Education Scrutiny Committee

Committee Room 2 (FHM05.002), 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

Tuesday, 14 November 2023 - 10.00 am

AGENDA

Members are reminded that should they have queries on the detail of a report they should, where possible, contact the report authors in advance of the meeting to seek clarification.

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7 November 2023

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BLENDED MEETING NOTICE

This is a formal meeting of the Committee and the required standards of behaviour and discussion are the same as in a face to face meeting. Unless otherwise agreed, Standing Orders will apply to the proceedings and the terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct will apply in the normal way

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If a member wishes to ask a question, speak on any item or move a motion or amendment, they should indicate this by raising their hand at the appropriate time and will then be invited to speak. Those joining remotely should use the "Raise hand" function in Teams.

All decisions taken during this meeting, will be done so by means of a Roll Call vote.

Where items are for noting or where there has been no dissent or contrary view expressed during any debate, either verbally or by the member indicating they wish to speak, the Convener will assume the matter has been agreed.

There will be a short break in proceedings after approximately 90 minutes.

Members joining remotely are reminded to have cameras switched on during meetings and mute microphones when not speaking. During any breaks or adjournments please switch cameras off.

THE FIFE COUNCIL - EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – BLENDED MEETING

Committee Room 2, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

18 September 2023   **10.00 am – 11.15 am**

PRESENT:	Councillors Kathleen Leslie (Convener), Patrick Browne, Ian Cameron, Colin Davidson, Dave Dempsey, Linda Erskine, Alycia Hayes, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal, Jonny Tepp (substituting for Councillor John Caffrey); and Ian Macaulay, Religious Representative, Church of Scotland.
ATTENDING:	Shelagh McLean, Head of Education & Children's Services (Early Years and Directorate Support), Angela Logue, Head of Education & Children's Services - Primary Schools & Improvement Support, Stuart Booker, Quality Improvement Officer and Rona Weir, Education Manager, Education and Children's Services; and Emma Whyte, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.
APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:	Councillors John Caffrey and Daniel Wilson.

57.   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 22.0.

58.   MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee of 22 August 2023.

Decision

The committee agreed to approve the minute.

59.   DIRECTORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023-26

The committee considered a report by the Head of Education and Children's Services - Primary Schools and Improvement Support presenting the Education and Children's Services (ECS) Directorate Plan 2023-26 and setting this plan in the context of other key strategic plans for children and families in Fife.

Decision

The committee:-

(1)   considered and provided comment on the ECS Directorate Plan 2023-26;

(2)   agreed to recommend approval of the Plan by the Cabinet Committee at its meeting on 5 October 2023; and

(3)   agreed that a progress report on the improvement plan priorities, including an updated plan and lead officer information for each of the priorities, be provided to the committee annually.

14 November 2023

Agenda Item No. 5

Relationships & Behaviour in Schools – Update Report

Report by: Shelagh McLean, Head of Education and Children's Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

To provide members of the Committee with updated details of the approaches adopted and the action plans developed to support school staff and pupils in reducing and addressing incidents of violence and aggression.

Recommendation

Members are asked to review and comment on the content of the report and the action plans.

Resource Implications

Officer and staff time is required to provide support. However, there are no direct resource implications from this report relating to finance, people or assets.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no direct legal/risk implications arising from the report. However, if Fife does not provide appropriate support, there could be Health & Safety at work and risk management impacts associated with this area.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary because this report does not propose a change to existing policies.

Consultation

Regular consultation with Headteachers, Trade Unions and other stakeholders takes place to assess the impact and effectiveness of the approaches embedded within the Relationships and Behaviour and Staff Wellbeing strategies.

Meetings and working groups have been held, to support the development and implementation of best practice processes.

1.0 Background

1.1 In March, Committee considered two reports. The first report provided details of the supports available for school staff when there were incidents of violence and aggression, and the second report provided information relating to behaviour in Fife schools and details of the approaches in place to support young people.

1.2 Committee requested a further report, toward the end of the year, to include:

(a) updated and comparative data relating to violent incidents broken down as appropriate according to, for example: SIMD, gender, age, care experience, additional support needs, etc;

(b) an update on progress of the pilot model of having a social worker based in secondary schools; and

(c) an update on the work of the recently established multi-agency group committed to working together in responding to violent incidents and the development and implementation of best practice processes.

1.3 It remains the case that effective learning and teaching depend on a foundation of positive behaviour and good working relationships between learners and staff, and between young people themselves. Positive behaviour is dependent, in turn, on effective teaching and an appropriate curriculum.

1.4 Therefore, the work undertaken in response to the varying challenges deals with all aspects of a pupil's relationships and behaviour.

1.5 The Directorate guidance outlines practical materials and tools which can be used by schools in delivering the core aspects of our Health & Wellbeing Strategy, with all schools in Fife reviewing their own Relationships and Behaviour Policy. The intention is that each school's policy: is developed as a school; supports both staff and learners to understand what it means to learn and work in a community built on respect; is embedded in the life and culture of the school community.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The roles our staff in schools undertake have great scope to be rewarding. They can also be challenging and, at times, emotionally draining. When the balance between relationships, demand, control and support is right, staff are more able to engage fully, enjoy and achieve in their work.

2.2 The Staff Wellbeing Strategy and our strategy for managing relationships in Fife schools are critical to addressing this balance.

2.3 In all our schools we place the importance of relationships at the centre of what we do. Our Relationships and Behaviour Strategy Group has, for many years, had an overview of what support is offered and any added support required for schools. We continue to work through this group, and in partnership with our children's services colleagues to respond to changes in community and school behaviours.

2.4   We have continued to discuss actions that both central staff and schools should be taking to help address the challenges that we in Fife, and across Scotland, are experiencing with increased mental health problems, the impact of poverty, the impact of trauma and the impact of the pandemic.

2.5   Through the number of strategic engagement exercises, which involved colleagues from across the organisation, we have further identified and developed our range of supports for school staff.

2.6   Even with this support and guidance in place across our schools and communities we know that the nature of the services provided may place staff at increased risk from verbal abuse, intimidating behaviour or physical violence. The Education Service regards all forms of violence towards employees as unacceptable and is committed to acting to reduce risk via safe working practices and training.

2.7   The Service along with the leadership teams in schools, is continuing its work, in collaboration with trade union colleagues, to embed consistent approaches to promoting positive behaviours, such as de-escalation and trauma informed practice; to review the curriculum; to review the resource allocations within schools and to provide targeted support to schools where needed.

2.8   Schools continue to embed trauma informed practice or restorative approaches, delivered in conjunction with our Educational Psychology team.

2.9   We are continuing the development of the model to provide more time for Pupil Support Assistants, within their week, to become more familiar with pro-active management plans for individual pupils, time for further training and time to meet with Teachers.

3.0 Violence & Aggression Reporting

3.1   Since January 2017 the number of violent incidents reported through First Contact, by school staff, are as follows:

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
2017	78	114	117	38	128	116	4	62	206	79	183	96	**1221**
2018	123	151	162	58	206	119	1	107	208	128	187	112	**1562**
2019	110	116	192	79	177	136	0	53	321	122	230	169	**1705**
2020	204	215	130	0	1	1	0	77	226	92	131	86	**1163**
2021	29	36	85	61	144	120	5	53	212	90	204	168	**1207**
2022	171	184	287	149	271	225	8	160	530	216	466	318	**2985**
2023	367	436	610	225	505	430	19	192	596	257			**3637**

N.B. These reported incidents include all violent incidents involving staff, not only those involving pupils

3.2   For the current year, of these, 2788 were recorded as physical and 698 as verbal incidents of violence, aggression or threat.

3.3   The number of violence & aggression incidents reported in schools, during August and September 2023, was 788.   Of these, 80.8% were classed as physical.

3.4   164 incidents were reported by secondary schools, with 93 incidents reported as verbal and 70 as physical. 147 of these incidents involved staff, with the majority of these being teachers.

3.5   542 incidents were reported by primary schools, with 485 incidents reported as physical and 31 as verbal. 431 of these incidents involved staff, with the majority of these being Pupil Support Assistants.

3.6   6 incidents were reported within our Family Nurture Centres, with 5 incidents reported as physical and 1 as verbal. All these incidents involved staff, with all of these being Early Years Officers.

3.7   16 incidents were reported within our Pupil Support Service, with 14 incidents reported as physical and 2 as verbal. 15 of these incidents involved staff, with the majority of these being Pupil Support Assistants.

3.8   36 incidents were reported within our Special Schools, with 33 incidents reported as physical and 1 as verbal. 29 these incidents involved staff, with the majority of these being Pupil Support Assistants.

4.0 Support for School Staff - Update

4.1   As indicated in the report in March, we know that the nature of the services we provide may place employees at increased risk from verbal abuse, intimidating behaviour or physical violence. The Directorate continues to regard all forms of violence towards employees as unacceptable and is committed to implementing the action plan to reduce risk via safe work practices and (in our buildings) by safe workplace design.

4.2   Behaviour management strategies and policies are a crucial element of a school's culture. Having a clear set of guidelines that are followed and implemented effectively makes a significant difference to the work of all staff in the classroom. It also ensures a better learning environment for pupils and reduces lost teaching hours spent on dealing with poor and disruptive behaviour. The approaches adopted to respond to the increasing challenges have included significant policy and guidance review, along with programmes of professional development to embed these effectively across schools.

4.3   Health & Wellbeing has been identified within the Directorate Improvement plan for 2023-26 as one of the Directorate's priority areas. This now makes explicit reference to staff health & wellbeing, as it is for the young people and families we support every day.

4.4   Through a number of strategic engagement exercises, which involved colleagues from across the organisation, we have identified a range of

projects in response to what staff have told us about how they feel in the workplace. These are included within the action plans. (See Appendix C).

4.5   It is anticipated that these will develop and improve staff wellbeing, both within all of us individually, as well as in the teams we work in. Over time, the effectiveness of these projects will be reviewed and as they become embedded into practice, the focus of the wellbeing strategy may change.

4.6   Power BI reports for individual schools are being developed, in conjunction with the changes to the incident reporting mechanism. This is allowing more targeted approaches to support schools, based on data, leading to supportive discussions with school teams.

4.7   The new Promoting Positive Relationship and Behaviour in Schools strategy is being used to develop new / update existing ELC and school strategies. Further developments and communications planned to ensure this is embedded in with practice.

4.8   Core approaches to Professional Learning have been offered for all schools (Trauma Informed Practice and De-Escalation) Settings engage with either the Trauma Informed programme or the De-escalation programme.

4.9   Settings have been allocated places during 10th November INSET, as a follow up support session to last year's input. The de-escalation session will focus on key messages;   implementation & embedding approaches; using audit tool; sharing practice (video clip montage); proactive protocols & action planning. The trauma Informed session will be on recap of key messages, implementation & embedding approaches, using audit tool, sharing practice (video clip montage), staff wellbeing & action planning.

4.10   The Service has also worked to improve accessibility of information to local settings (Communication campaign, Intranet Tile, Leadership & Direction of Resources) and to strengthen communication approaches to ensure all staff are aware of and understand responsibilities.

4.11   There has been the development of the tile on the Intranet, including a V & A pack for practitioners.

5.0 Support for Pupils - Update

5.1   From mid-January 2023 until end of March 2023 there was an increasing number of serious incidents in our secondary schools in Fife. We know this via serious incidents forms sent by Headteachers. There were 17 in this time, an increase of 400% from the previous term's figure of 4 during August 2022 – December 2022. There were none received in January - March 2022.

5.2   From April to June 2023, there were 10 serious violence & aggression incidents reported. These   involved 2 females and 8 males. All incidents happened between 10 May and 15 June. These involved 4 secondary schools. In 2 of these schools there were 4 reports on the same day (i.e. 4

pupils were involved in the same incident in each school). All were assault/fighting. 6 of the pupils were from S3, 3 from S4, with 1 in S2.

5.3   From August – October 2023, there were 3 serious violence & aggression incidents, involving 2 males and 1 female. The males were in S3/S4 and the female in S1.

5.4   This information has been shared with multiagency group.

5.5   The pilot of a Social Worker in 5 of our schools with high deprivation and low engagement i.e. high levels of non-attendance at 30% or lower (Glenwood, Levenmouth, Lochgelly, Viewforth and Inverkeithing) will support the development of an early intervention, partnership model. This is funded through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fun. To date we have recruited 4 out of the 5 senior practitioners, who from August 2023 have been based in Glenwood, Inverkeithing, Levenmouth and Lochgelly High Schools.

5.6   The Senior Practitioners have been welcomed by the School Leadership Teams and have been building and developing relationships within the school communities with the aim of delivering a range of early intervention supports; for example 1-1 and group work opportunities. Each Senior Practitioner is currently supporting a number of children and families where concerns have begun to rise around attendance, behaviour and attainment, with a view to providing the right support at an early stage and to prevent escalation of risk. The Senior Practitioners are attending a range of meetings within the school and have begun to consider where to target specific support such as group work.

5.7   A letter to parents/carers and learners on social media, was issued from the Education Service in September 2023 - (see Appendix 3 of Appendix A).

5.8   Taking the data provided through the Fife Young People's Health & Wellbeing Survey into account, along with concerns regarding relationships, wellbeing and behaviour, a short-life working group was created in August 2023 to ascertain which approaches and resources were being used to support positive relationships, wellbeing and behaviour in our ELCs and Primary settings during the post-pandemic period. These are detailed in Appendix B.

5.9   Results from this scoping project will be used to inform future professional learning opportunities & conversations at HWB Leads meetings to plan next steps. Fife's Core Approaches Development Group, represented by members of the PL (Professional Learning) Team, EP (Educational Psychology) Service, SLS (Supporting Learners Service), OMM (Our Minds Matter) & NHS Child Psychology colleagues, will continue to liaise with settings as part of the delivery programme to monitor progress, promote the use of robust data gathering to assess impact, facilitate the sharing of practice and provide further support and information as required.

5.10   A new social media policy called Mobile Technology & Electronic Communication Guidance will be in place for all schools.

5.11   The multiagency SLWG will continue to meet and address the actions identified with this group especially around areas where partners can support, in terms of universal and targeted provision to link with the violent incidents and gaps within PSE (Personal and Social Education) delivery.

5.12   The group discusses and shares information to ensure effective partnership working. This group consists of 15 members and has met 5 times since March 10. There has been ongoing work and sub meetings outwith these formal meetings. (See appendix 4 of Appendix A)

6.0 Conclusions & Next Steps

6.1   This report provides updated information, as requested at the Education Scrutiny Committee of March 2023, with regards to behaviour in Fife Schools, and provides details of the approaches in place to support our young people and families.

6.2   The model of having a social worker based in a secondary school is being piloted in 4 of our secondary schools.

6.3   The specific work, and actions taken, are outlined in appendices A-C, including next steps.

6.4   Policies and procedures locally and in schools continue to be reviewed to ensure that the most up to date and relevant strategies are in place. Those policies amended include anti-bullying, equalities, mobile phone use and responses to violent incidents.

6.5   An updated skeleton curriculum for PSE in secondary schools is being implemented, to help provide guidance on areas that require further input or input from external organisations.

6.6   In addition, the Fife Young People Health & Wellbeing survey results have been analysed and have informed the Directorate Improvement Plan, the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and the areas for priority action. This information is helping Fife Council, and our partners, to plan and deliver any changes to policies for the benefit of Fife's children and families, or specific groups.

List of Appendices

A. Data Gathering and Directorate Action Summary - Serious Incidents in Secondary Schools: Updated October 2023.
B. Approaches and resources being used to support positive relationships, wellbeing and behaviour in our ELCs (Early Learning and Childcare) and Primary settings.
C. Violence & Aggression Action Plans, as at October 2023

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973: -

- Staff Wellbeing Strategy – Education & Children's Services Directorate
- The Staff Wellbeing Continuum of Support

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Data Gathering around Serious Incidents in Secondary Schools Summary report

15

Background

From mid-January 2023 until end of March 2023 there had been an increasing number of serious incidents in our secondary schools in Fife. We know this via the serious incident forms sent by Headteachers during this time. There had been 17 in this time, an increase of 400% from the previous term's figure of 4, during Aug 22 – Dec 22. (There were none received in Jan-March 2022.)

There has also been a growing number of HS1 forms (forms completed by council employees when there has been a violent incident) for violence against pupils and violence against staff in schools overall (see the report to committee link below). As reported to Education Scrutiny committee on 21 March Relationships and Behaviour reports Education Scrutiny Committee 21st March 2023. The total number of incidents of violence against pupils, recorded by schools, for 2022/23 was 261, increased from 179 in 2021/22.

Some of this increase can be contributed to better reporting by staff in schools, the focus on this area, access to HS1 forms directly on staff desktops and growing awareness around issues, as completing these forms is encouraged by unions and have been discussed at HT engagement days and other professional meetings.

There is also a recognition, across Scotland, that following the COVID pandemic and now with the cost-of-living crisis, there are increasing concerns for all children and young people and their resilience to cope with socialising, anxiety, social media pressure and adjusting back into routines.

It is clear that behaviour in schools cannot be seen in isolation and in many cases the incidents are happening out with the school grounds.

In Fife, there has been a growing number of these incidents recorded on mobile phones and shared on social media by young people, families and/or communities. These have been reported by the local and national media over this time period.

The negative media coverage and social media recording and sharing is having a detrimental and reputational damage to Fife Council, some schools and or individuals, where there may be a long-term effect on both victims and those carrying out the incidents.

Purpose

This summary report gathers information sought from all 18 secondary schools in response to these serious incidents. It also uses data we already have in the Education Service and from partners.

The aim of analysing the data is to see if there are common themes, patterns and to identify the right resources, ask for partnership support and to address areas for improvements at education level, school level and council level where appropriate.

The ongoing work links directly with the work of the already established Relationships and Behaviour working group which consists of trade union colleagues, Headteachers and a range of central officers.

Outline of Data gathered and analysed

For the purpose of this report data was analysed and gathered over the course of 8 weeks, from beginning of February until end of March 2023.

- **Information from schools on coverage of key themes related to violent incidents in PSE and assemblies** was collated. From this there is an inclusion in the findings of areas we need to focus on, including year groups we may need to target using the information from SHINE etc.

- **Partner Information on themes and stats during Jan - Mar 2023 or other data**. Information from the Reporter and Police stats in Fife to help determine issues to include in the PSE programme and also for identifying age groups, geographical concerns and themes.

- **Secondary bullying statistics collated in Mar 2023 (Analysis August 2022 to March 2023)**. Showed bullying is not recorded well enough, with more bullying in the classroom than anywhere else (28%). It appears that more **bullying is recorded in S1** than in other year groups. Or could this be they are more likely to report it? It appears that bullying happens between same year groups and same sex, especially **female to female, which is at over 40%** although there is a **concern around male to female bullying which sits at over 16%.**

- **Focus Groups carried out in all secondary schools with groups of 6-8 young people with the theme of 'feeling safe' (took place between Feb and end of April 2023- see appendix 2).** Information gathered here was used to help with areas for the develpoment of the PSE curriculum and to understand issues around social media and influence social media policy. Although almost all pupils expressed that schools deal well with bullying it was noted that responses can be inconsistent, with variation between schools. It should be noted **almost all** young people met with felt safe at school and appreciated the efforts of school staff to make them feel safe and **almost all** young people identified that they had someone in school to speak to if they were worried or had a problem.

- **Individual Pupil Analysis for serious incidents from 9 schools Jan - Mar 2023.** This was used to determine if there were specific challenges in particular schools. Over 50% were ASN (54.17%), with 62.50% having had a VPD. Just over 20% had had an IRD (20.83%), whilst 37.50% had had a NOCC (this may be more as the NOCC might not be submitted if they have an allocated SW). S2 most challenging year group at 47.62%. 50% of incidents were female and 50% male.

- **Serious incident forms from Jan – Mar 2023 compared to Aug to Dec 2022** (this year up by 400%). No one age group stood out from these forms. From serious incident forms received during this time, there has been an increase of 400% in reporting during Jan to March 2023. There were 17 forms received during this time. This compares to 4 serious incidents forms being received from Aug 2022 to Dec 2022. The serious incident forms received were from 9 schools. The analysis of these shows that 6 are regarding females and 9 males with 2 N/A (this is because they were bomb threat or incidents not related to individuals). 11 of these relate to violent incidents. Five refer to S1 pupils, 6 from S2, 3 from S3 and 1 from S4.

- **Exclusions data comparison for 21/22 and 22/23**. This information did not show a significant rise from this period. For 22/23, in Secondary schools, the overall exclusion incidents per pupil was 4.865%, up by 0.5% on session 21/22 which was 4.355%

- **Attendance statistics secondary schools for Jan - Mar 2023 compared with last year**. This did not show a change as the Fife average was around 86% for Secondary schools. The average for the previous year in schools at this time was 85%. Schools with the

lowest attendance, who were asked for a response to the proforma, have submitted the most cases i.e. Levenmouth and Lochgelly, they are also 2 of our most socially deprived schools and a priority schools and areas for the Secondary sector.

- **Active schools' data from work with Levenmouth, Lochgelly, St Andrews and Viewforth.** This helped to increase leadership opportunities for young people. We now have 1519 young people involved in leadership.

- **SHINE analysis** (Local Authority level on pupil mental health-2022 results). Of all the cohorts participating in the surveys, **S2 boys and S4 girls** are the two where scores are most concerning. S4 girls score as particularly low in mood, confidence, and emotional symptoms and are most likely to feel lonely with the lowest score relating to peer relationships. This is also reflected in other data, **with S4 girls most likely to be referred to the School Counselling Service in Fife.** National research also tells us that girls are more likely to experience emotional problems than boys, and these can impact on functioning both at school and in social situations.
  S2 boys appear to be struggling more with peer relationships, liking school and feeling pressured by schoolwork (which was more than 10% above the Scottish average). They also score as being less confident than the S4 and S6 cohorts and score almost 10% lower than the Scottish average.

From the information gathering above the following actions were identified.

Summary of next steps (also see action plan appendix 3)

Strategic overview

- The **Education Service** will continue to prioritise specific Secondary schools for additional support to support this work.
- The **17 proforma's from 7 schools** have been followed up by HoS secondary, with advice and feedback given to schools
- **HoS in Education** will continue to have an overview of the ongoing work of various groups, including HWB, Child Protection and Learning with Care, to ensure schools are receiving the right support.
- **Schools will continue** to be encouraged to continue to get staff to complete the **HS1 forms** (when there has been a violent incident) and serious incident forms, completed by school and sent to HoS to inform them of this.
- **Relationships and Behaviour Strategy group** continues to meet, with a separate action plan relating to support for staff. This action plan will be used with this ongoing work and all actions. Some schools need support in developing effective pro-active management plans, which is part of this group's work.
- Use the **wide range of established school networks** (i.e. DHT 3,1 collaborative etc) to discuss/identify issues and to address issues strategically.

Partnership

- Continue to convene and meet with the **multiagency SLWG** and address the actions identified with this group, especially around areas which partners can support in terms of universal and targeted provision to link with the violent incidents and gaps within PSE delivery. See appendix 5 for membership.
- **Community mental health support –** There is a current proposal that CAHMS Early Intervention Service. Proposed to *take a 'No Wrong Door Approach' and will provide representation at mental health and wellbeing triage meetings alongside Education*

*Staff, School Nursing, School Counselling to support appropriate referrals and targeted support for practitioners. This will include a provision of mentoring, capacity building and support to practitioners who are supporting **children and young people experiencing significant distress and risk.** Initially this will be offered as a pilot to 5 high schools across Fife, (Viewforth HS, Waid Academy, Levenmouth Academy, Lochgelly HS and St Andrews HS).*

- **Continue to support the work of the Neurodevelopment pathway** rollout with NHS Fife (for those with Autism) to ensure appropriate support to all young people with a neurodiversity through effective staff training. Awaiting funding from SG.
- Explore work that partners can offer around **S2 and S3 pupil and girls** specifically where this reflects the proformas and serious incidents reported to the Education Service and partner stats. Being done via multiagency meetings.
- Ensure **there is a focus on out of school activities via Active schools and other partners as distraction activities especially in the communities where there are high levels of crime for those under 16.** This year there is an increase from 408 in Jan 2022-Mar 2022 to 428 Jan 2023-Mar 2023. The area with highest number is **Kirkcaldy** and **Glenrothes** with 123 and 90 respectively. During the same time in 2022 the dominant area was **Kirkcaldy** and **Dunfermline**. Assault, assault to injury and vandalism and threatening or abusive behaviours prevalent across all areas. For 2023 dominant age range in the 2 areas identified here is 12-14.
- **Promote Safer Communities** links to all Secondary schools**.**
- **Misogyny focus** for school nursing service and how to support children and young people with these issues. The service is removing their formal referral system to be contacted directly via a note to the school office. Following a pilot in some secondary schools it will be rolled out to them all.

Education service developments

- **Bullying work needs continued via networks and equality professional learning** input to ensure that bullying incidents are accurately recorded, and issues disclosed to allow schools to fully analyse. Also, need to raise the profile of bullying incidents taking place in classrooms (over 28% of those recorded said the bullying is happening in the classroom). This discussion is needed via the relationships and Behaviour working group. Input on training on this with teachers and via networks. Updated policy being issued. *An update Anti- bullying policy has been completed and will be issued to schools in October 2023*
- **Reviewing Pupil Support Service (PSS)** including extending and formalising the outreach structure to support more schools with distressed children and young people.
- A move **towards full time guidance teachers** in all secondary schools is being encouraged to allow more time for the named person in schools. There are however cost implications, so this will be a work in progress over time. Consideration of this reflects focus group and proforma returns need for someone to go to and improve child plans and attendance at meetings. Currently 7 schools currently have full time guidance teachers, 9 do not and 2 do hybrid approach.
- **Roll out MVP in all secondary schools** by May 2023. All 18 schools have signed up and staff members being trained currently. This will roll out to S1 in each school over the coming year.
- **ASIST training for Suicide Training** for staff (8 schools signed up so far - St Columba's, Madras, Auchmuty, Woodmill, Glenrothes. Levenmouth, Glenwood, Kirkcaldy and Lochgelly).
- **Develop work related learning** to re-engage more learners and offer them routines via a DYW priorities.
- **Mandatory CP in-service** for all staff in school in August 2023, will focus on misogyny and influence of social media.

