, Quality Improvement Officer
Ms J Holland, Senior Solicitor
Ms P Homer, Lead Officer, Early Years and Childcare
Mr R Parker, Service Manager – Education (Strategy and Operations)
Mr N Trussler, Quality Improvement Officer
Ms G Whitford, Quality Improvement Officer
Ms J Allen, Communications Adviser
Ms R Crichton, Committees Officer

Head Teachers Present:

Ms S Cook, Knox Academy
Ms S Morgan, Pencaitland Primary

Others Present:

Councillor N Hampshire

Clerk:

Ms J Totney, Team Manager – Democratic and Licensing

Apologies:

Councillor C Hoy
Councillor S Kempson
Ms E Malcolm

Declarations of Interest:

None

Prior to the commencement of business, the Clerk advised that the meeting was being held remotely in accordance with the Scottish Government's guidance on physical distancing; that the meeting would be recorded and live streamed; and that it would be made available via the Council's website as a webcast, in order to allow public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. She stated that the Council is the data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018; that data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council's policy on record retention; and that the webcast of the meeting would be publicly available for up to six months from the date of the meeting.

The Clerk recorded attendance of committee members by roll call.

Councillor Dugdale, Convener, welcomed everyone to the meeting, stating that this was the first meeting of the Education committee without Councillor Innes and referred to all the wonderful tributes that had been received in relation to his life, work and achievements, following his death. She added that the Education committee had greatly benefitted from his wisdom and guidance and the care and ambition he had shown for the children and young people in East Lothian.

Councillor Dugdale warmly welcomed Councillor O' Donnell to her first meeting as a member of the Education committee; extended the welcome to Ms Nicola McDowell on this her first meeting of the Education committee as Head of Education; and acknowledged that two head teachers were present at the meeting.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON 8 JUNE 2021 FOR APPROVAL

The minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 8 June 2021 were approved.

2. UPDATE ON THE ONGOING IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SCHOOLS AND THE WIDER EDUCATION SERVICE DURIGN SESSION 202/21

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services providing an update on the impact of COVID-19 on schools and the wider Education Service, along with an update on the lessons learned including areas which the service and schools plan to build on and areas where further support will be required as a result of any negative impacts of COVID-19.

Nicola McDowell, Head of Education, explained that the report provides updates subsequent to the last Education committee meeting in June 2021 and provides an overview to date. She highlighted the key points which included the continuation of previous mitigations such as the wearing of face masks; that the return to school had been a generally positive experience for most learners; exams would go ahead in 2022 if it is safe to do so; referred to the rigorous oversight work by the Education Recovery Group, which will remain in place until all mitigations are removed; spoke about the impact of lost learning and the need to focus on recovering the pre-pandemic attainment levels; and referred to the additional Scottish Government funding that had been allocated to support lost learning and attainment. Ms McDowell stressed that it remains essential to work with communities and families to build on nurture and recovery and to identify where further support is required.

Responding to questions from Councillors Gilbert and Findlay, Ms McDowell outlined the arrangements that would be in place across the whole school estate in respect of classroom ventilation during the imminent colder weather, and explained that there are ongoing discussions with Facilities Management colleagues around the prioritisation of cleaning and janitorial services for schools, which continues to be an issue. Ms McDowell confirmed that contingency plans are in place to ensure that schools and early learning settings can remain open.

Councillor Forrest asked about the support for the learners who had reported anxiety on returning to school. Dr Lynne Binnie, Principal Educational Psychologist, reported on the significant work that has taken place to facilitate children returning to school and listed the extensive range of partners who are providing support for mental health issues and bereavement loss. She advised members about the single point of contact for many services and informed them of a new early intervention multi agency service. She stated that there are excellent relationships with NHS colleagues and that the use of funding to work with external agencies is maximised.

Answering additional questions from Councillor Williamson about ventilation and heating in classrooms during the winter, Ms S Morgan, Head Teacher – Pencaitland Primary, explained that there is a bank of pre-loved school uniforms that can be accessed by families who require additional clothing.

Councillor Akhtar asked for further information regarding the Scottish Government funding to support the recovery of lost learning and attainment. Ms McDowell explained the staffing approach to support this, adding that permanent staff are being recruited into the raising attainment team and would be allocated to schools as required, based on robust local data. She committed to updating members at the next meeting of the Education committee once the recruitment campaign had been completed.

In relation to a question from Councillor Henderson about the intended resumption of exams in 2022, Mr Nick Trussler, Quality Improvement Officer, explained that if there is further disruption to learning and teaching this session, it is still anticipated that exams would go ahead, but with supports which could include advance notice of exam topics. He added that if there are any changes to public health, such as restrictions on the numbers of people who could gather together, which resulted in exams being cancelled, then it would be for teachers to determine learners' exam grades without the need for any additional assessments. He acknowledged Councillor Henderson's comments that many pupils have had no experience yet of sitting formal exams. Ms S Cook, Head Teacher, Knox Academy, reported that the upcoming prelims would be conducted under formal exam procedures.

Councillors Williamson, Akhtar and Forrest commented on the excellent leadership from the Education Service, expressed thanks to everyone involved in caring for children at school in such difficult circumstances, acknowledged the engagement with trade unions and the resilience from children, parents, head teachers and all who are supporting the education of children and young people at this difficult time.

Councillor Dugdale, Convener, expressed her huge thanks to every member of staff in schools for supporting children and young people to get back to school at a time when the pandemic continues to impact schools and the Education Service. She commented the huge efforts to respond to the pandemic and to address the impacts of lost learning while keeping the focus on children's wellbeing.

Decision

The Education Committee agreed to note:

- i. the considerable work continuing to be undertaken by the Education Service and school staff in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in session 2021-2022.
- ii. the lessons learned including positive developments that the Education Service plans to build on and areas where further support is required.

3. EDUCATION SERVICE PROGRESS REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2021/2022

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services seeking approval of the Education Service Progress Report and Improvement Plan on key improvement priorities achieved for session 2020/21 and informing members of the identification of key improvement priorities planned for session 2021/22.

Ms McDowell presented the report and advised that the Scottish Government have asked all Education Authorities to prioritise their areas for improvement. Prior to questions from members she highlighted the key points in relation to successes; employability; leadership; finance and resources; and key challenges and opportunities. She added that the Education Service would continue to implement key national policies including the Scottish Government's commitment to raise attainment for those children and young people who face barriers to their learning due to the impact of poverty and disadvantage. She commented that the Education Service remains ambitious for continued improvement for children and young people and would therefore continue to implement the required actions and steps to take forward the four priority areas set out in the National Improvement Framework.

Responding to a question from Councillor O'Donnell about school-based counselling in partnership with the NHS, and waiting times for these services, Dr Binnie informed members that a lot of work is taking place in East Lothian to support young people's mental health and wellbeing. She explained the governance arrangements that are in place to support this which include the Children's Strategic Partnerships and a multi-agency steering group. She outlined future plans to take forward working with CHAMS; stated that East Lothian Council has been recognised nationally for its work on children's mental health and wellbeing; and that the Council had been selected to take part in a neurodiversity pathways pilot. Dr Binnie advised that while children are waiting on support from CHAMS, many wrap-around services are accessible to them such as mental health youth workers and third sector providers,

Councillor Forrest's questions about work placements and support for parents were answered by Neil Craik-Collins, Education Service Manager, and Ms McDowell. Mr Craik-Collins advised that placements relating to apprenticeships and where they are critical to transitioning, have been prioritised. He reported that 12 foundation apprentices had become fully qualified during the pandemic. Ms McDowell assured the committee that help for staff and parents is very high on the agenda and that head teachers and HR colleagues had been engaged regarding ideas for support and creating strategies.

