

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 20 June 2023

BY: Executive Director – Education & Children’s Services

SUBJECT: Positive School Leaver Destinations 2021/22

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 significant proactive work currently underway to support improved outcomes for learners leading to positive destinations.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 A glossary has been created to explain the acronyms contained within this committee report (Appendix 1).

3.2 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.

3.3 The initial destination of school leavers’ data (SLDR) (Appendix 2) is used by schools and Education Authorities across Scotland to monitor progress in improving the proportion of school leavers into positive and sustained destinations.

3.4 The data for initial post school destinations (SLDR) referred to in this report is taken from the February 2023 release of the senior phase benchmarking tool, Insight and forms one of the four National Benchmarking measures. The data provides information on the outcomes for young people as recorded in October 2022, approximately three to ten months after leaving school.

- 3.5 The data on initial post-school destinations for 2021/22 was reported nationally and published by the Scottish Government on 28th February 2023: [Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, No. 5: 2023 Edition - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 3.6 This report compares East Lothian initial school leaver destinations (SLDR) with the Virtual Comparator and the National Establishment (i.e. national average). Figures are provided in most cases for both the national average and the Virtual Comparator, however, the Virtual Comparator is seen as the key benchmark for helping schools and authorities understand their strengths and areas for improvement. 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.
- 3.7 This report will explore how the Education Authority has performed over the three-year period since 2019/20 to 2021/22, in relation to the national average and the Virtual Comparator. The main highlights for East Lothian in 2021/22 are provided below -

Summary of Results for East Lothian 2021-2022:

- Our initial Positive Destinations Report (SLDR), for the 2021/22 cohort was 95.6% against a national picture of 95.7%. An analysis of the recent statistics shows that one percent fewer young people moved directly into training and around eight percent fewer young people moved directly into Higher Education (this is in line with the national context and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) attribute this to the rise in the cost of living). There was an increase of seven percent young people leaving school and moving directly into employment.
- Staff within East Lothian Works (ELW), in partnership with colleagues within SDS have followed up with all leavers from the 2021/22 cohort. The service is currently awaiting the follow up SLDR statistics. These relate to sustained destinations six months beyond leaving school. All young people have been offered a range of support from ELW in order to help them identify an appropriate onward positive destination.
- Our current 16-19 year old Annual Participation Measure (APM), the statistic which records positive destinations three years beyond the school leaving date) is currently 93.3% (2022), an increase of 0.8% (92.5%) on 2021-22 statistic. East Lothian remains above the national average, which was 92.4%. This national statistic was the highest ever recorded APM result. These statistics were reported by SDS in the Annual APM report published August 2022.
- East Lothian remains consistently above the national average for Participation across all age ranges;
 - Age 16: ELC 99.5% National 99.3%;
 - Age 17: ELC 96.9% National 95.7%;
 - Age 18: ELC 91.3% National 89.8%;
 - Age 19: 84.3% National 84.2%.

- 3.8 All Secondary Schools now operate a 'Common School Day' and timetable structure. Schools are exploring how we can better utilise collaborative opportunities to widen the regional curriculum offer and provide best value for East Lothian Council. ELW will track and monitor progress towards the key targets that are outlined in the Corporate Parenting Plan. Our aspiration is to develop a curriculum that ensures **all** learners have the opportunity to achieve their potential; through clear, coherent, flexible and progressive 2-18 learning pathways and opportunities. Literacy and numeracy, health and wellbeing sit at the heart of this vision, in terms of accessibility.
- 3.9 Further planned engagement with Education Scotland around the development of the 2-18 Curriculum and a refresh of how we implement Curriculum for Excellence, is an overarching Education priority for session 2023-24. By the end of year, every school will have a refreshed curriculum rationale. This will enable schools to broaden their collaborative and wider partnership opportunities and enable them to facilitate inter-school collaboration and sharing of resources and ensure learner pathways are appropriate and lead to more positive outcomes. Digital connectivity will also be utilised to enhance these learning opportunities. The Education Service continues to collaborate with Education Scotland (ES), the South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES), as well as other key partners, to update schools on the latest national developments and priorities relating to curriculum development and the phase 3 review of Qualifications and Assessment, led by Professor Louise Hayward. The interim report was published on 3rd March 2023 [Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment in Scotland: interim report - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/documents/2023/03/Independent_Review_of_Qualifications_and_Assessment_in_Scotland_interim_report.pdf)
- 3.10 The Education Service continues to support a wide range of Further Education and Training opportunities through the School to College Partnership with Edinburgh College. In academic session 22/23, we commenced with the first year of the East Lothian Aspire Pilot Programme. This is a school-led, integrated intervention programme that aims to support vulnerable young people and families in East Lothian, to improve Educational engagement, attainment, attendance and positive destinations. The programme was approved by Education Scotland as a test of change. 24 pupils (12 from Ross High School and 12 from Preston Lodge) attended Edinburgh College for one full day a week (Monday), for the academic session; to engage with a programme of interdisciplinary, project based learning, across all Edinburgh College campuses. Learning experiences were aligned to regional labour market intelligence (LMI), highlighting where the jobs and opportunities will be for these young people, in the future. All pupils engaged in this programme experienced their full curriculum entitlements, across a broad general education (BGE), through a strength based approach, which brings further education, schools and communities together in partnership. There is an intense focus on developing skills for learning, life and work. Plans to progress this cohort to a successful tertiary transition, in partnership with Edinburgh