School improvement

- Continue with **attendance priority in all secondary schools** and promote and share with partners via schools (see appendix 1).
- All school staff to continue with **staff training on Trauma informed practice and De-escalation** as outlined in March committee report.

Curriculum

- A **skeleton for PSE/ resources and partnership** input will be developed and implemented for August 2023. This will include social media/bullying/consent/peer pressure/body image/suicide/exam stress and mental health aspects - to apply a consistent approach to PSE delivery and share with partners. Focus in S1 on prevention and S2 & S3 on intervention.

Data

- **Ongoing tracking of any further serious incident forms from Secondary**, to help with early intervention. Share relevant ones early with partners. 17 received from Jan- March 2023. 10 received from April- June 2023. Information to be shared with multi-agency group.
- **The Fife young People Health & Wellbeing survey** and outcomes of focus groups currently being carried out will be used to amend policies and prioritise actions for schools and central work including influencing PSE programmes. Cross reference data from this work and surveys.
- **Continue to talk to partners about supporting distraction activities** for young people in the evenings and weekends.

Specific interventions

- **Partnership group pilot** (still confirming the final name of this partnership group) will begin in 5 schools in June 2023- these schools will be Kirkcaldy, Madras, Glenrothes, Dunfermline and Levenmouth. (Levenmouth link to SW pilot with other schools across Fife).
- **A pilot of a SW in 5 of our schools** with high deprivation and low engagement i.e., high levels of nonattendance at 30% or lower (these schools will be Glenwood, Levenmouth, Lochgelly and Viewforth) Inverkeithing been added due to helping increase partnership working for the new school). will begin when SW staff are appointed (this will be before the end of the academic year). Other options also being discussed.
- A letter to parents/carers and learners from education on **social media was issued on 25th Sept 2023- see Appendix 4**
- A **new social media policy called Mobile Technology & Electronic Communication Guidance** will be in place for all secondary schools for August 2023
- Review the serious incidents Elected Member process in September 2023 to ascertain if this has improved communication between schools and Elected Members. Feedback to schools.
- **Pilot re-admission contracts following exclusion** or serious incident to have more joined up working to support young people after an incident and/or exclusion. (Pilot schools to be decided). Possible schools to be used Levenmouth, Lochgelly Viewforth and Kirkcaldy High Schools
- A **new social media policy called Mobile Technology and Electronic Communication policy** will be in place for all secondary schools.
- Develop **work related learning and work experience** to re-engage learners and offer them routines via DYW priority and focus.
- Continue with **MCR** (Motivation, Commitment and Resilience) pathways in 4 schools - Viewforth, Glenwood, St Andrews and Lochgelly, which support CE young people into PD.

Serious incident forms analysis received by HoS Secondary April - June 2023

There were 10 reported during these 3 months. 2 females and 8 males. All happened between 10 May and 15 June. This involved 4 secondary schools. In both KHS and Levenmouth there were 4 from each school on the same day (i.e. 4 pupils were involved in the same incident in each school). All were assault/fighting, 6 of the pupils were from S3 and 3 from S4, with 1 in S2.

August – October 2023 Serious Incident forms analysis (only related to violent incidents). There have been 3 incidents, 2 boys and 1 female. Boys in S3/S4, Kirkcaldy HS and girl S1 in Inverkeithing HS.

Appendix 1

Secondary Attendance (Aug 2022 – March 2023)

School Name	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Auchmuty High School	90.27	88.27	86.44	86.58	78.26	87.09	85.67	84.85	**85.96**
Balwearie High School	91.71	88.94	86.89	86.96	79.64	87.83	87.66	86.63	**87.03**
Beath High School	90.62	86.55	85.76	86.76	81.30	90.82	87.35	86.47	**86.93**
Bell Baxter High School	91.84	90.00	88.49	87.63	79.69	88.10	89.58	88.62	**88.04**
Dunfermline High School	94.66	92.28	89.46	89.88	84.44	90.73	89.07	88.43	**89.78**
Glenrothes High School	92.10	88.42	86.74	85.37	79.93	86.66	86.13	85.30	**86.22**
Glenwood High School	89.31	85.58	84.86	84.00	79.66	86.23	86.41	84.40	**84.95**
Inverkeithing High School	92.88	88.89	86.76	85.27	83.45	88.45	88.17	87.80	**87.59**
Kirkcaldy High School	89.51	85.87	82.78	83.69	79.17	85.98	82.62	81.26	**83.76**
Levenmouth Academy	87.47	83.29	81.69	82.42	71.63	82.35	81.66	80.80	**81.44**
Lochgelly High School	88.39	81.90	80.03	80.76	70.46	81.26	80.61	79.81	**80.31**
Madras College	90.29	88.82	89.01	85.96	81.52	88.48	87.63	87.19	**87.29**
Queen Anne High School	91.29	88.22	86.22	88.03	78.50	89.83	88.88	88.76	**87.59**
St Andrew's R C High School	91.83	88.13	86.52	87.24	76.27	88.16	87.65	87.00	**86.67**
St Columba's R C High School	91.76	89.69	89.40	88.11	85.44	89.75	89.18	86.81	**88.62**
Viewforth High School	88.99	83.05	83.44	83.32	80.05	86.45	86.22	85.20	**84.47**
Waid Academy	92.53	88.75	87.83	89.64	84.89	90.64	88.88	88.96	**89.02**
Woodmill High School	93.30	90.52	88.69	88.92	83.01	90.15	89.82	89.41	**89.23**
Total	**91.08**	**87.81**	**86.23**	**86.24**	**79.80**	**87.79**	**86.80**	**86.10**	**86.45**

Appendix 2

Summary of all focus group work in Secondary schools on 'feeling safe.'

Strengths
Almost all young people felt safe in school and appreciated the efforts of school staff to make them feel safe.
Almost all young people identified that they had someone in school to speak to if they were worried or had a problem.
Almost all young people agreed that their school takes positive steps to deal with bullying concerns.
Almost all young people were positive about the role and accessibility of their guidance teacher. However, the **majority** of young people surveyed felt that guidance time was mainly spent dealing with difficult matters meaning little time for pupils who needed a check in or general support.
Almost all pupils also felt that there were a range of other teachers & staff that they could talk to if they had a problem.
Almost all pupils surveyed valued the input of Mentor in Violence Prevention (MVP) and felt this was a positive experience to be part of.
Almost all learners recognised that the school staff team promote a culture of respect for self and others, however almost all young people identified peers who did not model this respect at times.
All pupils felt there were a wide range of clubs and extra-curricular events that supported their wellbeing, both at lunchtime and after school and including homework/study clubs.

Areas for Improvement
Although pupils felt safe in school there were areas such as the toilets where behaviours such as vaping meant they would avoid going. Schools with single cubicles noted they helped with feelings of safety going to the toilet.
Buildings with narrow corridors can be challenging to navigate with cramped corridors which pupils felt were unsafe at time e.g. during period changeover.
Although the school has lots of good outside spaces for lunch, pupils felt that it can be difficult in bad weather where the dining hall etc is very busy.
Although almost all pupils expressed that schools deal well with bullying it was noted that responses can be inconsistent with variation between schools.
Young people would value more support from guidance teacher/staff around exam time.

Actions for Improvement
Social media groups/messages with sexual content and gore (e.g. adults completing suicide online) was brought up as a source of distress. It was noted that schools are addressing through assemblies and messaging to families. e.g. "we are advised to leave groups if they become too hectic."
Consider ways to increase the visibility of school approaches to anti-bullying and how this is positively impacting on pupil wellbeing, engagement, restored relationships etc.
Ensure consistency of Positive Relationships via classroom observation of practice feedback.
Consider scheduled guidance appointments or specific input via Personal & Social Education (PSE or special assembly for senior phase learners in preparation for external examinations.   Strengthen training for guidance teachers.

Notes: Key to evaluative language used + National Definition of Bullying (from Respect Me: Scotland's Antibullying Charity)

The following words are used to describe numbers and proportions:

almost all	means	over 90%
most	means	75% to 90%
majority	means	50% to 74%
less than half	means	15% to 49%
few	means	up to 15%

Appendix 3

To All Parent/Carers

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Maria.Lloyd@fife.gov.uk
03451 555555 ext. 480217
Maria lloyd@fife.gov.uk

Your Ref:
Our Ref: ML/EF

25 September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

You will be aware how much influence social media has on your child/children. This includes group messaging on various social platforms with large groups of young people either in their school or in their community.

Some research has suggested that young people are receiving in excess of 50 messages a day via snapchat or other platforms. Some are receiving in excess of 300.

As part of ongoing work as a partnership the Child Protection Committee of Fife Council would like to share with you some information to help you to protect your child from over exposure and to share with you ways to help keep your child/children safe. We have developed some top tips for you.

Children and young people use many different social media apps and sites. Like most things, there are positives and negatives.

For children and young people there are risks that you should be aware of, to help keep your child safe on social media.

What are the risks?	
Oversharing.	Talking to people they don't know.
Sharing their location.	Sending or receiving inappropriate content.
Unrealistic sense of body image or reality.	Obsessive focus on likes and comments.

Tips to help children and young people stay safe on Social Media

Review the location settings - Remind them, and explain why, they shouldn't share location on posts, or public forums and chats, videos or with people they don't know.   Review the location settings on their favourite app or game and talk to them about what they're sharing online.

Sometimes it might be appropriate for your child to share their location with a trusted adult or friend. For example, if they're travelling home alone or arranging to meet a group of friends outside school, then it can be a good way to help keep them safe.

Remember: If children share their location publicly, it could be seen by someone they don't know.

This can increase the risk of cyberbullying, stalking or unwanted contact (from friends or others) or becoming a target.

15

Get to know the safety and privacy settings - Explore the safety and privacy settings on any app, to decide which are right to use for your child. Each app has slightly different ways to set up an account, but most have the option to set an account to private, to not allow friend requests, and to hide the user's location. Explain these settings to your child and the reasons for having them in place.

Please alert your child's school should there be a likelihood of peer issues at school due to social media. Your child's school will support and give advice on managing social media use and signpost to useful resources.

If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999. If you're worried about a child but they are not in immediate danger, you should share your concerns in line with the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021).

Fife Child Protection Services   For non-emergency calls call Police Scotland on 101 or the Social Work Contact Centre (03451 551503) or email sw.enquiries@fife.gov.uk. Out of office hours (9 am to 5 pm) the Emergency Social Work number is 03451 550099.
Contact the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk. NSPCC trained professionals will talk through your concerns with you and give you expert advice.
If your concern is about online sexual abuse, you can make a report to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) command.

Age ratings and features - Get to know the age ratings of the apps that your child uses. Many have a minimum age of 13 years old to be able to sign up, but you should check the age rating of individual apps to make sure.

Don't forget that you know your child best, and you might decide that they need to be a little bit older before it's suitable for them.

Social Media App	Age rating	Main features
Facebook	13+	Share text, photos & videos, instant messaging, marketplace, friends, likes and comments
Instagram	13+	Photo & video sharing, livestreaming, stories, Direct Messages, hashtags.
Snapchat	13+	Photo & video messaging, snaps, location sharing.
TikTok	13+	Making & sharing short videos, lip-syncing.
Twitter	13+	tweets (text with restricted character count), photo and video sharing, hashtags.
Wink	13+	Messaging, photosharing.
Omegle	18+	Talking/video messaging with strangers – avoid.

Frequently Asked Questions

If it's illegal offline, is it illegal online?

Yes! This includes posting anything that promotes crime, violence or drug misuse.

This also includes threats made against you or attempts to force you to pay money. This is often linked to footage taken using webcams, known as Sextortion. Anything put online may be traced, even if false details are used.

I have been hacked. How do I recover my account?

NCSC have a step by step guide to help you regain control if your account had been hacked. You can then protect yourself against future attacks.

How do I report abuse on social networking sites?

Here are some tips to reporting abuse: -

- If you become aware of anyone acting illegally or behaving in a threatening way, report it to the service provider. You can also report to the Police by dialling 101.
- Don't delete the abusive message.
- If you think you are the victim of a crime or are being threatened, contact the police.
- On Facebook, you can now also download a 'ClickCEOP' button. This allows users to get help and advice from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. You can report concerns directly to CEOP if necessary.

How do I find out more about keeping safe on social media?

Childnet — Online safety for young people

Social media and online safety | NSPCC Learning

Childline on social media | Childline

Feeling good on social media | Childline

Yours faithfully

Maria Lloyd
Head of Service, Head of Education (Secondary Schools and Specialist Support)

Appendix 4

Secondary Support Multiagency Short Life Working Group Membership

Maria Lloyd, Head of Service, Head of Education and Children's Services, (Chair)
Karen Lees, Education Manager, Education and Children's Services
Gavin Waterston, Quality Improvement Officer, Education and Children's Services
Heather Bett, Interim Children's Service Manager, H&SC/NHS
Fiona Crook, Interim Lead Nurse for School Nursing, NHS Fife
Katie Pacholek, Locality Reporter Manager, SCRA
Mark Hutchison, Children's Services Development Manager, FVA
Katie Maxwell, Youth Justice Officer, Safer Communities
Graeme Donaldson, Youth Justice Officer, Safer Communities
Caine McIntyre, Police Scotland, Divisional Coordination Unit
Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Corporate Development
Mark Smith, Social Work Service Manager for Children and Families
Louise Stean, OMM Lead Champion
Duncan Thow, Senior Practitioner, Young Person's Team
Eugene Clark, CAMHS Nurse Consultant for Early Intervention

The group has met at the following dates and times: -

10 March at 3.30 pm
27 March at 10.00 am
9 May at 3.00 pm
26 June at 2.00 pm
28 August at 11.00 am
9 Oct scheduled however meeting cancelled due to school holidays, Maria Lloyd provided an update to the group.

Approaches and resources being used to support positive relationships, wellbeing and behaviour in our ELCs and Primary settings

Background

During the 2018-19 academic session, Fife's Educational Psychology Team conducted a large-scale scoping exercise to explore the range of approaches used across school settings to support children and young people's wellbeing. Their summary report can be viewed here.

The overarching aim was to have a clear and coherent approach to supporting young people's social and emotional wellbeing in Fife schools. This approach would build on the underlying principles of trauma-informed practice and take into account the need for staff to support young people who have suffered adverse childhood experiences, and whose presenting behaviour may be challenging or distressed.

The COVID pandemic in 2020 significantly impacted on our society, culture and communities, resulting in a shift in the current educational landscape – this is evident through our children and young people's emotional resilience, engagement with learning and levels of attainment.

The recent Fife HWB survey completed by P5-S6 learners in 2023 highlighted the following key findings:

- 80.2% of YP in P5-S4 reported that they agreed that their friends treated them well.
- 62.5% of YP P5-S6 said they always have an adult in their life to talk with about personal problems. The National Percentage was 65.4%.
- 39% of YP in P5-S4 indicated they had been bullied in school, this was higher in Primary School.
- 29.6% of YP in P7-S6 felt they were pressured (stressed) a lot by schoolwork, the percentage of YP in S4-S6 felt the most pressure. Females reported this pressure more than males with a difference of 14.9% more females reporting feeling pressured a lot by schoolwork. The difference between sexes is also seen in national data. Females were much more likely to say they don't feel confident to speak up in class, ask questions and share opinions. 31% females compared to 16.7% for males
- 56.8% of our YP in S2-S6 had a slightly raised, high or very high strength and difficulties score. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a brief emotional and behavioural screening questionnaire for children and young people capturing: Emotional, conduct, hyperactivity, and relationship behaviours. The most affected group are the S2 cohort with 60.4% of pupils who responded in this category reporting slightly raised, high or very high strength and difficulties score. YP in P5-S1 were asked "there are lots of things I worry about in my life" 50.3% agreed, the national figure was 41.9%

Taking the data into account and concerns regarding relationships, wellbeing and behaviour, a short-life working group was created in August 2023 to ascertain which approaches and resources were being used to support positive relationships, wellbeing and behaviour in our ELCs and Primary settings during the post-pandemic period.

In taking a pro-active approach to supporting our children and young people it is essential that we recognise a number of points:

- There is no silver bullet, quick fix or magical resource which will improve relationships, wellbeing and behaviour in our settings overnight. Changing behaviours, systems, ethos and culture takes time, especially if we want sustainability. Fife's updated De-escalation pack (2022) states that "*the majority of distressed and dangerous behaviours can be mediated and often prevented. Ensuring and implementing high quality learning and teaching, effective behaviour management systems and positive relationships in schools are the essential foundations on which to build more specialised approaches to managing extreme behavioural challenges*".
- There must be a focus on creating a positive ethos within our settings, which is based on both the core values of our service (compassion, ambition, respect, collaboration and integrity) and the values of each individual establishment. How Good is Our School (HGIOS 4) (2015) identifies highly effective practice where: "*All stakeholders promote a climate where children and young people feel safe and secure*" and "*the learning environment is built on positive, nurturing and appropriately challenging relationships which lead to high-quality learning outcomes.*"

In order to streamline our approaches in building emotional resilience across our settings, Fife's Education Directorate established a focus on two **Core Approaches** to support relationships, wellbeing and behaviour: *Trauma Informed Practice* and *De-escalation* – both of which are research based and emphasise the importance of staff knowledge around the impact of stress responses and confidence in using overarching practice interventions. All settings were invited to engage with their choice of focus for professional learning input and follow up support throughout the 22/23 and 23/24 academic years.

"In the presence of people we feel safe with, our stress response systems calm down. The 'glue' of connection is both regulating and rewarding".

Dr Bruce Perry (2023)

Impact reports for these programmes (22/23) can be found here: Trauma Informed Practice & De-escalation

Frameworks

As a starting point, all settings should make use of the range of available frameworks to evaluate current areas of strength and areas for development. Self-evaluation

processes are useful at both whole team and individual level. Examples of available frameworks include:

- The 'How Good is Our' Suite
- Education Scotland's 'Nurture as a Whole School Approach'
- Fife EP Service HNIOS document, 'Resilience Toolkit' & De-escalation Pack
- The Circle Framework
- Fife's T5 Principles of Trauma Informed Practice Audit

There are currently ongoing conversations about how we embed the use of the Circle Framework as an integral tool to self-evaluation & improvement across Fife.

Continuum of Support

Based on the '*Getting it Right in Fife Framework*' we can consider our Core approaches and supplementary resources as being appropriate to use across a continuum of support - *Universal*, *Additional* and *Intensive*, responding to needs in a flexible and proportionate way.

Depending on life events & experiences, our children and young people can move across and within these different levels a fluid way and therefore, may need a range of support throughout their time in school.

Universal Support:

- It is **available to all** young people and values diversity.
- It promotes the **holistic development and wellbeing** of the young person as an effective contributor, confident individual, responsible citizen and successful learner.
- It supports and enables **positive and effective relationships** around the young person.
- It **listens** to young people and encourages **resilience** and a **solution focused** approach.
- It enables the **people around the young person to feel informed and able to support**.
- It **informs young people** where to seek advice and information.

Framework for Intervention

Additional Support:

- It is **available to Fife pupils based on their individual needs**.
- It uses the **Child Wellbeing Pathway** along with the variety of available assessment tools
- It applies **resources available across Fife (**e.g. parenting
- programmes, pupil group support programmes)
- It **involves partners** (e.g. parents and/or other professionals) in assessing and responding to individual children's needs

- Partners and young people have **access to appropriate information** at a suitable level
- It **listens** and **coaches** young people to support them to be **resilient** and explore **solutions**.
- It **draws upon locally available support**.

Intensive Support:

- It is for those with **complex signs of mental distress which impact on their day to day functioning**.
- It is designed to meet specific needs, which are **identified through multi-agency assessment and planning** through the Wellbeing Pathway.
- It is **coordinated by the Named Person or Lead Professional, with support from specialist agencies**.
- It may involve intensive, individual or group interventions **specifically targeted to meet the need** identified.
- It involves partnership with **specialist providers**.

Approaches and Resources

All ELC & Primary Settings were requested to complete a MS Form to ascertain which Core Approach they were engaging with and if any additional resources were being utilised to support their practice. **All clusters** were represented, and most settings submitted a response (134) - some joint heads may have submitted a response on behalf of all of their establishments.

The results of this scoping exercise demonstrated that **most settings (88%)** are engaging with either Trauma Informed or De-escalation approaches. **A few** settings are not currently engaging with either programme at the current time. It is evident that a wide range of resources are being utilised across our settings as part of their selected core approach - this is a similar outcome to the exploratory task carried out by the Educational Psychology Team in 2018-19. The 2023 summary results can be viewed here.

The MS Form highlighted that our settings are particularly making use of the HGIOS Self-evaluation toolkit, the Circle EP Service De-escalation pack as an approach to auditing effective practice and identifying areas for development and next steps.

Resources and interventions most commonly identified by settings as supporting their core Trauma Informed or De-escalation approach include:

- Restorative Conversations (117)
- Boardmaker/Visual Timetabling (114)
- Emotional Check-ins (114)
- Calm Corner/Safe Space – within classroom (111)
- Kitbag (111)
- Scripting (105)
- Nurture Room/Safe Space – outwith classroom (102)

- 5 Point Scale (100)
- Seasons for Growth (93)
- Mindfulness Techniques (92)
- 5 Ways to Wellbeing (91)
- Nurture Groups (90)
- Growth Mindset Approaches (86)
- Lego Therapy (85)
- RSHP - National Relationships, Sexual Health & Parenting Resource (83)
- Peer Mediation (78)
- Buddies/Mentors (76)
- Breakfast Club/Alternative (74)

The MS Form also provided a wealth of qualitative information around use of other resources and interventions which were being ulitised across settings, in addition to highlighting future support and information they would be interested in. Common themes include:

- Violence & severe trauma
- Domestic Abuse support
- Opportunities to see examples of practice in other settings
- Improved links with parents
- Listening to pupil voice
- Key messages to parents about approaches being used in school – some learners become a 'witch hunt' for other parents.
- Supporting staff who have had violence & aggression directed at them
- More information around de-escalation strategies
- Support with a radical & innovative approach to improving playground experience
- Circle Framework
- A list of non-negotiables in Fife – things became mixed during the pandemic
- Handbook of all approaches listed above

It is evident that each setting is choosing selected approaches depending on individual need – taking a bespoke approach allows for personalisation and targeted intervention. However, what it of key importance is that any additional resources should closely align with the ELC or school developments using a Trauma Informed or De-escalation lens.

Implementation, Impact and Next Steps

No matter which core approach is the current focus of each ELC or school, in order to achieve sustainable outcomes, implementation must be planned & evaluated in a robust manner. In order to support this process, all settings engage in regular dialogue with their link EP to discuss 'readiness' and data gathering processes. Using both qualitative and quantitative data allows for the effective assessment of impact in an ongoing way.

Results from this scoping project will be used to inform future professional learning opportunities & conversations at HWB Leads meetings to plan next steps. Fife's Core Approaches Development Group (represented by members of the PL Team, EP Service, SLS, OMM & NHS Child Psychology colleagues) will continue to liaise with settings as part of the delivery programme to monitor progress, promote the use of robust data gathering to assess impact, facilitate the sharing of practice and provide further support and information as required.

VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

SUPPORT FOR STAFF (SCHOOLS) – ACTION PLAN @ October 2023

RISK / AREA OF CONCERN	PROPOSALS	PROGRESS	TIMESCALE	ECS OFFICERS	ECS OFFICERS
Reducing Risk	• Improve Incident Reporting (First Contact is understood and form accessible)	Organise a separate meeting with CHSW/BTS to discuss	Medium	SMcL, KH	SMcL, KH
		Explore how other LAs record/report V&A incidents	Immediate	KF, NF (SEIC)	KF, NF (SEIC)
	• Develop the management and use of information to inform planning (Power BI, First Contact) as reports are improved	Review of how First Contact is managed centrally	Medium	DOT	DOT
	• Agree what information would make the Power BI report more useful	Power BI reports for individual schools. Work with Team to identify what would make the report useful.	Medium	CHSWT	CHSWT
		Targeted approach based on data, leading to supportive visits	Ongoing	EMs	EMs
		SLWG to be set up including school staff to agree	Medium	SMcL, KH	SMcL, KH
	• Define the SEEMiS Referral / HS1 categories	Staff feedback from the ASL Strategy survey is being used to inform this.		ASL Strategy Group	ASL Strategy Group
	• Explore streamlining the referral paperwork / process	Addition to Anti-Bullying Policy		MMcB	MMcB
	• Produce guidance for managing incidents on School Transport				

RISK / AREA OF CONCERN	PROPOSALS	PROGRESS	TIMESCALE	ECS OFFICERS	ECS OFFICERS
Staff Wellbeing Strategy	• Coordinate staff consultation activities, including Staffwise 2024, with corporate teams	Meeting scheduled March Agenda Item at Education Scrutiny May 2023 Consideration to be given to additional Staffwise questions – short-life group meeting set-up to agree question to propose to R&B group members for agreement	Medium	MMcB	MMcB
	• Safer Working Practices Guidance	Shared with group for consultation	Medium	GW	GW
	• Data informed review of staff wellbeing strategy to publish update as part of Services Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Draft out for consultation Comms to reinforce message re. Expectations	Immediate	PC	PC
	• Ensure local settings to use their own data to inform their own centres staff wellbeing approaches – record in SIP's / team plans	Short-life working group set up to discuss – 21.08.23	Immediate	Wellbeing Strategy Group	Wellbeing Strategy Group
	• Ensure Staff PRDs include reference and discussions re wellbeing. Providing Reviewers with reminder and information re V&A processes and support mechanisms.		August	LH	LH

RISK / AREA OF CONCERN	PROPOSALS	PROGRESS	TIMESCALE	ECS OFFICERS	ECS OFFICERS
Implementing Promoting Positive Relationships & Behaviour Strategy	• New Promoting Positive Relationship and Behaviour in Schools strategy is used to develop new / update existing ELC and school strategies	Further developments and communications to ensure this is embedded in practice	Completed previously	SMcL/ MMcB	SMcL/ MMcB
	• Check with Data Protection team re the wording which allows staff to have knowledge of individual pupils		Immediate	NF	NF
	• Provide a Policy list for schools	Draft Document/ SLWG to be set up		GW/MMcB	GW/MMcB
	• Instigate process for central recording/sharing of school PR strategies and timeframes re expectations for update/review.	Follow up in HT Briefing			
		Include in Health & Wellbeing Newsletter – see below		PC/MMcB	PC/MMcB
	• Improve understanding of Physical Intervention	Quality Assurance programme in development		GW/NF	GW/NF
	• Develop PAMP process and understanding				
Developing PSA Model	• Create time for PSAs to participate in "non contact time" opportunities	Draft a document re purpose / use of time / training / approaches / processes. Temp approach to Summer 23 to allow contracts to be altered from Aug 23. Planning to commence for permanent change from January	Immediate	SMcL to lead LCT	SMcL to lead LCT

RISK / AREA OF CONCERN	PROPOSALS	PROGRESS	TIMESCALE	ECS OFFICERS	ECS OFFICERS
	• Recruit to PSA Supply List	Supply advert is live		Staffing Team	Staffing Team
	• Potential for PSAs to engage in relevant professional learning out with 39 week contract period.			JF	JF
Workforce Planning and Professional Learning	• Offer core approaches to Professional Learning for all schools (Trauma Informed Practice and De-Escalation)	49 Settings engaged with Trauma Informed programme (Nov '22) 94 Settings engaged with De-escalation programme (Feb '23) Positive impact recorded from participant feedback – full reports available Needs analysis form will be created & shared with settings (April '23) to support planning for 23-24 session: follow up sessions & monthly drop-ins Staff Resilience Feedback to be requested from schools re plans for dissemination Consideration of availability and opportunity for all supply staff. All settings have been allocated places during 10th Nov INSET as a follow up support session to last year's input. 3 Venues will host - Castlehill PS (East), Auchmuty HS (Central) & Inverkeithing PS (West) Morning 9am-12pm: De-escalation (54/109 settings confirmed to date).		JF/LT	JF/LT

RISK / AREA OF CONCERN	PROPOSALS	PROGRESS	TIMESCALE	ECS OFFICERS	ECS OFFICERS
		Focus will be on recap of key messages, implementation & embedding approaches, using audit tool, sharing practice (video clip montage), proactive protocols & action planning

Afternoon 1pm-4pm: Trauma Informed (21/59 settings confirmed to date). Focus will be on recap of key messages, implementation & embedding approaches, using audit tool, sharing practice (video clip montage), staff wellbeing & action planning | | | |
| | • Review relationships, behaviour, and wellbeing support for schools to identify key areas of focus that have the potential to provide further support

• Improve Induction process | Induction process to be improved (in service materials, corp. Induction)
In place for Probationers
New staff are supported to understand the incident reporting process and its importance – part of Risk Awareness presentation
Short-life working group set up to discuss – 21.08.23

Included in ECS mandatory training matrix | Immediate | MMcB/ LH | MMcB/ LH |

RISK / AREA OF CONCERN	PROPOSALS	PROGRESS	TIMESCALE	ECS OFFICERS	ECS OFFICERS
	• Raise awareness of the Risk Assessment module on Oracle • Using Quality Improvement Methodology to measure impact of nurturing approaches	Evaluation of 17 pilot cohort projects is underway to establish planning for targeted cohort during 23-24 session A QI Relational Approaches programme was shared via weekly update & HT briefings before Summer break. Schools who indicated interested were not all in the 'right place' to engage with programme e.g. already taking part in other QI programmes, embedding other approaches or significant changes in leadership teams. A bespoke approach was deemed best fit. Therefore, a whole school focus is being used with 2 large primary schools (central Fife setting Aug-Dec & West Fife setting Jan-June) Outcomes & impact of projects will be shared when data is available.		LT	LT
		Headteacher support sessions, LNCTs Headteacher / Aspiring Headteacher Programme		LH	LH
	• Develop existing Professional Learning programme				
				MMcB	MMcB

RISK / AREA OF CONCERN	PROPOSALS	PROGRESS	TIMESCALE	ECS OFFICERS	ECS OFFICERS
	• Organise additional sessions to support use of resources • Joint survey – ECS/Professional Associations • Explore Peer Supervision opportunities (C&F)	23/24 Peer Support Programme confirmed and to be promoted through weekly update and September SOMs. Twilight dates agreed for participating HTs (aims – supporting HTs with the broader challenges of managing a school) Supervision proposal to be developed to inform decision making (aims – those involved in emotionally challenging practice) Collaboration at appropriate forums		MMcB / GW / SM SMcL	MMcB / GW / SM SMcL
	• Develop Headteachers / Professional Associations / Trade Unions Joint Working • Raise awareness of Headteacher / Persons in Control re Health & Safety Responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act • Launch of Safer Working Practices Guide	Embedded in Induction Follow up communication for those in post at SOMs On Relationships & Behaviour Intranet page		SMcL GW	SMcL GW
Communication	• Improve accessibility of information to local settings (Comms campaign, Intranet	Development of tile on Intranet	Immediate	MMc	MMc

RISK / AREA OF CONCERN	PROPOSALS	PROGRESS	TIMESCALE	ECS OFFICERS	ECS OFFICERS
	Tile, Leaderships & Direction of Resources)	Agree a V & A pack to be ready for w/c 13th March: Reporting / Debrief documents PSA Additional Time Proposal Existing posters (for now) Signposting / Link to Intranet information (inc H&W) Ready to issue at SOMs this week	Immediate	KH/NF /MMcB	KH/NF /MMcB
	• Strengthen communication approaches to ensure all staff are aware of and understand their responsibilities				
		Ready to issue w/c 20th once agreed at V&A meeting	Immediate		
	• Provide opportunities for colleagues to share their feedback – Joint survey ECs/Professional Associations	Primary classroom design outstanding but in progress			
			Immediate	MMcB / Comms team	MMcB / Comms team
	• Redesign Anti violence posters and redistribute (Sector appropriate)			MMcB	MMcB
	• Review Intranet page to allow easier access and use	Discussed with HWB Governance group to issue 1 each term across the session – 1st edition will spotlight the new HWB strategy after its publication	Medium	LT	LT
	• Design a short video clip to demonstrate how to use and find documents				

RISK / AREA OF CONCERN	PROPOSALS	PROGRESS	TIMESCALE	ECS OFFICERS	ECS OFFICERS
	• Issue a joint survey – ECS/Professional Associations • Issue a regular Health & Wellbeing newsletter			PC / MMcB	PC / MMcB

VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION
SUPPORT FOR PUPILS – ACTION PLAN @ October 2023

KEY: -
RED not started
AMBER – In progress
GREEN - completed

Area	Action	By Whom	By When	RAG
Strategic Overview				
The Education service via the **sector approach** will continue to prioritise specific Secondary schools for additional support to support this work.	Continue with a focus on the sectors to understand and address specific sector issues.	All HoS in education	Ongoing	
The **17 proforma's from 7 schools** have been followed up by HoS secondary, with advice and feedback given to schools/	Return next steps to school.	M Lloyd	By end of May	
HoS in Education will continue to have an overview the ongoing work of various groups including HWB, Child Protection and Learning with Care to ensure schools are receiving the right support.	All HoS via DLT to discuss relevant issues with teams.	All HoS in Education	Ongoing	
Schools will continue to be encouraged to continue to get staff to complete the **HS1 forms** (when there has been a violent incident) and serious incident forms, completed by school and sent to HoS to inform them of this.	Promoted via School Operations Meetings with all HT's and via face-to-face meetings including HT engagements days and Secondary Head teacher meetings.	All HoS in Education	Ongoing	
Relationships and Behaviour working group continue to meet and have an action plan (see appendix 1). This	Share the action plan widely with other groups and partners, so there	R& B working group	Ongoing	

40

Area	Action	By Whom	By When	RAG
Strategic Overview				
action plan will be used with this ongoing work and all actions. Identified that some schools need support in developing effective training, pro-active management plans which is part of this groups work.	is a full understanding of work being done in this area.			
Use the **wide range of established school networks** (i.e. DHT 3.1 collaborative etc) to discuss/identify issues and to address strategically.	Ensure information is shared and there is no duplication of workload.	Senior officers in Education	Ongoing	
Partnership				
HoS will continue to convene and meet with the **multiagency SLWG** and address the actions identified with this group especially around areas which partners can support in terms of universal and targeted provision to link with the violent incidents and gaps within PSE delivery.	Discuss and share information at this meeting to ensure effective partnership working. This group consists of 15 members and has met 5 times since March 10 formally. There have been work and sub meetings out with these See appendix 5	M Lloyd	May- August	
Community mental health support – There is a current proposal that CAHMS Early Intervention Service. Proposed to *take a 'No Wrong Door Approach' and will provide representation at mental health and wellbeing triage meetings alongside Education Staff, School Nursing, School Counselling to support appropriate referrals and targeted support for practitioners. This will include a* provision of mentoring, capacity building and support to practitioners who are supporting **children and young people experiencing significant distress and risk.** Initially this will be offered as a pilot to 5 high schools across Fife, (Viewforth HS, Waid Academy, Levenmouth Academy, Lochgelly HS and St Andrews HS).	Join up work in this area as we know mental health is a big issue for young people and families.	G McLeod and R Weir	May onwards	
Continue to support the work of the Neurodevelopment pathway rollout with NHS Fife (for those with Autism) to ensure appropriate support to all	Seeking to roll out staff training and work with partners to support this	Depute Principal	Ongoing	

Area	Action	By Whom	By When	RAG
Strategic Overview				
young people with a neurodiversity through effective staff training. Awaiting funding from SG.	area of work to help to support those on the ND pathway.	educational Psychologist- A Brown with lead Clinical psychologist A Espie from NHS Fife.	(work started on this form January 2021)	
Explore work that partners around S2 and S3 pupil and girls specifically which reflects the proformas and serious incidents reported to the Education Service and partner stats. Being done via multiagency.	Identify this with partners so they can prioritise their input.	M Lloyd, all partners, groups and Sec HTs	Need to decide by August 2023	
Ensure **there is a focus on out of school activities via Active schools and other partners as distraction activities especially in the communities where there are high levels of crime for those under 16.** This year there is an increase from 408 in Jan 2022-Mar 2022 to 428 Jan 2023-Mar 2023. The area with highest number is **Kirkcaldy** and **Glenrothes** with 123 and 90, respectively. During the same time in 2022 the dominant area was **Kirkcaldy** and **Dunfermline**. Assault, assault to injury and vandalism and threatening or abusive behaviours prevalent across all areas. For 2023 dominant age range in the 2 areas identified here is 12-14.	Shared the data with partners, so important we can focus on this as a partnership for area support.	Active schools via P Colburn and P Vaughan service	August 2023	
Misogyny focus for school nursing service and how to support children and young people with these issues. The service is removing their formal referral system to be contacted directly via a note to the school office. Following a pilot in some secondary schools it will be rolled out to them all.	Been training on this and nursing staff are more aware. This will ensure they feel able to discuss with this children and young people when or if the issue arises.	H Bett and the HWB group	June onwards	
Education Service Developments				
Bullying work needs continued via networks and equality professional learning input to ensure that bullying incidents are accurately recorded, and issues disclosed to allow schools to fully analyse. Also, need to	Professional learning session for teachers arranged to support logging of incidents. Also being discussed at DHT collaborative. ES	N Masterton and Gavin Waterston		

Area	Action	By Whom	By When	RAG
Strategic Overview				
raise the profile **of bullying incidents taking place in classrooms** (over 28% of those recorded said the bullying is happening in the classroom). This discussion is needed via the Relationships and Behaviour working group. Input on training on this with teachers and via networks. Updated policy being issued. An update Anti-bullying policy has been completed and will be issued to schools in October 2023.	information on bullying also shared with schools. https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/news-and-events/news/education-scotland-publishes-new-bullying-report/ An update Anti- bullying policy has been completed and will be issued to all educational establishment schools in October 2023.	leading on this. PSE/SEEMiS	October 2023	
Reviewing Pupil Support Service PSS for schools including extending and formalising the outreach structure to support more schools with distressed children and young people.	A review of this service is underway. Now formalising some additionality for schools around an outreach approach.	Deborah Davidson	Ongoing	
A move **towards full time guidance teachers** in all secondary schools is being encouraged to allow more time for the named person in schools. There are cost implications, so this will be a work in progress over time. Reflects focus group and proforma returns need for someone to go to and improve child plans and attendance at meetings. Currently 7 schools have full time guidance teachers, 9 do not and 2 do hybrid approach.	As part of ongoing discussions with schools and to support wellbeing, this is being encouraged. There is however a cost implication to this, so it is a longer-term piece of work. Some schools have already achieved this.	HoS in Education- M Lloyd/S McLean DHT 3.1 Guidance Network/SHC	June 2023 onwards	
Roll out **MVP in all secondary schools by May 2023**. All 18 schools have signed up and staff members being trained currently. This will roll out to S1 in each school over the coming year.	Training has taken place and schools are implementing from August 2023.	L Stean	August 2023	
ASIST training for Suicide Training for staff (8 schools signed up so far- St Columba's, Madras, Auchmuty, Woodmill, Glenrothes, Levenmouth, Glenwood, Kirkcaldy, Lochgelly)	Priority for some schools given SHINE survey results.	L Stean	May/June 2023	

Area	Action	By Whom	By When	RAG
Strategic Overview				
Develop work related learning to re-engage more learners and offer them routines via a DYW priorities	Wider offer for Work experience offered. Focus on work readiness for young people, Including increasing better recording of wider achievement and more volunteering offers. A pilot of Mentoring via Sport Scotland is also being explored for Kirkcaldy schools.	K Lees N Masterson		
Mandatory CP in-service for all staff in school in August 2023, will focus on misogyny and influence if social media.	Every August there is a in service input. This year will priorities misogyny and domestic abuse topics in the prepared ppt to all schools.	G Waterston & S McGarry	August 2023	
School Improvement				
Continue with **attendance priority in all secondary** schools and promote and share with partners via schools (see appendix 1)	Raise at various meetings to ensure this is widely known and collectively can address in the local areas. WG already established with partners. Further develop the strategy and update related policies like home education.	HoS- A Logue and M Lloyd supported by S Else and G Waterson	Ongoing	
All school staff to continue with staff training on Trauma informed practice and De-escalation as outlined in March committee report.	Training programme underway for all schools and establishments.	R& B working group	August 2022 onwards	
Curriculum				
A Secondary **skeleton for PSE/ resources and partnership** input will be developed and implemented for August 2023. This will include social media/bullying/consent/peer pressure/body image/suicide/exam stress and mental health aspects -	Programme developed with a range of officers and school staff. This has been shared with partners to add to this universal offer and targeted. Partner being asked to identify	P Colburn/G Waterstone/L Stean/R weir/L Tobin	October 2023	

44

Area	Action	By Whom	By When	RAG
Strategic Overview				
to apply a consistent approach to PSE delivery and share with partners. Focus in S1 on prevention and S2 & S3 on intervention.	resources. The plan will be shared by schools and training will be given on specific areas, where there is a need. This should improve consistency programme delivery i.e. core offer, reduce preparation time for Guidance staff and ensure key partners are involved in planning and in the curriculum offer.			🟧
Data				
Ongoing tracking of any further serious incident forms from Secondary, to help with early intervention. Share relevant ones with partners. 17 received from Jan-March 2023. 10 received from April-June 203. Information to be shared with multiagency group.	To identify areas of support and to discuss with relevant partners at multiagency meeting. Analysis of each term completed.	M Lloyd		🟩
The **Fife young People Health & Wellbeing survey** and outcomes of focus groups currently being carried out will be used to amend policies and prioritise actions for schools and central work including influencing PSE programmes. Cross reference data from this work and surveys.	The PSE skeleton has been updated in light of the HWB survey results.	L Stean/ P Colburn/ G Waterston	August 2023 onwards	🟧
Continue to talk to partners about supporting distraction activities for young people in the evenings and weekends.	Being discussed at Multiagency meetings.	M Lloyd	August 2023	🟧
Specific Interventions				
SLG pilot (still confirming the final name of this Partnership group) will begin in 5 schools in June 2023 - these schools will be Kirkcaldy, Madras, Glenrothes, Dunfermline and Levenmouth (Levenmouth link to SW pilot with other schools across Fife).	Purpose developed and shared with multi-agency members and the HT involved. Dates sent to schools.	G Waterston and partners in SLWG	September 2023 onwards	🟧

Area	Action	By Whom	By When	RAG
Strategic Overview				
A **pilot of a SW in 5 of our schools** with high deprivation and low engagement i.e. high levels of non-attendance at 30% or lower (these schools will be Levenmouth, Lochgelly, Glenwood and Viewforth) Inverkeithing been added due to helping increase partnership working for the new school) will begin when SW staff are appointed (this will be before the end of the academic year). Other options also being discussed.	Update: -To support the development of an early intervention, partnership model in 5 High Schools in Fife, funded through Whole Family Wellbeing, we have recruited to 4 out of the 5 senior practitioners in schools who from August 2023 have been based in Glenwood, Inverkeithing, Levenmouth and Lochgelly High Schools. The Senior Practitioners have been welcomed by the School Leadership Teams and have been building and developing relationships within the school communities with the aim of delivering a range of early intervention supports for example 1-1 and group work opportunities. Each Senior Practitioner is currently supporting a number of children and families where concerns have begun to rise around attendance, behaviour and attainment with a view to providing the right support at an early stage and to prevent escalation of risk. SPs are attending a range of meetings within the school and have begun to consider where to target specific support such as group work.'	L Gilles and D Davidson	August 2023 onwards	
A **letter to parents/carers and learners on social media issued on Sept 25 -** see appendix 4.	Written from education on social media was issued on 25 September to all Secondary schools	M Lloyd	September 2023	

Area	Action	By Whom	By When	RAG
Strategic Overview				
A **new social media policy called Mobile Technology & Electronic Communication Guidance** will be in place for all secondary schools for October 2023	Updating current policy. This will also go to cabinet committee. This links to social media letter issued in Sept.	G Waterston and CP SOG group	October 2023	
Review the serious incidents Elected Member process in Sept 2023 to ascertain if this has improved communication between schools and elected members. Feedback to schools.	To develop a questionnaire related to this and then amend process as necessary. This has been completed in summary of those Elected Member who replied (14) felt that Serious incidents had been Handled well local work with HTs is positive ·. They were pleased to have clear procedures in place · Thanks to all those involved in improving this protocol · Most were happy to receive just an email or the serious incident form·	M Lloyd	Aug/Sept 2023	
Pilot re-admission contracts following exclusion or serious incident to have more joined up working to support young people after an incident and/or exclusion. (Pilot Schools to be decided). Possible schools to be used Levenmouth, Lochgelly, Viewforth and Kirkcaldy High Schools.	Stronger contracts for young people with partner involvement where appropriate	K Lees	Sept 2023	
Develop **work related learning and work experience** to re-engage learners and offer them routines vis DYW priority and focus.	Part of the DYW Board priorities and work with businesses	K Lees and N Masterton	August 2023 onwards	

Area	Action	By Whom	By When	RAG
Strategic Overview				
Continue with **MCR** (Motivation, Commitment and Resilience) pathways in 4 schools - Viewforth, Glenwood, St Andrews and Lochgelly, which support CE young people into PD.	Review with information has already taken place.	Z Thomson	Ongoing	
Promote Safer Communities links to all Secondary Schools.	Email sent to all Secondary schools to give contact names. Additional Support for targeted work been identified in PSE skeleton and via individual schools.	M Lloyd	March 2023	

14 November 2023

Agenda Item No.   6

Report on Progress on Neurodevelopmental Assessment Pathway

Report by: Maria Lloyd, Head of Service, Head of Education and Children's Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Elected Members on the Scottish Government funded Neurodevelopmental Assessment Pathway Test of Change (ToC). This project has been led by Education and supported by NHS Fife colleagues.

This ToC has been running since October 2021 in two West Fife secondary schools (Woodmill High School and St Columba's RC High School) and their associated cluster primary schools, as well as Calaiswood Special School. The pilot involved a move from multiple assessment pathways for different neurodevelopmental conditions (e.g., Autism, ADHD) to a single assessment pathway which allowed a range of potential conditions to be considered. The proposed advantages of having one referral route include:

- Simplified process for families and professionals
- Allows for the capture of information once rather than multiple referral routes
- Does not require parents/carers and education staff to guess whether a child has a neurodevelopmental condition and what that might be before referral
- Allows a range of conditions to be considered by specialist staff working together

This report includes the most up to date information relating to referral rates, as well as feedback from stakeholders including parents/carers and school staff on the pilot from November 2021 to July 2023.

Recommendation(s)

The Education and Children's Services Committee is asked to:

1. Scrutinise the progress made on the Test of Change
2. Support proposed next steps

Resource Implications

There are no new resource implications arising from this report. Although there were resource implications in the ToC, due to additional workload of education staff in schools and of course the money used to support this from the Scottish government of £205,000.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no direct legal implications, although there is a risk associated with not meeting the needs of children and young people which could result in lost learning or placements in provisions outwith the Local Authority.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policy is proposed currently.

1.0 Background

How are Neurodevelopmental Conditions assessed?

1.1 Neurodevelopmental (ND) conditions are complex to both identify and diagnose in children. For some, the observable 'traits' or characteristics are more obvious but often the differences faced by children with such conditions are subtle and can be masked by the child's ability to adapt to social/environmental and intellectual challenges, or by the ability of the environmental setting (e.g., school) to modify and adjust to the needs of the child successfully. Characteristics can vary vastly from person to person and are often considered as a pattern of behaviours in terms of frequency, consistency and intensity rather than being 'present' or 'absent'. These conditions are often identified when children are in school, at a point when their social skills and progress with learning can be seen alongside others.

1.2 It must also be noted that ND conditions are a medical diagnosis. We also know that children's brain development and behaviours are highly influenced by their environment including home circumstances, relationships, life experiences, health and emotional wellbeing. Neurodevelopmental conditions have also been shown to frequently occur alongside one another, meaning a child can have two or more neurodevelopmental conditions simultaneously, or 'co-occurring conditions'.

1.3 There have been previous committee reports on this Education Scrutiny Committee of 24 January 2023 over the time of the ToC as well as the Test of Change Interim Report June 2022.

1.4 In response to the high number of children and young people awaiting autism assessment in Fife, and the acknowledgement that more needed to be done to support families at an earlier stage in the identification of concerns, a cross-council and Health Board working group was established in February 2021 (Multi-agency Neurodevelopment Strategic Oversight Group). This group's ongoing role is to

identify and respond to key priorities related to autism in Fife. One key priority this group is working towards is to support the implementation of 'The Specification' [Children and young people - national neurodevelopmental specification: principles and standards of care.](#)

1.5   Funding was provided by the Scottish Government to five local authorities / health boards, after a bidding process across Scotland, to pilot new approaches to deliver on 'The Specification'. We received £205,000 to cover the costs as set out in the January 2023 Scrutiny Committee Report. Since the assessment of children with suspected ND conditions varies quite widely across Scotland, a variety of project teams were formed, generally with multi-agency representation. The Education Service were able to carry forward £58,000 from the original bid, which is allowing some of this work to continue to present (see breakdown).

1.6   This ToC has implemented and assessed a new neurodevelopmental pathway process in a small cluster of schools in the west of Fife. Rather than developing a completely new approach, the Neurodevelopmental Pathway (NDP) pilot has been embedded within the Child Wellbeing Pathway. As such, the child's Named Person is expected to coordinate the process and (where appropriate) submit referral forms. The ToC has focused on the initial stages of the pathway (pre-referral and referral) rather than the triage and specialist assessment stage. This is, therefore, in line with the Child Wellbeing Pathway, where there is already an expectation that high quality assessment information will be gathered, and interventions and supports will be implemented in an effort to address concerns, prior to any onward referral for assessment.

2.0 Feedback on the Test of Change (ToC)

2.1   There are seven main sources of information to report on, which are summarised below and then described through the rest of this report:

- ND Pathway referral numbers and information
- Quality of referrals
- Feedback on staff support sessions ('virtual consultations')
- Feedback from teaching staff working in the ToC schools
- Feedback from Pupil Support Assistants across Fife
- Parent and carer feedback
- New GIRFEC Neurodevelopmental website feedback.

ND Pathway Referral Numbers and information

2.2   While ND Pathway referral rate figures were of interest to us, our goal was not to reduce the number of referrals. The purpose of the pilot was to improve the quality of assessment information gathered prior to referrals, to test the new single referral paperwork, assessment tools and supports, and to ensure the new system functions effectively for professionals and families. As of the end of July 2023, the ToC has been running for 23 months and receiving referrals for 21 months (November 2021-July 2023).