Gael Gillan, EIS, commented on reports from schools that some children's behaviour had deteriorated during the pandemic and asked if the Education Service has looked

at the links between attainment and the disruption to all learners as a result of this behaviour. Ms McDowell informed the committee that engagement in the classroom had been looked at; the Education Service is aware of issues caused by the pandemic; that there had been positive engagement with the trade unions and head teachers; and that other groups of staff would also be consulted to establish where the pressure points are. She stressed that, nonetheless, the focus in schools remains on recovery and nurture to support children's resilience and readiness to learn.

With regard to the Building Resilience Programme that is referred to in the committee papers, Councillor Akhtar sought feedback about the programme. She also referred to the recent Council Poverty Plan and asked for information on any interactions there had been with multi agency partners to tackle issues. Ms McDowell advised that the Building Resilience Programme is used in most schools. Ms Morgan spoke about her experience of using the programme and the range of skills that it equips learners with. She reiterated that nurture is still the priority before accessing learning. Ms McDowell commented on the Poverty Plan, stating that the main priority is to close the poverty attainment gap. She added that all head teachers have had a session to identify the gaps in their own schools; that support is available from the Attainment Adviser regarding national best practice; and listed the range of supports and interventions that are available to support closing the poverty gap.

Councillor Dugdale, Convener, indicated that there has been an increase in the number of children with additional support needs and asked what is in place to meet these needs. Dr Binnie advised that the approaches are largely the same for all children but that the support is more personalised, individualised and more frequent.

Councillor Akhtar expressed her thanks to all who had contributed to the report and commented that she would like the positive work to be highlighted in other ways, such as with the Scottish Government. Councillor Forrest added his thanks for this excellent paper.

Councillor Dugdale concluded the debate by adding her sincere thanks. She commented that despite the pandemic the focus continued to be on standards and improvements; the role of nurture remained a priority; the work to support care-experienced children was very much welcomed; and acknowledged the excellent partnership working between Education and Children's Services and other areas.

Decision

Following a roll call vote, the Education Committee unanimously agreed to:

- i. note the overall positive progress made by the Education Service in delivery of the Council's Plan and the priorities within the National Improvement Framework.
- ii. note the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the progress of the 2020/21 priorities and the steps being taken to secure continuous improvement in session 2021/22.
- iii. approve the Progress Report and Improvement Plan attached to the report as appendix 1.
- iv. note that this Progress Report and Improvement Plan will be submitted to the Scottish Government in line with the Local Authority's statutory duty pending Committee approval.

4. POLICY: INCLUDED ENGAGED & INVOLVED - A POSITIVE APPROACH TO PROMOTING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services seeking approval of the draft attendance policy entitled 'Included, Engaged and Involved: A Positive Approach to Promoting School Attendance', attached as appendix 1 to the report.

Dr Binnie summarised the purpose of the report advising that new and updated policy guidance and updated attendance procedures had been issued to schools to promote attendance. She explained that there had been internal and external consultation and that the feedback would be incorporated into the policy; reported that the updated policy builds on existing good practice, promotes nurture and will ensure consistency; and indicated that children's attendance at school is a multi-faceted issue.

Councillor Findlay asked if there was an update on home and flexible schooling. Dr Binnie advised that this had started at the beginning of the autumn term and that eight children had registered for home schooling which is an increase over the pre-pandemic figures. She added that it is the intention to obtain children's and young people's views on home education.

Councillor Williamson asked if schools had a responsibility to support missed learning for pupils who were being flexibly schooled, and enquired as to how teachers dealt with this if flexibly schooled children returned to class. Ms Brown advised that this was supported on an individual basis and that Councillor Williamson's question highlighted some of the difficulties when agreeing to flexible schooling. She acknowledged that it can be a challenging situation for class teachers.

Councillor Henderson enquired about the fit with the European Convention on Human Rights legislation to which Ms Holland, Senior Solicitor, advised that this is already incorporated into Scots Law and the Human Rights Act legislation.

Replying to Councillor Forrest's question about support for families, Ms Brown advised that a new early intervention support team had been created, adding that under the Attendance Policy, there is an automatic referral to that team when attendance drops to a certain level.

In response to Councillor Dugdale's question about the types of issues affecting school attendance, Ms Brown reported that these can include bullying, struggles with learning, personal issues, and the fact that some learners are young carers. She added that the supports which are put in place are based on the primary reason for non-attendance.

Councillor Akhtar commented on the effort that had gone into producing the report and the massive amount of engagement there had been to support young people.

Councillor Dugdale, Convener, closed the debate by adding her thanks for this very important paper, commenting that it was pleasing to see that the approach involved the whole school community, given that some young people can experience a loss of connection as a result of absence.

Decision

Following a roll call vote, the Education Committee unanimously agreed to:

- i. approve the Draft Attendance Policy: “Included, Engaged & Involved: A Positive Approach to Promoting School Attendance”, as attached at appendix 1.
- ii. note specifically the guiding principles, legislative context, and procedures for recording and managing school attendance.

5. UPDATE ON EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE TO 1140 HOURS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Education and Children’s Services updating the committee on the implementation of 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare in East Lothian.

Ms Pauline Homer, Lead Officer – Early Years and Childcare, presented the report. She informed members about the updated position since the last Education committee meeting in June 2021 and confirmed that the Education Service has fully implemented 1140 hours across the county in a way that is compliant with all Scottish Government guidance regarding Covid-19, and reported that some parents had taken advantage of the facilities at Letham Primary during the summer and October breaks. She advised that there is a career structure and pathway in place for staff working in this part of the service, adding that there had recently been the creation of early level support roles; that greater induction and mentoring would be introduced; and that the leadership course had been very successful. Ms Homer commented on East Lothian Council’s role as guarantor of quality, stressing that quality assurance and improvement continue to be a key focus, and informed members that feedback would be sought from parents and carers in February 2022 as part of a review ahead of the 2022/23 session. Ms Homer concluded her presentation by advising that the role of the Improvement Board had come to a natural end and thanked all Board members for their time and commitment, and reiterated that 1140 hours has been fully implemented in East Lothian for all two, three, and four year olds.

Answering questions from Councillor Findlay, Ms Homer advised that feedback on both the 38 week and 48 week models had been very positive and that further information on parents’ and carers’ preferences would be available after the formal feedback consultation. She commented that the 1140 hours provision includes blended models and that as there are no catchment areas for nursery schools, parents can choose the nursery and model of their choice. Ms Homer also advised that there had been occasions where parents had not been able to get their first choice of nursery and she expected that would be raised through the consultation; reported that the number of staff leaving the service due to changes in work patterns had been no more than in a normal year; stated that there is no requirement for nursery teachers to be qualified teachers, and that parents had been aware of this some time ago; and that at the moment there are no qualified teachers in East Lothian Council nurseries. Regarding learning and child care, she advised that it is a national standard and Scottish Government guidance that learning and child care are regarded as one area. However, she undertook to review this approach for the forthcoming consultation.

In response to Councillor Gilbert, Ms Homer advised that slightly more 48 week settings have been chosen than 38 week settings and agreed to email the exact figures to committee members.

Ms McDowell informed the committee that there are nursery teachers in the central team who provide support to individual settings as required.

Councillor Dugdale sought more information on the career opportunities available to staff following the introduction of the new roles. Ms Homer outlined the importance of the introduction of the support worker role; advised that the opportunity to apply to be appointed to the start level role provides qualifications and training which lead to the next level role of early years practitioner; and explained that the career structure includes senior early years practitioners and centre managers in each cluster.

Councillor Akhtar commended the Education Service for the huge agenda that had been planned and delivered by the team over recent years.

Councillor Dugdale concluded the debate by adding her massive thanks and stating that parents and carers have been very welcoming of the developments within the Education Service, adding that it was very pleasing to learn of the progress regarding staff opportunities.

Decision

The Education Committee agreed to note:

- i. the Education Service has now fully implemented the expansion of early learning and childcare to 1140 hours and that COVID-19 restrictions and mitigations continue to impact on the flexibility.
- ii. the way in which provision over the traditional summer break in 5 local authority nurseries was managed and received by parents and the increased opportunities made available to staff through enhanced training opportunities leading to career development and progression.
- iii. the plans to review the implementation of the policy and to seek feedback from parents, carers and staff. Note the very successful cross-service collaboration which supported the implementation of the policy.

6. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON EDUCATION REFORM

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services providing an update on the Scottish Government consultation on Education Reform and seeking approval to submit the draft response, as attached as appendix 1 to the report, on behalf of East Lothian Council.

Ms Brown presented her report and set out the background to the Scottish Government's decision that the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) would be replaced and that the functions of Education Scotland would be reviewed with the removal of the Inspectorate from its remit and the establishment of a separate curriculum and assessment body and inspectorate. She advised that an independent advisor to the Scottish Government on the replacement of the SQA and the reform of Education Scotland had been appointed; informed members that there is currently a consultation on this reform which ends on 26 November that all local authorities are being encouraged to respond to; and outlined the main areas contained in the consultation. She referred to the response that has been drafted for East Lothian Council, explaining that this incorporated the views of a short life working group, the

wider education community, and trade unions. She placed on record her thanks to everyone involved in producing the response. Ms Brown highlighted some of the response content including a lack of clarity on the expectations on practitioners in using the Experiences and Outcomes within the curriculum areas, the complexity of the range of advice, guidance and documentation that have been produced by Scottish Government and Education Scotland over the years; the need for a stronger national focus on transitions; and the need for a national approach to the range of qualifications on offer. She reported that the consultation also focuses on Roles and Responsibilities and that the Council's response highlights what would be of most benefit to school staff and learners together with the possible risks associated with this type of reform. She asked committee members to note that within the consultation there is some mention of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives and the role of Education Scotland in providing direct support to school staff. She pointed out that the Council's response highlights that there is a need for any national school support to be delivered alongside the local authority by staff who can provide support that impacts positively on learners and manages teachers' workload.

Responding to questions from Councillor Goodfellow, Ms Brown explained that the Council's response in relation to the SQA reflects the views of education practitioners regarding their frustrations with lack of timely information and communication during the Covid pandemic; outlined the range of staff who are included in the term practitioners; and commented on working relationships between the Council and the SQA.

Councillor Akhtar commented positively on the reference to the Regional Improvement Collaboratives. Ms Brown stated that the new organisation needs to link in with local authorities given the statutory obligation to avoid duplication and complexity; stressed the need for collaboration from national agencies; and indicated that despite the Scottish Government's statement that there would be formal exams, it would be preferable to have a blend of teacher assessments and a final exam at the end of the course.

Responding to Councillor Henderson, Ms Brown provided background information to the response in relation to identifying the main factors that support a broader range of SQA qualifications being included in the curriculum in secondary schools, stressing that any reform of qualifications needs to align with current jobs and trades.

Councillor Dugdale asked for information regarding any issues with transitions. Ms Brown advised that staff work hard to support children who are transitioning, and while it can present challenges for both learners and teachers, there is a high level of pastoral support for learners, particularly for the transition to secondary school where the structure is very different from the primary school environment. She added that although there is excellent practice in East Lothian, the working group felt that there was room for enhancement by way of more national focus and guidance for practitioners.

Councillor Akhtar thanked the working group for their work on the consultation response and stated that there is the need for the new organisation to focus on learners; place importance on additional support needs; trust and rely on the professional judgement of teachers; and acknowledge that local authorities have accountability for schools and education.

Councillor Dugdale, closed the debate by commenting on the importance of education being statutorily provided by local government. She fully supported the draft consultation response and stressed that the local authority has to be a major party in providing education at a local level. She added her thanks to those who had produced

the consultation response.

Decision

Following a roll call vote the Education Committee unanimously agreed to:

- i. note the scope and remit of the consultation on Education Reform being carried out by Professor Kenneth Muir, on behalf of the Scottish Government; and
- ii. approve the content of the draft response at appendix 1 which would be submitted to the Scottish Government by 26 November 2021.

Sederunt: Councillor Gilbert left the meeting

7. SCHOOL SESSION DATES - 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services seek Education Committee's approval for School Session dates for the three school years, 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Richard Parker, Service Manager – Education (Strategy and Operations) presented the report, advising that the school session dates for the next three years had been aligned, where possible, to those of neighbouring local authorities. He explained the consultation process that had taken place and reported that a significant majority of respondents had supported the proposed dates and the alignment with the City of Edinburgh Council dates.

Councillor Williamson welcomed the alignment of dates with neighbouring authorities and hoped this would continue to be the case beyond 2025.

Decision

Following a roll call vote, the Education Committee unanimously agreed to:

- i. approve the school session dates for the three years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 as outlined in appendix 1.
- ii. authorise the Head of Education to notify Scottish Government, Head Teachers, Teachers' Associations, Heads of Establishments and Parent Councils and approve delegated authority to the Head of Education, in consultation with the Council Leader and Convener of the Education Committee, to make any further changes if required to the session dates during the year.

Signed

Councillor Fiona Dugdale
Convener of the Education Committee

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 22 March 2022

BY: Executive Director for Education and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Update on the impact of COVID-19 on schools and the wider Education Service during session 2021/2022

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide an update on the continued impact of COVID-19 on schools and the wider Education Service during session 2021/22.
- 1.2 To provide an update on lessons learned including areas which the service and schools plan to build on and areas where further support will be required as a result of any negative impacts of COVID-19.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:-
 - i. Note the considerable work continuing to be undertaken by the Education Service and school staff in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in session 2021-2022.
 - ii. Note the lessons learned including positive developments that we plan to build on and areas where further support is required.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Please see Education Committee COVID-19 Update Report of November 2021 for further background information.
- 3.2 **School Session 2021/22**
- 3.3 In December 2021, as a result of the spread of the OMICRON variant of COVID-19, Scottish Government Guidance was updated to reflect a return

to enhanced mitigations which included a return to the use of grouping or bubbles, a minimising of visitors in schools and a minimising of movement of staff and children across settings.

- 3.4 Due to the early return of East Lothian schools on 5 January, before most other authorities returned, and the high numbers of positive COVID cases amongst staff and children, it was necessary for a number of schools to revert some classes and year groups to remote learning. This continued throughout January and February, easing when the necessity for close and household contacts to isolate for a full 10 days ended.
- 3.5 The latest version of Scottish Government *Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID19 in schools* guidance came into effect on 28 February 2022. This guidance:
 - removed the requirement to wear face coverings in secondary school classrooms, while maintaining existing provisions in communal areas or when in close contact with others
 - removed the remaining restrictions on assemblies
 - allows transition visits to resume fully if appropriately risk assessed
- 3.6 While CMT took the decision that there should be no residential trips for the whole of Session 2021/22, further discussion and adherence to the latest version of the guidance now allows schools to begin to book such trips for the next academic session. This is in line with neighbouring local authorities.
- 3.7 Parents and Carers have continued to receive regular communication regarding changes to mitigations, and the risk of remote learning under exceptional circumstances.
- 3.8 Severe shortages of Facilities Management staff due to absence meant that there continued to be some disruption to provision of facilities services in other areas of the council so that schools could be prioritised for enhanced cleaning and delivery of the school lunch service.
- 3.9 The Education Recovery Group has been in place since April 2020 and continues to have rigorous oversight of the planning and implementation of any new Scottish Government guidance to ensure the safe operation of school buildings and continued provision of education in the event of school building closure. The group will remain in place until such times as all mitigations are removed. Related recovery working groups remain in place to support specific areas of focus such as supporting the workforce, adapting the physical environment and advising on health and safety considerations for children with Additional Support Needs. A range of staff from across the Council and representatives of the Trade Unions continue to support the work of these groups and both consider the implications of any revised Scottish Government guidance as well as providing practical advice and support to staff in schools. Regular meetings with Trade Unions continue in order to ensure a collaborative approach is taken to supporting the delivery of education across our schools and nurseries during these challenging circumstances.