College and schools, have been agreed. This programme was shortlisted as a finalist for a Herald Higher Education Award 2023.

- 3.11 The Education Service, through East Lothian Works, offers a portfolio of work based Level 6 Foundation Apprenticeships (FA's), in partnership with businesses across Edinburgh, East and Midlothian. These work based pathways, are equivalent to two Higher level qualifications. Internal ELC course, are currently offered in the following vocations - Business Skills, Accountancy, Scientific Technologies, IT Software (new from academic session 2023), and Social Services Children and Young People. Pupil numbers continue to increase across all frameworks. 95 East Lothian pupils enrolled on a Foundation Apprenticeship in 2022, a significant increase on the 51 starts in 2021. In 2023, a former Musselburgh Grammar FA Business student was shortlisted for the FA Student of the year, in March 2023. This student has since gone on to secure employment as an 'Intellectual Capital Assistant' within a global investment management company and remains an ELC FA Ambassador.
- The ELC Foundation Apprenticeship in Scientific Technologies is delivered in partnership with regional businesses and Higher Education. The programme is a very attractive option for students interested in pursuing a wide range of Science careers. This work-based qualification unlocks a diverse range of pathways, either through the traditional University study route, or via a Modern Apprenticeship. In 2021-22, 14 students achieved the Science Technologies qualification and in 2022-23, 34 students are on track to pass. Notably, last year, one of our students gained a modern apprenticeship within the University of Edinburgh's School of Chemistry. Another 3 students have applied for science-based employment at Charles River Laboratories. Employers continue to reap the benefits of engaging with our Science framework and we are delighted to announce a new partnerships with MiAlgae, The Institute of Genetics and Cancer, Scottish Water and the Queens Medical Research Institute Centre, for 2023-24. In addition our centrally supported schools science programme has been expanded to offer an uplift to the National Progression Award (NPA) 6 in Chemistry, which is the equivalent to a Higher on the SCQF framework, in all 6 secondary schools. In 2021-22, 68 pupils achieved both the Higher SQA Chemistry and the additional NPA L6 award. In academic session 2022-23, this number increased to 132 pupils receiving the equivalent of a double SQA Higher qualification.
- 3.12 ELW successfully devised and implemented the ELC 'Workforce for the Future Strategy', utilising external funding from the Scottish Government's Young Person's Guarantee grant (YPG), to further confirm East Lothian Council's commitment to developing the highest quality of employability support, work-based learning and workforce development. This work supported the Council and East Lothian businesses throughout COVID-19. A range of Employer Recruitment Incentives have also been awarded. Since the end of 2021 £550,000 has been committed to support Council departments to offer 10 Modern Apprenticeships (MAs), as well as a further 16 Graduate Internships.

ELW has also allocated funding through:

- LACER ERI (Employer Recruitment Incentive) £123,000, creating 38 opportunities.
 - YPG (Young Persons Guarantee) £610,000, creating 65 opportunities.
 - LTU (Long Term Unemployed) £40,000, creating 4 opportunities.
 - UKSPF ERI (Employer Recruitment Incentive) £58,000 to date in 2023, creating 13 further opportunities (funding in place until March 24)
- 3.13 The Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) provided the opportunity for targeted funding to support parents seeking employment and individuals who were experiencing in-work poverty. ELW created 37 x 6 month Paid Work Experience placements for classroom assistants, across all ELC schools. 12 candidates were successful in gaining employment contracts in their host schools. 8 candidates are now working on the supply list. 3 remaining candidates have applied to college and university for courses in Early Learning & Childcare. These courses commenced in August 2023.
- 3.14 During 2022/23 the Income Maximisation service received 54 new PESF referrals and in total assisted 91 clients, resulting in a significant financial gain for clients who were already in work and for those on statutory benefits. These gains included the new Scottish Child Payment, Council Tax reduction and Adult Disability Payment (ADP). The cumulative gain amounted to £173,478.95. As well as the financial benefits, clients were also helped to access the Community Windpower Fund (CWPF) utilising Advice Direct Scotland (ADS) grants. In comparison to the overall figures for 2021, the income maximisation results for every statistical measure increased, with a 10% increase in new referrals, 39% increase in benefit/in work calculations and an over 400% increase in financial gains.
- 3.15 'Employability+', is a new employability programme for pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASN). The programme has expanded since the initial pilot project in 21-22, with 17 young people participating, and in 22-23, increasing to 40 pupils. The employability programme runs over 12-20 weeks and focuses on developing employability skills and confidence. This is a certificated programme and results in a Personal Development Award, employer engagement experiences which is coordinated through East Lothian's Developing Scotland's Young Workforce Coordinators.
- 3.16 The East Lothian Works School Team successfully supported 145 pupils to access a variety of programmes, including Construction, Rural Skills, Boxing, Customer Service, Business and Marketing, Girls Allowed in partnership with Dunbar Fashion School. In 2022-23, 250 young people engaged with these course and the offer has been expanded and will include Construction, Rural Skills, World of Sport, Uniform Services, Boxing, Girls Allowed and Customer Services: Principles and Practices.

Senior phase courses include certification, either through an appropriate SQA qualification, or using the SQA Personal Development Award.

- 3.17 In partnership with Edinburgh College, ELW co-ordinates the 'School to College Partnership (SCP)' programme. These opportunities take place on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and are available to all East Lothian pupils within the senior phase. In Academic session 2021-22, 150 East Lothian pupils successfully gained a qualification, ranging from SCQF Levels 3-7, in a range of industry skills, from Hair and Beauty, to Hospitality and Professional Cookery, Engineering, Media and Sound Production, Sport and Leisure, Social Sciences and Automotive. Statistics evidence that many of these pupils make a successful tertiary transition to a positive post school destination, which underpins our positive regional performance in this measure.
 - 3.18 Winter and summer leaver programmes have been developed, utilising the No One Left Behind (NOLB) Scottish Government funding (6 months prior to leaving school). These group programmes are delivered in all East Lothian secondary schools, and support towards a positive destination is offered to young people who have intimated that they are intending to leave school. These programmes support pupils to achieve a positive destination. To complement this work, we have used NOLB funding, through a small grants process to strengthen our offer for young people leaving school. In 2022-23 we partnered with The Bridges Project, Street League, Enable and Access to Industry. Due to successful collaboration, we have expanded our partnership work to include Barnardos.
 - 3.19 Construction continues to be a regional priority growth and demand sector across the South East of Scotland in response to SDS labour market analysis. ELW have a successful partnership with The Ridge (Dunbar) to deliver certificated Construction & Rural Skills training. Construction Crafts Level 4, is available to all pupils in BGE. Students attend from S3 and can progress to Level 5 in S4-S6. In 2021-22, 24 pupils enrolled and completed the BGE curriculum alongside 12 pupils from the senior phase. In academic session 2022-23, 27 pupils from BGE and 16 pupils from Senior Phase have been accepted onto these courses.
 - 3.20 In addition to the provision detailed above, The Ridge also delivers an SCQF Level 4 in Rural Skills to senior phase pupils. In academic session 2021-22, 7 pupils completed this qualification. We have the same number enrolled in academic session 22-23.
- The Regional Agricultural Skills Academy is due to open at the Wallyford Learning Campus in June 2023. 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 STEAM centre. ELW are in the process of negotiating strong partnership agreements with a range of industry partners; including British Engineering Services Association (BESA), Edinburgh College (EC) and The Scottish Rural College (SRUC). This training facility is a regional resource and

designed to be an economic attractor for the Building Services, Housing, Construction and Infrastructure businesses, as plans are being developed to deliver a range of school level pathways and Modern Apprenticeship training from this facility. In 2022-23, ELW successfully co-ordinated a pilot Regional Construction Skills Academy, in partnership with Edinburgh College, on site at Wallyford Learning Campus. 6 pupils successfully gained a full National Progression Award (NPA) Level 4 qualification. This provision will transition and expand, at scale, into the Wallyford STEAM Centre in August. Plans have been agreed with Edinburgh College for a further transition pilot project to enable school leavers to gain a National Certificate, Level 5, in Construction.

