



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EDUCATION & CHILDRENS SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 21 NOVEMBER, 10:00am
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING FACILITIES**

1

Committee Members Present:

Councillor Bennett
Councillor Bruce
Councillor Dugdale - Convener
Councillor Hampshire
Councillor McFarlane
Councillor McIntosh
Councillor Menzies
Councillor Trotter
Councillor Yorkston
Ms G Gillan (EIS)

Council Officials Present:

Ms L Brown - Executive Director of Education and Children's Services
Ms N McDowell - Head of Education
Ms B Skirrow - Principal Officer (Education Service)
Ms J Allen - Communications Adviser
Ms J Boyle – Quality Improvement Officer (Equity)
Ms A Cameron – Service Manager – Early Years and Childcare
Ms L Byrne – Head of Children's Services, Children's Wellbeing
Mr N Trussler – Quality Improvement Officer, Education
Ms K Haspolat – Quality Improvement Officer, Education
Ms F Brown – Principal Officer, Education

Teachers Present:

Ms Z Diggle – Head Teacher, Wallyford Primary School & Nursery Class

Clerk:

Ms M Scott, Committee Officer
Ms F Currie, back-up clerk

Other Elected Members present:

Apologies:

Councillor Ritchie
Councillor N Gilbert
Rev G Sheridan (External Rep)

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 extended a welcome to the Head Teacher, Ms Zena Diggle who was present at the meeting.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023

The minutes of the Education Committee meeting of 21 November 2023 were approved.

2. EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION OF WALLYFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services to report to Committee on the outcomes of the Education Scotland inspection of Wallyford Primary School and Nursery Class.

Mr Nick Trussler, Quality Improvement Officer for Education noted the inspection team used the How Good Is Our School 4? (HGIOS4?) quality indicators for primary inspections and How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare? (HGIOELC?) for inspections of Nursery and Early Years provisions to evaluate the quality of provision at Wallyford Primary School and Nursery Class.

At the end of the inspection process, the outcomes were published in a short letter to parents and carers outlining the key strengths and areas for improvement. The letter provided a statement of the confidence the inspectors have in the school's capacity to improve the quality of its own work. This was published along with the summary of inspection findings which is a professional report and summarised the findings from all the evidence gathered during the inspection. This document is intended to be used by staff progressing school improvement.

Mr Trussler reported the summary of inspection findings could be found within the report and highlighted Wallyford Primary School received gradings satisfactory for learning, teaching and assessment and weak for raising attainment and achievement, and in the nursery class both related quality indicators were graded as satisfactory. Mr Trussler highlighted the key strengths and areas for improvement found during the inspection.

Mr Trussler confirmed he would continue to work closely with the Head Teacher and staff to provide professional advice and support and challenge in the areas for improvement.

Councillor McFarlane asked what support was being given to staff to help achieve the attainment objectives. Mr Trussler highlighted the additional supports the Quality Improvement Team had provided to the school including engagement with the National Improving Writing Programme and blocks of support from the Pedagogy Team. Ms Zena Diggle, Head Teacher at Wallyford Primary School and Nursery Class added she had been working with larger schools who had given feedback on the school improvement plan on things that could be done better. Ms Diggle informed Members she had participated in the Scot Group which in her view had been critical in looking at the curriculum offer at Wallyford Primary School as she believes this needs to be reviewed and uplevelled to raise attainment and literacy.

In response to a question from Councillor Hampshire, Mr Trussler confirmed the inspection was completed in September when Ms Diggle had only been in post for five weeks. He explained the Inspection Team recognised Ms Diggle's experience as she was able to provide an accurate self-evaluation statement to where the strengths and development needs were within the school and the impact of her leadership even over that short period of her appointment. Mr Trussler agreed with Councillor Hampshire, that time was required to see the impact on pupil attainment which has been evidenced in current tracking of pupil progress for this session. Ms Diggle added that the Leadership Team she has joined were fantastic in allowing her to be very robust in the evaluation she undertook when she started. She explained one of the key reasons the curriculum rationale will be looked at is due to the change in the community so this will need to meet the needs of the community as it develops.

Mr Trussler and Ms Diggle provided information to Members on what the future inspection at Wallyford Primary School and Nursery Class will look like and how the school will be supported in preparing for this. Ms Diggle explained since the inspection she has implemented a whole school tracking system and gave evidence on how this has helped staff to improve levels of attainment. Mr Trussler confirmed parents would be informed when the next inspection will take place.

Responding to questions from Councillor McIntosh, Ms Diggle confirmed the views of all staff and also the children are taken into consideration as part of the inspection. Ms Diggle provided information on the methods of assessment being used within classrooms to help children understand their progress and goals. Ms Diggle made Members aware the school will continue to strive to be the best it can be, and she is looking at a five-year plan for Wallyford including closing the poverty related attainment gap due to the changing SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) profile of the school.

Councillor Bruce asked if it was unusual for schools to not have a whole school tracker. Mr Trussler explained schools do track progress in terms of achievement of a level and the Quality Improvement Team engages with schools regularly to monitor and evaluate the tracking of that progress. He added the tracking system Ms Diggle has implemented within Wallyford is much more detailed around progress of individual learners, the barriers they may have, and the interventions put in place as a result.

In response to a second question from Councillor Bruce, Mr Trussler stated attainment can be cohort specific and data from Wallyford had not shown good rates of attainment over time however the additional supports put in place over the last three sessions has led to impact. A focus has been maintained on this with use of the Pedagogy Team to support teaching and learning in all classes in order to provide additional support and develop pedagogical approaches. Ms Diggle added she felt the understanding of achieving first and second level needed attention and the

school has worked hard to make sure they are stating accurately if a child has attained that level. She stated a SEF funded pupil support worker and equity administration have been brought in to work closely with families around attendance and funding has also been used to support family wellbeing, both of which will have a positive impact on attainment.

Councillor Menzies stated the difference in the school between when she was elected in May 2022 and now is amazing and has gone through a real transformation. She explained Wallyford is an ever changing and growing community which still has pockets of poverty with families with complex needs and this has to be managed by the school in a constantly changing environment. She noted that although this report is a concern, but things have really improved and are on a positive trajectory and spoke highly of the scrutiny of the Wallyford Parent/Carer Council. Councillor Menzies thanked Ms Diggle and the whole school team.

Councillor Hampshire said he is confident the school is going in the right direction and believes the next inspection report will be excellent.

Councillor Yorkston and Councillor McIntosh highlighted the strengths identified by the Inspection Team and were really encouraged by all the updates Ms Diggle was able to provide at today's meeting.

Councillor Dugdale echoed the comments from other Members and felt reassured the school are working really hard to focus on those areas of improvement. She added she is confident about the progress the school will make by continuing to work with the Quality Improvement Officer, Mr Trussler and thanked Ms Diggle and the whole staff team within Wallyford Primary School and Nursery Class.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

- i. Note the content of the Education Scotland letter (Appendix 1).
- ii. Note the content of the Summary of Inspection Findings for the Primary School and Nursery Class (SIF) (Appendix 2).
- iii. Note the content of the Summary of Inspection Findings for the Nursery Class (SIF) (Appendix 3)
- iv. Note that as a result of the inspection findings, Education Scotland will make a follow-up visit in connection with this inspection within 12 months of publication of the inspection report to allow more time for the school to make necessary improvements.
- v. Note the key strengths identified by the Inspection Team and progress made since the inspection.

3. RESERVE PLACES IN SCHOOLS FOR CATCHMENT PUPILS WHO MOVE INTO THE CATCHMENT AREA DURING ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/25

A report was submitted by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services to report to Committee to obtain approval for reserving place for incoming catchment pupils at the primary and secondary schools detailed in 2.1 for session 2024/25.

Ms Fiona Brown, Principal Officer for Education outlined the key points and purpose of the report and explained the factors that were taken into account when determining the number of places. She asked Committee to note an update to Yester Primary

School in that the reserve places are for each class not each primary stage which is in line with other schools who have a number of composite classes in academic year 2024/25.

Councillor Hampshire asked if Ms Brown was confident within the reserve places proposed today that with the new build planned for this year all children can be accommodated. Ms Brown confirmed she was confident in the number of places requesting to be held are sufficient for pupils moving into the catchment area as the role projections used are from build rates provided by colleagues in October/November which at that time was the most up to date information available from planning and housing.

In response to a question from Councillor McIntosh, Ms Brown confirmed it would only be pupils out with the catchment area who would potentially be refused as a place as these places are held in reserve for families moving into the catchment area of the school. She noted there are a few schools who may start the academic year with only their reserve places available, but these are held for the entire year to accommodate for new builds and migration into the local school area.

Councillor Hampshire stated a lot of concern is raised by communities because of the level of new builds within East Lothian people that the Council is not creating the infrastructure available, but it is clear officers do everything they can to ensure there is enough capacity within every school so any child moving into the area has a place where they can be educated. He emphasised the challenge of this, especially with the construction industry as the Council is unable to dictate how many houses they build within the year.

Councillor Dugdale thanked Ms Brown and other officers for their work on ensuring all children and young people have a place to be educated within their local school.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

- i. hold in reserve places for incoming catchment pupils for sessions 2024/25 in the named primary and secondary schools between S1-S4.

A roll call vote was carried out and the decision to support was unanimous.

4. ROLL CAPPING IN EAST LOTHIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS – SESSION 2024/25

A report was submitted by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services to ask the Committee to approve the S1-S4 intake levels for East Lothian secondary schools for session 2024/25.

Ms Fiona Brown, Principal Officer for Education summarised her report highlighting the main principles for managing secondary school roles within East Lothian are to; provide high quality education at local schools for local pupils, ensure quality of resources throughout East Lothian and commit to a real choice of education inside our schools and not between our schools. Ms Brown noted that practical classes, such as science subjects, are set in multiples of 20 and non-practical classes are set in multiples of 30.

Councillor Hampshire asked if there was a maximum capacity of pupils within schools are there are numerous secondary schools now with over 1000 pupils. Ms

Brown explained colleagues within other services look at school capacity and extensive work has been done around both our primary and secondary schools on what the maximum capacities can be which included looking at the full education estate and proposed house builds. Nicola McDowell, Head of Education added the Learning Estate Project Team are doing a comprehensive piece of work around school capacities at the moment in regard to the local development plan to make sure the current capacities are correctly set for the way the curriculum is delivered. Ms McDowell offered to provide the outcome of this work with Councillor Hampshire when it was completed. In response to a follow up question from Councillor Hampshire, Ms McDowell explained when planning the capacity of a school there is a formula used to allocate the required space for dining which is also taken into consideration should an extension be added to an existing school.

In response to a question from Councillor Menzies, Ms Brown explained parents can still make an out of catchment placing request for Musselburgh Grammer instead of Rosehill. She explained this year the local authority will be noting the families who may make these requests to accommodate them if they have siblings already at Musselburgh Grammer and wish for these siblings groups to stay together.

Councillor McIntosh asked if she could also be sent the information from Ms McDowell. She added that while looking at school estates part of the discussion should cover what the most efficient use of resources that go into building extensions and at what point it becomes more resource sensible to build a new school as well as the energy usage of the current school estate. Councillor McIntosh highlighted the work of the Teach the Future group who are campaigning for schools to be high on the list for retrofitting.

Councillor Dugdale thanked Ms Brown for all the work that has gone into preparing the report.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

- i. a maximum intake level in S1-S4 for session 2024/25 in the listed schools.

A roll call vote was carried out and the decision to support was unanimous.

5. EXCELLENCE & EQUITY: RAISING ATTAINMENT FOR ALL STRATEGY 2023/24 – 2025/26

A report was submitted by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services to report to seek the Committee's approval of the draft raising attainment strategy: Excellence & Equity: Raising Attainment for All.

Ms Jennifer Boyle, Quality Improvement Manager for Equity and Inclusion summarised her report and drew Members' attention to the equity principles which were created in collaboration with school colleagues to illustrate our rigorous approach and culture of ambition. She also highlighted the work of the Education Support Officer for Care Experienced Children and Young People, and the stretch aims in relation to improving school attendance and attainment. Ms Boyle drew attention to the eight core plus stretch aims and the scope and inclusivity that they include recognition for a wide range of attainment measures. Ms Boyle noted each school also has a stretch aim in relation to school attendance and East Lothian Council's Attendance Policy has been highlighted by Education Scotland as an example of good practice in a recent publication.

In response to questions from Councillor Bruce, Ms Boyle confirmed the Scottish Attainment Challenge is made of three strands; pupil equity funding which is paid directly to head teachers based on the children in receipt of free school meals, the strategic equity fund which is paid directly to local authorities based on the children and families considered to be in low income and funding for care experienced children and young people. She explained officers work in partnership with schools to ensure they are happy with the approaches they are taking when it comes to the use of the pupil equity funding. Ms Boyle added last year guidance was published on the use of the pupil equity fund with a clear process on how that funding is spent and the details of how that funding is spent is also set out in the school improvement plan which the school would be publishing in advance of their academic session.

Councillor Bruce asked how the Council will use the strategic equity fund to support schools. Ms Boyle reported that fund is primarily being used to fund extra staff within schools including a Principal Teacher of Equity in each secondary school and Family Support Workers into primary schools with the highest number of children in quintile one. Ms Boyle added that officers are currently designing a new service in terms of providing education outreach for the most vulnerable learners.

In response to a follow up question from Councillor Bruce, Ms Boyle provided information on what data is collated from schools and how this would be shared with Members through the Education Progress and Improvement Plan which is published annually.

Councillor Hampshire asked what more could be done for the parents and carers who won't engage with staff through any initiatives. Ms Boyle provided information on the Child Planning Framework Locality Teams she hopes to implement this year to provide school colleagues with a forum to bring families whom they feel they are not getting it right despite the current resources in place. Ms Alison Cameron, Service Manager for Early Years informed Members of the work of Whole Family Wellbeing which will allow everyone to work as a team to manage the requests of support. She confirmed the Families Together Team would also be present at Child Planning Framework Locality Team meetings to show the joined-up approach and planned ways of working compliment the raising attainment strategy highlighted today. In response to a follow up question from Councillor Hampshire, Ms Boyle stated schools have always been creative in making sure everyone feels welcomed and have shown tenacity and don't give up with parents who haven't been willing to engage.

In response to questions from Councillor McIntosh, Ms Boyle confirmed prior to the family support workers being brought into primary schools Ms McDowell and herself went to numerous schools and families to ask what would make things better for them and that is where many of the newly implemented approaches such as walking buses have come from. Ms Boyle also provided an update on the work our Educational Psychologist is currently doing around attendance in secondary schools.

Councillor McIntosh asked how the pupil voice was included within the attainment strategy. Ms Boyle explained an education support officer is linked into rights respecting school so year the Equity Pupil Group has been formed, made up on 3 to 4 pupils from each secondary school to be a sounding board for all policies going forward.

In response to Councillor McIntosh's questions regarding exclusions, Ms Boyle said she was confident that the current policies in place support staff and is used as a last resort and does not sit in isolation but instead alongside the GIRFEC frameworks

therefore all children who are known to be at risk of exclusion will have positive support plans and risk assessments to make sure staff are aware of triggers and working to mitigate them. She also made Members aware on how exclusions are tracked and how children who have been excluded are supported.