3.10 **Impact on children and young people**

3.11 Overall, East Lothian schools have reported that almost all learners are engaging well in their learning. The continued focus of schools on nurture and relationships supports this.

3.12 Using Scottish Government Funding received this session for 21 teachers and 10 support staff in a £1.042M investment for East Lothian, a number of interventions have been planned to support schools to continue to identify and tackle lost learning and support recovery.

- 5 full time Principal Teachers will work with the centrally based Pedagogy Team supporting attainment across nursery, primary and secondary.
- 9 full time Class Teachers will work across the Associated School Groups (ASGs) to support the raising attainment agenda. The allocation of these teachers is based on the needs of each ASG.
- 10 x 25 hour Classroom Assistants or ASN Auxiliaries have been allocated to those primary schools where no Support for Learning Teacher is permanently in place.

3.13 In addition, the funding supported the following recruitment of additional staff:

- 1 full time, permanent Class Teacher at Meadowpark
- 5 full time Class Teachers working with the Early Intervention Support Team

3.14 Comprehensive training will be delivered to the team, which will consequently work to upskill the workforce to meet the range of needs of our learners, particularly relating to the COVID-19 period.

This continues to be supplemented by the use of our Scottish Government funded temporary COVID-19 teachers and support staff.

3.15 Across East Lothian, a wider issue has arisen with regards to anti-social behaviour. This has been particularly prevalent in the Prestonpans, Musselburgh and Dunbar localities. It has been recognised that greater holistic use of resources is needed across Education, Children's Services and Communities, working in collaboration with Police Scotland and the third sector in order to tackle this robustly. This is linked to a small cohort of learners with challenging behaviour in our schools for whom alternative strategies are required.

3.16 This, linked with a wider range of needs arising from the implications of COVID-19 on families led to a series of Head Teacher Engagement Sessions to explore the current challenges and gaps in supports to meet the needs of our learners. A problem-solving conference has led to a series of actions

currently being implemented, linked to greater and more robust use of locality resources linked to our distinct communities and enhanced training for our staff to ensure they are equipped to meet the needs of our learners.

- 3.17 The SQA exam diet is still planned, beginning in April 2022. SQA has confirmed changes to course assessments for National Qualifications, to support learners to achieve the qualifications they deserve, which allow for lost learning and teaching caused by the pandemic by reducing the volume of assessment and easing teacher and learner workload, while maintaining the integrity and credibility of the qualifications.

To ensure fairness and credibility are maintained in light of the ongoing impact of the pandemic, SQA has recently announced additional support measures for learners who are taking National 5, Higher, and Advanced Higher courses in 2022. Revision support for learners will be provided during week beginning 7 March 2022, to help them prepare and focus their revision, in the run up to the exams.

- 3.18 To further support learners in an equitable manner, a further funding package of £4M has been announced of which east Lothian will receive £51,407 to provide Easter study support for targeted learners:

- senior phase learners undertaking NQ exams in 2022 from the most deprived backgrounds
- senior phase learners undertaking NQ exams in 2022 with additional support needs
- senior phase learners undertaking NQ exams in 2022 whose attendance and/or attainment has been most acutely affected by COVID-19

East Lothian secondary schools will work together to deliver a package of supports to allow them either to broaden their original offer or to encourage the above groups to be able to attend.

3.19 **Ventilation**

- 3.20 Scottish Government announced in August 2021 that local authorities had to monitor all learning & teaching spaces for CO2 levels for at least one full day prior to October 2021. East Lothian Council procured 700 Honeywell portable air quality/CO2 monitors and distributed these to all primary and secondary schools as well as Early Years partner providers in September 2021. £61,000 funding was received to procure monitor and take remedial action.

- 3.21 Heating and Ventilation guidance was provided together with manufacturer's guidance on the use of the monitors and templates for recording and returning monitoring results.

- 3.22 Following return of monitoring information, areas where readings exceeded 1200ppm during the recording period were reviewed and further monitoring requested.
- 3.23 The majority of primary schools were found to have good results evidencing that the use of natural ventilation was being effective in reducing CO2 levels below 800ppm. 11 primary schools indicated one or more spaces where readings had exceeded 1200ppm at some point in the day and these were selected to be visited to see if there were any additional measures that could be implemented to improve the situation with the following results:
- 3.24 The Scottish Government's updated reducing risks in schools guidance, published in December 2021, set out revised expectations in terms of frequency of CO2 monitoring (including that all spaces should be assessed at least once a week, and more frequently in the case of problematic areas).
- 3.25 A further 600 CO2 monitors have now been received and are being delivered to schools.
- 3.26 **Conclusion and Further Implications for session 2021/22**
- 3.27 Given the continued impact on children's wellbeing and learning, we will continue to prioritise support that ensures all children and young people are able to make appropriate progress. We will continue to make the best possible use of all available resources to support our staff working directly with learners.

It is likely that we will continue to see the impact of the pandemic for years to come on our learners. Schools and the wider education service will do everything we can to mitigate this impact, learn the lessons of what has worked and what we need to improve and ensure that we continue to improve outcomes for all.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 Equalities – the impact of COVID-19 has had and continues to have an impact on the wellbeing and learning of children, families and communities. Work continues to seek to mitigate this impact in all schools.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – The Scottish Government provided £214.833 million of additional Education funding for financial year 2020/21 and has provided a further

£111.667 million of additional funding in 2021/22 for Scottish Councils. East Lothian's share of this funding was £3.689 million in 2020/21 and is £2.159 million, to date, in 2021/22.

To further support learners taking SQA examinations in an equitable manner, a funding package of £4M has been announced of which East Lothian will receive £51,407 to support Easter Study.

- 6.2 Personnel – We have recruited 21 teachers and 10 support staff from the latest tranche of Scottish Government Funding.
- 6.3 Other – none.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None

AUTHOR'S NAME	Nicola McDowell
DESIGNATION	Head of Education
CONTACT INFO	Email – nmcdowell1@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	22 March 2022

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 22 March 2022

BY: Executive Director – Education & Children’s Services

SUBJECT: Visit of Macmerry Primary School and Nursery Class by Education Scotland

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report to Committee on the recent visit of Macmerry Primary School and Nursery Class by Education Scotland to learn more about the support for children and their families through the COVID-19 pandemic, approaches to support children’s health and wellbeing, learning and progress and the school’s progress in taking forward the recommendations from the inspection which took place in June 2019.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:-
- (i) Note the content of the Education Scotland’s letter to parents dated 14 December 2021 (Appendix 1).
 - (ii) Congratulate the Head Teacher and staff on the support provided to children and families through the COVID-19 pandemic and the approaches to supporting children’s health and wellbeing, learning and progress.
 - (iii) Congratulate the Head Teacher and staff on the progress that has been made since the inspection visit by Education Scotland in June 2019.
 - (iv) Note that the inspectors identified that the school needs more time to take forward the recommendations from the original inspection and that they will carry out another visit to the school within one year of the publication of the letter to parents/carers to further report on progress the school has made.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Macmerry Primary School and Nursery Class was inspected in June 2019. The inspection team agreed that the school required more time and support to make the necessary improvements and a further inspection would be carried out within one year of the publication of the letter to parents/carers.

3.2 As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, inspections of schools by Education Scotland were paused in March 2020. In September 2021, Education Scotland announced a phased return to scrutiny activities engaging with those schools due to have a further inspection. The focus of the visits was the impact of the pandemic and the actions taken to support recovery and the progress around the areas for development identified in the earlier scrutiny activity.

3.3 The visit by Education Scotland to Macmerry Primary School and Nursery Class took place on 1st and 2nd November 2021 and included discussions with the Head Teacher and staff, visits to classes and focus groups of pupils and parents/carers.

A letter of the findings was published to parents/carers on 14 December 2021.