2.3   After 21 months the ToC pilot has received 160 referrals for specialist neurodevelopmental assessment. Based on historic autism referral rates in Fife, we predicted 94.5 ND referrals over 21 months. Whilst the referral rate is higher than expected, the estimated rates were based on previous autism referrals alone, whereas the NDP figures could include referrals for other suspected neurodevelopmental conditions (e.g., ADHD or Learning Disability). There is also strong evidence of a national rise in demand for assessment and specialised children's services post-pandemic with almost 20,000 referrals received nationally in the past year, which is likely to have impacted referral figures between November 2021 and July 2023. Prevalence has increased too as the CYP Neurodevelopmental Services national sharing event indicated – up from 1.03% to 1.7% across Scotland. Fife figures are currently 3.5%.

2.4   The current average referral rate for ASD assessment across Fife is now 78 per month compared to a rate of 42 referrals per month at the start of the ToC. To further understand our data patterns in Fife, we are currently in the process of surveying a sample of school staff outwith the ToC schools to gather information about the number of young people they have supported through neurodevelopmental assessments over the past year.

Quality of referrals

2.5   In April 2023, we carried out a qualitative review of a random sample of 10 cases out of the total (n=80) that had been referred to the ND Pathway. A range of ages/stages and schools were included in this sample.

2.6   In all the referrals reviewed, we found:

- there was the inclusion of a documented discussion about referral and consent from a parent/carer and the young person in those 12 years and older
- evidence that there were wellbeing concerns over time for the child/young person
- contextual assessment information with a rationale for why neurodevelopmental specialist assessment was now being requested by the team involved with the child
- some attempt made to implement appropriate supports and interventions prior to referral

2.7   Overall, the cases sampled during the ToC contained high-quality and comprehensive assessment evidence and the full requested referral information. Concerns about a child's neurodevelopment and their impact over time were reasonably well documented in the information submitted, however there was some duplication and variability evident.

Feedback on staff support sessions ('Virtual Consultations')

2.8   Consultation sessions, using video call, were offered to school teaching staff at the outset of the pilot launch. The purpose of these sessions was to allow key education staff from pilot schools the opportunity to seek early advice around specific children and young people being considered for referral for specialist ND assessment. Children were discussed on a no names basis. The sessions were coordinated and run by staff from the Educational Psychology Service, the Autism Spectrum Information and Support Team (ASIST) and NHS Fife Clinical Psychology.

2.9   Feedback from school staff who attended these sessions was positive. Staff noted that it had been helpful to have a detailed and separate discussion with a multi-agency team and to seek advice and clarification about the assessment information they had gathered. This was especially true when dealing with more complex neurodevelopmental presentations and when problem-solving was needed around communication between agencies.

2.10   The uptake of these sessions was lower than we anticipated. Over the seven sessions offered, there was a total of six education staff who attended looking for support/advice. Four schools involved in the pilot out of a total of 14 were represented. There were no attendees for three of the sessions held. We remain unclear if this indicated a low demand for support or if potential factors related to accessibility and availability of the sessions were in part to blame. It is also possible that the initial training, additional support materials (e.g., Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document) and advice from school link Educational Psychologists (EPs) provided staff with sufficient understanding and support around the new process.

Feedback from Teaching Staff working in the ToC schools

2.11   In December 2022, a feedback session/focus group was held for education staff from all the ToC schools. Fifteen staff involved in the ND Pathway pilot attended the session, with representation from both primary and secondary sectors. A Microsoft Forms questionnaire was also developed and circulated to seek feedback from those who could not attend – this was completed by eight participants. We also received one email feedback response. The points below summarise the collective feedback received.

2.12   Positive aspects of the ToC included:

- The prospect of a unified referral approach for all ND conditions
- The Dimensions Tool (an online rating tool that school staff complete with parents/carers which is included as a step in the information gathering process) supported staff to identify appropriate cases for referral and signpost support elsewhere for those less suitable
- Support offered by specialist education staff on more complex cases via the organised ND virtual consultations or through link Eps

2.13   Difficulties with the ToC included:

- Significant workload challenges for school staff including increased demand for coordinating wellbeing meetings and developing Child's Plans for pupils identified specifically by health staff or parents/carers as potentially having ND conditions but not presenting with a high level of concern for school staff
- 'Backlogs' within education as meetings and paperwork were coordinated and implemented
- The Dimensions Tool was reported to sometimes take a long time to complete

2.14   There is evidence of a workload shift as part of the process of moving assessment and referral routes from health colleagues to education staff in these ToC schools. This is an area which has historically attracted a large number of informal and formal parental complaints to Health around waiting times and processing referrals, which we

anticipate will focus more on education staff, even with the more streamlined pathway in place.

Feedback from Pupil Support Assistants across Fife

2.15 One of the key next steps to emerge from the focus group feedback has been to develop an accessible professional development resource for education staff to support the effective implementation of the ND pathway. To support this, a long-term professional learning strategy will be required. To try and gain a better understanding of the training opportunities which would benefit staff the most, we consulted with Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) working in schools across the whole of Fife via a short online survey about their experiences of supporting pupils with neurodevelopmental conditions.

2.16 The survey was completed by 136 PSAs between February and April 2023, who worked across the full range of provisions available in Fife. Some PSAs who responded had only been in the role for a few months, whilst others had worked as a PSA for over ten years.

2.17 Key aspects of the feedback included:

- 95% are currently supporting a pupil with a neurodevelopmental condition
- 22% report to have never received training on supporting young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN)
- PSAs have received training on a variety of topics (including Autism, Moving and Handling, supporting communication, anxiety and de-escalation) and from a range of professionals (EPs, specialist teachers, Health staff)
- PSAs also receive de-escalation and trauma-informed practice training as part of a 3 year roll out to all education staff
- PSAs would like training to focus on more practical supports and strategies

Parent and Carer Feedback

2.18 From March 2023, parents and carers of young people referred to the ND pathway were sent a Microsoft Forms questionnaire. The aim of this questionnaire was to gather parent/carer views and experiences of the referral process, what helped and what did not, and what (if any) changes might be helpful in the future.

2.19 As of the end of July 2023, we have had 17 responses.

2.20 As part of the referral process and prior to a referral being made, parents/carers will have met with school staff (and possibly other professionals) to discuss interventions, advice and possible supports for their child. Respondents were asked to rate these discussions on a scale of 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive). The average rating was **4.41**.

2.21 Respondents generally provided positive feedback about support received prior to referral (e.g., *"great support through the school"* and *"the school have been very good at informing me of this process"* and *"teaching staff have generally been very supportive"*). Interestingly, in terms of outcomes parents/carers were hoping for from the referral, comments largely centred on *"getting support"*. This shows that although we know support should be needs-led and not dependent on diagnosis, more work

needs to be done to ensure this is the case and that parents and carers understand this; for example, that even without a diagnosis they can receive support from a Pupil Support Assistant, central specialist staff teams and/or Educational Psychology.

2.22   Respondents were asked whether there was anything that would have improved their experience of the referral process. Only five people provided a response to this question. Comments largely centred on starting the process sooner and having access to earlier support and intervention.

2.23   The questionnaire is still open for responses and the data generated will continue to be evaluated.

New GIRFEC Neurodevelopment Website Feedback

2.24   On 23ʳᵈ January 2023, the Neurodevelopment GIRFEC weblink went live - The purpose of this website is to provide open-access information on neurodevelopment and the assessment pathways in Fife, primarily to parents and carers, however, it is also designed to be supportive for professional staff. The website also signposts parents and carers to sources of further support.

2.25   Each page of the website has an option to leave feedback. To date, we have received 81 responses. 100% of these have rated the website as 'very helpful' or 'somewhat helpful'. Respondents commonly cite positive factors as:
- ease of access
- the helpfulness of having one location with all relevant information
- the informative nature of the pages
- the reassurance/normalisation it provides around neurodiversity
- clear explanations of the referral processes for assessment in Fife

2.26   Further content for the website will be developed to extend the utility of this resource.

3.0 Considerations and Implications

3.1   At this stage of the Test of Change project, there are several next steps being considered and progressed. However, implications for roll-out and system maintenance are contingent on ongoing project funding, which we are still currently awaiting confirmation on from Scottish Government after putting forward a new bid in August 2023 (appendix 1).

3.2   In proposing the next stage of recommendations, we have also sought to identify and analyse the challenges that have arisen to date and think about how these might be mitigated moving forward. We have identified four key areas of challenge from this learning in the ToC:

- Shared multi-agency aims and communication - collaborating with large teams across Health and Education has meant that communication has been challenging at times. It has been hard to ensure that the messages shared around the aims of the ND pilot, the pre-referral priorities and how to quality assure referrals are consistent and that practice is aligned
- Data – we were not able to obtain clear baseline data or shared access to referral data from the beginning of the pilot from partners

- Workload - new expectations such as the requirement for the submission of a Child's Plan and Dimensions Tool have significantly added to workload demands for education staff within this process
- 'Right to Diagnosis' - presents challenges for professionals in balancing an individual or family entitlement to specialised ND assessment versus the need to be able to evidence sufficient wellbeing concerns pre-referral to meet the threshold for specialist assessment. This is compounded by a perceived link between diagnosis and extra help, resources, and potential financial support.

Implications

3.3   A full roll-out of the ND Pathway in Fife is going to impact most heavily on the workload of school-based education staff, health-based administration and some clinical staff and associated support services. Whilst supporting children with ND conditions already forms a large part of the existing work of school staff, it is one area of ASN provision amongst many others which education staff are expected to support. We have tested support mechanisms like a FAQ document to complement the initial training delivered to staff involved in the pilot, and face-to-face support such as the virtual consultation sessions. However, 'new' expectations for education staff as part of the pathway process, have added to existing workload demands. These mainly involve coordinating information gathering and communication, arranging meetings and completing pathway referral paperwork.
It is worth noting that guidance teachers in secondary schools within Fife do not have full-time dedicated time allocated for Additional Support Needs (ASN) activities. Schools are reporting increased expectations from families to receive support for their children in line with the increase in identified needs around ASN, with the current figure for 23/24 on the Fife educational data system (SEEMiS) being 42.24%. This is a 0.81% increase from last session and increase of 7.36% since 19/20. Areas of increasing need include; learning disability, dyslexia, language and speech, English as an Additional Language & autism.

3.4   We predict that a Fife-wide roll-out will also lead to an increase in workload for health staff who will have to triage and coordinate with one another in a new way at the point of referral. The triage team (the group who look at 'accepted' ND referrals from schools) will require experienced multi-agency staff to work together regularly to look at the detail of large numbers of incoming referrals, some with complex presentations. This would be new/additional work in that format and may need additional or diverted existing funding to ensure it is effective.

3.5   Any future roll out of the ND Pathway across Fife for all ND conditions will be contingent on funding for enhanced specialist education staff and alignment of existing health pathways to enable these to be fully incorporated.

3.6   The project team (Educational Psychologists (1.0 FTE total) plus a Consultant Clinical Psychologist) are looking at the feasibility of continuing the existing supports if more schools in Fife were to use the new ND pathway process. This would require posts to be funded to be dedicated to this work, as is the case currently for the ToC. Next steps within our wider Scottish Government evaluation, will be contingent on ongoing funding.

4.0 Summary of Proposed Next Steps

4.1 From the Neurodevelopmental Assessment Pathway ToC work outlined above, we have gained a better understanding of the drivers and barriers to change, and this learning has informed the proposed next steps. The ND Strategic Oversight Group will be presented with recommendations for multi-agency agreement and actioning as follows:

4.2 **Development of a new multi-agency Children and Young People NDP Steering Group**
This will oversee the creation and functioning of a new triage approach so that children with a range of neurodevelopmental concerns across Fife can be considered by the correct team of multi-agency professionals with the appropriate criteria/decision-making rationale in place. Initial tasks will include agreeing multi-agency triage group membership, oversight, referral criteria and organisation in collaboration with Health colleagues.

4.3 **Review and refine the pathway referral processes and paperwork**
Based on feedback received, and in consultation with Education Service management and NHS colleagues, the referral process and paperwork requirements should be refined, ensuring that the processes are robust and in line with GIRFEC and the Wellbeing Pathway, including:
- Reviewing the requirement for a Child's Plan as part of the referral paperwork and replacing this with alternative documentation to help to ensure the right information is available to facilitate decisions at triage whilst balancing professional workload demands. Key to this will be ensuring that the process best supports responsive planning for children and families matched to their needs, as well as recording and evidencing intervention attempts/outcome.
- Ensuring the pathway is available for home-educated learners or those accessing non-local authority educational provision and reviewing the requirements of Primary Healthcare professionals when raising concerns otherwise not identified by school staff.

4.4 **Update the products that have been developed as part of the ToC**
Products developed so far include the pathway flowchart, referral form, FAQs guidance notes and other referral process support materials for school staff, professional training materials and website content for parents/carers. These should continue to be reviewed, and new content and resources developed as appropriate.

4.5 **Continue to gather and evaluate data from those with lived experience**
This should include further consultation with parents/carers and establishing mechanisms to meaningfully involve children and young people to share their views in ways that can be used to inform the development of the pathway process.

4.6 **Develop a collaborative professional learning model**
To support a wider roll-out programme and the knowledge and skills of colleagues across health and education, we will continue to develop and deliver professional training and support materials alongside other partners. This should reflect current research and thinking and take a 'neuro-affirming approach', with the intention of building consistent practice across all services in Fife.

4.7 **Continue in the West area, even without future funding, as Education supporting this with a full-time Educational Psychologist**
This could allow the limited-scope project to continue within the existing school cohort, however, would run the risk of a two-tier assessment system across Fife with associated public and professional communication and training issues.

5.0 Funding going forward

5.1 Education are also progressing access to part of the £100,000 of Fife Council monies given to support ND pathway, which has been used to support a separate Test of Change within Health and Social Care. As of Sept 2023, we will access approx £28,000 of this total fund to support the ToC described in this paper. This has been supported by the ND Strategic Oversight Group (Council and NHS Fife) and will be reviewed in Feb 2024 and reassessed.

5.2 In response to the bid, (see appendix 2) submitted by Fife Education and Children's Services/NHS Fife on 25 August 2023 for £269.929 confirmation of a grant offer was received from the Scottish Government on Tuesday 17th October. The grant offered is for the amount of **£150, 225,** to cover the current financial year (2023/24). The details of this grant offer are currently being reviewed by Fife Council finance team in collaboration with Education Service Management.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 This paper sets out the methodology and evaluation of a new approach to supporting a single pathway for assessing children with suspected neurodevelopmental conditions in Fife. Our findings suggest that the new referral methodology is robust and achievable with some refinement. In order to fully implement the pathway across Fife, planned training will require to be delivered on a large scale alongside predictable recurring funding to support this implementation process alongside providing school staff with advice and support.

6.2 Educational and Children's Services alongside NHS Fife continue to work on the final part of the pathway which receives the completed neurodevelopmental referrals and supports the process of specialised assessment which can lead to diagnosis or the decision that the case does not meet the relevant diagnostic criteria.

The above will be dependent on future funding being made available.

Background Papers

The following paper was relied on in the preparation of this report

Previous scrutiny report to council committee (also see 1.3 of this report).
Agenda and Papers for Meeting of Education Scrutiny Committee of 24 January 2023

Sources of evidence

Various project datasets from schools and SEEMiS and previous scrutiny committee reports in addition to Scottish Government project reports and funding bid documentation.

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Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Autism	A lifelong neurodevelopmental condition that affects the way a person communicates, interacts and processes information
ADHD	A lifelong neurodevelopmental condition which impacts on attention, concentration, processing of information
Child's Plan	Multi-agency planning document for children with wellbeing concerns – outcome of Wellbeing Pathway
GIRFEC	Getting it Right for Every Child
Neurodevelopment	Brain development over time
Neurodevelopmental Assessment	Specific assessment when concerns about wellbeing or development are noted (usually in childhood)
Neurodevelopmental Conditions	A range of conditions caused by differences in how brains have formed or developed
Neurodiversity	Includes everyone whether 'neurotypical' or 'neurodivergent'
Neurodivergent	A term used to describe someone whose brain, thought processes and/or cognitive abilities, differs from those who are neurotypical
Neurotypical	A term used to describe someone whose brain typically functions and processes information in the way society expects
Test of Change	A project measured with data over time to gauge effectiveness. Commonly used within NHS Fife as a descriptive term for a project/trial
Wellbeing Pathway	The process used as part of GIRFEC to ensure assessment and intervention for children with wellbeing concerns is supported by professionals alongside families and children

Full list of schools involved in the pilot.

St Columba's HS
Holy Name PS
St Brides's PS
St John's PS
St Joseph's PS
St Kenneth's PS
St Margaret's PS
St Serf's PS

Woodmill HS
Carnegie PS
Duloch PS
Lynburn PS
Touch PS

Calaiswood Special School
Appendix 1 – Bid submitted to the Scottish Government 25 August 2023

Neurodevelopmental Tests of Change 23/24 Planning Template

Every year the Mental Health Directorate seeks approval from Ministers around our budget proposals, working closely with Health Finance and delivery partners. We are at an advanced stage in the budget setting process and hope to provide clarity in the coming weeks.

We continue to operate in a challenging financial context. In order to determine the amount required for the continuation of the Neurodevelopmental Tests of Change we need accurate projections on costs and deliverables for 23/24. As we are already within the current financial year, we understand that many areas have reduced / tapered their activities and spend.

As such, it would be helpful if you could complete the table attached to provide an estimate of the costs required to continue work from now until March 2024.

You will recall that funding for the Tests of Change was allocated in March 2022. Scottish Government gave an in-principle agreement for this funding to be carried forward given that it was allocated towards the end of the financial year and it would be helpful to confirm:

  i.   what, if any, amount was carried forward to 22/23
  ii. any carry forward to 23/24
  iii. projected expenditure for this financial year (23/24)

In order to help us allocate the funding as soon as possible we would appreciate an early return with the information requested by a deadline of Friday 25 August 2023. Please find attached table to complete overleaf.

Please contact us if you have any questions or require further information at Hannah.ross@gov.scot

Appendix 2

Bid from Fife Council Education Service ND ToC Leads 25th August 2023

	Resource Description	Cost
Please detail the amount, if any, you carried forward from the funding provided in 22/23	Carry forward largely on account of timing of recruiting to a supporting role for web design and administration, as well as challenges recruiting clinical psychologist on temporary contract during 2022/23	£52,360
Provide an indication of your costs already incurred this year (23/24) and an estimate of your projected activities and costs to the end of March 24	Educational Psychologist (1 FTE), being funded by Education, in part offset by the carry forward above. We have also appointed on a permanent basis 1.0 fte teacher to our ASIST team, focus on supporting staff development and C/YP with ND conditions. Without any further investment, we can not move beyond the current scope of the ToC Activities for 23/24, deliverable only with the additional resources outlined in the section below: - Delivery of tasks as required by the NDP steering group - Evaluation and refinement of the current pathway processes - Further development of the materials and products available to schools - First steps of a Fife universal professional learning training offer to be written - Ongoing support to current Test of Change schools in the West - Maintaining collaboration links with Health	Incurred to date: £28,699 (4 pay periods) Total projected to March 2024: £86,098 Incurred to date: £21,376 (4 pay periods) Total projected to March 2024: £64,127

	Resource Description	Cost
Outstanding requirements to the end of March 24.	Educational Psychologist (2.0 fte) This would allow for some scoping out the extension of the Test of Change beyond the 2 school clusters currently involved.	£172,196
	Teacher (1.0fte) To expand the specialist support within the ASIST team, increasing the capacity to develop the ToC	£64,127
	Clinical Psychologist Band 8b (0.2 fte) This would allow for some capacity for triage and increasing the pace of progressing referrals	£17, 645
	Administrative Support To support the activities for 23/24, ongoing improvements to the website following stakeholder feedback	£15,961
	The aim being to start to build a specialist team around neurodiversity, supporting the delivery of the Specification in 2023 and beyond.	**Total** £269,929

14 November 2023

Agenda Item No 7

Attainment in the Broad General Education

Report by:	Angela Logue, Head of Service, Education and Children's Services

Wards Affected:	All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on current progress in improving attainment in the broad general education and closing the attainment gap across Fife's schools. This has been a key priority within the Education and Children's Services Directorate Improvement Plan 21-23.

The broad general education begins in early learning and childcare and continues to the end of S3. The report provides members with details of improvement activities that are well-underway to ensure sustained education recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, through increased universal or targeted support for our children and young people. This includes progress made in the use of the Attainment Scotland Fund (ASF), which encompasses the Strategic Equity Fund (Year 1), Pupil Equity Funding and the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund to address the challenge of Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap and to support families by reducing the Cost of the School Day.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is invited to:

(1) scrutinise and comment on current progress in improving attainment in the broad general education, and the planned next steps to continue to support education recovery in Fife and close the attainment gap.

(2) scrutinise and comment on the progress made by Fife's schools and teams in the use of the Attainment Scotland Fund to positively impact on the educational outcomes of children and young people and planned next steps for 23/24;

(3) seek updates on the impact of approaches and interventions on improving educational outcomes for our children and young people locally, through individual schools and via Area Committee reports or workshops.

Resource Implications

There are no immediate resource implications associated with this report.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no specific legal and risk implications associated with this report.

Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed and is not necessary at this stage, as the proposals within the report do not currently represent a change to policy.

Consultation

Staff, pupils and partners have been consulted through various surveys and through evidence gathered via improvement projects – both at a strategic level and at school level. This evidence is informing the work currently being undertaken to close the attainment gap, as well as our wider approach to supporting education recovery and improved attainment for all children and young people.

In determining themes to be supported by Strategic Equity Funding a consultation was undertaken with school staff, pupils and families. Schools are required to consult with stakeholders each year around their use of Pupil Equity Funding.

1.0 Background

1.1   Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) provides a coherent, flexible curriculum for learners from ages 3 to 18. Progress of learning through the Broad General Education is defined relative to levels of achievement that learners would typically be expected to achieve. These are:

- Achievement of Early Level by the end of stage P1
- Achievement of Level 1 by the end of stage P4
- Achievement of Level 2 by the end of stage P7
- Achievement of Level 3 or 4 by the end of stage S3

1.2   The framework provided by CfE is, however, designed to be flexible in order to permit careful planning for those with additional support needs, including those who, for example, have a learning difficulty or those who are particularly high attaining.

1.3   Data is collected nationally by the Scottish Government on achievement of CfE levels by learners in stages P1, P4, P7 and S3 at the end of each school year. This data is published nationally following a quality assurance process, usually in mid-December.

1.4   As part of The Scottish Attainment Challenge – Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress (published by the Scottish Government in May 2023), local authorities are required to set and report on progress in achieving stretch aims for attainment and closing the attainment gap. Fife's approach to setting stretch aims is based on our existing approach to the use of stretch targets, as a basis to support an ambitious approach to improving educational outcomes.

1.5   In setting stretch targets, consideration has been given to current outcomes and trends over time within Fife, across Scotland, and for a benchmark performance outcome, which reflects the influence of child poverty on educational outcomes. The Fife approach to stretch targets has been developed collaboratively with schools with a focus on improving the progression of learning through the 3-18 curriculum. The main stretch targets reflect this focus and are stage-based. They provide a key tool to inform and support improvement activity.

1.6   Work to address the Attainment Gap has been overseen by the Attainment Reform Strategy Group, which was formed to provide a strategic steer for the Council's work to close the attainment gap as part of the Reform and Recovery agenda.

1.7   In order to support the work, the Attainment Reform Strategy Group developed a high-level change theory, based on what was known about how the system was currently working. Primary drivers for improvement in attainment and closing the attainment gap were identified by the reform group and are detailed in the driver diagram in Appendix 1. They are equity; high quality learning, teaching and assessment; improved attendance and engagement, including wellbeing. The need to build capacity for improvement and to reflect pupil voice are recognised as underpinning all areas.

1.8   The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) was established to promote equity in education by ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. It is underpinned by the National Improvement Framework, Curriculum for Excellence and Getting it Right for Every Child. It focuses on improvement activity in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Reducing educational inequity and reducing the poverty-related attainment gap is a long-term strategy, which aims to impact on societal culture and thinking.

1.9   Since 19/20 Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding has also been allocated annually to local authorities to support the educational attainment of care experienced children.

1.10   From session 22/23, the refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge (Scottish Attainment Challenge: framework for recovery and accelerating progress) programme saw Pupil Equity Funding, allocated directly to schools, fixed for four years. There was a move away from direct funding to schools through the Schools Programme Funding element of Attainment Scotland Funding (ASF) in March 2022, to Strategic Equity Funding (SEF). Strategic Equity Funding of £43 million is being shared by all 32 local authorities from April 2022 to March 2026 to invest in approaches to achieving the mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC). This move towards a more centralised resource has allowed us to focus our efforts, across Fife, on what works in closing the poverty related attainment gap.

1.11   An overview of all the Scottish Attainment Challenge funding is shown in the table below (fig 1):

Fund Sources	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 (final)	Total
Strategic Equity	£859,490	£1,708,651	£2,557,812	£3,406,972	£8,532,925
Pupil Equity	£10,456,020	£10,456,020	£10,456,020	£10,456,020	£41,824,080
Care Experienced	£697,025	£697,025	£697,025	£697,025	£2,788,100
Total	£12,012,535	£12,861,696	£13,710,857	£14,560,017	£53,145,105

Figure 1

1.12 The mission of this refreshed Challenge was clearly set out, namely to "use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap." Our Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) Plan 22/23 set out our response to this policy landscape and the way in which we would use this funding to support our most vulnerable learners in achieving their potential whilst closing the gap between those learners living in the most and least deprived areas across Fife.