Councillor Dugdale asked how schools are making sure they are aware of hidden poverty and parents having to work multiple jobs to manage finances. Ms Boyle stated having the Principal Teachers of Equity within secondary schools to look at that data and gaps will be hugely beneficial.

In response to a second question from Councillor Dugdale, Ms Boyle explained the stretch aims set out by the Scottish Government look at children achieving level five and six qualifications but we are aware not all children can achieve this level therefore within our core plus stretch aims one was set around the achievement of level one qualifications and above which seeks to scoop up every single learner, including those within specialist provisions to make sure all learners leave school with five qualifications. She added that the team have also looked at literacy and numeracy as a core qualification. Ms Boyle confirmed foundation apprenticeships are covered in the measure of one of more qualification at level five.

Councillor Hampshire said he was pleased about the locality groups that are underway to help families who are struggling to have the best chance at an education, and he looked forward to an update in the future.

Councillor Dugdale thanked Ms Boyle and all staff who have worked on the report. She saw a genuine focus on raising attainment and attendance to identify children who are at risk of underachieving and to bring everyone together to support children and families.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

- i. Approve the draft raising attainment strategy: Excellence & Equity: Raising Attainment for All Strategy 2023/24 – 2025/26. (Appendix 1)
- ii. Note the steps being taken to ensure raising attainment for all learners and closing the poverty related attainment gap in sessions 2023/24; 2024/25 and 2025/26.

A roll call vote was carried out for i. and the decision to support was unanimous. Councillor Bruce lost connection at the time of voting but later confirmed his vote via email.

6. HEAD TEACHER APPOINTMENT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services to inform the Committee of the Head Teacher made by the Appointments Sub-Committee.

Ms Nicola McDowell, Head of Education reported the appointment of Steven Wood as Head Teacher at Gullane Primary School. Mr Wood will leave his current post at Gorebridge Primary School and Early Learning Centre and begin at Gullane Primary on 19 April.

-Councillor Findlay and Councillor Dugdale congratulated Mr Wood on his appointment and thanked parents, carers and pupils for their help with his recruitment.

Decision

The Committee agreed to note the Head Teacher appointment.

7. BELONGING TO EAST LOTHIAN

A report was submitted by the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services to update the Committee on the progress of the joint work across Education and Children's Services to meet the needs of our children and young people within East Lothian and where possible in their communities and seek to avoid having care and Education needs met out with the authority.

Ms Lindsey Byrne, Head of Childrens Services presented her report which outlined some of the key developments across the directorate and key successes including the key development of the outreach service which offers support to families at risk of break down and can be available at evenings and weekends, the introduction of Chances which is a dedicated outreach programme for young people at risk of residential or secure accommodation and the pilot of a new approach to supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking young people. Ms Byrne noted the department are also pleased about the implementation of Child Planning Framework Locality Teams which will become an integral part of the Councils approach to GIRFEC. Ms Byrne confirmed by the end of the school session 2023/24 all locality areas will have been supported to establish their own locality team. She reported a gradual reduction in the number of children being looked after which showed the department are meeting more children's needs within their families and schools which continues to be the overall aim of Belonging to East Lothian. She provided an update on the next phase for collaboration which will include a new targeted campaign to attract more people to care for our most vulnerable young people as well as developing a service to offer flexible education provision to ensure more people can engage with education in a way that meets their needs.

In response to a question from Councillor McIntosh, Ms Byrne stated the department absolutely agree that our unaccompanied asylum seeking young people have the same rights and needs as the rest of the our looked after young people but sometimes it is difficult to ensure one resource can meet the needs of a large group and often the young people coming in via the national transfer scheme have a different set of requirements and are slightly older then the young people cared for in Lothian Villa. She added that it would also mean we have less resources for local young people who may need to be looked after in a residential provision. Ms Byrne reported the department have decided to utilise their close relationship with housing and have reprovisioned some two-bedroom properties to keep unaccompanied asylum seekers in pairs when they arrive with visiting support from staff. She explained this has been seen as more appropriate than 24-hour care given their age and requirements, but this would be based on full assessment and if there was a young person whose needs could be better met within a residential facility then that would also be considered. Ms Byrne confirmed this is a similar set up to the starter flats local young people may move into from Lothian Villa and they will have their own tenancy agreement which is more stability for their future within East Lothian. She noted there is currently one allocated support worker for asylum seeking young people, but their capacity will be monitored as the national transfer scheme picks up.

Councillor McIntosh asked if the potential trauma these young people have suffered is being addressed. Ms Byrne explained the department work closely with the Guardianship National Service which looks at the individual needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people and also colleagues within health services. She added

that the department are also starting to create networks of support across Lothian and Borders to share best practice and learning with other local authority areas experiencing similar things.

In response to a question from Councillor Hampshire, Ms Byrne explained the department are looking to recruit a dedicated worker for marketing and recruitment who will focus on setting up events for people who are interested in becoming foster carers. She added these events will help people understand there is more than one way to foster and will hopefully be offered online as well as in person to ensure they are as accessible as possible.

Councillor Dugdale asked how children and young people's voices are being heard in the evaluation of these approaches. Ms Byrne reported the department are always seeking ways to enhance to help develop services which is being done through the Pupil Equity Group and Family Together East Lothian as well as the East Lothian Champions Board who have come up with a list of priorities that underpin a lot of the work we are taking forward at the moment. She noted the Champions Board are also involved in the recruitment and training of new foster carers.

Councillor Hampshire thanked the staff for their success on reducing the number of looked after children in East Lothian and hoped in the future all children who require to be looked after can be kept within the local area.

Councillor Dugdale thanked Ms Byrne and all staff involved with Belonging to East Lothian. She was pleased to see an acknowledgment of some young people requiring a bespoke approach and was pleased to see the increase of foster fees so felt reassured that East Lothian will manage to recruit more foster carers. Councillor Dugdale also thanked all officers involved.

Decision

The Committee agreed to:

- i. Note the overall positive progress made by the Education and Childrens Services to avoid placements out with the authority and meet the needs of our young people within East Lothian
- ii. Note the planned joint next steps.

Signed

Councillor Fiona Dugdale
Convener of the Education Committee

DRAFT

REPORT TO: Education & Children’s Services Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2024

BY: Executive Director, Education & Children’s Services

SUBJECT: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide an update on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024.
- 1.2 To detail the work done by ELC UNCRC Working Group on understanding and supporting policy implications across the Council and next steps.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The UK Government ratified the UNCRC in 1991. It was signed and ratified by all UN member states, except the United States, making it the most widely ratified international human rights treaty. It seeks to ensure that children and young people, as more vulnerable members of society, are afforded specific additional human rights protections.
- 3.2 The UNCRC is underpinned by four general principles, all of which are reflected throughout the specific articles of the Convention:
 - Children should not be discriminated against;
 - The best interests of the child should be a primary consideration;
 - Children have rights to life, survival and development;
 - Children’s views should be given due weight and consideration.

- 3.3 The UNCRC (both the Convention itself and the Act) outlines a minimum standard of rights for children and young people and aims to ensure they grow up loved, supported and empowered to reach their potential. Many of the Articles or general aims of the UNCRC have already been included in Acts of the Scottish Parliament. These are, however, scattered through a number of individual pieces of legislation. This approach means that only some UNCRC rights can be enforced in Scottish courts. To address this, the Scottish Government made a commitment in their Programme for Government 2018-2019 to incorporate the full articles (not just the principles) of the UNCRC into Scots law. That goal was finally reached in January 2024.
- 3.4 The Bill was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament, but before receiving Royal Assent was subject to legal challenge from the UK Government. This focussed on the scope of the Bill and submitted that this Bill should not be able to “strike down” anything outside of the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament, in short, UK Government Acts. The challenge further explained that this Bill should not seek to control or react to actions of UK ministers. This challenge was upheld, and the Bill was redrafted with amendments to its scope. This redrafted version again passed unanimously through the Scottish Parliament and achieved Royal Assent 16 January 2024. The vast majority of its terms are due to come into force in six months following Royal Assent, which will be July 2024. It is this deadline that we as a Council are now working towards.
- 3.5 With the Act now passed, it is important to note the difference between specific rights that are enforceable, and the duties owed by local authorities and other applicable bodies in respecting or taking account of those rights. The duty on local authorities imposed by this Act makes it *“unlawful ... for a public authority to act, fail to act, in connection with a relevant function in a way which is incompatible with the UNCRC requirements”*. As noted, the scope of this Act has been reduced and no longer includes UK Acts or actions beyond the Scottish Parliament’s competence. Operationally this is likely to mean that although we will strive to give full effect to the UNCRC, there may be situations where we will have to carefully consider whether to do so would be to act incompatibly with service specific legislation and if so, how we approach such situations. It is also important to understand that it will be unlawful for the Council to act *“in a way which is incompatible with the UNCRC requirements”*. This duty is not the same as a requirement to act compatibly with the UNCRC. This distinction is likely to become important in any conversations or formal challenges or complaints we see or must answer, after the Act is fully in force.
- 3.6 East Lothian Council has had a long history of considering and promoting the UNCRC and how to bring our practices, policies and procedures into line with the aims and principles of this Convention. For example, many of our schools are ‘Rights Respecting’ and in our recent Joint Inspection of Services for children and young people at risk of harm, inspectors commented on how well children’s rights are embedded in our work across the partnership. We have been actively considering local incorporation for

several years and for some time before the original Bill was drafted. The COVID pandemic impacted the progress and timeline of the UNCRC Act, as did the challenge to the UK Supreme Court. Questions of how best to support and protect the rights of children and young people, however, have been at the forefront of our thinking when considering specific changes we can make to our existing policies, procedures, practices and assumptions.

- 3.7 Although our advanced work was hampered by the considerations of the Scottish Government, work continued on the aspects of the UNCRC that could be taken on board as best practice; Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) and Article 13 (freedom of expression) are all examples of specific children's rights that can be incorporated into any service or procedure. Many services within the Council already work to include children and young people's views in the actions they take, allowing a range of communication methods to suit individual needs. Work to review, strengthen and improve these methods is already underway.
- 3.8 A UNCRC working group has been in place in the Council since September 2022. It is chaired by the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services and includes representatives from all service areas across the Council. Members of the working group act as UNCRC 'Champions' and provide support and advice to their service areas. Our discussions have included how to identify and meet training and support needs, how we best learn from actions taken in other council areas or individual service plans and how these relate and give effect to Council-wide corporate plans and the updating or renewal of Council-wide policies.
- 3.9 The Council has benefitted from direct support from the Improvement Service who have supported us in self-assessing our work on children's rights and creating an action plan. We have also discussed our training needs with external providers (Scottish Child Law Centre and CLAN Childlaw, both of whom provide legal services, advice and support exclusive to children and young people in Scotland) and are working hard to use the experience and expertise of those within the Council as a basis for plans and actions.
- 3.10 With a clear timescale for implementation of the provisions of the Act, UNCRC Champions are producing service specific actions. This has involved raising the profile of the UNCRC within service team meetings, a bespoke UNCRC piece in Inform and regular discussions about how individual service plans feed into and support the overall corporate action plan. Through these discussions we are highlighting more and more examples of very good practice, explored alongside new ideas and questions that are challenging and testing existing practice, all with the goal of improving our protection and advancement of children's rights.
- 3.11 Although clear progress has been made, we still have more to do. It is important that the whole Council is aware of these new duties and is working together to improve our interactions with children and young people. While the Convention was considered to be forward thinking and ahead of its time when drafted in 1989, it is now decades old. The family

unit does not look as it did at the time of drafting and issues of gender identity in particular, have moved on significantly since the Convention was finalised. The Act brings in new, higher duties that we must consider and discharge in our professional roles. It may be that this is easier in some actions or services than others, but we must maintain the same standard of approach across the council. We have committed and are required to update our working practices to take account of the Act.

- 3.12 Officers provided a detailed Elected Member briefing in May 2024. At that briefing, it was noted that elected members will have a role in supporting and challenging practice and to consider where the Council could improve its work. Support will be given to all employees and elected members of the Council to actively consider and improve how children and young people are included in the duties and activities of the Council. This includes both individual service and Council-wide implementation plans, as well as rethinking public activities such as committees and surgeries. Elected members will be supported to examine the ways they carry out their functions and engage with the public to ensure that there are routes and opportunities for children and young people to engage with their local councillor in a way that empowers them, their rights and voice. Every individual working to discharge the duties of the Council is being called upon to bring about what Scottish Government have referred to as a “culture change” to ensure that not just what the Council does, but how it is done, has the needs and rights of our children and young people as a central consideration.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Whilst a retrospective review of Council policies is not required following the UNCRC Act coming into force, all revisions to or creation of new Council policies will be subject to consideration of the new UNCRC legislation.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this update report does not at this stage directly affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy. However, it should be noted that whilst the new legislation does not require local authorities to carry out Children’s Rights Impact Assessments (CRIA) by law, undertaking CRIAs remains good practice and as such, we are looking at how best to incorporate the CRIA process alongside existing Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA). It will be for each individual service to ensure that appropriate CRIAs and IIAs are completed on the policies, processes or procedures for which they have responsibility for. Our Equalities officer is currently working on guidance and will be able to support service areas in undertaking the CRIA.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - There has been no additional funding allocated by the Scottish Government to support the implementation of the Act. We will continue to make use of all national and local resources alongside networking with other local authorities to share information and training materials. We will continue to raise the need for additional resources with the Scottish Government given the additional work that will be required following full incorporation beyond July 2024.
- 6.2 Personnel - No additional personnel will be employed or engaged to support the implementation of the Act.
- 6.3 Other – None.

AUTHOR'S NAME	Keren Conway
DESIGNATION	Principal Solicitor – Legal Services
CONTACT INFO	kconway@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	18 June 2024

REPORT TO: Education & Children' Services Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2024

BY: Executive Director, Education & Children's Services

SUBJECT: Raising Attainment

3

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Committee on progress towards raising attainment for all learners and closing the gap for the most disadvantaged children and young people.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
 - i. Note the progress and next steps identified towards raising attainment for all learners and closing the poverty related attainment gap and the data summary of key measures provided in Appendix 1.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Consistent with the National Improvement Framework (NIF), East Lothian Council prioritises improving attainment for all, particularly in literacy and numeracy and closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.
- 3.2 To provide strategic direction and measurable outcomes, stretch aims have been set. These are detailed in *Excellence & Equity: Raising Attainment for All – Strategy 2023/24 – 2025-26* and were approved by the Committee in March 2024.
- 3.3 The post of Principal Teacher of Equity has been created in each secondary school with a senior phase. Through a data informed approach, these postholders track, monitor and identify interventions for young people impacted by poverty who are at risk of under-attaining.