3.4 Supporting children, young people and their families through COVID-19

In the letter to parents/carers, the inspectors acknowledged the challenges posed by COVID-19 particularly in relation to staff turnover and staff absences. They recognised the improvement in the school's approach to meeting the needs of children, including additional staffing to support children with additional support needs and those requiring further support with literacy. They noted the partnership work undertaken by the nursery team to support children and their families including maintaining contact through the health visitor and addressing gaps in children's speech development through speech and language.

The inspectors recognised how the approaches to promoting positive behaviour has had a positive impact on children's wellbeing and reduced interruptions to learning.

3.5 Progress with recommendations from previous inspection

The inspectors noted that the Head Teacher has maintained a focus on addressing areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection and that school staff speak positively about his leadership and the changes made since his appointment.

The letter to parent/carers noted a number of areas of improvement since the previous inspection, including:

- work undertaken to develop positive, nurturing relationships with children which has resulted in a more calm, settled and purposeful learning environment;

- the work undertaken by staff to help children understand the aims of each lesson and how successful they have been at achieving these aims;
- staff confidence in using data to support children with their next steps in learning; and
- developments in writing which staff report provides clearer guidance on children's progression.

The inspectors noted the impact of the pandemic on the overall pace of improvement and that as a result, many improvements were at the early stages of implementation and yet to impact positively on improving outcomes for children. As planned, the Head Teacher should continue to ensure a whole school focus on raising attainment and achievement.

- 3.6 Overall, the inspection team recognised that the school has been responding to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and that staff were prioritising their plans to support the recovery. As a result the inspectors will carry out another visit to the school one year from the publication of the letter to parents/carers to allow more time for the school to take forward the recommendations from the original inspection.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

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 Education Scotland letter to parents of Macmerry Primary School and Nursery Class dated 14 December 2021 (Appendix 1).

AUTHOR'S NAME	Karen Haspolat
DESIGNATION	Quality Improvement Officer
CONTACT INFO	Tel: 01620 827137 E-mail khaspolat@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	4 February 2021

14 December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education are currently carrying out visits to some schools and early learning and childcare settings across Scotland. When we wrote to you after the last inspection of Macmerry Primary School and Nursery Class, we said that we would engage with the school to report on progress. We recently engaged in discussion with staff and the local authority and carried out a visit to Macmerry Primary School and Nursery Class. Our engagement helped us learn more about how children and their families have been supported through the COVID-19 pandemic. We also heard about approaches that have been working well to support children's health and wellbeing, learning and progress. We discussed with the headteacher and local authority officer the school's progress in taking forward the recommendations from our original inspection.

This letter sets out what we found during our visit.

Supporting children, young people and families through COVID-19

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the school experienced a high turnover of staff resulting in a need to support further new and temporary staff to become familiar with agreed classroom approaches. Current staff absence continues to pose significant challenges for the headteacher and the school more generally. Upon return to school in August 2021, staff worked closely with the local authority to improve the school's approach to meeting the needs of all children. This includes using additional staffing to support children with their learning and wellbeing needs, including a focus on improving children's resilience. The school has also used additional staff effectively to support children with additional support needs and those identified as requiring further support, especially in literacy.

The nursery team work well together to address challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. They work well in partnership with external agencies such as the health visitor to maintain contact with children and their families. Staff identified gaps in children's speech development which they are addressing well in partnership with colleagues from speech and language therapy services.

The school remain focused on recovery, reconnecting children with their school setting and meeting children's needs. Supported well by the local authority, the headteacher ensures that every child has access to a digital device. This is providing staff and children with the opportunity to develop further their digital literacy skills. The headteacher has led approaches to promoting positive behaviour across the school and nursery. This impacts positively on children's wellbeing and has reduced interruptions to learning.

Progress with recommendations from previous inspection

Parents, support staff and teachers speak positively about the headteacher's leadership and the changes that he has made since his appointment. For example, providing more opportunities for staff training and development and improving communication across the school community. The headteacher has maintained a focus on addressing areas for

improvement identified in the previous inspection. The headteacher and staff are well placed to address the identified priorities. All staff in the nursery now have a leadership role, providing important opportunities for them to lead areas for improvement. Quality assurance processes are in place and all staff participate in professional learning. Staff use formal and informal conversations well to improve their practice. Self-evaluation now features prominently in the nursery and is increasingly understood by all staff.

Staff across Macmerry Primary School and Nursery Class continue to work well to develop positive, nurturing relationships with children. As a result, the school is now more calm and settled and the learning environment is much more purposeful. In order to improve staff and children's understanding of wellbeing, senior leaders introduced a whole school approach to supporting children's emotional wellbeing. Staff have worked together to create nurturing classroom environments. While the school places a high priority on developing children's wellbeing, staff are aware that further work is required to improve the consistency of approaches to supporting children's wellbeing across the school. Staff have achieved some success in promoting positive behaviour across the school. As planned, the school should continue to engage parents and the wider school community in maintaining and improving further behaviour in classrooms and the playground. Staff also need to ensure that children work at an appropriate pace and provide more opportunities for them to work independently.

To improve consistency in the quality of learning, teaching and assessment, the headteacher has worked together with staff to produce a guide highlighting the most important features of a class lesson. This has been welcomed by staff and is supporting discussions on improving the consistency of teaching, learning and assessment. Staff have undertaken significant work to help children understand the aims of each lesson and how successful they have been at achieving these aims. This work needs to develop further to include more of a focus on the quality of these interactions between staff and children. Children would benefit from being involved more fully in considering what they need to do to be successful in their learning.

As planned, staff need to ensure that learning is at the right level of difficulty for all learners. Children's learning has been disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the pace of learning in lessons continues to be too slow with a majority of children making limited progress. Children would benefit from having a greater role in contributing to improvements in learning, teaching and assessment.

Staff work well with parents and partners to support children requiring additional support. Class teachers and support assistants are now clearer about available resources to support the needs of individual children. A timetable is in place for children to access regular support on a one-to-one or small group basis with a member of the leadership team. This support is very well-received by children and staff.

Staff know the children well and are becoming increasingly confident in using data to support children with their next steps in learning. The current school improvement plan highlights literacy, and in particular, writing as an area for improvement. Senior leaders have introduced a new writing programme. Staff report that this has provided clearer guidance on children's progression and is supporting teacher judgement of achievement at each Curriculum for Excellence level. As planned, staff need to develop further their shared understanding of national standards to ensure that the needs of all children are met. This approach should be extended across all areas of the curriculum.

Understandably, the pandemic has impacted on the overall pace of improvement. As a result, many improvements are at the early stages of implementation and are yet to impact positively on improving outcomes for children. There remains a need for senior leaders to strengthen leadership roles across the school and use more rigorous self-evaluation to evaluate the impact of improvement priorities. In discussion with the local authority officer and the headteacher, we agreed that significant improvements in attainment are required. As planned, the headteacher should continue to ensure a whole school focus on raising attainment and achievement.

What happens next?

Understandably, the school has been responding to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. These have had a significant impact on the work of the school. Staff are prioritising their plans to support recovery. As a result, the school needs more time to take forward the recommendations from the original inspection. We will carry out another visit to the school within one year of the publication of this letter. When we carry out another visit, we will write to you informing you of the progress the school has made.

John Reilly
HM Inspector

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 22 March 2022

BY: Executive Director for Education and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Visit of Whitecraig Primary School and Nursery Class by Education Scotland

4

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report to Committee on the recent visit of Whitecraig Primary School and Nursery Class by Education Scotland to learn more about the support for children and their families through the COVID-19 pandemic, approaches to support children's health and wellbeing, learning and progress, and the school's progress in taking forward the recommendations from the inspection which took place in June 2019.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to: -
- (i) Note the content of the Education Scotland's letter to parents dated 11 January 2022 (Appendix 1).
 - (ii) Congratulate the Head Teacher and staff on the support provided to children and families through the COVID-19 pandemic and the approaches to supporting children's health and wellbeing, learning and progress.
 - (iii) Congratulate the Head Teacher and staff on the progress that has been made since the inspection visit by Education Scotland in June 2019.
 - (iv) Note that the staff have addressed the recommendations from the original inspection successfully. As a result, Education Scotland will make no further visits to the school in connection with the original inspection. East Lothian Council will continue to inform parents about the school's progress as part of its usual arrangements for reporting on the quality of its education service.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Whitecraig Primary School and Nursery Class was inspected in June 2019. The inspection team agreed that the school required more time and support to make the necessary identified improvements and a further inspection would be carried out within one year of the publication of the letter to parents/carers.