1.13 Our SEF plan has been developed collaboratively with school leaders, families and partners. Our "Taking a Closer Look" review, which evaluated the work of schools receiving Challenge School Funding and those receiving Pupil Equity Funding, gave a rich source of evidence on which to base strategic decisions around year one funding of SEF. During each review the team met with school senior leadership teams, teachers and practitioners. The team also met with learners, parents and partners supporting the work of the programme. This work also included questionnaires and focus groups, of pupils, families and staff, to support us in identifying what was making a difference in our aim to close the poverty related attainment gap. Further consultation with staff and families across Fife through questionnaires reinforced the themes set out in the SEF plan.

1.14 Over the past year Fife's Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) plan has focussed on building on what we know to have made a difference to outcomes for children from our evaluation of the previous Scottish Attainment Funding through the School's Programme funding, Pupil Equity Funding and more recently through the Care Experienced Funding. Using this evidence, we have looked to scale and spread interventions which have been shown to have had greatest impact on our learners and families.

1.15 Evaluation and evidence from this work showed greatest impact through the following themes:

- Literacy - Early Language Intervention
- Numeracy - focussing upon the knowledge and application of developing an understanding of number sense as the building blocks for future learning.
- Health & Wellbeing
- Nurturing Approaches
- Counselling
- Mentoring Programmes
- Family Engagement and Support
- Use of Quality Improvement Methodology

1.16   During our consultation with staff (1054 responses) and families (2793 responses) people were asked to indicate areas that they felt were most important to support with the strategic equity funding.

1.17   Participants were asked to rank from most to least important what mattered to them from:

- Support for literacy and numeracy
- Support for professional learning in literacy and numeracy
- Support for mental health
- Support for family engagement
- Support for school attendance

1.18   Families and staff were also given the opportunity to identify other areas not listed above. Response from this indicated that some families would welcome further support for children with an identified additional support need whilst others identified areas such as outdoor learning and school excursions. Support in these areas will be developed through our Additional Support Needs and Curriculum strategies.

1.19   From the responses gathered, support for literacy and numeracy and support for professional learning in literacy and numeracy were identified as either first or second choice for the majority of families, with support for mental health and family engagement being selected as 3rd and 4th choice by most. Attendance was the least important area identified by families. However, our data shows that this is an area that requires resource to support improvement and that this is closely aligned to support for mental health and family engagement.

1.20   Staff responses showed a similar picture with regards to support for literacy and numeracy with the majority of staff identifying this as either their first or second choice in terms of importance. However, staff also identified strongly that there was a need to support mental health with this being closely identified by most staff as their first or second choice. Support for family engagement and professional learning were selected as 3rd and 4th in terms of importance with attendance identified as least important. However, as noted above our data shows that there is a need to support work on improving attendance across our schools.

1.21   These themes formed the focus of our Strategic Equity Fund Workstreams through lenses of Professional Learning, Learner Engagement, Curriculum, Learner Pathways and Strengthening Relationships.

1.22   In 2022/23, Fife Council schools received £10,456,020 of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), to support the closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap. This can be broken down as follows:

Primary - £ 7.6 million
Secondary - £ 2.7million
Special - £ 160 000

1.23   As in previous years the funding allocation has been calculated using the most recently available Healthy Living Survey and Pupil Census data and is based on:

- The estimated number of P1-P5 pupils who would be registered for free school meals using the national eligibility criteria.
- The number of P6-P7 and S1-3 pupils who are registered for free school meals.
- The number of special school pupils in the P1-S3 age range registered for free school meals.

1.24 In session, 2020-21 free school meal registration in Fife was 21.8% for primary aged children and 17.9% for pupils attending secondary school. These are the figures upon which the funding was set for all schools for the four years from 2022/23 to 2025/26.

1.25 Across the six years the Attainment Scotland Funding has been in place, schools have identified a range of barriers to learning for pupils who were most disadvantaged through poverty. Some common themes included:

- Attendance and Engagement
- Resilience
- Mental wellbeing
- Family Engagement

These themes have underpinned the Pupil Equity Fund planning undertaken across Fife's schools.

1.26 Furthermore, costs associated with school can put pressure on low-income families and put children and young people at risk of missing out on opportunities and feeling different, ashamed and stigmatised. Schools across Fife are sensitive to the increasing number of families facing socio-economic challenges. Our ethos and culture ensure that the dignity of families is respected while ensuring that children and young people do not miss out on opportunities and experiences because of financial barriers.

1.27 In 21//22 there were 1.6% Care Experienced Children and Young People within Fife schools. Care Experienced young people attain less well than their peers. Nationally a lower proportion of care experienced young people achieve their expected level of Literacy and Numeracy in Primary school. The biggest gap nationally exist at P4, see figure 2 below.

Area	National Gap	Fife Gap
Reading P4	29%	22%
Writing P4	32%	32%
Numeracy P4	33%	30%

Figure 2

1.28 Across Scotland 78% of care experienced school leavers have one or more qualification at Level 4 or better this compares to 96.4% for all leavers. More information can be found in the Education Outcomes for Looked After Children 2021/22.

1.29 Using the Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding,our *Learning with Care* Strategy looks to address concerns around attendance, achievement and sustained positive destinations of Fife's Care Experienced children and young people. The key aims of the strategy are:

- To support Education and Social Work Services within the Belonging to Fife strategic commitment for young people to be cared for and learning in their own families and communities.
- To ensure that children and young people's right to experience success in learning is met, enabling them to maximise their potential and develop motivation to pursue their personal strengths and ambitions.
- To quality assure and support the educational planning for those in Kinship care whose placement is at risk of breaking down.
- To work with colleagues in social work to further support young people at risk of being taken into care in order to maintain stability and continuity in their education.
- To build staff capacity across the directorate to deliver the spirit and essence of The Promise's recommendations.

2.0 Progress & Impact

Attainment Reform

2.1 **Process for Improvement**

This improvement work is being driven through 3 Primary Drivers: Equity, Improved Attendance and Engagement and High-Quality Learning, Teaching and Assessment. This work is underpinned by building Quality Improvement Capacity, Culture and Capability in all staff and using data to inform improvement planning and implementation. All work is supported by strategic groups who focus on improvement and measure impact through identified secondary drivers and report regularly to Strategic Attainment Reform Group. Various approaches have been taken to support raising attainment and achievement across all establishments. These include building capacity in quality improvement, high quality learning, teaching and assessment, equity and attendance.

2.2 **Building Capacity in Quality Improvement**

- All establishments completed a SQR for 2021-2022 and IP for 2022-2023. All improvement plans focus on priorities to raise attainment, attendance or engagement in line with Directorate Improvement priorities.
- 38 Early Years and Primary Leaders and 6 Secondary Leaders are engaging in professional learning to support external scrutiny within their own establishments.
- 13 establishments have been inspected by Education Scotland. Across all inspections 94% received evaluations of satisfactory or above. 24% received evaluations of very good or above and this is an increase from 17% in session 2019-2020.
- During 2022/23 session five Quality Improvement Programmes involving 45 settings (over 115 staff) leading 64 projects were undertaken to improve outcomes for children and young people. The programmes focussed on improving writing, nurture, reading, listening and talking, and attendance.

2.3 **High Quality Learning, Teaching & Assessment**

Approaches to high quality learning, teaching and assessment have included promoting play pedagogy in the early years, development of assessment and moderation networks, improving digital literacy and targeted approaches to literacy and numeracy:

2.3.1 Assessment and Moderation Network

- Almost all schools have an Assessment and Moderation network link.
- 40 Quality Assessment and Moderation Support Officers (QAMSO's) in Fife have been trained by Education Scotland with almost all clusters represented.
- This work is supporting the development of practitioner knowledge, understanding and confidence of effective approaches and strategies, leading to improved experiences and outcomes for children and young people.

2.3.2 Promoting Play Pedagogy in the Early Years

- To support learning within the early years and improve attainment in literacy and numeracy, Playful Pedagogy is being developed across our early primary curriculum. This a way of integrating children's play experiences with curricular learning, giving pupils the flexibility to find their own solutions to both new and existing problems.
- The Empowering Playful Pedagogy professional learning was attended by 32 schools/nurseries across Fife. Of those who attended almost all found the information session to be impactful. From school visits there is evidence of play pedagogy impacting on children's independent learning skills. From data analysis there is evidence that Fife practitioners are actively engaging with online supports in relation to Play Pedagogy. This is leading to increased engagement within the learning community/ network, which in turn ensures practitioners are implementing effective pedagogies in play.

2.3.3 Improving Digital Literacy

- 23 schools have been awarded with the Digital Schools award and 102 schools have registered for the award. 19 schools across Fife have had the opportunity to be involved across the South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) in a Digital Connectors programme supporting digital learning improvement planning and professional learning of staff.
- Various professional learning opportunities have been provided for school staff and our digital literacy progression has been refreshed from Early to Fourth level. This work is ensuring that practitioners have the skills, knowledge and understanding of digital technologies to support and enhance learning for all children and young people.

2.3.4 Targeted approaches to improving Numeracy and Literacy

- Variety of professional learning opportunities have been provided to upskill practitioners with core approaches within Fife.

- In Fife schools where the Workshop for Literacy approach and Conceptual Numeracy approach are fully embedded, there is evidence that this impacts positively on levels of attainment across literacy and numeracy.

Strategic Equity Fund

2.4   An evaluation of the implementation of the Strategic Equity Fund plan 22/23 found that through the professional learning offer supported by this work that most teaching staff now reported an increased confidence in practice when delivering Workshop for Literacy and Conceptual Numeracy both of which are core approaches across our schools. In upskilling staff and developing staff confidence evidence from learning partnerships indicates and improved quality of lesson across schools who have engaged which is improving learner engagement.

2.5   An evaluation of projects using Quality Improvement Methodology (QI) to improve children's writing showed that almost all (92%) teaching staff involved reported that the QI *Improving Writing* programme increased confidence in practice. This translated into the average percentage of pupils working within their expected Curriculum for Excellence level in writing by June 23, increasing from 72.7% to 79.4% in classes participating in this work.

2.6   Our work towards supporting learner engagement through the 50 Things to Do Before You're 5 app is in its' infancy however, the app is now established and working well within our early years' centres. The app has also been shared with all partner providers and Health Visitors have been made aware of resource to promote with families. This app aims to help every child reach important health, learning, and wellbeing milestones, by providing 50 low or no cost ideas for play, to families that: improve parental confidence in engaging in playful family learning with their child; improve engagement in outdoor play and learning, improving fine and gross motor skills improve school readiness including better self-regulation, metacognition and resilience and improve language and communication skills.

2.7   To support our aim to improve attendance we have been undertaking a whole family approach to this which has made use of Quality Improvement Methodology to support our SEF funded family and pupil support workers in identifying the barriers that young people and families are having with regards to school attendance and consider possible strategies to improve this. This has involved specific training for staff as well as bespoke coaching support and has made use of our wider partnership with Health colleagues and third sector organisations such as Fife Gingerbread.

2.8   Three primary and five secondary schools were involved in this work. All were able to test strategies and track attendance data to show if implemented changes had an impact. All schools involved saw improved attendance for individuals and wider cohorts of learners.

2.9   In our secondary sector MCR Pathways (Motivation, Commitment and Resilience) MCR Pathways has been used to support 198 young people across S1 to S6. 98 of these were young people with social work involvement with the other 100 having instability in their home environment. Feedback from young people and their mentors indicated that young people supported through this programme were well supported and valued the contribution that their mentor made to the wellbeing and choices.

Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund

2.10 Key outcomes of the Learning with Care strategy 22/23 evaluated within the annual report included:

- 75 % of primary aged children who received targeted support from *Learning with Care* showed improvements in their attainment.
- 50 pupils were supported through additional pupil support hours. This allowed almost all of them to increase their engagement in class with their peers.
- There is a minority of S1-S3 students, referred for non-attendance/ transition from out-with the authority who are yet to show improvements in attainment.
- For children and young people presenting with chronic non-attendance, improvement in attainment is a longer-term aim; the primary aim is engagement and relationship building, in order to build foundations which will lead to improvements in attainment.

Case studies that exemplify our close partnership working can be found in Appendix 2.

Pupil Equity Fund

2.11 From our monitoring of spend in session 2022/23 schools were allocated a total of £11 million *(Rounded to two significant figures)*. With the carry forward from session 2021/22 schools had a total of £16 million to spend. From this, they spent a total of £12 million (75%) by April with a further £ 3.75 million by the end of the academic session, The underspend of £225 000 equates to 2%. Close monitoring of the allocated spend has seen a marked reduction in underspent funds, this has reduced from 22% to just 2%. There has been acceptance from the Scottish Government that figures need to be considered after the end of the financial year as many staff funded by this stream will be paid through to August.

2.12 During session 22/23, schools used Pupil Equity Funding within the five themed areas below. The table in figure 3 shows the proportion of spend in each area.

Theme	Percentage of Spend
Literacy	41%
Numeracy	16%
Health and Wellbeing/ Family Engagement	24%
Pedagogy	2%
Attendance/ Engagement	13%
other	4%

Figure 3

2.13 There has been an increase in spending targeted at improving attendance and engagement and a reduction in spend targeted at numeracy.

2.14   As in previous years, many schools have made use of Pupil Equity Funding to recruit additional staff. These staff are employed over and above the school's core provision and are used to target support, monitor the impact of interventions, and identify pupils who would benefit from targeted interventions. This additional staffing continues to include Pupil Support Assistants, teaching staff and additional promoted staff such as Principal Teachers and, in some schools, Depute Head Teachers. In all instances, a key role of these staff is to build the capacity of other staff within the establishment and to support them in developing practice to ensure that the work being undertaken is sustainable for the future. These staff members have remits that are linked to Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap.

2.15   A minority of schools use their funding to provide a counsellor. One school's feedback on this intervention highlights:

- It has had many positive outcomes and supported a significant number of young people within the school.
- Supported an after school therapeutic poetry class.
- Pupils have a safe secure place they can come and share concerns that sometimes can be difficult to discuss in class.

2.16   Systems are in place in almost all schools to ensure that children and young people can access additional experiences such as excursions and residential experiences. Targeted interventions, such as breakfast clubs and holiday programmes ensure that children and young people are not missing out as a result of hunger. All secondary and special schools have removed all charges for curriculum subjects and almost all schools have systems in place to ensure sensitivity around fundraising and minimising events such as non-uniform days.

3.0 Outcomes

3.1   The following section provides an overview of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) achievement level data for Fife and Scotland, for both literacy and numeracy.

Achievement of CfE for literacy in stages P1, P4 and P7

3.2   The figure below shows the percentage of learners in stages P1, P4 and P7 (combined) who had achieved the expected level of CfE by the end of the school year for literacy. The figure compares levels of achievement in Fife and Scotland. No data is available for Scotland for 2019/20, as data was not collected by the Scottish Government. National data for 2022/23 will be available in December.
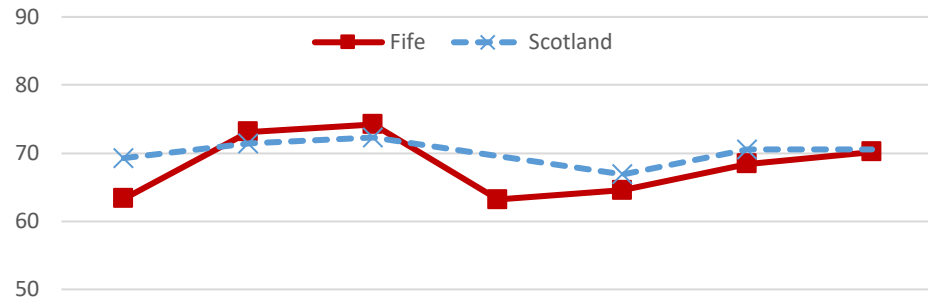
	2016/17 Total	2017/18 Total	2018/19 Total	2019/20 Total	2020/21 Total	2021/22 Total	2022/23 Total
Fife	63.3	73.1	74.2	63.2	64.6	68.4	70.3
Scotland	69.2	71.4	72.3	N/A	66.9	70.5	N/A

Figure 4

3.3 The table below shows achievement of CfE by learners in stages P1, P4 and P7 (combined) for literacy. Data is shown for learners in SIMD Quintiles 1 and 5. Data is also shown for the attainment gap between outcomes for these two groups of learners.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
SIMD Quintile 1	53.1	64.2	64.5	49.6	52.6	55.8	59.0
SIMD Quintile 5	76.1	82.7	83.0	76.9	76.3	78.1	81.2
Attainment Gap	**23.0**	**18.6**	**18.5**	**27.3**	**23.7**	**22.2**	**22.2**

Figure 5

3.4 The figure below shows the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level of CfE in literacy for different groups of learners over the period 2017/18 to 2022/23. The table also shows the improvement in outcomes seen in 2022/23 compared with the preceding year.
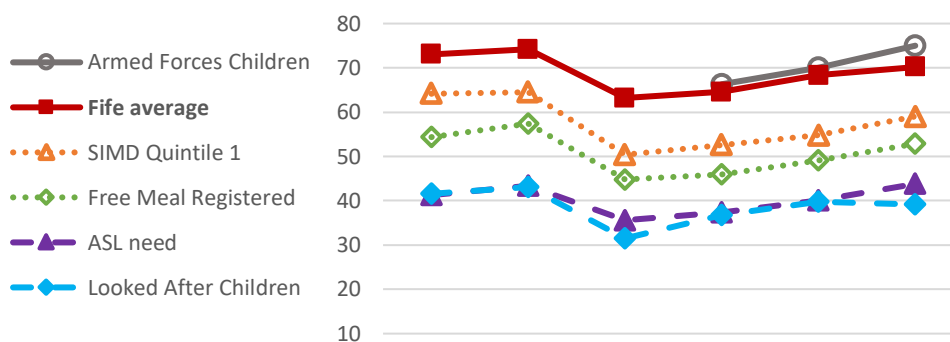
Achievement of Literacy (%)	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	Annual change
Fife average	**73.1**	**74.2**	**63.2**	**64.6**	**68.3**	**70.2**	**1.9**
Armed Forces Children	N/A	N/A	N/A	66.3	70.0	75.0	5.0
SIMD Quintile 1	64.2	64.5	50.4	52.6	54.8	59.0	4.2
Free Meal Registered	54.4	57.4	44.8	46.0	49.1	52.9	3.8
ASL need	41.3	43.4	35.6	37.4	40.0	43.8	3.8
Looked After Children	41.6	43.1	31.5	36.8	39.8	39.1	-0.7

Figure 6

Achievement of CfE for numeracy in stages P1, P4 and P7

3.5   The figure below shows the percentage of learners in stages P1, P4 and P7 (combined) who had achieved the expected level of CfE by the end of the school year for numeracy. The figure compares levels of achievement in Fife and Scotland. No data is available for Scotland for 2019/20, as data was not collected by the Scottish Government. National data for 2022/23 will be available in December.
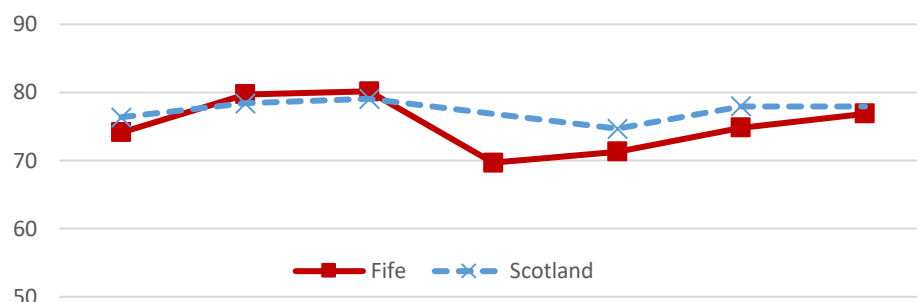
	2016/17 Total	2017/18 Total	2018/19 Total	2019/20 Total	2020/21 Total	2021/22 Total	2022/23 Total
Fife	74.1	79.7	80.2	69.7	71.3	74.8	77.0
Scotland	76.4	78.4	79.1	N/A	74.7	77.9	N/A

Figure 7

3.6   The table below shows achievement of CfE by learners in stages P1, P4 and P7 (combined) for numeracy. Data is shown for learners in SIMD Quintiles 1 and 5. Data is also shown for the attainment gap between outcomes for these two groups of learners.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
SIMD Quintile 1	66.2	72.2	71.8	56.6	59.9	63.3	67.1
SIMD Quintile 5	83.9	88.1	88.2	80.9	82.9	84.7	86.1
Attainment Gap	**17.7**	**15.8**	**16.5**	**24.3**	**23.0**	**21.5**	**19.0**

Figure 8

3.7   The figure below shows the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level of CfE in numeracy for different groups of learners over the period 2017/18 to 2022/23. The table also shows the improvement in outcomes seen in 2022/23 compared with the preceding year.
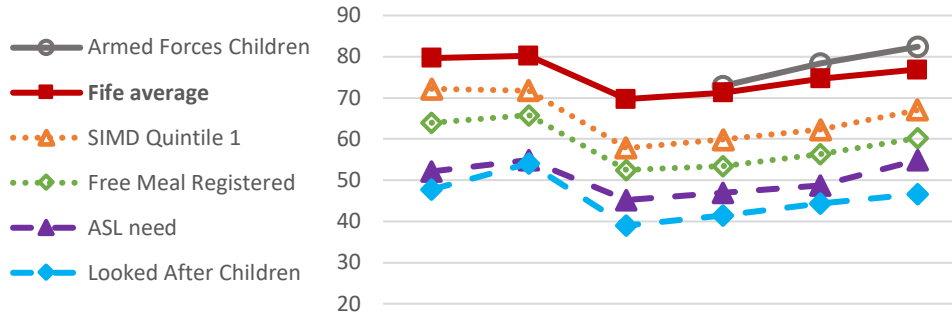
Achievement of Numeracy (%)	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	Annual change
Fife average	**79.7**	**80.2**	**69.7**	**71.3**	**74.7**	**76.9**	**2.2**
Armed Forces Children	N/A	N/A	N/A	72.9	78.3	82.4	4.1
SIMD Quintile 1	72.2	71.8	57.8	59.9	62.3	67.1	4.8
Free Meal Registered	63.9	65.8	52.5	53.4	56.4	60.2	3.8
ASL need	52.2	54.9	45.2	47.0	48.7	54.9	6.2
Looked After Children	47.7	54.1	39.0	41.5	44.4	46.7	2.3

Figure 9

Summary of trends in overall attainment in stages P1, P4 and P7

3.8 Comparing figures 4 and 7, we may see that overall levels of achievement for both literacy and numeracy show general trends of improvement over time, but that these have been disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic is evident in:

- A significant fall in levels of achievement in 2019/20
- A significant widening of the attainment gap in 2019/20

3.9 Comparing figures 5 and 8 we may see that there is an improving trend and evidence of a closing in the attainment gap between SIMD Quintiles 1 and 5 following since 2019/20. However, the rate of improvement (both for overall levels of attainment and in terms of reducing the attainment gap) is slower than might have been desired.

3.10 Comparing figures 6 and 9, we may see that outcomes for a range of learners at risk of lower achievement have seen improvement over time but have generally tracked overall levels of improvement. For most of these groups, however, improvements made last year were greater than those seen overall, leading to a closing in the attainment gap for these groups. The exception is for looked after children, for whom outcomes matched overall levels of improvement in numeracy but showed no improvement in literacy; it should be noted, however, that this is a small cohort of learners.

Achievement of CfE levels in S3

3.11 The figure below presents data on CfE achievement in literacy as declared for learners in S3, in Fife and across Scotland as a whole. Outcomes are shown for both levels 3 and 4 of the curriculum. No data was collected nationally, or in Fife, during

2019/20 and 2020/21, due to the impact of the Covid pandemic. This reflects a recognition of the significant work required by secondary schools in supporting alternative models of certification for SQA outcomes in the senior phase during this period.

Achievement of literacy at level 3 or better by the end of stage S3 (%)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Fife	82.6	80.4	79.7	N/A	N/A	80.1	85.7
Scotland	87.1	87.3	87.9	N/A	N/A	85.5	N/A

Achievement of literacy at level 4 by the end of stage S3 (%)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Fife	32.0	29.6	32.6	N/A	N/A	30.7	54.8
Scotland	44.2	46.4	48.2	N/A	N/A	47.7	N/A

Figure 10

3.12   The figure below presents data on CfE achievement in numeracy as declared for learners in S3, in Fife and across Scotland as a whole. Outcomes are shown for both levels 3 and 4 of the curriculum. No data was collected nationally, or in Fife, during 2019/20 and 2020/21, due to the impact of the Covid pandemic. This reflects a recognition of the significant work required by secondary schools in supporting alternative models of certification for SQA outcomes in the senior phase during this period.

Achievement of numeracy at level 3 or better by the end of stage S3 (%)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Fife	86.6	84.1	88.0	N/A	N/A	88.5	87.0
Scotland	88.2	89.0	90.2	N/A	N/A	89.1	N/A

Achievement of numeracy at level 4 by the end of stage S3 (%)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Fife	48.8	40.2	54.5	N/A	N/A	48.3	59.5
Scotland	55.7	56.1	58.9	N/A	N/A	59.3	N/A

Figure 11

3.13   Following the reintroduction of CfE achievement declarations in 2021/22, arrangements to support moderation are continuing to be re-established and strengthened in the secondary sector. This continues to be a focus of improvement work.

4.0 Next Steps

4.1   In line with Directorate Improvement Priorities 2023-2026 and building on the work started through Attainment Reform in Session 2022-2023, our main focus for session 2023-2024 will be directly linked with Directorate Improvement Priority 3 – Achievement.