- 3.4 Our approaches to tracking and monitoring learners are rigorous with comprehensive data sets provided to schools monthly. This allows school staff to direct their time and resource to supporting identified learners. The support and challenge of officers in the central team also underpins this work.
- 3.5 The post of School and Family Support Worker was created in four primary schools with the highest incidence of children living in poverty (quintile 1, Q1).
- 3.6 An evaluation of this post and its potential for wider impact has informed the creation of The Equity & Inclusion Education Outreach Service.
- 3.7 This new service will commence in August 2024. It will comprise of the newly created posts of: Depute Head Teacher, Equity & Inclusion; Teacher of Equity & Inclusion and 8 Education Outreach Officers.
- 3.8 Funded as a 'test of change' concept for 23 months, the service will support identified children and young people at risk of underachieving. There will be a particular focus on children and young people impacted by poverty, care experience and those with additional support needs.
- 3.9 Referrals to the service will come through our newly created Child Planning Framework – Locality Teams (CPF-LTs).
- 3.10 CPF-LTs provide a multi-disciplinary and solutions-orientated forum for schools to refer identified children and young people who require additional supports. They have now been established across all localities in East Lothian.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 3.11 Data provided in relation to stretch aim measures in Appendix 1 highlight progress in overall attainment and closing the poverty related attainment gap (Q1 – Q5) in the following measures:
- 3.12 Curriculum for Excellence literacy and numeracy attainment has improved for all learners and learners in quintile 1. The poverty related attainment gap in literacy has closed by 6.3%.
- 3.13 At Level 5 or above, literacy levels have also increased slightly for all, but most noticeably for learners in quintile 1, which is the highest level of attainment achieved in this measure. The poverty related attainment gap also closed by 8.7%.
- 3.14 There was a slight decline in the overall percentage of young people leaving school with 5 or more awards at level 1 or above. However, the percentage of learners in quintile 1 leaving with 5 qualifications increased by 10.2% and the poverty related gap closed by 11.7%.
- 3.15 For learners leaving school with 1 or more awards at level 6 (A-C) or above, there was a slight decline in the overall figures. However, there

was an increase in the percentage of learners in Q1 achieving this measure by 2.3% and a slight reduction in the poverty related attainment gap.

- 3.16 There are specific measures for learners with care experience. The percentage of care experienced school leavers to obtain 5 or more awards at level 1 or above increased by 21% and the gap for learners with care experience decreased by 23.9%, almost eradicating the gap in this measure.
- 3.17 This robust approach to use of data allows the identification of learners at risk of under attaining and promotes early intervention to ensure East Lothian learners are appropriately supported to reach their potential.
- 3.18 East Lothian Council reports on its progress towards stretch aims through the Education Progress and Improvement Plan. This is published annually and shared with the Scottish Government, Education Scotland and East Lothian Council Education & Children's Services Committee.

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 Raising Attainment Data (Appendix 1)

AUTHOR'S NAME	Jennifer Boyle
DESIGNATION	Quality Improvement Manager for Equity and Inclusion
CONTACT INFO	E-mail – jboyle@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	18 June 2024

Appendix 1

Raising Attainment Data

P1,4 & 7, Literacy (Combined)		
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23
All	62.8	66.3
Q1	42.6	50.3
Q2	50.9	56
Q3	67.7	68.5
Q4	68.9	74.2
Q5	72.7	73.5
Q1 – Q5 Gap	30.1	23.2
Q2 – Q5 Gap	21.8	17.5

P1,4 & 7, Numeracy (Combined)		
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23
All	72.4	73.8
Q1	56.1	56.3
Q2	65.4	64.8
Q3	75.3	77
Q4	76.8	80.6
Q5	78.3	79.9
Q1 – Q5 Gap	22.2	23.6
Q2 – Q5 Gap	12.9	15.1

School Leavers, Level 5 Literacy (Or Above)		
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23
All	78.3	78.5
Q1	53.6	60.3
Q2	65.1	68.2
Q3	81.7	77.3
Q4	85	87.8
Q5	90	87.9
Q1 – Q5 Gap	36.4	27.7
Q2 – Q5 Gap	24.9	19.7

School Leavers, 5 or More Awards at Level 1 (Or Above)		
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23
All	89.4	87
Q1	67.9	78.1
Q2	86.6	82.7
Q3	89.9	83.3
Q4	91.5	91.6
Q5	95.4	94
Q1 – Q5 Gap	27.6	15.9
Q2 – Q5 Gap	8.9	11.2

School Leavers, 1 or More Awards at Level 6 (A-C)		
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23
All	55.7	55.4
Q1	19.6	21.9
Q2	37.3	38.9
Q3	58.3	55
Q4	64.6	67.6
Q5	75.3	74.1
Q1 – Q5 Gap	55.7	55.2
Q2 – Q5 Gap	38.1	35.2

Care Experienced School Leavers, 5 or More Awards at Level 1 (Or Above)		
Cohort	% Achieving in 2021-22	% Achieving in 2022-23
Care Experienced	65.2	86.2
No Care Experience	89.9	87
Gap	24.7	0.8

REPORT TO: Education & Children’s Services Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2024

BY: Executive Director, Education & Children’s Services

SUBJECT: East Lothian Collaborative Improvement

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the Collaborative Improvement visit that took place in March 2024 with involvement from the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES), Education Scotland (ES) and the East Lothian Education Service.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- i. Note the nature and focus of the Collaborative Improvement visit (appendix 1).
 - ii. Note the progress and next steps identified by the Collaborative Improvement Team, and that the next steps have been incorporated into the Education Service’s draft priorities for Session 2024/25.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Collaborative Improvement is an approach to support ongoing improvement through shared work involving staff from the local authority, Education Scotland (ES) and the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES).
- 3.2 Together, the group establishes the focus for the Collaborative Improvement Review and then undertakes activities in the local authority that will result in an evaluative summary, identifying strengths and areas that may require further focus.

- 3.3 The approach to Collaborative Improvement is based on the call for a “strengthened middle” in the 2015 OECD report on Scottish Education. The approach is also intended to address the recommendation in Audit Scotland’s report on education that Councils should work with schools, Regional Improvement Collaboratives, other policy teams and partners, for example in the third sector, to reduce variability in outcomes.
- 3.4 In addition to the programme of Collaborative Improvement activity outlined above, ADES has recognised the need to develop further approaches to rigorous and robust self-evaluation of education authorities.
- 3.5 Work has therefore been taken forward by ADES, supported by Education Scotland, to develop a revised self-evaluation framework. All 32 Education Authorities have agreed to trial the new framework starting in academic session 2024/25. The East Lothian Executive Director for Education and Children’s Services has been part of the ADES working group and has helped to support the updating and reviewing of two new quality indicators. ADES were keen to explore a range of ways in which quality indicators could be used including as part of Collaborative Improvement activity.
- 3.6 Both ADES and East Lothian Council’s Education Leadership Team were keen to trial the use of the two Quality Indicators during East Lothian’s Collaborative Improvement. The indicators and selected challenge questions were used as part of the authority’s evidence gathering and to provide a framework for the collaborative improvement activity.

3.7 **Focus and Nature of the Visit**

Self-Improving Schools was chosen as the focus of the visit. The following overarching statement was taken from the authority’s Self-Improving Schools Guidance to serve as the stimulus:

We invest our energy and focus our resources and accountability to where we make the biggest difference – improving outcomes, through working as close as possible to our children and young people where improvement is owned and led by our practitioners, leaders and schools.

- 3.8 The Collaborative Improvement visit took place over three days in March 2024. The 9 team members engaged in a series of focus groups designed to explore each of the themes, visited three school settings, attended a series of scheduled meetings with senior officers and took the opportunity to explore documentation and resources. All these sources of evidence were used to inform the findings of the team.

3.9 **Key Strengths**

The team identified the following strengths:

- strong culture of collaboration, improvement and accountability, as well as support and clear direction from the local authority with regard to local and national priorities
- peer relationships, built through School Team Groups (STGs), leading to a culture of appropriate challenge and support, alongside a solution-focused approach
- use of Associated School Groups (ASGs) and STGs to review data collaboratively is an effective contributor to self-evaluation
- recently created and school-led Locality Teams have the potential to be a highly effective model for improving outcomes for learners
- the Single Point of Access (SPA) supports effective collaboration alongside use of data and pupil voice to inform service provision
- clear vision for curriculum development, underpinned by shared values, giving autonomy and agency to schools to apply local solutions
- engagement with national agencies to support East Lothian's improvement journey (e.g. SEIC, Education Scotland, academics, other local authorities, Scottish Government) as well as engaging with evidence-based research
- strong connection from the Education Progress and Improvement Plan to individual School Improvement Plan Priorities
- training in improvement planning and standards and quality reporting creates solid foundations in practice, which has been built on through peer-review and collaboration at STGs
- use of new Equity Trackers is strongly supporting development of data driven approaches to raising attainment and ensuring targeted intervention for those most in need

3.10 Next Steps

The team identified the following next steps:

- further strengthen tracking and monitoring of attainment data to continue to secure progress
- moderation and robustness of teacher judgements should continue to be improvement priorities
- build the above into school Service Level Agreements
- create more opportunities for middle leaders, teachers and support staff to collaborate
- strengthen work in Early Years to increase ownership and accountability of Head Teachers in Early Learning and Childcare
- involve children and young people more in shaping service improvement
- review the remit of the Pedagogy Team

These next steps are being incorporated into the Education Service Priorities for Session 2024/25.

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 East Lothian Collaborative Improvement Report – March 2024

AUTHOR'S NAME	Nicola McDowell
DESIGNATION	Head of Education
CONTACT INFO	E-mail – nmcdowell1@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	18 June 2024



East Lothian Council

Collaborative Improvement

March 2024



A · D · E · S
Association of Directors of Education in Scotland



What is Collaborative Improvement?

Collaborative Improvement is an approach to support ongoing improvement through shared work involving staff from the Local Authority, Education Scotland (ES) and the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES). Together, the group establishes the focus for the Collaborative Improvement Review and then undertakes activities in the Local Authority that will result in an evaluative summary, identifying strengths and areas that may require further focus. The approach to Collaborative Improvement was outlined in the Joint Agreement and is based on the call for a “strengthened middle” in the 2015 OECD report on Scottish Education. The approach is also intended to address the recommendation in Audit Scotland’s report on education that Councils should work with schools, Regional Improvement Collaboratives, other policy teams and partners, for example in the third sector, to reduce variability in outcomes.

Use of the Education Authority Self-Evaluation Framework

In addition to the programme of Collaborative Improvement activity outlined above, ADES has recognised the need to develop further approaches to rigorous and robust self-evaluation of education authorities. Whilst a self-evaluation framework (Quality Management in Education 2) has been used across local authorities, it has been some time since the document has been updated. Work has therefore been taken forward by ADES, supported by Education Scotland, to develop a revised self-evaluation framework. All 32 Education Authorities have agreed to trial the new framework starting in academic session 2024/25. The Executive Director for Education and Children’s Services has been part of the ADES working group and has helped to support the updating and reviewing of two new quality indicators. ADES were keen to explore a range of ways in which quality indicators could be used including as part of Collaborative Improvement activity.

Both ADES and East Lothian Council’s Education Leadership team were keen to trial the use of the two Quality Indicators during East Lothian’s Collaborative Improvement. The indicators and selected challenge questions were used as part of the authority’s evidence gathering and to provide a framework for the collaborative improvement activity.

The Focus of the East Lothian Collaborative Improvement Visit

East Lothian Council has been working towards a self-improving schools system since 2019. Since then, some members of the central team and a significant cohort of Head Teachers have changed and while significant progress has been made in the development of a self-improving system, it was now an important time to take stock, evaluate progress and define next steps. Collaborative Improvement was the perfect tool to support us to be able to do that, with a mix of both independent external advice and review alongside our own internal evaluative activity.

East Lothian Council Collaborative Improvement – March 2024

The following overarching statement was taken from the authority's Self-Improving Schools Guidance:

We invest our energy and focus our resources and accountability to where we make the biggest difference – improving outcomes, through working as close as possible to our children and young people where improvement is owned and led by our practitioners, leaders and schools.

Using the two QIs from the Education Authority Self-Evaluation Framework, the following question and themes were chosen:

In relation to the above statement and under the themes below, how effective is the Self-Improving Schools Strategy in East Lothian?

- our practitioners and schools are responsible for owning and leading their improvement
- local authority support and challenge and the support of regional work and national agencies adds value to our work at a local level

Two challenge questions were selected from each QI to support the focus of the Collaborative Improvement Team:

- How effectively have we developed a collaborative culture in which all staff share a collective responsibility to improve outcomes for children and young people?
- To what extent do we critically engage with research, policy sources and developments in learning and teaching?
- How effective is our guidance to EYC and schools on self-evaluation, improvement planning and standards and quality reporting?
- How well do we provide opportunities for all staff to be involved in and lead aspects of service improvement?

The Collaborative Improvement Process and Team

The Collaborative Improvement visit took place over three days in March 2024 and was supported by the following team:

Carrie Lindsay	Executive Officer – ADES
Moira Allan	HM Inspector – Education Scotland
Heather Robertson	Senior Regional Adviser – Education Scotland
Wendy Rigg	Attainment Adviser – Education Scotland
Jim Hammond	Service Leader, Education and Lifelong Learning - Angus
Tracey Henderson	Interim Service Manager, Schools – Stirling Council
Karen Haspolat	QIO – East Lothian Council
Nick Trussler	QIO – East Lothian Council
Alistair Stewart	QIO – East Lothian Council

Team members engaged in a series of focus groups designed to explore each of the themes, visited three school settings, attended a series of scheduled meetings with senior officers and took the opportunity to explore documentation and resources. All these sources of evidence were used to inform the findings of the team.

The analysis and challenge provided by the Collaborative Improvement team has greatly aided the education service to reflect on progress made and identify next steps. The findings of the three-day visit are outlined below.

What is Working Well?

How effectively have we developed a collaborative culture in which all staff share a collective responsibility to improve outcomes for children and young people?

Strengths:

A strong culture of collaboration, improvement and accountability, as well as support and clear direction from the local authority with regard to local and national priorities came through very clearly from focus group discussions. They agreed that appropriate actions are being taken to improve outcomes and overall performance at Education Authority and school / East Lothian Council levels. In some areas, it was reported that there was a culture of systems leadership and that up-to-date data and intelligence are informing strategic decision-making. There was found to be clear guidance and communication regarding expectations, and clear strategic direction.

School reviews were cited as a significant contributor to school improvement, with the role of school leader as reviewee and reviewer both holding value. School leaders identified direct outcomes following school reviews which have led to school improvement. Peer relationships, built through School Team Groups (STGs), were identified as a key component of this process, leading to a culture of appropriate challenge and support, alongside a solution-focused approach.

The use of Associated School Groups (ASGs) and STGs to review data collaboratively was also cited as an effective contributor to self-evaluation, with support from QIOs being valued particularly in supporting senior leaders in being much more data focussed.

The recently created and school-led Locality Teams are viewed as having the potential to be a highly effective model for improving outcomes for learners. Although this remains at an early stage, there has been positive engagement from partner agencies with indications of solution-focused approaches being identified.

A refined Single Point of Access (SPA) was also widely reported as highly positive. School leaders, Educational Psychologists (EPs) & Mental Health practitioners reported effective collaboration alongside use of data and pupil voice to inform service provision, supported by the Child Planning Framework and underpinned by a clear culture of shared responsibility.

The following quotes were gathered by the team during the visit:

“In our ASG they are all our bairns”

“We are the local authority”

“We own all the parts and can mould and shape”

“Flexibility to determine own tasks”

“Good level of professional autonomy to lead aspects of improvement across the local authority”

Next Steps:

The team outlined that the success of the creation of a collaborative culture in East Lothian should continue to provoke reflection on the accuracy of local authority attainment data. While a strong improvement system has been developed, a significant shift in attainment is not yet evident. Evidence of improved equity outcomes was shared through stretch aims over a two-year period, with the expectation that forecasting of future gains should bring East Lothian into line with the virtual comparator. A further next step is that tracking should continue to monitor progress closely to ensure these goals are met.