3.2 As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, inspections of schools by Education Scotland were paused in March 2020. In September 2021, Education Scotland announced a phased return to scrutiny activities engaging with those schools due to have a further inspection. The focus of the visits was the impact of the pandemic and the actions taken to support recovery, and the progress around the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report from the initial inspection in June 2019.

3.3 The visit by Education Scotland to Whitecraig Primary School and Nursery Class took place on 10th, 11th and 12th November 2021 and included discussions with the Head Teacher and staff, visits to classes and engagement with focus groups of pupils and parents/carers. A letter of the findings was published to parents/carers on 11th January 2022.

3.4 Supporting children, young people and their families through COVID-19

In the letter to parents/carers, the inspectors recognised that the Head Teacher and staff were continuing to respond to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, such as absences and periods of remote learning, and that good progress had been made in taking forward improvements from the original inspection.

Inspectors also recognised the improvements made by staff in the provision of remote learning, evident in the quality and variety of lessons on offer for children. This helped to increase children's engagement and motivation during these periods. Inspectors also noted that parents valued the quality of communication received from the school and appreciated the school's flexibility in responding to different needs families.

The inspection team recognised improvement in the school's approach to meeting the needs of children, with more targeted action being taken where required and the innovative ways in which teachers ensured children received the support that they needed. Staff provided regular experiences to help children reconnect and have fun with their peers. Children and families reported that these activities helped them to feel happy and included in school.

3.5 Progress made against recommendations from previous inspection

The inspection team noted that the Head Teacher's strong leadership provided direction and a clear focus on learning and teaching for the school and nursery. She established trusting positive relationships across the school community and staff felt empowered in their new roles as leaders of learning.

- 3.6 The letter to parent/carers noted a number of areas of improvement since the previous inspection, including:
- All staff felt well-supported by the Head Teacher to implement a structured approach to nurturing children's emotional needs. Pupils now talked confidently about how they felt and are able to use strategies to support themselves and others when they are facing challenges.
 - Staff have made good progress in improving approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. Teachers now plan progressive lessons that take better account of children's needs and build on their prior knowledge.
 - Across the school, well-structured team-teaching approaches effectively support raising attainment in literacy and numeracy. As a result, more children are working at nationally expected levels and are making better progress from prior levels in their learning.
 - Children are now clear about the purpose of their lessons and what they need to do to succeed. They can talk about their achievements and successes and are demonstrating more leadership of their own learning.
- 3.7 The inspection team noted the impact of the pandemic on the overall pace of improvement and, as a result, the pace of change in a few areas of improvement has been affected. Despite this, staff have addressed the recommendations from the original inspection successfully and the school has made good progress in taking forward improvements. As a result the inspectors will not make further visits to the school in connection with the original inspection.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

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 Education Scotland letter to parents of Whitecraig Primary School and Nursery Class dated 11 January 2022 (Appendix 1 - Visit - East Lothian Council - Whitecraig Primary School - 5550726 - Publication - Final letter for publication.pdf).

AUTHOR'S NAME	Nick Trussler
DESIGNATION	Quality Improvement Officer
CONTACT INFO	Tel: 01620 827953 E-mail ntrussler@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	7 February 2021

11 January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education are currently carrying out visits to some schools and early learning and childcare settings across Scotland. When we wrote to you after the last inspection of Whitecraig Primary School and Nursery Class, we said that we would engage with the school to report on progress. We recently engaged in discussion with staff and the local authority and carried out a visit to Whitecraig Primary School and Nursery Class. Our engagement helped us learn more about how children and their families have been supported through the COVID-19 pandemic. We also heard about approaches that have been working well to support children's health and wellbeing, learning and progress. We discussed with the headteacher and local authority officer the school's progress in taking forward the recommendations from our original inspection.

This letter sets out what we found during our visit.

Supporting children, young people and families through COVID-19

The headteacher and staff continue to respond to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, such as absences and periods of remote learning. As a result, the pace of change in a few areas of improvement have been affected. Despite this, the school has made good progress in taking forward improvements from the original inspection.

Staff worked well to build on lessons learned from the first period of remote learning and, as a result, increased further the quality and variety of lessons on offer for children. They also reviewed approaches to better balance activities completed online and away from the screen. This helped to increase children's engagement and motivation.

Parents value the communication received from the school and report that they feel staff go 'the extra mile' in supporting children, families and the community during challenging times. They value the school's flexibility in responding to different family needs.

The headteacher and staff use information effectively to evaluate children's progress in literacy and numeracy and identify gaps in learning. Teachers and support staff are implementing well-planned interventions and are supporting children's individual needs well.

Staff take a whole school approach to support wellbeing during periods of remote learning, with more targeted action being taken where required. Teachers create innovative ways to ensure children receive the support that they need, for example, the online Lego club. The school reports that COVID-19 restrictions have had an adverse impact on children's resilience and wellbeing. This is an area of significant focus since the return to the school building. Staff are providing regular experiences to help children reconnect and have fun with their peers. Children and families report that these activities help them to feel happy and included in school.

Progress with recommendations from previous inspection

The headteacher's strong leadership provides direction and a clear focus on learning and teaching for the school and nursery. She has established trusting positive relationships across the school community. Staff are empowered in their new roles as leaders of learning.

All staff are well-supported by the headteacher to implement a structured approach to nurturing children's emotional needs. Children now show higher levels of respect for each other and the adults they work alongside. They can talk confidently about how they feel and increasingly use strategies to support themselves and others when they are facing challenges. The headteacher and staff continue to embed developments to improve the ethos within the school.

Staff have made good progress in improving approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. Teachers now plan lessons that take better account of children's needs and build on prior knowledge. High expectations of children's work and behaviour are consistently upheld across the school and nursery. Assessment information is more accurate and links very well into the school's planning cycle.

Across the school, well-structured team-teaching approaches effectively support raising attainment in literacy and numeracy. As a result, more children are working at nationally expected levels and are making progress from prior levels in their learning. As planned, staff should continue to develop planned learning, teaching and assessment to reflect the full breadth of the curriculum in relevant and meaningful contexts.

Children are clearer about the purpose of their lessons and what they need to do to succeed. They can talk about their achievements and successes. Across school and nursery, children are able to identify what they would like to learn next. With support from adults, they are demonstrating more leadership of their own learning. Staff should continue to develop children's knowledge of themselves as learners and their skills of working independently.

What happens next?

Understandably, the school has been responding to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. These have had a significant impact on the work of the school. Staff are implementing plans to support recovery. Staff have addressed the recommendations from the original inspection successfully. As a result, we will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection. East Lothian Council will continue to inform parents about the school's progress as part of its usual arrangements for reporting on the quality of its education service.