Next Steps

- 3.21 East Lothian Works is launching a new programme for parents, funded through Multiply (UK Shared Prosperity Fund), which is aimed at improving the functional numeracy skills of adults. The programme will engage with parents to improve their confidence and skills to support their children's numeracy learning. In the longer term, this improved engagement should positively impact on young people's learning and route through school into a positive 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 – All post school activity is reliant upon external grant funding and therefore parameters of activity are dictated by strict grant conditions. External funding fluctuates on an annual basis.
- 6.2 Personnel - Is reliant upon maintenance of existing budget allocations; both core and external.
- 6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Glossary

Appendix 2 – School Leaver Destinations 21/22

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Appendix 1

Glossary:

School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR) - Data relating to school leavers (S4-S6) and their initial destination upon leaving school.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) – Is the national skills agency for Scotland, supporting people and businesses of Scotland to develop and apply their skills.

South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) – Is a collaboration between Edinburgh City Council, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian and Scottish Borders to improve schools, early learning settings and other services for children and young people.

Education Scotland – Is a Scottish Government executive agency responsible for supporting quality and improvement in Scottish Education.

Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) – Is an independent professional network for leaders and managers in education and children's services, who inform and influence Education policy in Scotland.

Curriculum for Excellence (CFE) – Developed over the course of several years to improve and transform Scotland's Education systems, by a more flexible and coherent curriculum from 3-18 years.

Broad General Education (BGE) – Begins in early learning and childcare until the end of S3 (the third year of secondary school).

STEAM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths

Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) - Foundation Apprenticeships at SCQF Level 6 provide work-based learning opportunities for learners in their senior phase of secondary education (S4 – S6). The delivery of the qualification is a mixture of classroom and work based learning with employer and forms part of the pupil's timetable alongside their other qualifications such as National 5 and Highers.

No One Left Behind (NOLB) – Is Scottish Government's Employability Strategy to transform employment support in Scotland.

Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) – Grant funding provided by Scottish Government to ensure that all young people aged 16-24 upon leaving school had the offer of a positive destination.

Modern Apprenticeships (MA's) - Is a job which lets people earn a wage and gain an industry-recognised qualification.

Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) – forming part of the NOLB strategy, this fund is collaboratively managed by Scottish and Local Government, providing dedicated support for low-income families. Taking a holistic Key Worker

approach parents are supported to upskill and/or re-train, increasing family income, lifting themselves and their families out of poverty. For 2023/24 this activity will form part of the Child Poverty employability funding for local authorities.

Advice Direct Scotland (ADS) – Scotland’s largest digital advice agency. Provides a range of support including home heating and energy advice.

Adult Disability Payment (ADP) - Is a new payment from Social Security Scotland to help with the extra cost of living with a disability or health condition for new claimants who are working age, replacing Personal Independence Payment and the Disability Living Allowance.

Community Windpower Energy Fund (CWPF) – Is a partnership between Community Windpower and Advice Direct Scotland delivering a £1m fund to people in East Lothian affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

Appendix 2

School Leaver Destinations 2021/22

	%Employed	% Further Education	% Higher Education	% Not known	% Personal Skills Development	% Training	% Unemployed not seeking	% Unemployed seeking	% Voluntary Work	% Total Positive Destinations
Dunbar Grammar School	36.63	15.7	40.7		1.16		3.49	2.33		94.19
Virtual Comparator for Dunbar Grammar School	26.86	20.29	47.33	0.41	0.35	1.8	0.87	1.69	0.41	97.03
Knox Academy	34.46	20.27	39.19	0.68	0.68	2.03	0.68	1.35	0.68	97.3
Virtual Comparator for Knox Academy	26.35	27.03	39.73	0.2	0.54	2.43	1.42	1.96	0.34	96.42
Musselburgh Grammar School	37.76	21.94	32.14		1.02	1.02	2.55	3.57		93.88
Virtual Comparator for Musselburgh Grammar School	26.28	29.69	34.8	0.31	0.56	3.93	1.89	2.04	0.51	95.77
North Berwick High School	29.31	10.92	52.87			1.72	0.57	4.02	0.57	95.4
Virtual Comparator for North Berwick High School	21.61	15.8	57.7	0.46	0.34	0.92	0.98	1.49	0.69	97.07
Preston Lodge High School	40.98	21.86	31.69		0.55	3.28	0.55	1.09		98.36
Virtual Comparator for Preston Lodge High School	26.34	26.94	34.32	0.38	0.93	4.97	1.42	3.88	0.82	94.32
Ross High School	32.75	27.95	30.57		2.18	1.75	0.44	4.37		95.2
Virtual Comparator for Ross High School	26.68	29.08	33.89	0.61	0.74	3.58	2.14	2.58	0.7	94.67