Moderation and robustness of teacher judgements should continue to be the focus of improvement priorities. School leaders themselves identified learning, teaching and assessment, under the Service Improvement Plan heading ‘Back to Basics’, should remain a continuing priority.

To what extent do we critically engage with research, policy sources and developments in learning and teaching?

Strengths:

School leaders who form the Strategic Curriculum Oversight Team (SCOT), demonstrated a clear commitment to systems leadership and described a shared view that this was within their role as a school leader. School leaders reported a clear vision for curriculum development, underpinned by shared values, whilst giving autonomy and agency to schools to apply local solutions. School leaders identified that leadership and delivery of professional learning was within their role, alongside peer support. This was reflective of both their high level of professional skills and knowledge as well as their collective responsibility.

Strengths were identified in engagement with national agencies to support East Lothian’s improvement journey (eg SEIC, Education Scotland, academics, other local authorities, Scottish Government) as well as engaging with evidence-based research. This was found to be supported by senior officers, who provide structure and support, as well as access to partner agencies.

School leaders reported feeling well-supported in applying national legislation and the local policy derived from this, including safeguarding. Staff at all levels have been consulted on policy development. In addition, school leaders described a systematic approach to focus on two policy directives per year, leading to increased focus and resultant clarity. Additional support from professional learning, including support of exceptional needs, and resources available via the EduHub online platform were also evidenced.

Collaborative Improvement activities evidenced involvement in a range of initiatives that reflect service priorities, including national programmes. These were identified as drawing on the robust use of data, which school leaders identified as a strength in East Lothian. The National Writing programme was reported as being a strong example of this.

Next Steps:

Effective collaboration with the Educational Psychology Service was evidenced, with an example of a bespoke project grounded in current theory and research aimed at producing improved learner outcomes, with a specific focus on children who have experienced trauma and adversity. As these needs are reflected at a wider systemic level within the authority, consideration should be given to building further capacity in schools at a universal level through the application of these principles.

In addition, within all projects and interventions staff should have an understanding of planned measurable outcomes, backed up by robust monitoring and tracking of data at all levels of the system.

How effective is our guidance to schools on self-evaluation, improvement planning and standard and quality reporting?

Strengths:

A strong connection from the Education Progress and Improvement Plan to individual School Improvement Plan Priorities was identified. Central and school staff reported that they feel they have ownership in shaping and taking forward council improvement priorities.

School leaders consistently cited School Team Groups (STGs) and school reviews as crucial within the Self-Improving Schools System leading to effective self-evaluation, improvement planning and standards and quality reporting. School leaders reported training in improvement planning and standards and quality reporting created solid foundations in practice, which has been built on through peer-review and collaboration at STGs.

Shared engagement in East Lothian's service level agreement for schools model identified benefits in ensuring equity through a culture of openness.

Next Steps:

The service should now continue to ensure that tracking of data, robust assessment and moderation and quality assurance arrangements are built in to Service Level Agreements to ensure shared responsibility and accountability.

How well do we provide opportunities for all staff to be involved in and lead aspects of service improvement?

Strengths:

There are many examples above of the opportunities that staff have to be involved in and lead aspects of service improvement.

A specific example of a collaborative culture which has included engagement of practitioners at all levels is the review of the exceptional needs process, as well as strategic planning of equity and

inclusion, informed by data and led by collaborative working between school leaders and Education Support Officers. School leaders and ESOs reported this is leading to robust review and assessment of service provision. This is further supported by Principal Teachers of Equity (PTs Equity).

School leaders, Education Support Officers (ESOs) & Principal Teachers of Equity (PTs Equity) evidenced that the use of the new Equity Trackers is strongly supporting development of data driven approaches to raising attainment and ensuring targeted intervention for those most in need. This has been supported by ESOs providing support on provision and the use of attendance codes to ensure data entering the system is accurate. Further work is underway in developing the referral process within schools and this is being supported by a working group encompassing school leaders, ESOs and multi-agency groups.

Through focus group discussions, it was evidenced that school leaders recognised the potential for wider engagement from school staff in the self-improving schools system.

Next Steps:

Focus group discussion with senior leaders evidenced that they recognise a natural development would also be to create more opportunities for middle leaders, teachers and support staff to share and learn from each other through ASGs and STGs. Consideration should also be given to how the STGs and ASGs could be utilised to share practice and further develop transition at each of the key stages (ELC-P1, P7-S1 & S3-S4).

The team identified through visits and focus group activities that there is scope to strengthen work in Early Years particularly with funded providers and to further increase the ownership and accountability of Head Teachers in Early Learning and Childcare.

There was agreement with the service's own self-evaluation that children and young people should be more involved in shaping service improvement, and this is featured in the Education Service improvement priorities for Session 24/25.

The remit of the Pedagogy Team should be reviewed in the light of changes to its structure. Clearly defined outcome measures should be clarified for the session ahead.

Reflection on the process

The collaborative improvement process has been extremely beneficial to the Education Service. In general terms the Collaborative Improvement team agreed with the service's own self-evaluation including the next steps identified. There were however areas that the service had not yet considered in detail, and the team gave valuable insights into specific areas that have provoked further discussion and planning.

It was a privilege to have a team of professionals in our authority for three days, focussing their valuable time on this area of our service to support our continuous improvement. We benefited greatly from their insight and have made connections that will continue to be of mutual support and challenge.

What will happen next?

This report will be shared at a Head Teacher Development Day, with the central team and at Education and Children's Services Committee.

Areas for further development and next steps will be considered along with our own self-evaluation for inclusion in our service priorities for Session 2024/25 and beyond.



REPORT TO: Education & Children’s Services Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2024

BY: Executive Director, Education & Children’s Services

SUBJECT: Positive School Leaver Destinations 2022/23

5

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

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 The initial destination of school leavers’ 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.
- 3.3 The data for initial post school destinations (SLDR) referred to in this report is taken from the February 2024 release of the senior phase benchmarking tool, Insight. The data provides information on the outcomes for young people as recorded in October 2023, approximately three to ten months after leaving school.

- 3.4 The data on initial post-school destinations for 2022/23 was reported nationally and published by the Scottish Government on 28th February 2024: [Summary statistics for attainment and initial leaver destinations, no. 6: 2024 edition \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 This report will explore how the Education Authority has performed over the three-year period since 2020/21 to 2022/23, in relation to the national average and the Virtual Comparator. The main highlights for East Lothian in 2022/23 are provided below -

Summary of Results for East Lothian 2022-2023:

- Our initial Positive Destinations Report (SLDR), for the 2022/23 cohort was 96.3% (0.7% increase on 2021/22) against a national picture of 95.9%. This is the highest recorded positive destination for East Lothian. An analysis of the recent statistics shows an increase of 1.4% of the number of young people moving directly into higher education, an increase of 1.2% moving into further education and a decrease of 4.8% in the number of young people moving directly into employment. However, East Lothian continues to maintain a much higher trend of young people moving into employment versus that of the national picture.
- Staff within East Lothian Works (ELW), in partnership with colleagues within Skills Development Scotland (SDS) have followed up with all leavers from the 2022/23 cohort. The service is currently awaiting the follow up SLDR statistics. These relate to sustained destinations at a point 6 months beyond leaving school. All young people have been offered a range of supports from ELW in order to help them identify an appropriate onward positive destination.
- Our current Annual Participation Measure (APM), measures the proportion of 16-19 year olds participating in education, training or employment over a 3 year period. Currently the APM is 96.1% an increase of 2.8% (93.3%) on the 2021/22 statistic. Whilst East Lothian remains above the national rate, which was 94.3%, the stretch aim for the next 3 years is 96.4%.
- East Lothian is slightly behind the national average for those aged 16 and 17 however above for both 18 and 19 year olds; Age 16: ELC 99.1% National 99.2%; Age 17: ELC 95.6% National 96.1%; Age 18: ELC 94.8% National 92.6%; Age 19: 92.8% National 88.9%.

- 3.7 To support attainment and post school destinations, the Education Service, through East Lothian Works, offers a portfolio of work-based Level 6 Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs), in partnership with businesses across Edinburgh, East and Midlothian. These work-based pathways, equivalent to two Higher level qualifications are currently offered in the following vocations - Business Skills, Accountancy, Scientific Technologies, IT Software and Social Services Children and Young People. Pupil numbers continue to increase across all frameworks. In academic session 2023/24, 148 ELC students enrolled in an East Lothian delivered Foundation Apprenticeship. This was an increase from 95 students in academic year 22/23 due to a one-year pilot model delivered alongside the traditional 2-year duration. Due to its success, both delivery durations will remain a feature of the 24/25 offer.
- 3.8 The East Lothian Works School Team continues to support young people to engage with a variety of vocational programmes, all certificated, including Construction Crafts, Rural Skills, Summer and Winter leaver provision and Personal Development Awards. During academic session 2022/23, 54 young people achieved a SCQF Level 4/5 award in Construction Crafts delivered by our partners The Ridge. In addition, 6 young people obtained SCQF Level 4 in Rural Skills, and 21 young people achieved a Personal Development Award Level 3-5. Of these 21 young people, 8 students achieved a further SCQF Level 6 qualification in First Aid and Mental Health First Aid. Academic session 2022/23 also offered engagement programmes to young people within BGE (S1-S3), including 33 young people engaged with Boxing, 12 attended a Working with People course and 21 young people participated in a 1-year pilot programme 'QMU Creates' delivered in partnership with East Lothian Council Arts Colleagues and Queen Margaret University.
- 3.9 For academic session 2023/24, over 140 young people are enrolled in certificated courses coordinated by East Lothian Works, including Construction Crafts, Rural Skills, Make Up Artistry, Personal Development Award and The Saltire Awards
- 3.10 The Regional Construction Skills Academy based within Wallyford Learning Campus opened in June 2023, delivering vocational and industry led courses to young people, and adults across East Lothian. Partnering with Edinburgh College, to deliver a pilot programme in 2022/23, 14 senior phase students achieved SCQF Level 4 Construction Crafts with an additional 12 students undertaking this within session 2023/24. Recruitment has commenced to continue this delivery for session 2024/25. Edinburgh College also delivered a year-long 'Introduction to Construction' course for school leavers, and young people up to age 24.
- 3.11 In partnership with Edinburgh College, 200 East Lothian senior phase students attained qualifications from the School to College Partnership (SCP) offer during 2022/23. Attending courses on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon within Edinburgh College campuses, East Lothian students

successfully engaged in a variety of certified courses, including, Automotive, Professional Cookery, Hair and Beauty, Early Learning and Childcare, Criminology and Games Development Design. This was an increase from 150 students from academic session 2021/22. For session 2023/24, circa 240 students are planning to undertake an SCP to complement their course choices at school and help plan for their post-school future.

3.12 ELW has also allocated funding to employers through:

- LACER ERI (Employer Recruitment Incentive) 8 opportunities continued to be supported in 2023.
- UKSPF ERI (Employer Recruitment Incentive) £89,569 was allocated in 2023-24, which created 20 opportunities. For 2024-25 £100,000 is available to create new job opportunities.
- Parental ERI (Employer Recruitment Incentive) created 11 opportunities in 2023-24 totalling £61,818. A new offer for 2024-25 is being developed.

3.12 The Parental Employability Support Team have received 118 referrals, with 224 enquiries for Paid Work Experience resulting in 80 Paid Work Experience placements and 47 job outcomes during 2023/24. Paid Work Experience placements were delivered in Hospitality, Administration, Classroom Assistant, Catering Assistant and Early Years Support Worker job roles. In addition to the job outcomes, 151 qualifications were achieved ranging from First Aid to SCQF level 5 in Business Administration.

3.13 During 2022/23 the Income Maximisation service received 81 referrals this was an increase of 27 from the previous year. The number of residents benefitting from financial gains was 61, totalling £117,860.

3.14 **Next Steps**

For session 2024/25, ELW continues to work with Edinburgh College to maximise the Regional Construction Academy, and to offer more local course to East Lothian young people. Plans are underway to include delivery of Future Skills for S4-S6 students, a year long course based on Automotive and Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. We are also planning to introduce a Pre-Apprenticeship Fabrication and Welding course for post school. Both courses will be delivered as part of our ongoing partnership with Edinburgh College.

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 school age activities are predicated upon the continuation of existing core funding being allocated to East Lothian Works. Any reduction in funding will lead to a decrease in capacity and therefore a drop in the service’s ability to continue with existing activities and interventions. 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

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Glossary and Appendix 2 – School Leaver Destinations 2022/23.

AUTHOR’S NAME	Alison Hood
DESIGNATION	Team Manager
CONTACT INFO	ahood@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	10/05/2024

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.

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

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).

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.

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 2024/25 this activity will form part of the No One Left Behind employability funding for local authorities.

Appendix 2

School Leaver Destinations 2022/23

School	% Employed	% Further Education	% Higher Education	% Not known	% Personal Skills Development	% Training	% Unemployed Not Seeking	% Unemployed Seeking	% Voluntary Work
Dunbar Grammar School	28.95	19.3	43.42		1.75	1.32	2.19	1.75	1.32
Virtual Comparator for Dunbar Grammar School	27.24	20.79	47.94	0.26	0.22	1.27	0.79	1.23	0.26
Knox Academy	23.97	23.97	39.73		5.48	0.68	2.05	1.37	2.74
Virtual Comparator for Knox Academy	23.42	26.1	42.95	0.21	0.75	2.26	2.12	1.78	0.41
Musselburgh Grammar School	33.87	24.19	28.49	0.54	2.15	5.38	1.08	4.3	
Virtual Comparator for Musselburgh Grammar School	25.81	30.86	33.33	0.27	0.75	4.09	1.67	2.9	0.32
North Berwick High School	21.51	12.9	61.83			1.08	1.08	1.08	0.54
Virtual Comparator for North Berwick High School	19.73	15.91	61.18	0.16	0.11	0.97	0.7	0.75	0.48
Preston Lodge High School	40.98	21.31	30.05		0.55	5.46	0.55	1.09	
Virtual Comparator for Preston Lodge High School	26.83	30	30.55	0.44	0.77	3.93	2.95	3.99	0.55
Ross High School	32.39	26.32	30.36	0.4	4.45	1.21	0.4	4.05	0.4
Virtual Comparator for Ross High School	23.77	30.2	34.21	0.53	1.01	4.98	2.19	2.79	0.32

REPORT TO: Education & Children’s Services Committee
MEETING DATE: 18 June 2024
BY: Executive Director, Education & Children’s Services
SUBJECT: Scheme of Devolved School Management 2024/25

6

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Education and Children’s Services Committee of the updates to the Scheme of Devolved School Management (DSM) for the financial year 2024/25.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note:

- (i) The changes in the funding formula to be more responsive to each school’s individual context and meeting their “in place” costs.
- (ii) Secondary school core funding to be determined by a per pupil amount only, with the fixed cost allocation redistributed through the per pupil model for equity due to the varied size of schools.
- (iii) No change to the costs to be devolved to schools from April 2024.
- (iv) The updated scheme (Appendix 1) highlights prominently that schools must operate within budget and any budget pressures in year must be identified and addressed in year.
- (v) Development of a revised funding formula to allocate Predictable and Exceptional Needs funding for pupils with additional support needs continues with an anticipated implementation date of August 2025.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A report was submitted to Education Committee in June 2022 in respect of the review of DSM guidance to encourage greater transparency in the financial decisions both at local authority level (what is devolved and what

is not) and at school level. The new format was adopted and implemented with schools from April 2022.