4.2   The key issues being addressed through this work will be a focus on continuing to close the poverty-related attainment gap within the Broad General Education and

into the Senior Phase in both literacy and numeracy. All aspects of this work will be led by the Achievement and Attainment Reform Strategic Group and identified steering groups with involvement of all stakeholders. The primary drivers are equity and equality, high quality learning, teaching and assessment, curriculum and engagement. Building leadership capacity, culture, and capacities as well as families and learners' voice will be cross cutting across all this work. An overview of this is provided in Appendix 3: Achievement Priority – Driver Diagram for 2023-2024.

4.3   The Strategic Equity Plan 23/24 was approved at Cabinet Committee in April 2023. The plan builds on the successes of the 22/23 plan and is focussed on in improvement activity within the themes listed below through the lenses of Professional Learning, Learner Engagement, Curriculum, Learner Pathways and Strengthening Relationships:

- Literacy & Numeracy
- Health & Wellbeing
- Mentoring Programmes
- Family Engagement and Support
- Use of Quality Improvement Methodology

4.4   Through the development of participatory budgeting we aim to engage more widely with communities to ensure that we are meeting their needs, involving them in decision making regarding funding at a local level. This approach will be piloted within the Beath and Glenrothes clusters. Learning from this work will inform our participatory budget strategy next session (23/24).

4.5   We will continue to focus upon improving attendance through family and learner engagement with our family support offer and multi-agency partnerships. To support re-engagement, we are developing a 1-1 tutoring offer to support those within the upper stages of primary school with low attendance. A virtual learning offer will also be developed.

4.6   Collaboration with senior leaders, practitioners, authority staff, parents and partners will be ongoing with our Cost of the School Day strategy. This includes all staff undertaking related professional learning as well as for all establishments to work with learners, parents, their local community and partners to create a Cost of the School Day position statement. This will support schools to ensure there is increased consistency across their establishment.

4.7   Schools will continue to develop effective ways to engage with stakeholders to inform their Pupil Equity Fund planning. There is evidence of strong practice in some schools, with a few schools beginning to develop approaches using participatory budgeting. We continue to support school leaders to collaborate and share learning and success through these approaches.

4.8   We have successfully secured a grant from Promise Scotland to facilitate system-level change aimed at establishing a more supportive school structure for care-experienced young people. The grant, totalling £200,000, will be disbursed in two instalments over an 18-month period. These funds will be enabling a multiagency team tasked with closely collaborating with two secondary and two primary schools, to enhance their curriculum and teaching approaches to better cater to the needs of care-experienced families. The goal is to reduce or eliminate exclusions, improve

engagement, and enhance academic performance. Furthermore, we plan to partner with two of our residential houses to develop a more comprehensive approach to supporting students' educational engagement.

4.9   To guide our efforts, a theory of change diagram has been developed, and we intend to employ quality improvement methodology to capture our key insights and progress. Oversight for this project will be provided by the Learning with Care Strategy Group, and the outcomes and lessons learned will be shared through the Directorate Improvement Plan and the Corporate Parenting Board.

4.10   Fife's stretch targets were reviewed at the end of 2022/23 school session, as part of work to develop a new Education Service Improvement Plan for 2023-26. The review of BGE stretch targets showed that a continued improvement and closing of the gap was achieved, but at a slower rate of improvement than had been achieved in the years leading up to the Covid pandemic. This reflected significant challenges facing schools (e.g., continuing increase in recorded levels of support needs relating to family issues, social and emotional issues, mental health issues). The Education Service Improvement Plan 2023/26 aims to support an increased pace of recovery over the next three years and this has been reflected in updated stretch targets set for the period 2023-26. It should be noted that, in setting these stretch targets, the Education Service has aimed to be ambitious for Fife's children and young people. This approach comes with a risk that outcomes may be lower than aimed for, but the Education Service believes that setting truly stretching targets for future improvement is essential if we are to ensure the best possible outcomes for Fife's children and young people in future years.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1   As outlined in section 3, attainment in Fife fell in 2019/20, with the attainment gap widening. Since 2019/20, levels of achievement for literacy and numeracy in Fife have been slightly lower than national and have tracked improvements seen nationally. Data for Scotland for 2022/23 is not yet available, but outcomes in Fife saw further improvement and evidence of a closing in the attainment gap for a range of learners at risk of lower levels of achievement (including SIMD Quintile 1, those registered for free school meals, and those with additional support needs for learning).

5.2   We remain ambitious in our target setting, planning and improvement activity. The improvement required collectively by Fife schools for the period 2023-26 corresponds to an overall level that matches or exceeds previous outcomes in Fife and matches the highest levels of performance seen by any similar local authority with similar levels of child poverty. This represents an ambitious but achievable improvement goal for the coming year.

5.3   Improving overall levels of attainment in the Broad General Education, and closing the attainment gap, remain priorities within the Education Service Improvement Plan for 2023-26. This is reflected in the inclusion of an improvement priority for Achievement in the Plan, and in the inclusion of Equity and Equality, Families and Learners' voice as a cross-cutting themes across all areas of improvement.

5.4   Our primary drivers for improvement in attainment and closing the attainment gap: equity; high quality learning, teaching and assessment; improved attendance and engagement will continue to frame our improvement activity moving forward.

5.5   These drivers are reflected in our SEF plan and will continue to provide the focus for our engagement with all stakeholders in ensuring that the needs of our most vulnerable children and young people are met.

5.6   Building the capacity for improvement through high quality professional learning and leadership development of staff will remain at the heart of our approaches, to support practitioners to make decisions about what works best for their learners and what has the greatest impact on their progress and achievement.

5.7   Importantly, the voices of the children and young people, and their families, will continue to underpin our on-going evaluation of what works best to improve the outcomes of all.

List of Appendices

1.   Attainment Reform Group – Driver Diagram 2022-2023
2.   Case studies from the Learning with Care strategy report.
3.   Achievement Priority – Driver Diagram for 2023-2024

References

Education Outcomes for Looked After Children 2021/22
Healthy Living Survey
Pupil Census Data
Scottish Attainment Challenge: framework for recovery and accelerating progress
Participatory Budgeting in educational establishments

Report Contacts

Jackie Funnell, Education Manager (Quality Improvement & Attainment)

Sarah Else, Education Manager (SAC (SEF), Poverty & Equalities)

Stuart Booker, Quality Improvement Officer (Strategic Planning & Performance)

Zoe Thomson, Quality Improvement Officer (Equity, Children's Rights/Pupil Voice, SAC – PEF & LWC)

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**Attainment Reform
Driver Diagram 22/23**

Primary Drivers

Secondary Drivers

Equity

Overcome poverty-related barriers to learning – Targeted/Disproportionate support

Learning with Care – Improving attainment outcomes for LAC/CE

Supporting Learners with ASN

High Quality Learning, Teaching & Assessment

Robust approaches: Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Moderation in BGE

Robust approaches: Learning, Teaching Assessment and Moderation in the Senior Phase

Tracking Pupil Progress (BGE Secondary)

Improving Digital Literacy – staff & children

Targeted approaches to improving Numeracy

Targeted approaches to improving Literacy

Improved Attendance & Engagement, including wellbeing

Strengthening Family Support Work

Targeted Emotional Wellbeing Support

Culture, Ethos & Relationships

Systems & Processes

Improving the quality of Flexible Education Agreements to increase engagement in learning

Reducing Exclusions

Building Quality Improvement Capacity, Culture and Capability in all staff
Using data to inform improvement planning and implementation

Pupil Voice is at the heart of all universal and targeted improvement work

Case Studies from *Learning with Care Strategy*

Young person (aged 10) living in residential care with complex challenging and distressed behaviours at home and in school. The team around the child ensured close communication and Learning with Care attended all meetings to provide creative solutions to ensure the young person was able to attend school full time. These included: DAPL art therapy, athletics sessions to burn off her energy, walks with staff and therapy dogs, outdoor and indoor areas created specifically for her needs. This young person was able to attend school full time.

We have seen improved attendance in primary aged pupils who are supported by our Kinship education workers

One example is a pupil who was supported during the last term of P7 and over the summer by the kinship worker, her attendance improved from 20% to 75%.

Some positive feedback from stakeholders on the learning with care teaching team.

"I do not think the young person in our care would have achieved anywhere near the number of qualifications if it wasn't for the Learning with care team and the setting in which the personalised education package is delivered. I cannot praise the team enough". Foster Carer

"I would never have managed to get as many National 4's as I did if I was at mainstream school, it's too busy and I hated it. I was so anxious about returning to Education in Fife after being in Kibble but meeting staff from Learning with Care and working at my speed made it feel much more manageable. They listened to me when I was struggling, and we were able to take breaks. I have been accepted into a Foundation Apprenticeship Course in a mainstream high school for S5 and I wouldn't have made it this far without the support of the teachers. Thank you." Young Person (S4).

The support from LWC is an example of early intervention work that has made a tremendous difference. Head Teacher, Ladybird Nursery

I could not be any more glowing about the support we've received. Primary Depute Head Teacher.

If I was a billionaire, I'd give some money to Learning with Care, so that you can have more places like you, because you can make a difference for kids like me who need it. You've always been there. It's been a constant.' Young Person (S2).

Updated driver diagram for Achievement

Based on the scatterplot for literacy in P1, P4 and P7

Based on the scatterplot for numeracy in P1, P4 and P7

Primary Drivers

Jackie

Stuart

Equity & Equality

Sarah

High Quality Learning, Teaching & Assessment

Steven

Curriculum

Mary

Engagement

Lesley

Gavin

Building Quality Improvement Capacity, Culture and Capability in leaders & staff. Using data to inform improvement planning and implementation

Secondary Drivers

Attainment Scotland Fund (SEF, PEF, Learning with Care…)

Removing barriers related to poverty, equity and equality

Reducing the impact of poverty (cost of school day)

Literacy and Numeracy Strategy 3-18 (core approaches, transitions)

ASL Strategy

Pedagogy (Core Approaches, play, transitions)

Assessment & Moderation Networks across BGE

3-18 Tracking and Monitoring (BGE tracking and primary reporting)

3-18 Learning pathways and course choices

Coherent and progressive skills framework

Approaches to 3-18 wider achievement

Universal approaches to improving attendance

Targeted approaches to improving attendance and engagement

Reducing exclusions

Leads TBC

Zoe

Families and learners voice / UNCRC

14 November 2023.
Agenda Item No. 8

Senior Phase Stage - Based Outcomes

Report by: Maria Lloyd, Head of Service, Education & Children's Services

Wards Affected: All Wards

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on current progress in improving outcomes in the senior phase of secondary schooling (stages S4 – S6).

This report provides an overview and brief commentary on the senior phase outcomes for Fife for 2023 for cohorts of learners and for specific groups of learners at this current time for SQA. https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/nq-2022-appeals-service.pdf This is in addition to the Elected Members briefing provided on 2023 SQA pre-appeal results issued on 8 August 2023. The report analyses these in relation to comparative data from session 2021-2022 and 2018-2019 when the exam arrangements were the same. Alternative arrangements for certification were in place during 2019-20 and 2020-21, due to the Covid pandemic and data for these years does not provide a like for like comparison. This report also describes the ongoing work in improving outcomes for learners in the Senior Phase of Secondary school.

This report also includes information on sustained positive destinations for school leavers from data provided by Insight (the tool used by the Scottish Government to provide both local authorities and schools with up to date data) in May 2023 and on literacy and numeracy outcomes for levels 4 and 5 from session 2022/23 versus the predictions as included in May 2023 committee report Education Scrutiny Committee of 23 May 2023

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Education Scrutiny Committee:

1. Scrutinise and comment on the senior phase outcomes for session 2022/2023 in the context of Fife data and national attainment trends.
2. Scrutinise and comment on the literacy and numeracy approach with schools and the use of the Senior Phase Analytical Tool (SPAT)
3. Scrutinise and comment on the sustained positive destinations for session 2021/2022 in the context of Fife data and national trends.
4. Support next steps identified for Session 2023-24.
5. Encourage Local Elected Members to meet with Secondary Head teachers to discuss their individual school's 2022/2023 outcomes for senior pupils and their approaches to improving attainment.

Resource Implications

There are no immediate resource implications associated with this report.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no specific legal and risk implications associated with this report.

Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed and is not necessary at this stage, as the proposals within the report do not currently represent a change to policy.

Consultation

Throughout the session, there have been a number of letters issued to both parents/carers and pupils by the Head of Service to keep them fully informed of the process being used for awarding SQA qualifications in 2023. This included information on the Appeals process: SQA website

A 3.2 (Raising Attainment and Achievement) collaborative group has been established and members include Central Officers and School Senior Leadership Teams from across Fife Secondary schools. This has provided an effective forum to share expertise and good practice and to develop a consistent approach to scrutiny of attainment data in order to raise attainment.

At our Secondary Head Collaborative meetings, approaches to improving attainment have remained a consistent agenda item. This has allowed a stronger approach to collaborative working, identifying key challenges, sharing good practice and increased scrutiny across our schools.

1.0 Background and context

Background

1.1 Last session 2021-22 was the first year of SQA exams since session 2019. In Session 2021 – 2022 COVID-19 continued to impact on schools and young people. The SQA Exam Diet went ahead and SQA provided guidance in relation to the Exam Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS) regarding young people who were unable to sit exams or complete coursework by deadlines.

This session 2022-2023 is the second year of young people sitting formal exams following covid. Due to alternative arrangements for certification being in place for session 2019-20 and 2020-21, data for these years does not provide a like for like comparison. Differences in outcomes in 2020 and 2021 may reflect alternative assessment and certification, rather than performance.

National context

1.2 There is a long-standing and well evidenced challenge facing Scotland, regarding equity of educational outcomes. This "attainment gap" exists for different reasons for a wide range of learners. It can be measured by data for a wide range of socio-economic indicators, including Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), the proportion of pupils on the school roll who are registered for free school meals (FMR), child poverty data, parental occupation, and educational qualifications. The attainment gap is also linked to the needs and life experiences of children and young people and is evident for

groups including children with a need for an additional support with learning (ASL), looked after and care experienced children.

1.3 Raising attainment and closing the equity gap remain key national policy priorities. National Improvement Framework (NIF) and improvement plan 2023: summary describes the national policy framework for schools in Scotland to achieve this goal. It set out the ambition of excellence for all through raising attainment and improving outcomes, ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to shape a sustainable future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors. To achieve equity for all, it plans to ensure every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Fife context

1.4 Improving educational attainment for all groups remains a key ambition of the Plan for Fife and within the current Education and Children's Services Directorate Improvement Plan. Priorities within the Education Improvement Plan 2023-2026 are:

- Improving Health & Wellbeing
- Improving Attendance and Engagement
- Improving Achievement (including literacy and numeracy, as well as wider achievement)
- Ensuring Positive Destinations for all young people in Fife

1.5 For each of these outcomes there are significant differences in outcomes relating to equity and equality. These include, for example, differences in outcomes relating to measures of poverty or deprivation (SIMD, registration for free school meals), Additional Support Needs for learning, or being care experienced.

1.6 For this reason, Equity and Equality is recognised as a cross-cutting challenge which will need to be addressed across all of our improvement activity. Central to addressing this challenge will be to work to promote the rights of our children and young people.

1.7 In order to achieve improved attainment and outcomes, the local authority provides a range of supports directly to improve outcomes for learners in secondary schools:

- Bi-annual school outcome reviews are held by Senior Education Officers with each school Senior Leadership Team and actions are developed and implemented.
- Secondary Head teacher meetings have a focus on improving attainment.
- Officers link to each school to support and challenge school leaders to create robust and appropriate Standards and Quality reports and School Improvement Plans
- Schools are provided with a range of National, local and school specific data to support understanding of the school's context and identify gaps in attainment at cohort, subject and individual pupil level.
- The authority leads Learning Partnership reviews across schools to facilitate collaborative review of practice and support the work of schools in relation to attainment. All Secondary schools participate in this.
- Senior Education Officers facilitate structured opportunities for professional learning for senior school leaders to support the sharing of best practice in improving outcomes for learners including the 3.2 Attainment Collaborative group and the Secondary Head Teacher Collaborative.

- Professional Learning in relation to self- evaluation and quality improvement methodology is provided for leaders across schools.
- Subject networks support principal teachers and class teachers to build their experience of moderation of assessment judgements and to promote a shared understanding of standards in relation to senior phase qualifications.
- The Fife Positive Destinations Network provides ongoing support to schools to maximise positive destinations for learners.
- The development and implementation of a risk prediction tool to further enhance the data available for individuals and cohorts of pupils to ensure targeted support is provided appropriately.
- Training on use of data via Power BI and Insight is available locally and nationally.
- Support and challenge are provided for schools in relation to their planned interventions to reduce the poverty related attainment gap and effective, targeted use of Scottish Equity Funding.
- The South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) provides additional support to schools by facilitating collaborative opportunities for Fife schools to work with schools across SEIC. SEIC associates are also involved in scrutiny activities across our schools.
- Area committee meetings allow for further scrutiny by local Elected Members.

Raising attainment in secondary schools

1.8   As part of the Working Time Agreement (WTA), all schools develop and agree their Quality Improvement calendar. Throughout the school session, schools engage in a range of quality improvement practices to improve attainment. These can include:

- Development of School Improvement Plans which set clear improvement targets, articulate measurable outcomes for learners and describe appropriate actions.
- Analysis of SQA attainment at cohort, subject, class and individual level to inform improvement planning.
- Supporting attainment action planning at subject level through Subject Scrutiny Reviews in each department of a school.
- Developing school-based approaches to improving the quality of learning and teaching.
- Tracking and monitoring of all learners at key points in the session to identify progress, gaps, concerns and plan appropriate, timely interventions especially for those who need targeted interventions.
- Tracking of groups or individual learners with identified barriers to learning and allocation of additional support as required.
- Ensuring learning conversations with learners to support their understanding of their progress and identify next steps in their learning.
- Regular communication with parents to inform them of progress and next steps in their child's learning.
- Providing study support opportunities throughout the session and during Easter holidays.
- After school and online support for those experiencing attendance issues.
- Developing curricular pathways with college and other partners to ensure appropriate progression and maximise attainment.
- Tracking of attendance and planned support for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Further development of the recently developed Senior Phase Analytical Tool (SPAT) to provide projected measures of attainment for current learners in senior phase and identify effective interventions for learners off track.

2.0 Literacy and numeracy

S4 Literacy and Numeracy

2.1   Literacy and numeracy are key skills for learning and future sustained employability. Ensuring that young people are equipped with attainment in these key skills is a key goal by the end of stage S4.

2.2   Figure 1, below, provides an overview of outcomes for literacy and numeracy by the end of stage S4. As can be seen:

- Attainment in Fife for 2022/23 exceeded attainment for both the Virtual Comparator and national outcomes for: literacy at SCQF levels 3 and 4, and for numeracy at SCQF levels 3, 4 and 5.
- Figures are also given, for comparison, for 2021/22 (the preceding year) and 2018/19 (the last year of similar assessments before alternative assessments were introduced due to the covid pandemic)

Establishment	% Level 3 Literacy	% Level 3 Numeracy	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 5 Numeracy
Outcomes in 2022/23						
Fife	95.9	95.7	93.7	91.3	74.4	65.4
Virtual Comparator	94.1	92.7	91.8	87.7	75.4	63.3
National	94.3	93.0	92.1	88.2	75.8	64.1
Outcomes in 2021/22						
Fife	94.4	94.2	92.1	89.5	70.5	61.5
Virtual Comparator	93.5	92.8	91.0	86.5	73.2	59.8
National	94.3	93.6	92.0	87.9	74.6	61.6
Outcomes in 2018/19						
Fife	92.0	94.1	89.8	90.7	68.9	58.6
Virtual Comparator	92.8	91.5	89.8	85.4	70.6	56.1
National	93.5	92.4	90.9	86.8	71.8	57.4

Figure 1. An overview of attainment for literacy and numeracy in 2022/23 for: Fife, Fife's Insight Virtual Comparator (this is a benchmark figure that allows for levels of deprivation, learner needs, etc) and the Scottish national average.

2.3   Figure 2, below, summarises the change in outcomes seen for Fife, the virtual comparator and National outcomes: since 2021/22, last year and since 2018/19, the final year before the Covid-19 pandemic. As can be seen:

- Improvements in attainment in Fife compared with 2021/22 were greater than those seen for the virtual comparator and national for all six measures.
- Outcomes in 2022/23 in Fife have seen a significant improvement since 2018/19 for: literacy at SCQF levels 3, 4 and 5, and for numeracy at SCQF level 5.
- Although the improvements seen in Fife since 2018/19 for numeracy at SCQF levels 3 and 4 are smaller, Fife was performing strongly relative to virtual comparator and national outcomes in 2018/19 and continues to do so.

Establishment	% Level 3 Literacy	% Level 3 Numeracy	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 5 Numeracy
Change since 2021/22						
Fife	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.9	3.9	3.9
Virtual Comparator	0.6	0.0	0.8	1.1	2.2	3.5
National	0.1	-0.6	0.1	0.3	1.2	2.5
Change since 2018/19						
Fife	4.0	1.6	3.9	0.6	5.5	6.8
Virtual Comparator	1.4	1.2	2.0	2.2	4.8	7.2
National	0.8	0.6	1.2	1.4	4.0	6.7

Figure 2. A summary of change in outcomes for Fife, the virtual comparator and National outcomes since 2021/2022 and since 2018/2019, the previous year of normal assessments

2.4   Figure 3,below, summarises the five year trend in numeracy attainment by the end of S4 for Fife and across Scotland. As can be seen:

- Outcomes at SCQF level 4 for numeracy in Fife are slightly higher than those seen across the rest of Scotland and have remained relatively consistent across the last 5 years
- Outcomes at SCQF level 5 for numeracy in Fife closely match those seen across Scotland and have shown some improvement over the last 5 years

	Diet Year		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Fife	% Level 4 Numeracy at end S4		90.7	91.0	90.3	89.5	91.3
	% Level 5 Numeracy at end S4		58.6	58.7	56.6	61.5	65.4
Scotland	% Level 4 Numeracy at end S4		86.8	88.8	86.6	87.9	88.2
	% Level 5 Numeracy at end S4		57.4	61.4	56.4	61.6	64.1

Figure 3. Five year trend in Numeracy attainment by end of S4 for Fife and across Scotland outcomes at National 4 and 5 levels.

2.5   Figure 4 below, summarises the five year trend in literacy attainment by the end of S4 for Fife and across Scotland. As can be seen:

- Outcomes at SCQF level 4 for literacy in Fife closely match those seen across Scotland and have shown an improvement over the last 5 years
- Outcomes at SCQF level 5 for Literacy in Fife closely match those seen across Scotland and have shown an improvement over the last 5 years
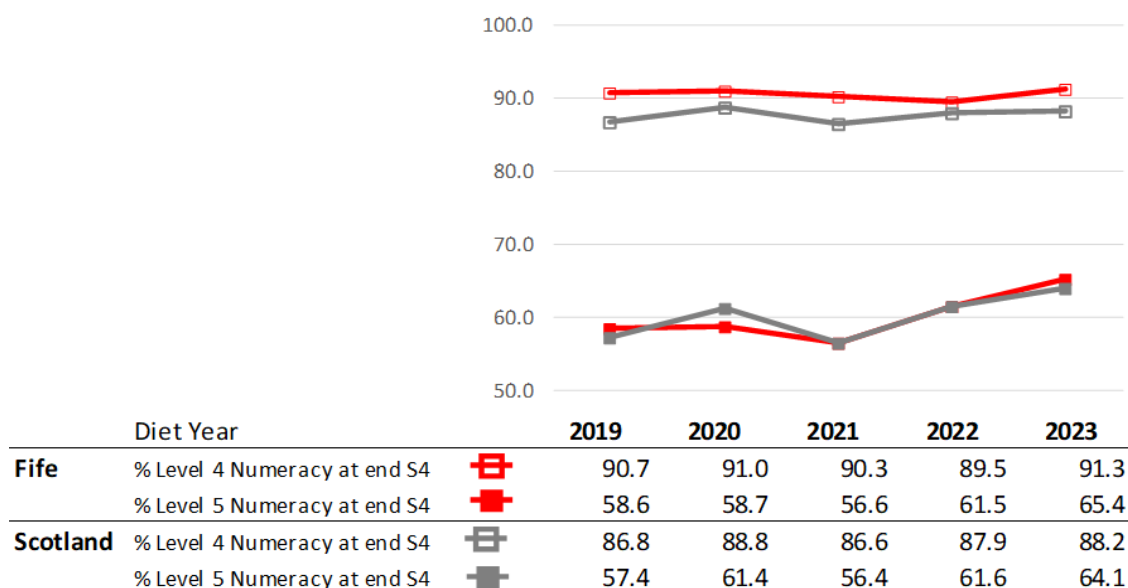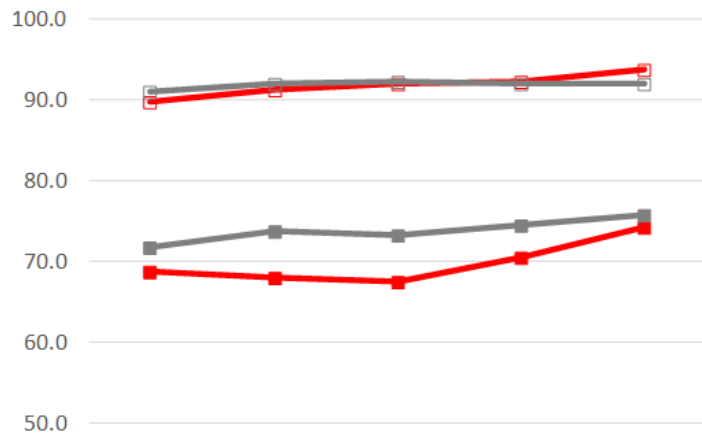
Diet Year		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Fife % Level 4 Literacy at end S4		89.8	91.3	92.1	92.1	93.7
% Level 5 Literacy at end S4		68.9	68.1	67.6	70.5	74.4
Scotland % Level 4 Literacy at end S4		90.9	92.0	92.2	92.0	92.1
% Level 5 Literacy at end S4		71.8	73.8	73.3	74.6	75.8

Figure 4. Five year trend in Literacy attainment by end of S4 for Fife and across Scotland outcomes at National 4 and 5 levels.