Lisa Marie McDonnell
HM Inspector

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 22 March 2022

BY: Executive Director for Education and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Redesigning Children's Services for Better Outcomes

5

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 Given the strong links and joint working across the Education and Children's Services Directorate, this report seeks to update the Committee of the rationale, the aspirations and intended outcomes of the whole-service review of children's social work service; Redesigning Children's Services for Better Outcomes.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 During 2017/18, it became clear that an increasing number of children needed to be accommodated away from their families, and an increasing number of children were requiring care outwith East Lothian. There was evidence that this was not resulting in positive outcomes for most young people and we also recognised that the resulting budgetary pressures were unsustainable.
- 3.2 Beginning in 2018, we undertook three significant pieces of self-evaluation - Children Social Work Service Self Evaluation Report (November 2018), and the Vulnerable Children's Project and the Analysis of Budget Overspends in Children's Services in 2019. This led to the creation of the Transforming Services for Children Project, overseen by the council's Chief Executive.
- 3.3 Reviewing the evidence from our self-evaluation activities, we recognised that we were not suitably organised to ensure the best possible outcomes

for children, young people and their families. We identified key pressure points in the child's journey through Children's Services. We acknowledged that we could not change one part of the structure without impacting upon other areas of the service. We collectively reached the conclusion that a whole service redesign was necessary to improve outcomes for children that were also essential in order to meet the aspirations of The Promise.

3.4 REVIEW PROCESS

3.4.1 With the support of the council's transformation team we took an evidence-based approach through mapping our systems and processes. We considered the child's journey from the "front door" of duty social work through to the "back door" of aftercare services. We consulted widely with families, staff and other stakeholders. We identified our key purpose, outcomes and operating principles for the whole service and individual areas of business. We mapped existing resources and designed new structures required to achieve the desired outcomes.

3.5 KEY SERVICE CHANGES

- Increased capacity and staffing resource at the "front door" with a dedicated child protection team and stronger approaches to initial assessment and planning.
- From existing resources we have created a welfare and justice team, to strengthen capacity to intervene at the right time to avoid escalation of concerns when young people are involved in anti-social behaviour, high risk behaviour or offending.
- Young peoples' transition to the throughcare and aftercare team will be needs led and not age led. Staff must consider the long-term and future needs of our young people from an earlier stage in their care journey.
- The support and intervention service will include three long-term practice teams and a dedicated family support team that will focus on meeting the SMART outcomes identified in the child's plan.
- The fostering and adoption team has been split to create greater capacity for operational and strategic developments including a greater focus on kincare.
- Development of an intensive outreach service for children and young people at risk of being accommodated. Available evenings and weekends, this service will operate from Lothian Villa, making use of residential and family support staff.
- Piloting a joint Early Intervention Support Team with the Education service including specially recruited family support workers and teachers. This is an up-stream approach aimed at those children who

are beginning to disengage with education and designed to prevent the need for targeted social work or educational support

3.6 SUPPORTING PRACTICE CHANGE

3.6.1 Children's Services has re-committed to *Signs of Safety* as a framework for practice. This is a relationship-based, strength and safety based approach to child welfare and protection work. It is created from research about what works for professionals and families in building meaningful safety for vulnerable and at-risk children. Leaders from across Children's Services and Education have benefitted from some initial professional learning on this approach.

3.6.2 We are reviewing our policies and procedures to ensure they support effective interventions and the child's journey through the service and are compliant with United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the requirements of The Promise.

Ensuring we have high quality, future and outcome-focused children's plans is a priority for the service and the broader directorate in 2022/23 alongside strengthening the voice of the child, young person and their family within assessments and plans.

3.7 WHAT IS REQUIRED FROM PARTNERS

3.7.1 Children's Services recognise that we need the support of all our partners to bring about lasting and meaningful change to the lives of children, young people and their families. Referrals to children's services continue to rise. This service redesign will not achieve its intended outcomes if it is not supported by change across other council services and key partner agencies in order to provide early and effective intervention with children and their families to reduce vulnerability and demand for targeted services.

- We need all services for children to prioritise the upstream, preventative supports and interventions that can stop concerns and difficulties from escalating.
- We need our communities to be nurturing and loving towards our children and young people. We need to create safe spaces where they want to be and where they feel a sense of belonging.
- We need all services to be trauma informed and understand that children and young people's behaviour is a form of communication and prioritise service development and practice that can better meet their needs at the earliest possible opportunity.
- We need everyone to be signed up to the same goal... *Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way. (The Promise, 2019)*
- We need everyone to recognise that it is not usually in a child's interest to be removed from their communities and connections and prioritise

solutions, creativity and persistence from everyone who has the power to make a difference.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

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 - The costs of the service redesign have been met within the existing children's services budget. The costs were met by using a portion of the budget uplift in 2021/2022. Three additional frontline posts have been created and five newly-graded posts were created from the deletion of five existing posts.

6.2 Personnel - Staff were consulted at various points throughout the service redesign process and staff feedback influenced the development of the structure. There were also numerous points of consultation with the Union representative and HR advisors.

Staff affected by the redesign were given the opportunity to provide their preferences for which new area they wished to work in. 93% of those affected were allocated to their first preference, with the others being placed in their second area of preference.

There are a number of frontline vacancies to be recruited to before we can fully implement the new structure. Maintaining safe oversight of open cases while minimising change and disruption for families is crucial. The ongoing recruitment challenges are a current risk for children's services and is a significant barrier in achieving the desired impact of the redesign.

6.3 Other – none.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

AUTHOR'S NAME	Lindsey Byrne
DESIGNATION	General Manager, Children's Services
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DATE	22 February 2022

REPORT TO : Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 22 March 2022

BY: Executive Director for Education and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Reserving Places in Schools for Catchment Pupils Who Move Into the Catchment Area during the Academic Year 2022/23

6

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To obtain Committee approval for reserving places for incoming catchment pupils at the schools detailed in 2.1 for session 2022/23.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to agree to hold in reserve places for incoming catchment pupils for session 2022/23 in the following schools:

i. Primary Schools

We recommend that the Committee reserve the number of places detailed below in each year group between Primary One and Primary Seven. The class organisation may be a mixture of non-composite and composite classes.

School	Number of reserved places per stage						
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Campie Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Cockenzie Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Dunbar Primary School	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
East Linton Primary School	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Gullane Primary School	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Haddington Primary School	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Law Primary School	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Longniddry Primary School	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Loretto RC Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Macmerry Primary School	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Musselburgh Burgh Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Ormiston Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Pencaitland Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Pinkie St Peter's Primary School	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sanderson's Wynd Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
St Gabriel's RC Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
St Martin's RC Primary School	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Stoneyhill Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Wallyford Primary School	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Windygoul Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Yester Primary School	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

We recommend that the Committee reserve the number of places detailed below in each class within the school.

School	Number of reserved places per class
Aberlady Primary School	4 places P1 – P3 only
Athelstaneford Primary School	2
Blindwells Primary School	ALL*
Craighall Primary School	ALL*
Dirleton Primary School	3

Innerwick Primary School	1
Letham Mains Primary School	ALL*
St Mary's RC Primary School	3
Stenton Primary School	2
West Barns Primary School	2
Whitecraig Primary School	2

*All available places within the school are reserved for incoming catchment pupils

ii Secondary Schools S1 and S2

We recommend that the Committee reserve the number of places as detailed in the table below.

School	Maximum number of places in S1 including reserved places	Number of reserved places in S1	Maximum number of places in S2 including reserved places	Number of reserved places in S2
Dunbar Grammar School	220	5	220	5
Knox Academy	180	10	180	10
Musselburgh Grammar School	240	8	260	6
North Berwick High School	180	10	200	10
Preston Lodge High School	240	5	210	5
Ross High School	260	5	240	5

iii Secondary Schools S3 and S4

We recommend that the Committee reserve the number of places as detailed in the table below.

School	Maximum number of places in S3 including reserved places	Number of places reserved in S3	Maximum number of places in S4 including reserved places	Number of places reserved in S4
Dunbar Grammar School	220	5	220	5
Knox Academy	180	8	160	8
Musselburgh Grammar School	260	6	240	6
North Berwick High School	180	8	210	8
Preston Lodge High School	210	5	210	5
Ross High School	260	5	260	5

Details of the factors considered when determining the appropriate number of reserved places for both primary and secondary schools are detailed in 3.2.1 of the report.