- 3.2 A further review of the DSM guidance for the financial year April 2024 has taken place to ensure the Scheme is operating fit for purpose within the current funding allocation.
- 3.3 As part of the review of our guidance in 2022 it was agreed that two strands of the revised DSM scheme required a “deeper dive” to look at the impact of alternative methodology and make recommendations in relation to management structures and ASN funding allocations.
- 3.4 The working group looking at the Additional Support Needs (ASN) funding allocation identified the following:
 - a) The current model of ASN funding allocation, determined by Free School Meal entitlement and roll no longer reflects current needs. The working group agreed that the funding model should be changed to reflect measures directly impacting children/young people with Additional Support Needs in each school.
 - b) Annually, each school in Scotland is required to submit to Scottish Government the number of children/young people in their school with an ASN through the SEEMIS management system. There is national guidance regarding this measure and clearly defined categories of ASN. The group agreed that this measure would be the most reliable data to use in the new funding model.
 - c) A working group of school representatives and central officers have agreed principles for the distribution of funding which includes: promoting early intervention; a recognition of the changing patterns of needs in schools; greater creativity to meet these needs and a data driven approach which utilises a “risk matrix” of the SEEMIS census data as a fair and equitable approach to the allocation of the Predictable and Exceptional Needs funding for all schools from August 2025.
 - d) The new model may lead to a change in the distribution of the allocation of funding but greater autonomy for Head Teachers to use the funding most effectively as they determine to meet the needs of pupils.
 - e) A comparison of the old and new models of funding will be undertaken to test viability before consultation on the proposal with all Head Teachers and other stakeholders. The implementation plan will be brought back to Education and Children’s Services Committee during 2024/25 academic year for approval.
- 3.5 The consideration of management structures in primary schools has not yet progressed due to prioritisation of a number of service reviews in other areas of the Education Service to meet agreed 2024/25 efficiency savings.

- 3.6 During session 2023/24 the Education Service has worked in partnership with Primary Head Teachers through a series of meetings to hone the “in place cost” model. This model robustly tests for an efficient staffing model whilst considering context and any school improvement or local challenges for schools. The detail of this change is captured in the revised Primary Scheme of DSM in appendix 2 of the guidance.
- 3.7 The Secondary DSM Scheme is largely unchanged. The removal of the core funding amount for all schools and distributing it through the per pupil amount, has addressed equity of the allocation for all schools. The schools had become so different in size that one core allocation no longer provided a secure basis to allocate funding.
- 3.8 The updated scheme highlights to all stakeholders that schools must operate within budget and any budget pressures identified must be identified and addressed in year, working closely with officers in Education and Finance.
- 3.9 Financial processes that support the DSM operation and forecast regular and accurate year end positions are more prominent to support the Council’s financial challenges.
- 3.10 No new costs have been delegated to schools under the updated DSM for 2024/25.

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 Appendix 1 – Scheme of Devolved School Management 2024/25.

AUTHOR'S NAME	Bev Skirrow
DESIGNATION	Education Service Manager
CONTACT INFO	Email:- bskirrow@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	June 2024

2024/25

DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT SCHEME

Enabling our schools to deliver the very best for
East Lothian's children and young people, and their families.

East Lothian Council

Devolved School Management Scheme

Formal Review date: April 2024

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2. Budget Overview
3. Areas of Expenditure
4. Key Areas required to be covered in DSM Schemes

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- 4.8 Consultation and Engagement
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- 4.11 Staffing Structures
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- 4.15 Budget underspend / overspend
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- 4.17 Review, methodology and Stakeholders

5. Appendices

- Appendix 1 East Lothian Council Spending Plans 2024/25

- Appendix 2 Core school budgets – cost allocation codes

- Appendix 3A Primary School DSM Entitlement
- Appendix 3B Primary School benchmark methodology for Calculating Management Time and Teaching Time

- Appendix 4A Secondary School DSM Entitlement

- Appendix 5 Definitions

6. Useful links

1. Introduction

East Lothian Council Devolved School Management (DSM) Scheme is designed to support all schools equitably and transparently to deliver the very best for East Lothian's children and young people and their families through our 36 primary schools and 7 secondary schools.

The Education and Children's Services Progress and Improvement Plan sets out annually the local context and priorities for the service and all schools [link here](#). This report is one of several council strategic reports and locality plans available on the East Lothian Council website [link here](#).

The legislative context of the East Lothian DSM Scheme forms part of the wider framework of documentation which relates to local government and schools e.g. Financial Regulation, Standing Orders, employment legislation and policies and procedures including teaching and support staff negotiating committee agreements.

The role of Parent Councils in all of our schools is considered pivotal in school improvement planning and responding to the local needs of our communities in line with the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 and the East Lothian Parental Engagement Strategy.

General legislative framework information:

- Education (Scotland) Act 2016 [link here](#)
- Council Improvement Plan – Best Value Assurance Report [link here](#)
- General Services Budget 2024-28 [link here](#)

Devolved School Management (DSM) Overview

DSM was introduced in 1993 to enhance and improve the management of resources at school level. The DSM guidance was reviewed in 2006, and again in 2012, taking account of the changing economic and financial climate for both Local Authorities and the Scottish Government. In June 2017 the Scottish Government consulted on changes to DSM as part of the wider "*Fair Funding to Achieve Excellence and Equity in Education*" consultation [link here](#).

The updated DSM guidelines, published in summer 2019, sought to build and improve on the DSM Guidelines of 2012 and, critically, reflect and integrate with the Education Reform Programme and priorities emerging from the Scottish Government and COSLA Education Reform Joint Agreement of June 2018 [link here](#).

The latest DSM guidelines aim to encourage participation from Local Authority wider teams, schools and parents and have been prepared through collaboration and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. Collaboration is key to a successful local DSM scheme, and this is captured within the Joint Agreement and Head Teachers' Charter to which these guidelines align and support [link here](#).

Principles of devolved school management

1.1 DSM is built upon the foundations and principles of:

- Subsidiarity and Empowerment
- Collaboration
- Accountability and Responsibility
- Clarity and Equity

These principles reflect the National Improvement Framework aims of excellence through raising attainment and achieving equity. The principles also fully endorse those proposed in the Fair Funding consultation:

- **support excellence and equity** - ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed.
- **be fair** - placing the needs of all children and young people at the centre.
- **be simple**, transparent and predictable – ensuring the costs of delivering education can be easily understood and explained and that schools are able to manage and plan ahead with certainty.
- **deliver value for money** – ensuring that every penny spent is used effectively.

1.2 Education Context within East Lothian

East Lothian Council is responsible for the delivery of education provision across the county. This is delivered through 7 secondary schools, 36 primary schools, and integrated specialist facilities for children and young people with additional support needs. Early Learning and Childcare is delivered through 32 settings within primary schools, 2 Tots and Teens provisions within secondary schools, 13 private and third sector partners and 33 childminders.

The Council's vision document 'Council Plan 2022-2027' [link here](#) confirms the commitment of the Council to provide a positive learning environment that motivates children and young people.

The quality of learning and teaching in the majority of schools in East Lothian is evaluated as good or very good. This information comes from schools' own evaluations in their Standards and Quality Report. Across the Broad General Education (P1-S3), the majority of primary pupils in East Lothian achieve the expected level for their stage in Literacy and Numeracy while most young people by the end of S3 achieve the expected levels of progress. Most young people leave school in East Lothian with 1 or more awards at SCQF Level 5 with the majority also leaving school with 1 or more awards at SCQF Level 6. All schools have in place improvement plans and specific targets to raise attainment and reduce the poverty-related attainment gap in line with the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the East Lothian Council Raising Attainment Strategy. These are discussed and challenged on a regular basis with Quality Improvement Officers. Each secondary school also has a PT Equity to track and monitor the attainment of children and young people impacted by poverty. Annual participation rates for 16–19-year-olds are high in East Lothian with almost all participating in education, training or employment each year. Post school participation rates are also high with almost all young people in a positive destination on leaving school.

1.3 Parent Councils

Parents and carers are the most important influence throughout a child's education and parental involvement in learning makes a real difference to children's attainment and achievements.

Parent Councils help parents and carers to become more actively and effectively involved in their children's learning. They were established under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 [link here](#) in recognition of the important role that parents and carers can play, both in their own children's learning and in the life of a school. Parent Forum is the collective name for every parent, carer or guardian at a school. The Act gives each school's Parent Forum the right to set up a Parent Council. More information can be found on the Parents' page of the Scottish Government website [link here](#); the East Lothian Council website [link here](#); and within the East Lothian Parental Engagement Strategy [link here](#).

The role of the Parent Council is to:

- Support the school in its work with children and young people
- Represent the views of all parents and carers
- Encourage links between the school, parents and carers, children and young people, pre-school groups and the wider community

Under the Council's DSM Scheme Head Teachers are required to engage with parents and carers on budget planning and informative reporting on a regular basis throughout the school year.

2. Budget overview

East Lothian Council's spending plans for this financial year (2024/25) are included in Appendix 1.

Within the Education & Children's Services Directorate budget, Educational Services are allocated an overall budget from which funding is devolved to schools under the DSM scheme guidelines. See Appendix 2 for details of each budget heading.

The DSM Scheme ensures that there is transparency throughout the process and that budgets are allocated on a fair and consistent basis. The specific responsibilities of Head Teachers in relation to the administration and management of school budgets are clearly identified within the DSM Scheme.

The Scheme in general provides funding based on school pupil roll (and in primary schools the number of classes) to cover the following operating costs:

1. Employee costs
2. Energy costs (Primary only)
3. Supplies & Services

Each budget heading is identified by a six-digit numeric code (for example, 2-25-225 Supplies and Services – Printing and Stationery – see Appendix 2), which is common to the financial accounting system of the Council. A brief title or description for each delegated budget heading follows in the next column of the document.

The actual amount allocated to each budget heading in cash terms is not detailed in Appendix 2, as it will change each year to take into account factors such as changes in pupil numbers or Council policy. Information on detailed amounts is made available from the Finance department to each school at the start of a new financial year in April in the form of a detailed budget statement.

The ability for Head Teachers to move monies from one budget heading to another is known as virement and is permitted on most budget headings subject to the provisions in the Financial Regulations.

At the start of each financial year Head Teachers will be provided with their total school budget and a separate budget report detailing the devolved elements. To assist Head Teachers in managing their school budget, monthly budget monitoring reports will be issued to schools for the devolved elements only.

3. Areas of expenditure

3.1 Areas of expenditure to be devolved:

The areas that will be devolved to schools under this scheme and subject to its conditions are detailed separately in:

- Appendix 3A for Primary Schools DSM Entitlement
- Appendix 4A for Secondary Schools DSM Entitlement

3.2 Areas identified as not generally suitable for devolving:

Whilst Head Teachers are given maximum flexibility over their budgets, there are areas of expenditure that are generally not considered suitable for devolution. The reasons for this may include but are not limited to: areas outside the influence of a Head Teacher; areas that are too bureaucratic; have unacceptable levels of risk; benefit from economies of scale; require professional expertise e.g. corporate support functions. Non-devolved school expenditure is met from central Education budgets and currently include:

- Rent in relation to school premises
- Capital expenditure, including Public-Private Partnership scheme costs that are within the scope of the existing contract
- Property Insurance
- Non-Domestic Rates
- Statutory Local Authority contracted work on managing the school estate
- Corporate support function costs for example Finance, HR, and Legal functions
- School clothing grants
- Education Maintenance Allowances
- Home to school pupil transport
- Premature retirement costs
- Local Authority Information Management Systems (currently SEEMIS)
- School meals
- Instrumental Music Instructors
- Examination fees
- Waste Collection
- Energy costs (Secondary)
- Carbon charges
- Janitorial and Cleaning staff costs
- Central support services for example Educational Psychology, Quality Improvement Teams, Learning Support and Behavioural Support Teams, Speech and Language Teams, hearing and visually impaired support, dyslexia or significant and enhanced provision for additional support.
- Long Term Sickness Absence – Primary Only

Key areas to be covered by the DSM Scheme

General information on devolved school management

4.1 Financial Regulations

The DSM Scheme forms part of the Council's approved Financial Regulations.

4.2 Best Value Principles

The Council's DSM Scheme demonstrates Best Value by following the characteristics of:

- commitment and leadership.
- sound governance at a strategic and operational level.
- accountability.
- sound management of resources.
- responsiveness and consultation.
- use of review and options appraisal.
- a contribution to sustainable development.
- equal opportunities arrangements and joint working.

Head Teachers are expected to deploy the school's budget in accordance with Best Value principles.

Value for money is a key aspect of Best Value and all decisions regarding resource used at school level should provide this. This should be managed within the Council's procurement strategy [link here](#)

4.3 Local Authority Commitment to Devolved School Management

The DSM scheme operates within East Lothian Council's overarching Scheme of Administration, Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders. Through this process decision-making powers and budgetary responsibilities are devolved to Head Teachers to allow them to respond to local needs more effectively.

4.4 School Expenditure Within Wider Strategic Planning

Head Teachers should ensure that school expenditure is in line with their School Improvement Plan which reflects both local plans for raising education attainment and the Council's strategic plans, priorities and the National Improvement Framework.

4.5 Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT), Joint Consultative Committee for Local Government Employees (JCC) and Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers (LNCT) Agreements

The DSM Scheme has been developed in consultation with East Lothian Council's LNCT for Teachers and JCC for Local Government employees and is consistent with the Council's HR policies and procedures and national SNCT, JCC and local LNCT agreements.

Publication

4.6 Publication Availability

The Council's DSM Scheme will be published on the Council's website, updated annually. Head Teachers should also arrange for their school DSM budget to be published on the school website and inform parents and other interested parties of its availability.

Training

4.7 Available Training

Training on the devolved arrangements contained in the DSM scheme is essential to Head Teachers, school staff and other stakeholders. This is to ensure that individuals have a clear understanding of the context of the scheme, its aims and objectives and how DSM can be used to meet the needs of staff and learners at a local level.

Training will take various forms such as induction training for new staff on financial regulations and the Council's policies and procedures relating to financial good practice, contracts and procurement; DSM training sessions including monitoring budgets and monthly reconciliation; job shadowing; online modules and one to one meetings with relevant staff where appropriate.

Ongoing refresher training will be available for existing staff organised annually jointly by Education and Finance Officers.

Consultation, engagement and transparency

4.8 Consultation and Engagement

In exercising their delegated powers Head Teachers should ensure that a collegiate approach is taken to planning and managing the school devolved budget.

Head Teachers are required to establish formal consultative procedures with all school staff. This will include, in all but very small schools, the establishment of a consultative committee, with representatives from both teaching and support staff. The consultative committee is a mechanism that ensures close staff involvement in more detailed DSM decision making, which would be impractical on a whole school basis. Meetings of the consultative committee should be recorded and made available to staff, who must be subsequently advised of the decisions finally taken by the Head Teacher.

It is expected that Head Teachers should consult with staff, parent councils and children and young people on appropriate DSM scheme matters. This may include the school's DSM budget and the Head Teacher's spending proposals.