2.6   Appendix 4 provides a comparison of the data provided by schools in May 2023 on predicted attainment levels across SCQF level 4 and 5 in literacy and numeracy for Fife against the actual results for session 2022/23. This information was provided by all schools. As can be seen:

- Across SCQF level 4 in literacy and numeracy, the attainment results were generally in line with predicted results across Fife schools. For free meal registered (FMR) and ASN young people, results were slightly lower than predicted in literacy.
- Across SCQF level 5 in literacy, the attainment results were generally in line with predicted results across Fife schools.
- Across SCQF level 5 in numeracy, the attainment results were significantly higher than predicted attainment levels. This increase included young people living in SIMD quintile 1, FMR young people and young people with Additional Support Needs.

The attainment gap in literacy and numeracy

2.7   Appendix 1 provides an overview of the attainment gap between SIMD Quintile 1 (areas identified as being in the most deprived 20% across Scotland) and SIMD Quintile 5 (areas identified as being in the least deprived 20% across Scotland). The appendix includes data relating to a range of qualifications and qualification sets that enable better post school opportunities for young people, including a number of measures of literacy and numeracy.

2.8   As can be seen from the literacy and numeracy data in Appendix 1, there have been significant improvements for S4 pupils living in SIMD quintile 1 over the past five years, with a significant closing of the attainment gap. In particular:

- There has been a 7.6% increase in the percentage of SIMD 1 pupils achieving 3 or more National 4 qualifications with an increase from 73.8% to 81.4% between 2018/19

and 2022/23. This has resulted in a 6.5% reduction in the attainment gap for this measure.

- There has been a 6.4% increase in the percentage of SIMD 1 pupils achieving literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 with an increase from 76.9% to 83.3% between 2018/19 and 2022/23. This has resulted in a 4.9% reduction in the attainment gap for this measure.
- There has been a 10.1% increase in the percentage of SIMD 1 pupils achieving literacy at SCQF level 5 (with an increase from 51.4% to 61.5% between 2018/19 and 2022/23). This has resulted in a 5.6% reduction in the attainment gap for this measure.

2.9   Outcomes for literacy and numeracy for pupils living in SIMD quintile 5 have remained broadly constant over a number of measures for the past five years, but with levels of attainment being generally high. The percentage of pupils achieving numeracy at SCQF level 5 has increased by 6.1%, from 77.9% to 84.0%)

Areas for further improvement

2.10   Appendix 2 provides a comparison of overall outcomes in Fife with those seen across Scotland. The appendix includes the same range of qualifications and qualification sets as appendix 1, including the same measures of literacy and numeracy.

2.11   As can be seen from appendix 2:

- The number of pupils achieving literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 are better in Fife than those across Scotland (3.96% higher in 2022/23)
- Outcomes for literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 5 are generally in line with those seen across Scotland.
- However, wider attainment for pupils in Fife is lower than those seen across Scotland (7.98% lower in 2022/23).

2.12   Appendix 3 provides a comparison of overall outcomes in Fife for a number of different groups of learners. The appendix includes the same range of qualifications and qualification sets as appendices 1 and 2.

2.13   As can be seen from appendix 3, attainment in literacy and numeracy is generally lower for disadvantaged and vulnerable young people, with attainment being particularly low for looked after children. Published data for the rest of Scotland shows a similar picture, with significant attainment gaps for disadvantaged and vulnerable young people.

2.14   Further analysis of the data shows that:

- There are significant overlaps between these groups (e.g. with many, but not all, pupils living in SIMD quintile 1 having an additional support need or being looked after, etc).
- Levels of attainment are particularly low for young people facing multiple barriers to learning (e.g. for those living in SIMD quintile 1 who have an additional support need and are registered for free school meals, etc).
- Outcomes vary significantly within the group of pupils with additional support needs, reflecting both the ways in which different needs present a barrier to learning and the extent to which those needs are being well met.

Supporting further improvements in literacy and numeracy

2.15   Further improving attainment in literacy and numeracy for disadvantaged and vulnerable young people remains a key area for improvement, including for those with an additional support need, our looked after and care experienced young people. Significant further

improvement will require an ability to understand and respond to a diverse range of barriers to learning, particularly multiple barriers to learning. This is a key focus of improvement activity at the present time.

2.16   In order to further support this work, the Directorate has extended its use of stretch targets (which have been used to support improvement in literacy and numeracy in primary schools) to the secondary sector. This supported the raising attainment agenda for session 2022/2023 and will remain a strong focus for session 2023/24.

2.17   Schools have been provided with a range of data to help them identify and set their own stretch targets, including data about:

- The school's context in particular, the school's SIMD profile.
- The range of outcomes seen across Scotland within each social context (e.g. the range of outcomes for each SIMD quintile, etc).

2.18   The goal is to ensure that Fife's schools are aiming to achieve the highest level of performance across SCQF levels 3, 4 and 5 for both literacy and numeracy separately.

2.19   Collaborative work continues with all secondary schools to develop an approach to setting stretch targets that can be used as the basis for ongoing improvement during the next Directorate Improvement Plan period (which runs from August 2023 – July 2026).

2.20   A network of senior leaders from across Secondary Schools and officers has been established with a particular focus on Raising Attainment across schools (3.2 Collaborative). The focus for session 2022/23 has been on the development of a risk prediction tool, the development and sharing of evidence based strategies for raising and the review of Fife presentation policy and guidance.

2.21   Work is now taking place to identify key priorities for session 2023/24 and share good practice, both from local and national practice. This includes the further development and implementation of the risk prediction tool, further development of the Senior Phase Analytical Tool and implementation of the Directorate Literacy and Numeracy strategy, across transitions, Broad General Education and Senior Phase.

3.0 Attainment outcomes

3.1   Appendix 2 provides a comparison of overall outcomes in Fife with those seen across Scotland, as well as improvement trends over the past five years in Fife. Data is presented for a range of key qualifications and qualification sets that might typically be achieved in stages S4 or S5 (including some measures of literacy and numeracy, discussed in section 2).

3.2   Key points for S4:

- Generally, improvements over the past five years across S4 outcomes, particularly for SCQF level 4 including literacy and numeracy.
- Less improvement seen at levels of attainment below SCQF level 4. In this group most learners have specific support needs and/or they experience multiple barriers to learning.
- Less improvement seen at SCQF level 5. Literacy attainment is generally in line with levels of attainment seen across Scotland. Wider attainment at SCQF level 5 is significantly below levels of attainment seen across Scotland.

3.3   Key points for S5:

- The percentage of learners staying on to stages S5 and S6 in 2022-23 was lower than in the last year. As a result of this, attainment measures for stages S5 and S6 that are based on those pupils who continued their schooling to complete S5 or/and S6 reflect a decline in 2022-23.
- Little change in S5 attainment at SCQF level 6 overall for young people in Fife which are significantly below levels of attainment seen across Scotland.

3.4   Appendix 1 provides an overview of attainment outcomes for SIMD quintiles 1 (the most deprived) and 5 (the least deprived). It highlights that:

- There has been little improvement in S5 attainment overall for young people living in SIMD1 and SIMD 5.
- For young people living in SIMD 1, there has been a slight improvement in those achieving 3 or more passes at SCQF level 6.
- For young people living in SIMD 5, there has been a decrease in those achieving 1or more and 3 or more qualifications at SCQF level 6 but an increase in those achieving 4 or 5 qualifications at grade A.

3.5   Figure 1, below, provides an overview of attainment results at SCQF level 5 by grade for all year groups from 2019 to 2023 (by number of entries and percentage of entries).

 As can be seen:

- There has been a significant rise in entries at SCQF level 5 from 2019 to 2023.
- From 2019 to 2023, there has been an increase in young people achieving grades of A to D. The most significant increase is the number of A passes from 2019 to 2023
- Whilst there has been an increase of No Awards at SCQF level 5 from 2019 to 2023, the number of entries from 2019 to 2023 has increased far more significantly.

Number of entries

Year	A	B	C	D	N/A	Total
2019	5331	4201	3703	2685	2100	18020
2020	6819	4896	4628	1587	976	18906
2021	7552	4009	3908	1787	1180	18436
2022	6754	4575	3784	2456	1912	19481
2023	6621	4687	4064	2846	2584	20802

Percentage of entries

Year	A	B	C	D	N/A	Total
2019	29.58	23.31	20.55	14.90	11.65	100.00
2020	36.07	25.90	24.48	8.39	5.16	100.00
2021	40.96	21.75	21.20	9.69	6.40	100.00
2022	34.67	23.48	19.42	12.61	9.81	100.00
2023	31.83	22.53	19.54	13.68	12.42	100.00

Figure 1: Overview of attainment results at SCQF level 5 by grade from 2019 to 2023

Figure 2, below, provides an overview of attainment results at SCQF level 6 by grade for all year groups from 2019 to 2023 (by number of entries and percentage of entries).

As can be seen:

- The number of entries at SCQF level 6 have remained generally consistent from 2019 to 2023
- From 2019 to 2023, the number of passes across all grades have not shown any significant change

Year	A	B	C	D	N/A	Total
2019	2428	2669	2574	1750	1180	10601
2020	3418	2727	2553	795	482	9975
2021	4822	2562	2147	920	504	10955
2022	3577	2570	2181	1373	914	10615
2023	2962	2686	2276	1580	1092	10596

Percentage of entries

Year	A	B	C	D	N/A	Total
2019	22.90	25.18	24.28	16.51	11.13	100.00
2020	34.27	27.34	25.59	7.97	4.83	100.00
2021	44.02	23.39	19.60	8.40	4.60	100.00
2022	33.70	24.21	20.55	12.93	8.61	100.00
2023	27.95	25.35	21.48	14.91	10.31	100.00

Figure 2: Overview of attainment results at SCQF level 6 by grade from 2019 to 2023

Areas for improvement

3.6   There continues to be a need to significantly improve S4 attainment for young people with significant and complex needs, and for those who face multiple barriers to attainment. This is a national challenge.

3.7   There is a close connection between this work and action to address poverty and the lives of care experienced young people – the focus of national policy for the Promise https://thepromise.scot/. This is a group who often attain at or below SCQF level 4. Their outcomes closely match those seen across Scotland (appendix 2). However, outcomes for this group are significantly poorer than for other young people (appendix 3).

3.8   There is also a need to significantly improve attainment outcomes for young people with less significant support needs, and those facing some barriers to attainment. These young people are typically achieving some awards at SCQF level 5 by the end of S4 – often literacy (appendix 3). However, fewer of such young people in Fife are achieving multiple awards at SCQF level 5 (e.g. 3 or more National 5s) than would be the case across Scotland as a whole.

3.9   Improving S4 outcomes for the group highlighted in 3.6 above would also feed through to improved outcomes by the end of S5 for young people in a range of disadvantaged groups, including those living in SIMD quintile 1 and

3.10   There is a need to further develop the Directorate's 3-18 literacy and numeracy strategy as identified within the Directorate Improvement plan. This will focus on improved pedagogical approaches and effective assessment across all sectors and a stronger focus on literacy and numeracy across learning in the secondary sector. Further development to track progress across the Broad General Education (BGE) and develop course choices from BGE to Senior Phase will continue to focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills for young people.

4.0 Sustained Positive Destinations 2021/22

4.1   Positive destinations is a priority in improving outcomes for young people in Fife. The categories included in positive destinations include Higher and Further Education, employment, training, personal skills development and voluntary work.

4.2   In February each year the initial positive destinations of school leavers from the previous year, hence in February 2023, is published the data is made available for leavers in session 2021/22. The figure in Fife for initial destinations increased from 93.9% in 2020/21 school year to 94.8% in the most recent session to be reported on, 2021/22.

4.3   In June each year the sustained destination data is provided for the follow up destinations of those leavers for session 2021/22. This allows an overview of those young people who have sustained the same destination or moved into another positive destination.

4.4   In May 2023 a report on initial school destinations was presented to the Education Scrutiny committee; which can be accessed Education Scrutiny Committee of 23 May 2023 . This report explained the initial destinations of school leavers from 2021/22 cohort.

4.5   It is important that any follow up destinations are linked to initial destinations to show how the pathways of young people have progressed and how many have sustained the initial destination 6 months on. Schools track and continue to support young people after they have left school by monitoring their journey and working with partners such as Skills Development Scotland as well as other partners to provide ongoing assistance and projects to enable them to reengage and continue to be in a positive destinations.

4.6   There are also a range of initiatives within the council to support young people such as 16+ keyworker support, Community Learning and Development programmes and Supported Employment Services projects. There is also liaison with Fife College for access courses and support with applications, Fife Voluntary Action activities. The range of partners are numerous in order to provide the right support for young people in order to reengage them and support them into a sustained and quality destinations.

Sustained Destinations Overview

4.7   As noted above, the current destination information for our Fife schools is gathered in April each year and published in June by Scottish Government. In the period from young people leaving schools and the update published in August.

4.8   The sustained destination figures for our Fife schools is 92.1% which is a decrease of 2.7% from the initial destination figures of 94.8%. Last year follow up in sustained destinations was 89.8% which is a gap of 4.1% negatively from the initial destination figures.   Fife have also improved from being 30/32 local authorities in Scotland to 24/32, which is a move into the 3rd quartile. This represents an improving picture.

4.9 In terms of destination categories, the sustained destination figures notably saw a decrease in those going on to further education from 32% to 24.9% with an increase in employment from 23.4% to 32.2%. Following discussions with SDS we are unable to identify the level of job or pay for those moving into employment. In terms of the decrease in those engaged in further education, there is work being undertaken with Fife College to evaluate the reasons for this and how young people can be better prepared for college courses and also supported to sustain these. As a local authority, the gap has lessened for many of the destination categories with some showing no or little difference between the initial and sustained data.

4.10 As well as continuing the strategic work on improving destinations across all schools, some schools have been targeted for support from the central team as well as partners including SDS, DYW etc, where more time has been allocated to the school, with a focus on initial or sustained destinations or both in some cases.

Strategies to Improve Schools

4.11 A clear action plan has been produced to ensure there is a clear strategy for continuing to improve initial and sustained destinations in Fife. This requires the support of all partners within and outwith the council. This strategic plan is linked to the directorate priorities for the next 3 years.

4.12 The strategic plan presents a clear direction within the directorate and across our partnerships to continue to improve further both initial and sustained destinations with a clear plan for all schools, targeted schools, partnership approaches and early intervention for pupil groups and localities.

- Strategic approach to improving initial and sustained destinations for all young people in Fife.
- In order to close the gap, an active focus on those young people who require additional support to engage in activities related to successful post school destinations, including expanding the offers available.
- Personalised and intensive support to allow young people to access a range of opportunities in school, including wider achievement and accreditation.
- Development of partnership working to ensure collaborative solutions for improved and sustained positive destinations.
- Creation of a range of universal and bespoke learning pathways, including wider achievement provision and accreditation.
-

5.0 Improvement Priorities and Next Steps

Our Improvement Priorities

5.1 As was noted in section 3, we need to improve outcomes for three distinct groups of learners:

Young people with significant or complex support needs.

5.2 This group of pupils will often be achieving attainment at SCQF levels 1-3. Outcomes in Fife for this group are similar to those seen nationally. However, there is a clear imperative – as highlighted in the Morgan Review additional-support-learning-action-plan-progress-report – to ensure that we are supporting these young people to fully

develop their individual potential. This will often involve additional levels of educational and other support.

5.3   Young people facing complex multiple barriers to learning, including significant socio-economic barriers (e.g. living in areas of deprivation and household poverty) combined with other support needs (e.g. being a young carer, household/personal disability, etc).

5.4   There is a significant overlap for this group with the policy challenge of *the Promise* https://thepromise.scot/ and the wider *Tackling Poverty* agenda. Successfully addressing these barriers will frequently require successful partnership working, including close working between schools and educational services and partnership additional services, whose support may be needed at during particular times. Evidence would suggest that outcomes for this group are typically similar to those for similar young people across Scotland, often with attainment at SCQF level 4 with limited attainment at SCQF level 5. However, these outcomes are significantly poorer than those of most other young people. This will be a key group to help improve outcomes within the *National Improvement Framework* over the longer term.

5.5   Young people facing some barriers to learning as a result of their socio-economic circumstances (e.g. living in an area of deprivation or household poverty) and/or some additional support needs.

5.6   Evidence would suggest that although this group is often attaining at SCQF level 5, Fife young people in this group are significantly less likely than those in other parts of Scotland to achieve multiple awards at SCQF level 5 and to progress to attaining Highers in S5. Targeted interventions, supported by effective tracking and monitoring, will be key to improving outcomes for this group. This will be a key group to help improve outcomes within the *National Improvement Framework* National-Improvement-Framework over the shorter term.

5.7   Ensuring improved outcomes for each of the three groups highlighted above will require a more precise understanding of the individual barriers to learning faced by a diverse range of young people. The Education and Children's Services Directorate is currently trialling a new use of data to identify pupils with combinations of characteristics that are linked to low attainment. The Risk Prediction Tool can identify initiatives that are working well for pupils with multiple challenges by setting benchmark specific to the types of ASN and levels of poverty facing those pupils.

5.8   The Directorate is also reviewing its approach to performance management of Fife schools, to improve the support for schools in targeting, tracking and monitoring support for young people. This includes further embedding the Directorate's approach to the use of stretch targets, which are currently being used as a tool to support Attainment Reform work within the primary and secondary sector.

5.9   Work on these improvement activities is being undertaken within the current school year and will form the basis for the new three-year Directorate Improvement Plan, which has been implemented since August 2023.

5.10 **Next steps: building on current best practice at school level to progress our priorities.**

- Further develop consistent approaches to attendance monitoring and develop capacity across Fife to provide high quality interventions to support improved attendance and achieve the stretch targets for each school and Fife's overall target of **88.8%** - to

match attendance levels in similar areas of Scotland by the end of the current school year.

- Within the wider approaches to target setting, continue to build school leaders' capacity to establish meaningful short term stretch targets for 23/24 for all secondary schools in relation to key attainment measures including attendance, literacy, numeracy and positive destinations. Learning from this from last session I now a particular focus across the scrutiny of secondary schools.

- Further develop collective accountability for Fife wide outcomes by developing school leaders' understanding of the levels of achievement which individual schools require to secure to ensure Fife achieves its stretch target. This will allow for good practice to be shared to and upscaled.

- Support the quality of the stretch target setting process by providing stretch target data sets which reflect the prior attainment of the school and the social context of the school community.

- Ensure that short-term stretch targets are ambitious but achievable and that:
  the targets set for levels of attainment (overall, in SIMD Quintile 1, and in SIMD Quintile 5 and for specific cohorts) are in line with higher levels of attainment than have been achieved in the past.

- that the rates of improvement required are in line with more significant rates of improvement achieved in earlier years.

- that the targets will contribute over the medium term to Fife significantly improving attainment and closing the attainment gap.

- Systematic monitoring of progress against stretch targets at school level is being implemented.

- Development of a consistent approach to tracking across the Broad General Education from primary to secondary school, with a particular focus on transition and S1-3.

- Build capacity with leadership at all levels to interrogate and analyse data to support well targeted improvement interventions.

- Continue to develop the role of the Subject networks to support Fife wide moderation and teacher judgment.

- Subject lead teachers and SQA coordinators to continue to meet regularly to ensure they are sharing practice across schools

- Supporting learners' mental health continues to be a priority in our schools. Schools are using Fife's Our Minds Matter framework to build their capacity to support learners. Strong partnership work continues to be a priority to help address mental health concerns. Our Educational Psychology Service will continue to provide a core offer of support and professional learning to build capacity across our schools and staff.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1   Attainment across all key measures for Fife's S4 cohort in 2022/23 shows a positive improving 5-year trend and other than literacy at SCQF level 5, all are above National attainment. Literacy and Numeracy at Level 5 shows significant improvement over the 5-year period within Fife.

6.2   Attainment outcomes for the S5 cohort at Higher level sits below National attainment and there is a less positive picture in relation to Fife's 5- year trend. Whilst there has been improvement for those achieving the highest grades (4 or more Highers at A/B passes by the end of S5) there has been little improvement or a decline in attainment for Highers more generally.

6.3   It is recognised that within each cohort, there are specific groups of disadvantaged learners whose outcomes are generally less positive than the general cohort. Improving educational attainment for all groups and Closing the Attainment Gap is a key improvement priority within the new Education and Children's Services Directorate Improvement Plan (2023-2026). This is reflected in all school improvement plans for session 2023/24.

6.4   The Education and Children's Services Directorate has a clear understanding of the disadvantaged groups who require additional focus to improve attainment. The quality improvement processes at authority and school level described in this report are focussed on achieving this over the next 3 years.

6.5   Both initial and sustained destinations have improved in session 2021/23 with a range of strategies in place across all Fife schools and bespoke approaches within targeted school to maintain this. Positive destinations continue to be a Directorate priority with strategies and actions developed to meet ongoing challenges and supports.

6.6   The Education Service will need to take into account the recent documents by the Scottish Government of The Hayward Review of senior phase qualifications conducted by Prof. Louise Hayward, namely, "It's Our Future – Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment: Report (IRQA) and The Withers Review of Skills in Scotland, conducted by James Withers, namely, "Fit for the Future: developing a post-school learning system to fuel economic transformation" when planning for the next steps with schools, once the Scottish Government determine if they are accepting the recommendations.

Glossary of Terms

SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation). SIMD is the Scottish Government's standard approach to measuring relative levels of deprivation across Scotland. It provides information about a range of resources and opportunities available to families living in a local community. These relate to income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing. Further information can be found at: https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/

SIMD Quintiles. Each local area in Scotland is classified as being within one of five families, called SIMD quintiles. These reflect the overall level of multiple deprivation recorded by SIMD for that area. SIMD Quintile 1 (often abbreviated to **SIMD Q1**) refers to the most deprived areas, as measured by SIMD. SIMD Quintile 5 (often abbreviated to **SIMD Q5**) refers to the least deprived areas, as measured by SIMD.

Insight: Insight is the Scottish Government benchmarking tool for analysing attainment data in the senior phase, accessible by secondary schools and local authorities.

Senior Phase Analytical Tool (SPAT): A bespoke analytical tool developed by Fife Education and Children's Services, allowing schools to analyse projected measures of attainment for current learners in Senior Phase and identify a range of effective interventions to support raising attainment.

Risk Prediction Tool: A tool devised to allow schools to identify individuals or cohorts of pupils with combinations of characters that are linked to low attainment and have a range of barriers to learning. The tool can identify initiatives that are working well for pupils with multiple challenges by setting benchmarks specific to the types of ASN and levels of poverty facing those pupils.