- 2.2 We request that the Committee delegate any changes to the number of places held in reserve to the Head of Education in consultation with the Education Convener, should the number of pupils requiring a place at the school significantly increase or decrease.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Acts and regulations

The Education (Scotland) Act 1996 Placing Requests Part IV: Section 33, allows education authorities to reserve places for incoming pupils into catchment areas of schools. This has helped education authorities to manage their schools and prevent them being at capacity at commencement of an academic year, and furthermore enabling them to accommodate incoming catchment pupils at their catchment schools when they move into the area during the academic year.

Section 28A (3A) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended) provides a general principle that, “so far as is compatible with the provision of suitable instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents”. This is what we strive to do, whilst also ensuring that we can accommodate new pupils in their catchment schools. Acceptance of a placing request for a child who is resident outwith the catchment area of a specified school could prevent the education authority from retaining reserved places:

- at the specified school, or
- in relation to any particular stage of education at the school.

It is for this reason that the education authority may refuse to grant a placing request that would impact on the ability to reserve places in schools.

Section 28A (3C) of the 1980 Act notes that “reserved places” means those “places (not exceeding such number or, as the case may be, such percentage of places at the school or relating to a particular stage of education as may be prescribed by regulations) as are in the opinion of the education authority reasonably required to accommodate pupils likely to become resident in the catchment area of the school in the period from the time of consideration of the placing request up to and during the year from 1 August to which the placing request relates”.

Therefore, when establishing the number of reserved places required for a school, we have to consider the likely number of pupils becoming resident in the catchment area of the school during the coming academic year. We analyse various factors when deciding how many places should be reserved. These are detailed in Sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.3.

3.2 Factors influencing the decisions on reserving places

3.2.1 The following factors have to be considered for both primary and secondary schools when we are determining the appropriate number of reserved places that are likely to be required for pupils moving into the catchment area of the school during 2022/23:

- a) The proposed level of capping at the school and number of expected pupils
- b) Local development plans
- c) Current and planned house builds within those plans
- d) Projected school rolls
- e) Projected migration into the catchment area
- f) Information about reserved places from previous years
- g) School capacities
- h) Information known to us, for example, about families moving into the area before/after commencement of the academic year.

3.2.2 For secondary schools, where it has been identified that reserved places are likely to be required, we propose that a minimum of one place be reserved for every 30 pupils (rounded to the nearest 30 where the class intake has been capped). Pupils are timetabled in secondary schools in groups of 20 for practical classes and 30 for non-practical classes. In addition, rooms in schools are only furnished to accommodate a maximum of 30 pupils per non-practical class. The factors noted above shall then be considered to confirm whether this number is reasonable and reflects the number of pupils likely to become resident in the catchment in the coming academic year. The number of reserved places can then be increased or decreased accordingly. This method allows an immediate number of reserved places to be identified and then adjusted to ensure it fairly reflects both the education authority's requirements and the legislation.

3.2.3 The number of reserved places can be affected by pupils moving into and out of East Lothian, late applications and pupils being withdrawn from schools. This can mean the demand for places in a school for pupils in the catchment area can change before the academic year begins. The number of reserved places in this report reflects our current understanding of the likely number of pupils that we think will be in each catchment area or moving into it during the next academic year. Should some of the reserved places at schools not be required or the situation change, the Committee is asked to delegate any increase or decrease in reserved places to the Head of Education, who will consult with the Convener. If the reserved places detailed in this report are agreed by the Committee, they will be protected for incoming catchment pupils. If it is not possible to reserve all these places before the academic year begins, then we still intend to protect them so that they are there as reserved places for catchment pupils who come in during the year. Committee members will be contacted where changes to reserved places are made in their wards.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications in this report.

5 EQUALITIES 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 None

AUTHOR'S NAME	Fiona Brown
DESIGNATION	Principal Officer, School Admissions and Planning
CONTACT INFO	Tel: 01620 827415 Email: fbrown@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	22 February 2022

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 22 March 2022

BY: Executive Director for Education and Children’s Services

SUBJECT: Roll Capping in East Lothian Secondary Schools – Session 2022/23

1 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Committee to approve the S1-S4 intake levels for East Lothian secondary schools for Session 2022/23.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to agree a maximum intake level in S1-S4 for session 2022/23 in the schools listed below. The reasons for this are set out in section 3.

School	Maximum S1 intake level	Maximum S2 intake level	Maximum S3 intake level	Maximum S4 intake level
Dunbar Grammar School	220	220	220	220
Knox Academy	180	180	180	160
Musselburgh Grammar School	240	260	260	240
North Berwick High School	180	200	180	210
Preston Lodge High School	240	210	210	210
Ross High School	260	240	260	260

- 2.2 We request that the Committee delegate any changes to the maximum intake level in S1 – S4 to the Head of Education in consultation with the Education Convener, should the number of pupils requiring a place at the school significantly increase or decrease.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The main principles for managing secondary school rolls in East Lothian are to:
- provide high quality education at local schools for local pupils;
 - ensure equality of resources throughout East Lothian;
 - commit to a real choice of education inside our schools and not between our schools.
- 3.2 As an education authority, East Lothian Council has to manage public funds and ensure a balanced education service across the authority in terms of expenditure and resources. This is partly managed by agreeing to limit the overall school roll for a school or to limit the number of pupils in one specific year. This is commonly referred to as “capping”.
- 3.3 When considering how to cap school rolls, East Lothian Council as an education authority must look at all its schools and available resources. We also consider the total population of children who require places in our secondary schools and how many of those are within each catchment area. We consider how each school will manage its resources and we then balance that with other schools’ situations to ensure that resources are shared evenly throughout East Lothian, thereby avoiding unreasonable public expenditure.
- 3.4 Limiting the number of pupils that the school can admit each academic year allows schools to timetable and employ a suitable number and category of teachers. In general, capping will support appropriate and early organisation for schools to meet their pupils’ needs for a high level of education. Capping prevents detrimental impacts on pupils’ education, and ensures effective and efficient management of resources by the authority.

Note: Practical classes, such as science subjects, are set in multiples of 20 pupils in secondary schools. Non-practical classes are set in multiples of 30 pupils and those classrooms are furnished to accommodate a maximum of 30 pupils. Where a limit has been set for S1 roll, this has been calculated in multiples of 20 and 30, as per practical and non-practical class maximum.

3.5 S1 August 2022 – School Roll

Based on the number of pupils expected in S1 and the current S1-S5 pupils progressing into S2-S6, the pupil numbers for next session 2022/23 are expected to be:

School	<u>S1</u>	<u>S2</u>	<u>S3</u>	<u>S4</u>	<u>S5</u>	<u>S6</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Dunbar Grammar	198	197	209	212	195	153	1164
Knox Academy	164	162	164	155	131	100	876
Musselburgh Grammar	223	242	245	230	183	96	1219
North Berwick High School	166	182	170	199	170	161	1048
Preston Lodge High School	220	198	201	189	145	82	1035
Ross High School	255	226	239	244	193	108	1265

3.6 The total roll includes pupils who are expected to transfer to S1 in August 2022 and the number of pupils expected to move up into S2 and so on, to S6.

3.7 The process is complex owing to pupils moving to and leaving East Lothian, late applications, and pupils choosing private schools. We consult with Head Teachers regularly and consider the statistics and information that we collate to decide on appropriate recommendations for the S1 intake. This has informed our capping recommendation, set out in 2.1 above.

3.8 Reserved places must also be considered as part of the roll for secondary schools and a separate report has been completed for this.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications in this report.

5 EQUALITIES 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 None

AUTHOR'S NAME	Fiona Brown
DESIGNATION	Principal Officer, School Admissions and Planning
CONTACT INFO	Tel: 01620 827415 Email: fbrown@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	22 February 2022

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-2022-2022-edition-4-2022/summary-statistics-for-attainment-and-initial-leaver-destinations-2022-2022-edition-4-2022.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/Information/Statistics/Summary_Statistics_for_Attainment_and_Initial_Leaver_Destinations_No_4_2022_Edition)

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