All staff must be given transparent access to the full details of any spending proposals including the allocation of departmental resources and the methodology used to allocate internal budgets in an accessible format. Any revisions to weightings or methodology should be highlighted annually.

4.9 Transparency

Full details of the East Lothian Council budget are published on the Council website [link here](#). This includes details of the budget allocated to the Education & Children’s Services Directorate and subsequently to education and schools. This information will also be published on each school website for parents and other interested parties to access.

In the spirit of genuine collaboration and consultation Head Teachers should also discuss the school budget and their spending proposals with their Parent Council and encourage meaningful discussion.

Head Teachers should ensure that any costs that require parental contribution related to extra-curricular activities are minimised to ensure equality of access and with due regard to the “Cost of the School Day” guidance [link here](#).

Currently schools receive Scottish Government funding to remove any parental donations for access to curricular activities (e.g. for class materials, school trips related directly to the core curriculum). This policy will continue subject to Scottish Government funding allocation.

Collaboration

4.10 Local Priorities

East Lothian Plan 2017-2027 is our Local Outcomes Improvement Plan under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This strategic plan will take us along the path to achieving our Statement of Intent for East Lothian; East Lothian Council Plan 2022-2027; Council Improvement Plan; Education Service Progress Report and Improvement Plan 2023/24 [link here](#).

The DSM Scheme is developed within the context of safeguarding, promoting and supporting the needs of our children and young people. It considers the key policy drivers pertaining to Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), meeting the needs of learners with additional support needs (ASN), our role as a corporate parent and the UN Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC).

Through the use of attainment data across our Associated School Groups (ASGs), Head Teachers identify common gaps to plan collaborative interventions which may include the use of pooling school funding to be solution focussed embracing joint working with the learning community, parents, children and young people, teachers and support staff, partners, other schools and the Local Authority. It is recommended that Head Teachers work together to share and maximise resources to influence outcomes across their ASG.

Staffing

4.11 Staffing Structures

All staffing budgets are devolved under the scheme. The budgets for staff have been broken down into teaching and school support staff most of which are allocated on a formula basis. Head Teachers will continue to appoint and manage employees in accordance with the Council’s policies and procedures, and in line with SNCT, JCC and LNCT agreements.

Although the scheme gives greater flexibility for the management of employee budgets, Head Teachers should always consider the wider implications of any proposals, for example, staffing standards, employment rights

etc; and therefore, Head Teachers should contact appropriate staff within central Council service departments, who can assist them with any such decisions.

4.12 Legislative and Contractual Requirements

The legislative context of the scheme forms part of the wider framework of documentation which relates to local government and schools e.g., Financial Regulation, Standing Orders, employment legislation, policies and procedures including SNCT and LNCT and JCC agreements. It is important that Head Teachers adhere to the legislation and agreements.

4.13 Staff Resource

Head Teachers will be given opportunities to participate in the development and review of recruitment and staffing approaches, both for their own school/s and for the Council.

Professional support

4.14 Professional Support teams, functions and transparency

In carrying out their function's schools are supported by a wide range of professional support teams. These include:

- Quality Improvement Team
- Education Support Officers
- Educational Psychologists
- Finance Services
- Human Resource Services
- Customer Services
- Procurement Services
- Legal Services
- Property and Risk Officers
- Facilities Management Team

Accounting

4.15 Budget underspend / overspend

The Head Teacher is not permitted to carry forward any surplus funds from one financial year to the next.

Head Teachers should identify the purpose of any surplus external or specific grant carry forward requests and reflect this in their School Improvement Plans or budget spending plans. Evidence of external funding or grant conditions must be provided for a carry forward to be considered. Where possible, funding should be used within the financial year it was awarded.

Any budget deficit will require a budget recovery plan agreed with the Local Authority and clear evidence that the school can operate within the budget allocation for the following year. The school can expect ongoing monitoring by central Officers throughout the following financial year.

4.16 Virement

The scheme gives Head Teachers the flexibility to manage and determine the best use of the resources devolved to their school. To facilitate this, Head Teachers are permitted to move funding from one budget line within their own devolved school budget to another i.e. from Educational Materials budget heading to Staff Development budget heading by a budget transfer request known as a virement, subject to the Council's accounting principles, schemes of delegation and financial regulations.

Scheme review

4.17 Review, methodology and Stakeholders

The scheme will be reviewed by the DSM working group every 3 years. The group will consist of representation from schools, central education, finance, human resources, trade unions and other stakeholders where appropriate. Elements of the scheme may be reviewed separately on occasions such as the annual budget process.

It may be necessary to update the scheme if required following formal agreement of the Council's budget, or to recognise any Council policy decisions which may have an impact on the scheme.

5 Appendices

Appendix 1 East Lothian Council Spending Plans 2024/25

Appendix 2 Core school budgets – cost allocation codes

Appendix 3A Primary School DSM Entitlement

Appendix 3B Primary School benchmarking for calculating indicative Management Time and Teaching Time

Appendix 4A Secondary School DSM Entitlement

Appendix 5 Definitions

6 Useful links

The Education and Children's Services Progress and Improvement Plan

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/24249/07_education_service_progress_and_improvement_plan

East Lothian Council website

<https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/>

Education (Scotland) Act 2016

[Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/12)

Council Improvement Plan – Best Value Assurance Report

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/28011/council_improvement_plan

General Services Budget 2024-28

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/24515/02bii_budget_proposals_general_services_revenue

Fair Funding to Achieve Excellence and Equity in Education

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-funding-achieve-excellence-equity-education/>

Scottish Government and COSLA Education Reform Joint Agreement of June 2018

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/devolved-school-management/>

Joint Agreement and Head Teachers' Charter

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/empowering-schools-education-reform-progress-update/pages/3/>

Council Plan 2022-2027

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/32562/east_lothian_council_plan_2022_to_2027

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2006/8/contents>

Parental Involvement – Scottish Government

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/parents>

East Lothian Parental Engagement link

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210557/schools_and_learning/12100/parental_involvement/5

The East Lothian Parental Engagement Strategy

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/23219/parental_engagement_strategy_-_full_document

East Lothian Council Procurement Strategy

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/27544/procurement_strategy

East Lothian Council DSM Scheme

https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210557/schools_and_learning/12720/devolved_school_management

Cost of the School Day (Child Poverty Action Group)

[The Cost of the School Day Toolkit, updated 2023/24 | CPAG](#)

Council Budget

The table below sets out the East Lothian Council's spending plans for the financial year 2024/25. Of the overall budget of £315M, £172.6M is allocated to the Education and Children's Services directorate to support the services that they deliver.

Directorate	2024/25 Total Net Expenditure £'000
Children's Services	20,290
Education	152,336
Finance	9,152
Corporate Services	10,684
Health & Social Care	74,023
Development	1,957
Housing	2,010
Infrastructure	31,340
Communities & Partnerships	13,276
Total spending	315,068

Within the Education and Children's Services directorate budget, Educational Services have been allocated an overall budget of £152.39M, of which £117M is devolved to schools under the DSM scheme guidelines.

The Scheme ensures that there is transparency throughout the process and that budgets are allocated on a fair and consistent basis. The specific responsibilities of Head Teachers in relation to the administration and management of school budgets are clearly identified within the scheme.

The Scheme in general provides funding based on school roll (and in primary schools the number of classes) to cover the following operating costs:

1. Employee costs
2. Energy costs (Primary only)
3. Supplies & Services

Core School Budgets – Cost Allocation Codes

All schools have a cost centre code that will prefix all cost centre classifications below in the general ledger and are used when requesting internal budget virements from one cost centre to another. The last 3 digits are unique to each school:

Primary	5-57-XXX
Secondary	5-59-XXX

Common cost centre classifications are:

1-11-005	Teachers-Pay
1-11-010	Teachers-National Insurance
1-11-015	Teachers-Pension
1-11-025	Teachers-Expenses
1-12-005	Chief Officers-Pay
1-12-010	Chief Officers-National Insurance
1-12-015	Chief Officers-Pension
1-12-025	Chief Officers-Expenses
1-13-005	Local Government Workers-Pay
1-13-006	Local Government Workers-Overtime
1-13-010	Local Government Workers-National Insurance
1-13-015	Local Government Workers-Pension
1-13-025	Local Government Workers-Expenses
1-16-040	Indirect Costs-Early Retirement
1-16-045	Indirect Costs-Severance Payments
1-16-045	Indirect Costs - Relocation
1-16-060	Indirect Costs-Recruitment
1-16-065	Indirect Costs-Training
1-16-080	Indirect Costs-Other
2-21-105	Premises Costs-Energy
2-21-107	Premises Costs-Gas
2-21-110	Premises Costs-Water Services
2-21-115	Rent of non-ELC premises
2-21-120	Premises Costs-Rates
2-21-140	Premises Costs-Cleaning
2-21-145	Premises Costs-Grounds maintenance
2-23-170	Transport Costs - External Hire
2-23-180	Transport Costs-Public Transport
2-23-195	Transport Costs-Car allowances
2-25-200	Supplies & Services-Equipment & furniture
2-25-205	Supplies & Services-Materials
2-25-210	Supplies & Services-Catering
2-25-225	Supplies & Services-Printing & stationery
2-25-230	Supplies & Services-Services
2-25-240	Supplies & Services-Communications
2-27-275	Third Party Payments-Central Government
4-41-410	Capital Charges-Depreciation

5-56-560 Other C Govt Grants-Scottish Executive Grants
5-57-574 Other Contributions-Other Organisations
6-61-620 Internal recharges-Education
6-61-640 Internal recharges-Roads & transport
6-61-641 Internal recharges-Contract Transport
6-61-670 Internal recharges-Corporate Services
6-61-680 Internal Recharges-Insurance Fund Allocs

Primary School DSM Entitlement

Employee Costs

All employee budgets are devolved under the scheme. The budgets for staff have been broken down into teaching and school support staff. Head Teachers will continue to appoint and manage employees in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

Although the scheme gives greater flexibility for the management of employee budgets, Head Teachers should always consider the wider implications of any proposals, for example staffing standards, employment rights etc; and therefore, Head Teachers should contact appropriate staff within the central office who can assist/advise them with any such decisions.

Funding will be allocated on the basis of the number of classes agreed between the Head Teacher and the Education Service, reviewed annually before the budget setting process commences. This produces an indicative staffing structure of "in place costs". Discussion takes place around any other factors that may influence this structure or costs i.e., context of the school demographic, improvement priorities, split campus etc.

Budget allocations to schools for core and nursery staff costs are based on the actual cost of staff in school or recruited, to cover salary, national insurance and pension contributions.

Promoted Posts: The promoted post structure and Management Time in Appendix 3B are the benchmark for discussions around the needs of the school in the given financial year. The nursery class FTE is a factor in the allocation of management time. Head Teachers can create a management structure within their indicative entitlement, with the agreement of the Education Service, however, overall affordability and equity are a consideration when deviating from the benchmark.

Class Teachers: The number of class teachers has been identified from the number of classes each school will operate. To estimate the number of classes organised within each school the following benchmark is applied:

Roll 1-25	1 class
Roll 26-50	2 classes
Roll 51-74	3 classes etc.

Final class structures will be negotiated between the Education Service and the school, considering age and stage profiles in each establishment. The figures in the columns headed "Class Organisation" and "Classroom Teachers" are therefore estimates. The number of classroom teachers, as estimated in the right-hand column of Appendix 3B, needs to be reduced by **0.12 FTE** for each Primary 1 or Primary 2 class in the establishment.

Management Structures & Time: Appendix 3B details the Management Structure benchmark and the amount of Management Time in terms of full-time equivalent staff that form the basis of discussion and agreement between the Head Teacher and the Education Service. Nursery is based on 0.5FTE of the roll capacity of the Nursery rather than actual number of children attending since there is more than one intake in the year so it changes each term.

Chartered Teachers: The additional cost of a Chartered Teacher is included within the "in place cost" allocation for class teachers agreed. The Chartered Teacher promoted post reward scheme was designed to

offer talented teachers the opportunity to stay in the classroom as an alternative to promotion through the management route. The scheme is a legacy scheme, no longer open to new entrants.

Probationers

The allocation of probationers to primary schools will be discussed each year between the Head Teacher and the Education Service. The total cost of the probationer salaries will be allocated as part of the “in place cost” budget allocation.

Visiting Specialists

Core teaching non class contact time may be delivered by specialist teachers known as Visiting Specialists. These teachers may support the teaching and learning of practical subject areas. Staff may be charged directly to the school budget or be recharged internally.

Predictable Need

Allocations to primary schools for Predictable Support for Learning, will be made based upon the size of the Predictable ‘pot’ for primary schools and will be determined by Free School Meal Entitlement and School Roll (excluding Nursery), both based on a three-year rolling average.

Funds will be allocated on a 70:30 basis with 70% being based on the school’s proportionate share of pupils on their roll entitled to FME compared to the authority total, with the remaining 30% based solely on roll. However, each school will be guaranteed a minimum entitlement of one classroom assistant.

The Predictable Need budget is updated annually to take account of the resources available to the local authority to increase or decrease it.

A revised Predictable Needs allocation scheme is in development for session 2025/26 based on a risk matrix of multiple factors considered to be a fairer distribution than the FSM/Roll methodology.

Exceptional Need

Budget allocations for Exceptional Need will be made based upon the number of hours/full time equivalent (FTE) staff for specific children agreed by the Moderation Panel.

These allocations will be reviewed each term throughout the school year and will only be available while the child attends school. If the child moves school, then these allocations will move with them.

Allocations to schools will be based upon the hourly rates/costs for an ASN Auxiliary post at Grade 5. Credits will be given to schools that have been allocated ‘Exceptional Needs’ funding at the start of the academic year and will be reviewed as directed by the Education Service.

A revised Exceptional Needs allocation scheme is in development for session 2025/26 based on a risk matrix of multiple factor methodology that will award funding to schools to use flexibly at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

Specialist Provisions

Local authority specialist provisions for children and young people with severe and complex needs are funded on the basis of the staff and resources required to meet the needs of the learners placed there. Funding is reviewed and agreed with schools annually via a collaborative approach to decision making that includes senior leaders from the school and officers of the Education Service.

Nursery Class Staffing

Nursery classes are allocated staffing based on hours required to meet Care Inspectorate ratios and deliver early learning and childcare. Schools must keep a record (staffing matrix) of the nursery staffing in place which reflects the staff in place on the budget papers.

Administrative and Support Staffing

The level of appropriate support staff is agreed between the Head Teacher and Education Services taking into account the context of the school, single of split site and rural factors. The benchmark for the discussions is roll based but can vary by agreement and is influenced by the Head Teacher's operational and business needs:

		INCLUDES NURSERY AND SPECIAL CLASS FTE				
	Clerical		Admin	Auxiliary	Dining Room Supervisor/ Playground Supervisor	
Roll	Hours		Hours	Hours	Hours	TOTAL
0	0		0	0	0	0
1	0		25	10	10	45
72	0		25	15	15	55
121	0		25	20	15	60
201	5		30	20	25	80
301	15		30	25	30	100
401	25		30	30	35	120
501	40		30	35	40	145
601	50		30	40	50	170
701	60		30	45	60	195
801	70		30	50	70	220
901	80		40	55	80	255
1001	90		40	60	90	280
1101	100		40	65	100	305

Pupil Equity Funding

The amount of Pupil Equity Funding allocated per school is identified by the Scottish Government and this amount is included in the Primary budget statement to schools as a specific budget line (this funding is not allocated as part of the DSM Scheme).

Ad-hoc Funding/Staffing

Schools may be awarded 'ad-hoc' funding for specific staff or projects. This funding will be agreed between the school and the Education Service.

Absence Cover

Short-term absence: A budget for short-term absence cover will be allocated to schools on the following basis. Each school will receive a basic allocation of 10 days' cover. The daily rate for this cover will be reviewed annually. In addition, there will be an allocation of £11.10 per full time equivalent registered pupil (including nursery pupils).

Maternity Leave: This will be covered by a central budget with no cost to the school. Credits will be issued to schools based upon receipt of correctly approved forms.

Long term Teacher absence: After the first 10 days this absence will also be covered by a central budget.

Nursery Staff: Schools will receive a budget to cover nursery staff absences and annual leave cover (for nurseries operating over the full year).

Long term absence of Local Government Workers: This is classed as absence greater than 4 weeks and will be covered 50% by a central budget.

Staff Development

Staff Development budgets will be devolved on the following basis:

- Each school will receive a basic allocation of £400 for each academic year, plus:
 - £55 for each FTE teacher
 - £25 for each FTE support staff member

Supplies – Educational & Core

The allocation for Educational & Other supplies will be made as follows;

- A basic allocation of **£1,385** to every school with a roll of less than 220. Schools in excess of this roll will receive a basic allocation of **£1,026**.
- An amount per full time registered pupil of **£62.45** each year.

This means that a school with a full-time registered roll of 300 (including, where relevant, any nursery places) will receive a budget allocation of **£19,761**.

This allocation is intended to cover the following;

- Educational Supplies
- Cleaning Materials
- Furniture & Fittings (where not part of any PPP contract arrangement)
- Photocopying
- Postage
- Phones
- Excursion Allowances
- Exchange Visits
- Curricular Travel
- Other Supplies & Services
- Expenses
- Licences

Energy Costs

Schools will be given energy budgets based upon estimates prepared by the Energy Officer.

The budget will be based on consumption and will take account of current market conditions.

Surpluses & Deficits

The Head Teacher is not permitted to carry-forward any surplus funds from one year to the next.

Head Teachers should identify the purpose of any surplus external or specific grant carry forward requests and reflect this in their School Improvement Plans or budget spending plans. Evidence of external funding or grant conditions must be provided for a carry forward to be considered. Where possible, funding should be used within the financial year it was awarded.

Any budget deficit will require a budget recovery plan agreed with the Local Authority and clear evidence that the school can operate within the budget allocation for the following year. The school can expect ongoing monitoring by central Officers throughout the following financial year.

Monitoring

Head Teachers must demonstrate that they are operating under the Council's Framework for Service Improvement and the Integrated Service Plan and that their funding use fully supports the School Improvement Plan.

Financial Arrangements

The Revenue Budget

- The Council meeting to agree budgets is held in February/March each year.
- Within the total available resources for Education Services, allocations are made to individual schools on the basis of any formulae and other allocation methods determined by the Council.
- The sums allocated to schools will include an uplift for pay and price increases subject to the budget process for that year.
- The budget for an individual school may be varied during the year, either upwards or downwards, by the Council but the Council will give reasons for any such action.
- The financial year for all council services runs from 1 April to 31 March each year.

Financial Control

- All payments and receipts must be made in accordance with systems and regulations specified by the Council.
- The Head Teacher will be required to:
 - a) account to the Council for the management of all funds provided by the Council and the operation of all bank accounts maintained in connection with these funds.

- b) maintain financial records to the satisfaction of the Council for all funds held by him/her for the use of the school and to provide access to these records, or information from these records, at any time to any duly authorised officer of the Council.
- c) provide any background information or reports in relation to expenditure or income required by the Council

Indicative Management Time benchmark

Teaching Time - P1 & P2 Class= 1FTE. P3 to P7 = 1.12FTE

												Suggested	
								Total	Management	Management	Class		Teaching
ROLL	CUT	HT	Grade	DHT	Grade	PT	Grade	Managers	Time	Teaching	Organisation		Time
										Time			Required
1-19	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	0.633	1.367	2		2.22
20-47	20	1	2	0	0	1	1	2	0.633	1.367	2		2.22
48-71	48	1	3	0	0	1	1	2	0.633	1.367	3		3.33
72-96	72	1	4	0	0	1	1	2	0.633	1.367	4		4.44
97-117	97	1	5	0	0	1	1	2	0.633	1.367	5		5.56
118-125	118	1	5	0	0	1	1	2	1.033	0.967	5		5.56
126-145	126	1	5	0	0	1	1	2	1.033	0.967	6		6.67
146-189	146	1	6	0	0	1	1	2	1.033	0.967	7		7.78
190-219	190	1	7	0	0	1	1	2	1.033	0.967	8		8.89
220-249	220	1	7	1	1	1	1	3	1.433	1.567	9		10.00
250-279	250	1	7	1	1	1	1	3	1.433	1.567	10		11.11
280-306	280	1	8	1	1	1	1	3	1.433	1.567	11		12.22
307-333	307	1	8	1	1	2	1+1	4	1.466	2.534	12		13.33
334-349	334	1	9	1	1	2	1+1	4	1.466	2.534	13		14.44
350-360	350	1	9	2	1+1	2	1+1	5	2.466	2.534	13		14.44
361-379	361	1	9	2	1+1	2	1+1	5	2.466	2.534	13		14.44
380-415	380	1	9	2	1+1	2	1+2	5	2.466	2.534	14		15.56
416-442	416	1	10	2	1+1	2	1+2	5	2.466	2.534	15		16.67
443-469	443	1	10	2	1+2	2	1+2	5	2.466	2.534	16		17.78
470-496	470	1	11	2	1+2	2	1+2	5	2.466	2.534	17		18.89
497-523	497	1	11	2	1+2	3	1+1+1	6	2.499	3.501	18		20.00
524-550	524	1	12	2	1+2	3	1+1+1	6	2.499	3.501	19		21.11
551-577	551	1	12	2	1+2	3	1+1+1	6	2.499	3.501	20		22.22
578-604	578	1	12	2	2+2	3	1+1+1	6	2.499	3.501	21		23.33
605-631	605	1	12	2	2+2	3	1+1+2	6	2.499	3.501	22		24.44

632-658	632	1	12	2	2+3	3	1+1+2	6	2.499	3.501	23	25.56
659-685	659	1	12	2	2+3	3	1+2+2	6	2.499	3.501	24	26.67
686-712	686	1	12	2	2+3	3	1+2+2	6	2.499	3.501	25	27.78
713-739	713	1	12	2	2+3	3	1+2+2	6	2.499	3.501	25	27.78
740-766	740	1	12	2	2+3	4	1+1+2+2	7	2.532	4.468	26	28.89
767-793	767	1	12	2	2+3	4	1+1+2+2	7	2.532	4.468	27	30.00
794-820	794	1	12	2	2+3	4	1+2+2+2	7	2.532	4.468	28	31.11
821-847	821	1	12	2	2+3	4	1+2+2+2	7	2.532	4.468	29	32.22
848-874	848	1	12	2	2+3	4	1+2+2+2	7	2.532	4.468	30	33.33
875-902	875	1	12	3	2+4	4	1+2+2+3	8	3.232	4.768	31	34.44
903-928	902	1	12	3	2+5	4	1+2+2+4	8	3.232	4.768	32	35.56
929-955	929	1	12	3	2+6	4	1+2+2+5	8	3.232	4.768	33	36.67
956-982	956	1	12	3	2+7	4	1+2+2+6	8	3.232	4.768	34	37.78
983-1009	983	1	12	3	2+8	4	1+2+2+7	8	3.265	5.735	35	38.89
1010-1200	1010	1	12	4	2+9	4	1+2+2+8	9	3.965	6.035	36	40.00

Secondary School DSM Entitlement

Pupil numbers are the major factor in determining resource allocations.

There is maximum flexibility of spend between the various resource allocations.

Once budgets are devolved Head Teachers become responsible for managing within identified resources and with progressing the School Improvement Plan.

Core Funding

Secondary schools in East Lothian will be funded for their core activities on the basis of a linear formula. This core funding is intended to cover the following;

- Core Teaching staff (Management and Class Teachers)
- Core administrative staff including School Business Managers
- Core Roll Related Supplies and Services
- Short term absence cover
- Long term Absence, Paternity & Maternity costs
- Recruitment & Relocation Costs
- Licences

The linear formula is not intended to cover the following items that are also within the DSM scheme.

- Predictable and Exceptional Needs funding
- Ad-hoc staffing agreed between the school and the Education Service
- Probationer costs
- Staff Development
- Efficiency Savings
- External funding sources e.g. Study Support

Funding under these headings will be allocated to the school but different guidelines will apply. These are detailed under separate headings below.

The following items will be outside the DSM scheme.

- PPP unitary charges payable by East Lothian Council
- Home to School Transport
- Catering
- Energy Costs - though the Council will attempt, along with schools and the PPP contractor, to devise ways to encourage efficient use of utilities.
- Waste Collection charges

Core funding will be allocated to secondary schools on the following basis:

Core funding = fixed amount per pupil

The funding allocated for the 2024/2025 financial year is as follows:

Amount per Registered Pupil £ 5,200 (subject to change)

This amount will be updated annually to cover a schools “in place costs” and to take account of:

- Teaching and non-teaching wage inflation
- National Insurance & Pension changes
- Grade increments
- National policy initiatives
- The resources available to East Lothian Council

A rigorous annual process takes place across all schools to examine the efficiency of their timetable load versus staffing capacity. Through this process the Per Pupil Amount is set with the aim of meeting the agreed “in place costs” of staff and basic supplies and services (this can also consider any external funding or income that is not part of the DSM Scheme allocation).

School Roll

Schools will be core-funded based on the actual roll April-July from the previous September census and predicted school roll August-March. Budgets will be finalised following the confirmation of the school roll at the September census (mid-financial year).

Probationer Funding

The allocation of probationers to secondary schools will be negotiated each year between the Head Teacher and the Education Service. Schools will be required to ensure that an adequate number of probationer places are made available as required by the Scottish Government. Once the cost to the school has been agreed in FTE terms, the total cost of the probationer salaries will be allocated as part of the “in place cost” budget allocation and includes 0.1FTE for release of teacher mentors.

Predictable Need

The Predictable Needs budget is designed to fund general support needs across all pupils within the school – not just those pupils who have specific and pronounced support needs. In a typical school the Predictable Needs budget will fund Support for Learning Teachers and support staff.

Allocations to secondary schools for Predictable Support for Learning, will be made based upon the size of the Predictable ‘pot’ for secondary schools and will be determined by Free School Meal Entitlement (based on the average of the previous three years) and School Roll (actual in April and estimated from August).

Funds will be allocated on a 70:30 basis with 70% being based on roll plus Free School Meal Entitlement and the remaining 30% based solely on roll.

We will continue to monitor the way in which deprivation factors are recognised within the formula, our long-term aims being to give our secondary schools maximum flexibility while including deprivation factors within the overall budget.

The amounts involved will be liable to increase in line with inflation and will be updated annually to take account of the resources available to the Authority.

A revised Predictable Needs allocation scheme is in development for session 2025/26 based on a risk matrix of multiple factors considered to be a fairer distribution than the FSM/Roll only methodology.

Exceptional Need

Budget allocations for Exceptional Need will be made based upon the number of hours/full time equivalent (FTE) staff for specific children agreed by the Moderation Panel.

These allocations will be reviewed each term and will only be available while the child attends school. If the child moves school, then the movement of resources by the end of the relevant school term would be facilitated where practicable.

Allocations to schools will be based upon the hourly rates/costs for the following grades:

Description	Grading
ASN Auxiliary	Grade 5

The above rates will include national insurance and pension contributions.

Credits will be given to schools that have received 'Exceptional Needs' pupils at the start of the academic year and will be reviewed as necessary.

A revised Exceptional Needs allocation scheme is in development for session 2025/26 based on a risk matrix of multiple factor methodology that will award funding to schools to use flexibly at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

Specialist Provisions

Local authority specialist provisions for children and young people with severe and complex needs are funded on the basis of the staff and resources required to meet the needs of the learners placed there. Funding is reviewed and agreed schools annually via a collaborative approach to decision making that includes senior leaders from the school and members of the central Education Service

Pupil Equity Funding

The amount of Pupil Equity Funding allocated per school is identified by the Scottish Government and this amount is included in the Secondary budget statement to schools as a specific budget line (this funding is not allocated as part of the DSM Scheme).

Ad-hoc Funding/Staffing

Schools may be awarded 'ad-hoc' funding for specific staff or projects. This funding will be agreed between the school and the Education Service.

Absence Cover

Short-term, long-term and maternity/paternity leave absence has been included within the core funding.

Staff Development

Staff Development budgets will be devolved to Secondary Schools and Specialist Provisions on the following basis:

- Each school will receive a basic allocation of £400 for each academic year and an allocation on the basis of full time equivalent staff, plus:
 - £55 for FTE teacher
 - £25 for FTE support staff

Surpluses & Deficits

The Head Teacher is not permitted to carry-forward any surplus funds from one year to the next.

Head Teachers should identify the purpose of any surplus external or specific grant carry forward requests and reflect this in their School Improvement Plans or budget spending plans. Evidence of external funding or grant conditions must be provided for a carry forward to be considered. Where possible, funding should be used within the financial year it was awarded.

Any budget deficit will require a budget recovery plan agreed with the Local Authority and clear evidence that the school can operate within the budget allocation for the following year. The school can expect ongoing monitoring by central Officers throughout the following financial year.

Supplies and Services – Educational and Core

In secondary schools the allocation for Education & Other supplies is determined by the school taking into account their local curricular needs and context and setting aside a budget from the core funding element (per pupil amount) to cover provision of resources and services to deliver the curriculum.

Reconciliation

At the end of each Council financial year a reconciliation will be made between:

- The total budget approved by East Lothian Council to be spent on the secondary schools DSM.
- The amounts retained centrally to be used on non-devolved items; and
- The amounts actually devolved to schools.

This reconciliation will be shared with the Head Teachers.

Financial arrangements

Capital expenditure will continue to be managed by the Council on behalf of schools.

The Revenue Budget

- The Council meeting to agree budgets is held in February/March each year.
- Within the total available resources for Education and Children's Services, allocations are made to individual schools on the basis of any formulae and other allocation methods determined by the Council.
- The sums allocated to schools will include an uplift for pay and price increases subject to the budget process for that year.
- The budget for an individual school may be varied during the year, either upwards or downwards, by the Council but the Council will give reasons for any such action.
- The financial year for all council services runs from 1 April to 31 March each year.

Financial Control

- All payments and receipts must be made in accordance with systems and regulations specified by the Council.
- The Head Teacher will be required to:
 - a) account to the Council for the management of all funds provided by the Council and the operation of all bank accounts maintained in connection with these funds.
 - b) maintain financial records to the satisfaction of the Council for all funds held by him/her for the use of the school and to provide access to these records, or information from these records, at any time to any duly authorised officer of the Council.
 - c) provide any background information or reports in relation to expenditure or income required by the Council.

School Business Manager/Finance Services - Service Level Agreement

Functions to be undertaken within Finance Services

- The identification of annual resources available to each school within which budgets can be set.
- Issue of budget guidance /timescales etc.
- Review and 'Sign-off' of annual budgets initially set by each school before input to finance system.
- Review and retention of School Business Plan as provided by School Business Manager at the start of each financial year.
- Preparation of annual budget for 'client'/non-devolved costs e.g. Vehicle Leases/PPP etc.
- Review of quarterly monitoring reports prepared on each school by the School Business Manager for consideration by the Head Teacher, Finance Services and Education Management Team.
- Development of reports for school monitoring and common information requirements.
- Provision of salary print out to School Business Managers
- Input of journals for credits, budget virements and other income.
- Agreement regarding requests for any annual carry-forwards (only relevant to external funding)
- Organising the input of journals onto financial ledgers.
- Production, update and review and circulation of Financial Procedures.
- Production, update and review and circulation of DSM Financial Guidelines
- Ensuring consistency of accounting treatment throughout schools

- Production of guidance on year-end procedures
- Determining the impact of new government initiatives and new council policies relating to DSM.
- Liaison with Education Management Team and/or Budget Groups
- Providing access to the financial ledger and relevant training.
- Providing access to personnel/payroll systems so that staffing databases can be maintained by schools.
- Reconciliation between total sums involved and amounts devolved each year.

Functions to be undertaken by Schools/School Business Managers

- Detailed preparation of annual budgets and submission to Education Management Team and/or Finance Services for review in line with agreed timescales.
- Detailed preparation and submission to Education and Finance Services teams of School Business Plan at the start of each financial year.
- Provision of information to aid the preparation of the client budget.
- Provision of financial advice to Head Teachers etc.
- Reporting variances between budgeted and actual expenditure to the Head Teacher.
- Providing information on major expenditure and income variations to Education Management Team and/or Finance Services.
- Preparation of quarterly budget reports to be circulated to Head Teacher, Finance Services and Education Management Team.
- Submission of claims for 'credits'.
- Ensuring financial procedures are adhered to within the school and that procedures comply with audit and control requirements.
- Ensuring compliance with issued accounting guidance.
- Ensuring use of approved accounting systems to ensure consistency throughout schools.
- Advising Finance Services with regard to possible accruals & prepayments for inclusion in the annual statutory returns.
- Managing the impact of new initiatives etc., at a local level and advising the Head Teacher accordingly.
- Ensuring that there are documented and regular reconciliations between the school finance system and financial ledgers and that any discrepancies are notified to Finance Services.
- Ensuring that staffing information within the school is accurate.
- The Council may suspend devolution of financial management at an individual school and/or take disciplinary action if there is evidence of fraud or other serious breach of trust between the Council and the Head Teacher.

Carry Forward of Surpluses and Deficits

- The Head Teacher is not permitted to carry forward any surplus funds from one year to another.
- Head Teachers should identify the purpose of any surplus external or specific grant carry forward requests and reflect this in their School Improvement Plans or budget spending plans. Evidence of external funding or grant conditions must be provided for a carry forward to be considered. Where possible, funding should be used within the financial year it was awarded.
- Any budget deficit will require a budget recovery plan agreed with the Local Authority and clear evidence that the school can operate within the budget allocation for the following year. The school can expect ongoing monitoring by central Officers throughout the following financial year.

DEFINITIONS

"The 1973 Act" means the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended or extended by or under any other enactment.

"The 1980 Act" means the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 as amended or extended by or under any other enactment, and any regulations made under that Act.

"The 2006 Act" means the Scottish Schools [Parental Involvement] Act 2006 as amended or extended by or under any other enactment, and any regulations made under that Act.

"The Council" means East Lothian Council as Education and Children's Services for East Lothian in terms of Section 123 of the 1973 Act.

"The Director of Education & Children's Services" means not only the Director of Education & Children's Services in person, but any other officer of the Council authorised to act on behalf of the Director of Education & Children's Services. In this context references to the masculine also include the feminine.

"The Head Teacher" means not only the Head Teacher in person, but any member of staff authorised to act on behalf of the Head Teacher.

"Competitive Tendering Legislation" means the Local Government Act 1988 and regulations made under that Act, and any other statutory enactment imposing requirements as to competitive tendering for work or activities which may form part of a local Council's functions.



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East Lothian Council
Education & Children's Services
Education Business Unit
John Muir House
Brewery Park
Haddington
East Lothian
EH41 4NX

Email EducationEnquiries@eastlothian.gov.uk
Telephone 01620 827827

www.eastlothian.gov.uk/education

REPORT TO: Education & Children’s Services Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2024

BY: Executive Director, Education and Children’s Services

SUBJECT: Sustainable Hourly Rate for Funded Providers delivering Early Learning and Childcare in East Lothian

7

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To note the increase in the sustainable hourly rate paid by East Lothian Council to early learning and childcare (ELCC) funded providers in the private and third sector to deliver funded early learning and childcare from 1 April 2024.
- 1.2 To note a further local review of the sustainable rate paid by East Lothian Council to early learning and childcare (ELCC) funded providers in the private and third sector to deliver funded early learning and childcare by August 2024.
- 1.3 To note the review of the partnership agreement process for new funded providers in East Lothian by March 2025.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

- i. Note the funding commitment from Scottish Government to ensure funded providers pay the real living wage of £12 per hour from April 2024. The Scottish Government provided East Lothian Council with additional funding to enable ELCC workers delivering funded hours in the private and third sector to be paid at least £12 per hour (the new real living wage rate from April 2024). A 7.6% uplift has been applied to 2023/24 rates to reflect the increase in staffing costs.
- ii. Note East Lothian Council increased the hourly rate by 7.6% as follows from 1 April 2024.

	Hourly Rate 2023/24 (including meal allowance of 35p per hour)	Hourly Rate from 1 April 2024 (including meal allowance of 35p per hour)
Eligible 2-year-olds	£7.90 per hour	£8.47 per hour
3 – 5-year-olds	£6.39 per hour	£6.85 per hour

- iii. Note the local review of the hourly rate to be paid to funded providers delivering early learning and childcare as outlined in this report.
- iv. Note the review of the partnership process by March 2025 for new funded providers wishing to enter an agreement with the local authority to deliver funded early learning and childcare. We do not plan to enter into a partnership agreement with any new providers until after August 2025.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Under section 47(1) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, education authorities must ensure that the statutory amount of funded early learning and childcare entitlement is made available for each eligible child.

3.2 Section 48 of the 2014 Act provides the statutory entitlement as 1140 hours of funded early learning and childcare in line with the school year, starting in August. Children eligible from January and April receive a pro-rata amount of funded hours for part of a year of which a child is eligible i.e. the term after their third birthday.

3.3 East Lothian currently has a variety of funded early learning and childcare providers.

- 13 private and third sector settings
- 34 council settings
- 33 childminders

3.4 As set out in the [Funded early learning and childcare \(ELC\) - setting sustainable rates 2024 to 2025: guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/funded-early-learning-and-childcare-2024-25/guidance/html/). In setting sustainable rates for 2024-25, the Scottish Government require councils to reflect the following elements:

- a fixed minimum percentage uplift to reflect the estimated average increase in staffing costs required to enable delivery of the £12 per hour pay commitment (this is assumed to account for, on average, 75% of the sustainable rate).
- the remainder of the sustainable rate is set in line with the requirements of the sustainable rates guidance (assumed to account on average, 25% of the sustainable rate, and reflecting the non-staffing cost elements of the rate, including providing scope for reinvestment).

3.5 East Lothian Council is proposing that the remainder of the sustainable rate (25%) is reviewed using Section 5: Options for Local Rate Setting in the Scottish Government guidance. [Funding follows the child and the national standard for early learning and childcare providers: guidance for setting sustainable rates from August 2020 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/funding-follows-the-child-and-the-national-standard-for-early-learning-and-childcare-providers/guidance/html/).

The proposed local hourly rate review would also take account of the following.

- the current rates charged by private nursery providers in the local area
- a cost data collection exercise, developed with Finance, gathering information from our current funded providers – 13 private nurseries and third sector services, and 6 childminders
- the existing hourly rates of £8.47 for Eligible 2-year-olds and £6.85 for 3–5-year-olds increased from 1 April 2024
- the staffing ratios of 1:5 to provide early learning and childcare for 2-year-olds compared to 1:8 for 3 – 5-year-olds in nursery settings
- benchmarking against neighbouring authorities

The hourly rate must be affordable and sustainable to the Council in terms of the budget available whilst enabling funded providers to be sustainable, pay employees the real living wage, reinvest in their service and provide high quality ELCC in line with the National Standards and East Lothian Council's contractual conditions.

Cabinet agreed on 8 November 2022, that the rate would be reviewed annually. The review did not take place in November 2023 due to an ongoing process review with the Scottish Government Improvement Service. The local review for 2024/2025 will take this into account.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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 – from financial year 2024/25, early learning and childcare funding is no longer ringfenced and is now included within the General Revenue Grant (GRG). The 7.6% increase will be met from Scottish Government funding of £346,500. There is no additional funding available for the non-staffing element (25% of the rate) and any increase in costs will need to be met from the Early Years budget for 2024/2025.
- 6.2 Personnel - none
- 6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

AUTHOR'S NAME	Kelly Weir
DESIGNATION	Senior Officer, Early Years
CONTACT INFO	kweir@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	18 June 2024

REPORT TO: Education & Children's Services Committee
MEETING DATE: 18 June 2024
BY: Executive Director, Education & Children's Services
SUBJECT: School Session Dates (2025/26 and 2026/27)

8

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain the Committees approval for School Session dates for the two school years, 2025/26 and 2026/27.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- (i) Approve the school session dates for the two years 2025/26 and 2026/27 as outlined in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.
 - (ii) Authorise the Head of Education to notify Head Teachers, Teachers' Associations, Heads of Establishments and Parent Councils.
 - (iii) Authorise the Head of Education to notify the Scottish Government.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This year, following discussion with neighbouring Authorities (City of Edinburgh Council, Midlothian Council, Scottish Borders Council and Fife Council), East Lothian has prepared school session dates for the following two school years - 2025/26 and 2026/27. City of Edinburgh Council had already set dates without consultation with neighbouring Authorities for the next two academic sessions and had them approved and published; Scottish Borders Council have set dates for the next two school years, namely 2025/26 and 2026/27 and Fife Council have also now set theirs for the next three years to 2027/28. Midlothian Council did reach out to consult on their dates and indicated they would be closely aligning with City of Edinburgh, their dates are now approved and published. It was therefore decided that East Lothian should align our dates with City of Edinburgh and Midlothian Council dates for the next two years which historically most respondents to our consultations favour.

- 3.2 A decision was taken to produce a proposal that aligns primarily to the City of Edinburgh Council dates but also considers the needs and preferences of our own schools, particularly around In-service dates. The draft dates produced for East Lothian very much align with the City of Edinburgh Council dates with the exception of the In-service day after the Christmas break, which the other two authorities have appended to the Christmas break. However, discussion with our Head Teachers on the In-service day preferences was strongly in favour of not placing In-service 4 in January but to append to the February holiday as it is felt this lends itself to a more focused and productive In-service day and aligns better for high schools around prelim diets and maximizing learning days for the senior phase. This is the pattern of In-service days familiar to families in East Lothian for many academic years.
- 3.3 In preparing the draft school session dates for 2025/26 and 2026/27 the following points were taken into consideration:-
- 190 pupil and 195 staff days which is in accordance with the Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975 (as amended);
 - A fixed one-week break in the third week of October;
 - The school session ending before the first full week of July ;
 - 5 fixed in-service days; and
 - Flexibility with the Easter break to allow for a natural end to Term 2 in the first week in April.
- 3.4 In preparing the draft school session dates for 2025/26 and 2026/27 the five points in 3.3 were taken into account as outlined in the attached draft proposed dates (Appendix 1 and 2). Cognisance of the City of Edinburgh Council's session dates were taken into account in an attempt to align the dates, as far as possible. This has been achieved in relation to the main holiday periods.
- 3.4.1 The Education Service consultation on the proposed East Lothian session dates for 2025/26 to 2026/27 took place with Head Teachers, Teachers' Professional Associations, UNISON, Educational Establishments, Parent Councils and the wider community through the Council's Consultation Hub. The period of the consultation ran from 16 April 2024 until 30 April 2024.
- 3.5 The Education Service consultation asked for comments only in relation to the proposed East Lothian dates. A total of 63 responses to the consultation were received, all of which were from individuals. Of the 63 responses received 29 commented they were supportive of the proposed dates as they stood in the consultation; 33 were not supportive of the proposed dates as they stood in the consultation and 1 respondent did not express a view either way; 5 responses related to requesting that the dates be aligned to neighbouring Authorities; 19 related to the timing and duration of the Easter break, some of the respondents were dissatisfied with the split in 2026/27 of the Easter bank holiday and Easter

break; other comments related to the timing and duration of the Christmas, February, Summer and October breaks and Public Holidays.

Much consideration was given to the splitting of the Easter bank holiday and Easter school break in 2026/27, given this is not ideal and very unusual. However, on balance the impact of bringing the Easter break forward to a continuous holiday period creates an imbalance in the term session dates elsewhere in the calendar. On balance it was decided we should continue to align with City of Edinburgh published dates.

Whilst the overall majority of the responses received 52.38% were not supportive of the proposed dates and aligning with neighbouring Authorities the response rate was low and close with 47.62% of respondent in favour. To arrive at a recommendation we have taken into consideration the historical view of the Education Committee to align with our closest neighbours City of Edinburgh and Midlothian.

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 Appendix 1 and 2 - draft school session dates 2025/26 and 2026/27.

AUTHOR'S NAME	Bev Skirrow
DESIGNATION	Education Service Manager
CONTACT INFO	Email:- bskirrow@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	June 2024

East Lothian Council School Session Dates DRAFT - 2025/2026 - calendar format

Teaching Day
In Service Day - Closed for pupils
School Holiday

August 2025						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2025						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2025						
Sxx	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2025						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
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December 2025						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
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January 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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February 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
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March 2026						
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2026						
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May 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
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June 2026						
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July 2026						
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
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East Lothian Council School Session Dates DRAFT - 2026/2027 - calendar format

Teaching Day
In Service Day - Closed for pupils
School Holiday

August 2026						
Su	M	T	W	T	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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September 2026						
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October 2026						
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November 2026						
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December 2026						
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January 2027						
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31						

February 2027						
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28						

March 2027						
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April 2027						
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May 2027						
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30	31					

June 2027						
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July 2027						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

REPORT TO: Education & Children’s Services Committee

MEETING DATE: 18 June 2024

BY: Executive Director, Education & Children’s Services

SUBJECT: Head Teacher Appointments

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform the Committee of the Head Teacher appointments made by the Appointments Sub-Committee.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the following Head Teacher appointments.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The following Head Teacher appointments are intimated: -

School	Appointee	Commencement Date	Previous Post and School
Dunbar Grammar School	John Johnstone	12 August 2024	Depute Head Teacher Castlebrae High School
Pencaitland Primary School	Debby Crossan	29.06.24	Acting Head Teacher Pencaitland Primary School

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 None

AUTHOR'S NAME	Nicola McDowell
DESIGNATION	Head of Education
CONTACT INFO	Email:- nmcdowell1@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	18 June 2024