List of Appendices

1. An overview of the attainment gap
2. An overview of cohort wider attainment
3. An overview of outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable young people
4. Comparison of May projections to August results (results of appeals not included)

Background Papers

1. SQA Appeals process - https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/nq-2022-appeals-service.pdf
2. SQA Qualifications for 2021 Committee Report - SQA Results 2021 Committee Report
3. The National Improvement Framework - National-Improvement-Framework
4. Plan for Fife - Plan for Fife
5. The Promise - https://thepromise.scot/
6. Additional support for Learning Action Plan progress report additional-support-learning-action-plan-progress-report
7. Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) - https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/
8. EM Briefing on Pre appeal Exam results
9. EM Briefing on Sustained Destinations

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Appendix 1

Appendix 1 - comparison of outcomes for pupils living in SIMD Quintiles 1 and 5

S4 pupils in SIMD Quintile 1 (most deprived)

2022/23	2018/19	Change in outcomes	
97.5%	95.2%	2.2%	of pupils achieved awards at SCQF level 1 or above
81.4%	73.8%	7.6%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards
83.3%	76.9%	6.4%	of pupils achieved literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4
61.5%	51.4%	10.1%	of pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 5
48.2%	42.1%	6.0%	of pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5
31.5%	32.3%	-0.8%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5 passes (C+)

S4 pupils in SIMD Quintile 5 (least deprived)

2022/23	2018/19	Change in outcomes	
98.9%	97.8%	1.1%	of pupils achieved awards at SCQF level 1 or above
95.0%	94.0%	1.0%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards
95.3%	93.7%	1.5%	of pupils achieved literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4
89.7%	85.2%	4.5%	of pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 5
84.0%	77.9%	6.1%	of pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5
75.2%	74.3%	0.9%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5 passes

Attainment gap (SIMD Q5 - Q1) at end of S4

2022/23	2018/19	Change in the attainment gap	
1.4%	2.6%	-1.2%	for pupils achieving awards at SCQF level 1 or above
13.6%	20.2%	-6.5%	for pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards
12.0%	16.9%	-4.9%	for pupils achieving literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4
28.2%	33.8%	-5.6%	for pupils achieving literacy at SCQF level 5
35.8%	35.8%	0.0%	for pupils achieving numeracy at SCQF level 5
43.7%	42.0%	1.7%	for pupils achieving 3 or more National 5 passes

S5 pupils (share of S4 roll) in SIMD Quintile 1 (most deprived)

2022/23	2018/19	Change in outcomes	
27.4%	29.0%	-1.6%	of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher passes
12.7%	11.3%	1.3%	of pupils achieved 3 or more Higher passes
4.2%	3.8%	0.4%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grades A or B
0.9%	1.0%	-0.1%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grade A

S5 pupils (share of S4 roll) in SIMD Quintile 5 (least deprived)

2022/23	2018/19	Change in outcomes	
70.1%	72.1%	-2.0%	of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher passes
47.9%	50.9%	-3.1%	of pupils achieved 3 or more Higher passes
26.4%	25.6%	0.8%	of pupils achieved 4 or 5 Highers at grades A or B
12.8%	10.6%	2.2%	of pupils achieved 4 or 5 Highers at grade A

Attainment gap (SIMD Q5 - Q1) at end of S5

2022/23	2018/19	Change in the attainment gap	
42.6%	43.0%	-0.4%	for pupils achieving 1 or more Higher passes
35.2%	39.6%	-4.4%	for pupils achieving 3 or more Higher passes
22.2%	21.8%	0.4%	for pupils achieving 4 or 5 Highers at grades A or B
11.9%	9.6%	2.3%	for pupils achieving 4 or 5 Highers at grade A

Colour coding for cohort outcomes
- 97.5% — Outcomes achieved by almost all pupils
- 50.0% — Outcomes achieved by half of the pupils
- 2.5% — Outcomes achieved by a few pupils

Colour coding for change in outcomes
- 9.0% — Large, positive difference / change
- 0.0% — Little difference / change
- -9.0% — Large, negative difference / change

Colour coding for change in the gap
- -9.0% — Significant closing of the attainment gap
- 0.0% — Little change
- 9.0% — Significant widening of the attainment gap

Appendix 2

Appendix 2 - an overview of cohort wider attainment for S4 pupils and S5 pupils in 2022/23

Overall achievements of Fife S4 pupils in 2022/23		Relevance of qualification set to post school opportunities	Overall achievements of Scotland		Difference between Fife S4 pupils in 2022/23 and Scotland in 2022/23		Five year trend for Fife (2018/19 to 2022/23)	
98.42%	of pupils achieved awards at SCQF level 1 or above	Have accredited achievement to evidence personal skills	97.59%	of pupils achieved awards at SCQF level 1 or above	0.84%	for pupils achieving awards at SCQF level 1 or above	1.87%	for pupils achieving awards at SCQF level 1 or above
88.85%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards	Are qualified for a range of selective Modern Apprenticeships & employment opportunities	88.77%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards	0.09%	for pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards	2.94%	for pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards
89.68%	of pupils achieved literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4	Are able to evidence accredited achievement of both key literacy and key numeracy skills	85.72%	of pupils achieved literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4	3.96%	for pupils achieving literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4	2.77%	for pupils achieving literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4
74.36%	of pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 5	Are able to evidence accredited achievement of more advanced literacy skills	75.78%	of pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 5	-1.42%	for pupils achieving literacy at SCQF level 5	5.49%	for pupils achieving literacy at SCQF level 5
65.37%	of pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5	Are able to evidence accredited achievement of more advanced numeracy skills	64.09%	of pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5	1.28%	for pupils achieving numeracy at SCQF level 5	6.79%	for pupils achieving numeracy at SCQF level 5
52.57%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5 passes (C+)	Are qualified for a range of more selective Modern Apprenticeships & employment opportunities	60.56%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5 passes (C+)	-7.98%	for pupils achieving 3 or more National 5 passes	0.38%	for pupils achieving 3 or more National 5 passes

Overall achievements of S5 pupils (based on S4 roll)		Relevance of qualification set to post school opportunities	Overall achievements of Scotland		Difference between Fife S5 pupils in 2022/23 and Scotland in 2022/23		Five year trend for Fife (2018/19 to 2022/23)	
47.83%	of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher passes	Are qualified for an HNC, providing a route to Higher Education	55.28%	of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher passes	-7.45%	for pupils achieving 1 or more Higher passes	-1.31%	for pupils achieving 1 or more Higher passes
28.22%	of pupils achieved 3 or more Higher passes	Are qualified for direct entry to Higher Education	35.35%	of pupils achieved 3 or more Higher passes	-7.13%	for pupils achieving 3 or more Higher passes	-0.07%	for pupils achieving 3 or more Higher passes
13.38%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grades A or B	Are qualified for more selective degree courses (e.g. science, etc)	18.34%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grades A or B	-4.96%	for pupils achieving 4 or 5 Highers at grades A or B	0.58%	for pupils achieving 4 or 5 Highers at grades A or B
5.6%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grade A	Are qualified for the most selective degree courses (e.g. veterinary science, medicine)	8.65%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grade A	-3.01%	for pupils achieving 4 or 5 Highers at grade A	0.75%	for pupils achieving 4 or 5 Highers at grade A

Key to colour coding

|			
97.5%	Outcomes achieved by almost all pupils	9.0%	Large, positive difference / change
50.0%	Outcomes achieved by half of the pupils	0.00%	Little difference / change
2.5%	Outcomes achieved by a few pupils	-9.00%	Large, negative difference / change

103

Appendix 3

Appendix 3 - an overview of cohort wider attainment for disadvantaged groups of S4 and S5 pupils in 2022/23

Overall achievements of S4 pupils in 2022/23		Relevance of qualification set to post school opportunities	For S4 pupils living in SIMD Quintile 1		For S4 pupils with additional support needs		For S4 pupils who were looked after	
98.42%	of pupils achieved awards at SCQF level 1 or above	Have accredited achievement to evidence personal skills	97.46%	of pupils achieved awards at SCQF level 1 or above	97.39%	of pupils achieved awards at SCQF level 1 or above	90.11%	of pupils achieved awards at SCQF level 1 or above
88.85%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards	Are qualified for a range of selective Modern Apprenticeships & employment opportunities	81.38%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards	80.23%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards	57.14%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 4 awards
89.68%	of pupils achieved literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4	Are able to evidence accredited achievement of both key literacy and key numeracy skills	83.28%	of pupils achieved literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4	83.23%	of pupils achieved literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4	64.84%	of pupils achieved literacy & numeracy at SCQF level 4
74.36%	of pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 5	Are able to evidence accredited achievement of more advanced literacy skills	61.48%	of pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 5	58.47%	of pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 5	37.36%	of pupils achieved literacy at SCQF level 5
65.37%	of pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5	Are able to evidence accredited achievement of more advanced numeracy skills	48.15%	of pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5	49.58%	of pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5	29.67%	of pupils achieved numeracy at SCQF level 5
52.57%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5 passes (C+)	Are qualified for a range of more selective Modern Apprenticeships & employment opportunities	31.53%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5 passes (C+)	33.82%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5 passes (C+)	14.29%	of pupils achieved 3 or more National 5 passes (C+)
Overall achievements of S5 pupils (based on S4 roll)		Relevance of qualification set to post school opportunities	Overall achievements of S5 pupils (based on S4 roll)		Overall achievements of S5 pupils (based on S4 roll)		Overall achievements of S5 pupils (based on S4 roll)	
47.83%	of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher passes	Are qualified for an HNC, providing a route to Higher Education	27.44%	of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher passes	30.47%	of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher passes	9.80%	of pupils achieved 1 or more Higher passes
28.22%	of pupils achieved 3 or more Higher passes	Are qualified for direct entry to Higher Education	12.67%	of pupils achieved 3 or more Higher passes	14.55%	of pupils achieved 3 or more Higher passes	2.94%	of pupils achieved 3 or more Higher passes
13.38%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grades A or B	Are qualified for more selective degree courses (e.g. science, etc)	4.22%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grades A or B	6.54%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grades A or B	0.98%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grades A or B
5.6%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grade A	Are qualified for the most selective degree courses (e.g. veterinary science, medicine)	0.89%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grade A	2.8%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grade A	0.0%	of pupils achieved 4 or more Highers at grade A

Key to colour coding

97.5%	Outcomes achieved by almost all pupils
50.0%	Outcomes achieved by half of the pupils
2.5%	Outcomes achieved by a few pupils

Appendix 4

Appendix 4: Comparison of May projections to August results (results of appeals not included)

Actual results compared to May Projections for Numeracy and Literacy Attainment
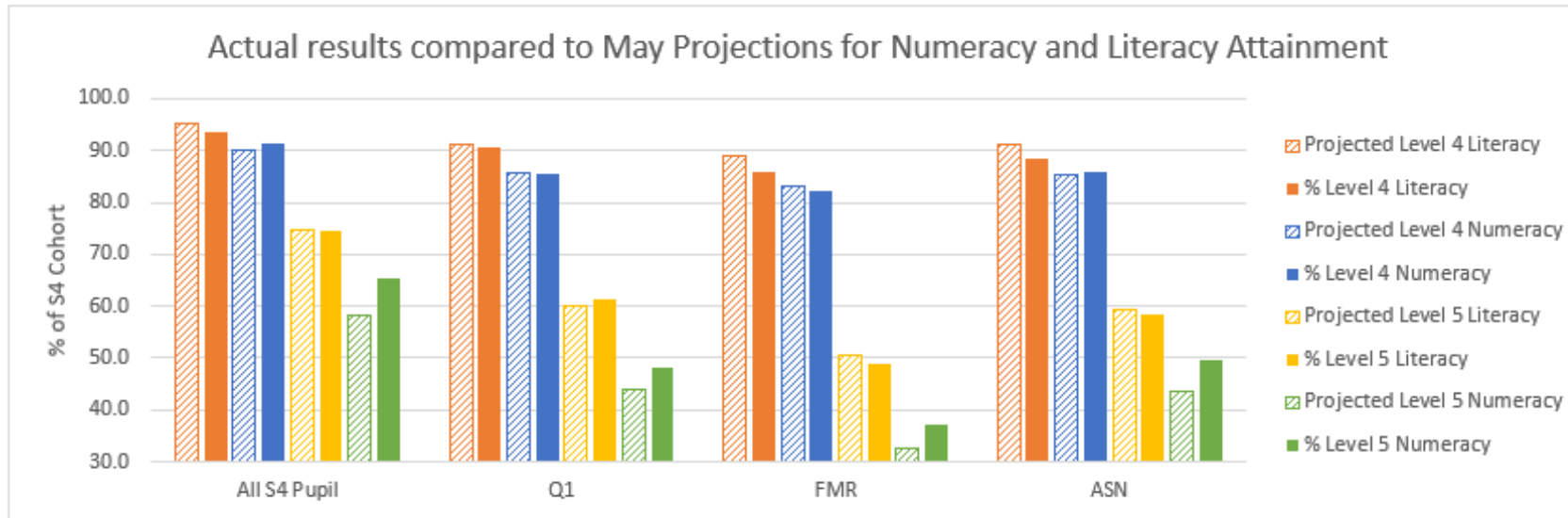
2022/23 Attainment compared to May projections

Pupil Group	% Level 4 Literacy	Projected Level 4 Literacy	Difference to Projection	% Level 4 Numeracy	Projected Level 4 Numeracy	Difference to Projection	% Level 5 Literacy	Projected Level 5 Literacy	Difference to Projection	% Level 5 Numeracy	Projected Level 5 Numeracy	Difference to Projection
All S4 Pupil	93.7	95.2	-1.5	91.3	90.1	1.2	74.4	74.6	-0.2	65.4	58.3	7.1
Q1	90.6	91.2	-0.6	85.6	85.8	-0.2	61.5	60.2	1.3	48.2	43.8	4.4
FMR	85.9	88.9	-3.0	82.1	83.2	-1.1	48.8	50.5	-1.7	37.1	32.5	4.6
ASN	88.4	91.3	-2.9	86.1	85.5	0.6	58.5	59.5	-1.0	49.6	43.7	5.9

14 November 2023

Agenda Item No. 9

Early Learning and Childcare – P1 Deferral Data

Report by: Shelagh McLean, Head of Education and Children's Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

To provide members of the Committee with updated details of the impact of the Scottish Government legislation to extend the automatic right to receive an additional year of funded ELC to all children eligible to defer entry into Primary 1, providing details of those children accessing a deferred year of Early Learning and Childcare during session 2023/24.

Recommendation

Members are asked to examine the information regarding children accessing a deferred year of Early Learning and Childcare during session 2023/24.

Resource Implications

The funding package to support the legislative change, for session 2023/24, has been allocated by the Scottish Government as part of the ELC Specific Revenue Grant, which is in addition to the core ELC funding allocated through the General Revenue Grant.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are on-going risks associated with this development. There is a requirement for increased staffing to ensure legal adult: child ratios are maintained in all ELC services.

When private or voluntary sector services cannot support deferral requests in line with their own admissions processes, this may result in an increase in applications for deferral in local authority settings.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary because this report does not propose a change to existing policies.

Consultation

- Engagement with Headteachers
- Engagement with Managers of private and voluntary sector services and childminders.
- Engagement with Parents/carers of deferred children with birthdays between August and December.

1.0 Background

1.1 Children who are five years old at the start of the school session in August must start school in August. Alternatively, parents/carers can decide to home educate their child.

1.2 Children usually start primary school in August of the year preceding or during which they have their fifth birthday. This means that children are usually aged between 4½ and 5½ years when they start school.

1.3 When a child does not start school at the anticipated August start date for their year group, it is called deferred entry to primary school. Until August 2023, when a child did not start school at the anticipated August start date for their year group, legislatively only children born in January or February had the automatic right to receive an additional year of funded ELC.

1.4 However, for session 2022/23 Fife Council was part of a Scottish Government pilot scheme to extend this automatic right to receive an additional year of funded ELC to all children eligible to defer entry into Primary 1. Therefore, from 17 August 2022, Fife Council was able to offer an additional year of Funded ELC to all children eligible, whose parent(s)/carer(s) applied to defer entry to Primary School.

1.5 From August 2023 it has become a legal right for all children eligible to defer entry to Primary 1 to benefit from an additional year of funded ELC. As a result of this legislative change, all children who are five years old after the start of the school session in August, but before 1st March the following year, now have the automatic right to receive an additional year of funded ELC.

1.6 Parents can apply to defer their child in a local authority nursery class or school, private and voluntary sector setting or with childminders. Parents may also apply for blended placements for their child.

2.0 Impact

Admissions

2.1 Appendix 1 provides information on the number of deferrals by birth month. Prior to session 2022-23, deferral requests for those children with August to December birthdays were at the discretion of the local authority. From session 2022-23 deferral applications for August to December birthdays have been automatically approved as part of the admissions process.

2.2 The number of January and February deferrals over the past four years has been consistent. (The birth months for children who were deferred prior to session 2020-21 are no longer available.) The number of August – December deferrals showed a significant increase in 2022/23, with the numbers of children rising in line with when they have their fifth birthday. The number of August – December deferrals has continued to increase in 2023/24, but not significantly from the 2022/23 session.

2.3 Appendix 2 provides a further breakdown of this information, detailing the SIMD quintile and sex for those children accessing a deferred ELC place. For session 2022-23 there is an even application rate across each SIMD quintile. (The SIMD data for those parents who could have applied for a deferred place for their child for session 2022-23, but chose not to, is not available.) It should be noted that prior to session 2022-23 all children with an August – December birthday who were approved for a deferred place will have had an additional support need.

Reasons for Deferral and Application Process

2.4   Parents of children with an August to December birthday, who had applied for a deferred year of funded ELC, were invited to complete a short survey once the academic session 2023-24 had commenced.

[Deferred Entry to Primary 1 Parent Survey 2023 (office.com)](office.com)

2.5   Appendix 3 provides information collected from the survey. Of the 50 parents who responded, most had children who had their fifth birthday in December 2023. Parents cited the main reasons for deferring their child as follows:

- My child was not ready socially or emotionally to attend school

- I believe children should start school later than they currently do in Scotland

- The nursery recommended that I defer my child

2.6   Parents were also given the opportunity to provide further information regarding their decision to defer their child's start to school. A selection of responses is as follows:

- We had a meeting to discuss my child's well-being and needs for school. I was on the fence so to speak about whether or not I wished for her to remain in nursery. The meeting was great and the staff listened to my concerns and we came to a decision which I feel wasn't forced and best for my child.
- The nursery gave us the option to deferring my son for another year, due to where his birthday lies and due to other circumstances that were out of our control. As parents, we are grateful and glad of the opportunity of deferring my child for another full year at nursery as he learns so much and likes the friendships he has made.
- The process was easy, but the decision was difficult. Much discussion as to the pros and cons.
- We felt very well supported and we were informed of both sides of the argument for deferral. The process was seamless.

2.7   Parents provided feedback on how easy or difficult they found it to make a deferral application. Whilst most parents who completed the survey found the process quite easy, a very small number found it more challenging. This feedback has supported the early years team to continue to review the communication with headteachers, managers and childminders about the importance of sharing information concerning deferral applications as part of the wider admissions process with relevant parents.

3.0 Conclusions

3.1   Fife Council was part of the Scottish Government's deferral for session 2022/23. This resulted in a significant increase in the number of children with August – December birthdays having an extra year of funded ELC.

3.2   From August 2023 the pilot project has been replaced by the legal right for all children eligible to defer entry to Primary 1 to be able to benefit from an additional year of funded ELC. This resulted in a further increase in the number of children with August – December birthdays having an extra year of funded ELC, but not significantly when compared to the year of the pilot.

3.3   The funding package for this policy change has been confirmed.

List of Appendices

1. Number of deferrals by child's birth month
2. Number of deferrals by sex and SIMD quintile of the household

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973: -

- A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare

- Early learning and childcare access in a deferred year: joint implementation plan - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

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Session	Total No of Deferrals in Session (Aug-Feb)	No of Deferrals in Session (Aug-Dec)	No of Deferrals in Session (Jan-Feb)	Number of Deferrals by Child's Birth Month							Type of Setting		
				Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Continued funding in Council run settings	Continued funding in PVI settings (incl. Childminder)	Continued funding for split placements
				No. of Deferrals	No. of Deferrals	No. of Deferrals	No. of Deferrals	No. of Deferrals	No. of Deferrals	No. of Deferrals	No. of Deferrals	No. of Deferrals	No. of Deferrals
2023/24	580	278	302	16	41	40	69	112	142	160	463	88	29
2022/23	534	244	290	12	24	51	58	99	141	149	471	63	42
2021/22	348	50	298	2	3	10	14	21	141	157	296	52	11
2020/21	329	49	280	2	1	7	15	24	133	147	285	44	7
2019/20	295												
2018/19	310												
2017/18	268												

Session	Number of deferrals by child sex		Number of deferrals	Number of deferrals by SIMD quintile of child household				
	Male	Female		SIMD1 (most deprived)	SIMD 2	SIMD 3	SIMD 4	SIMD 5 (least deprived)
Session 2023/24 - Total	348	232	580	105	124	130	114	107
2023/24: Aug-Dec	166	112		49	67	63	51	48
2023/24: Jan-Feb	182	120		56	57	67	63	59
Session 2022/23 - Total	343	191	534	115	99	116	107	93
2022/23: Aug-Dec	162	82		51	42	51	63	38
2022/23: Jan-Feb	181	109		64	57	65	44	55
Session 2021/22 - Total	225	123	348	71	62	66	66	67
2021/22: Aug-Dec	34	16		4	14	13	10	6
2021/22: Jan-Feb	191	107		67	48	53	56	61
Session 2022/23 - Total	187	142	329	54	65	67	79	72
2020/21: Aug-Dec	32	17		10	10	11	10	8
2020/21: Jan-Feb	155	125		44	55	56	60	64

Fife
COUNCIL

14 November 2023
Agenda Item No 10

Education Service

Revenue Budget 2023-24 Projected Outturn

Report by:

Shelagh McLean, Head of Education (Early Years and Directorate Support)
Eileen Rowand, Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the forecast financial position for the 2023-24 financial year, for the areas in scope of the Education Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

a.   consider the current financial performance and activity as detailed in this report;

b.   note the projected outturn position and the relevant areas of projected over and under spend within the service.

Resource Implications

The Service is committed to managing the service spend within the overall level of resource available.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None

1.0 Background

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the projected outturn for the Education Service, for the 2023-24 Revenue Budget, and to highlight the major variances as at August 2023. This is the second monitoring report to the Scrutiny Committee for the 2023-24 financial year.

1.2 The preparation of the 2023-24 Revenue Budget focussed on applying service underspends, budget realignment and vacancy factors to close the budget gap, and as such no specific savings proposals were approved by the Council as part of the Revenue Budget. There is therefore no requirement to include a Savings Tracker as part of financial reporting for the 2023-24 financial year.

2.0 Issues

Projected Outturn - Education Service

2.1 The projected underspend, for this financial year, for Education Service is £1.487m. A summary of the 2023-24 projected outturn is detailed in Appendices 1-2. This shows projected expenditure against budget across the service headings within the Service. It should be noted that the balances are extracted from the ledger system and are shown as rounded thousands. This may mean that there are some rounding differences contained within the appendices, but these are immaterial values that do not impact on the overall financial position. The following paragraphs provide a brief explanation of the main areas where there are significant variances (+/-£0.250m) to budgets.

2.2 In addition, a change in accounting treatment for grants during 2022-23 means that underspends on grant funding are included in service outturns, rather than removed to balances at year end for carry forward. The effect of this is that, due to this presentation, service underspends are higher in comparison with previous years, but in practical terms there is no change – the funding is carried forward and is available to the service in the next financial year.

3.0 Major Variances

DSM Budget :- projected outturn - £ 7.634m underspend, movement (£0.018m)

3.1 Under the DSM Scheme, schools' budgets are calculated and allocated with reference to a range of formulae based on appropriate data, for example school roll. At this stage in the financial year the projection for the DSM normally reflects the carry forward of underspend from the previous year as school budgets have still to be adjusted to reflect class numbers and staffing for the new session from August. The figure reported above therefore, includes the DSM carry forward across schools from 2022-23 of £3.603m.

3.2 In addition to the core DSM budget, schools' Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) is included in devolved budgets. This also includes any unspent PEF at 31 March 2023 which was carried forward, and for 2023-24 the amount of carry forward was £4.500m. The underspend reflects the fact that schools manage their PEF allocations over academic sessions, and therefore some of the funding requires

to be carried forward to meet the commitments in their PEF plans. Schools' PEF allocations for 2023-24 are still subject to final confirmation by Scottish Government, but the indicative allocations provided by them, which total £10.456m, will be added to schools' budgets shortly. A projected underspend of £4.500m is included as an estimate of unspent PEF at the end of the 2023-24 financial year, based on trends of past spend.

3.3 The underspends above are partly offset by an overspend in Special Education of £0.469m, which is related to additional temporary staffing within the service and a delay in implementing a management review.

Non-DSM/Childcare: - projected outturn - £6.147m overspend, movement £1.115m

3.4 The projected overspend mainly relates to maternity pay and long-term absence and overspends of £3.117m and £0.350m are included within the projection. These costs are in relation to teachers but are borne by the non-devolved central Education budget and not the DSM.

3.5 Within Special Education a projected overspend of £1.157m is also included in the projection. This is mainly in relation to overspends on transport provision costs for children of £0.850m, and the costs relating to the Education element of secure child placements of £0.751m, these partly being offset by additional income received from UK Government to support refugee children coming to Fife of £0.542m.

3.6 A projected overspend is included within Education Administration of £0.341m due to an increase in premises costs and professional fees within the service.

3.7 Finally a projected overspend of £0.873m is included within General Education which predominantly relates the funding of teaching budgets within the DSM/schools. It is anticipated that this overspend will reduce when the exercise to adjust schools' budgets for new rolls in August is undertaken during October.

3.8 The movement of £1.115m since the last monitoring report is due to an increase in the projection for Primary Education of £0.216m, relating to increased costs for supplies and services, which include inflationary increases on PPP contract costs. Within Special Education the movement is due to transport costs of £0.200m, and an increase in the Education element of secure placements of £0.290m. Within Education Administration the movement of £0.341m is due to increases in staffing costs and other costs associated with IT software, licence costs and other fees.

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 The projected outturn for the Education Service Revenue Budget for the 2023-24 financial year is a projected underspend of £1.487m.

List of Appendices

1. Education and Children's Services Revenue Monitor 2023-24
2. Educational Services – Devolved and Non-Devolved Revenue Monitor 2023-24

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BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY
Aug-23
EDUCATION - DEVOLVED

	CURRENT BUDGET 2023-24 £m	FORECAST 2023-24 £m	VARIANCE £m	VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m
TOTAL COST OF SERVICES	**245.761**	**238.127**	**(7.634)**	**-3.11%**	**(7.616)**	**(0.018)**
LESS: CORPORATELY MANAGED ITEMS	**0.012**	**0.012**	**0.000**	**0.00%**	**0.000**	**0.000**
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	**245.749**	**238.115**	**(7.634)**	**-3.11%**	**(7.616)**	**(0.018)**
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET						
PRIMARY EDUCATION	114.635	109.920	(4.715)	-4.11%	(4.611)	(0.104)
SECONDARY EDUCATION	123.020	119.665	(3.355)	-2.73%	(3.442)	0.087
NURSERY EDUCATION	2.924	2.891	(0.033)	-1.12%	(0.011)	(0.022)
SPECIAL EDUCATION	5.156	5.625	0.469	9.10%	0.449	0.021
AREA GROUPS	0.014	0.014	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
	245.749	238.115	(7.634)	-3.11%	(7.616)	(0.018)

SUBJECTIVE GROUPING	CURRENT BUDGET 2023-24 £m	FORECAST 2023-24 £m	VARIANCE £m	VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	**245.749**	**238.115**	**(7.634)**	**-3.11%**	**(7.616)**	**(0.018)**
INCOME	**(10.441)**	**(10.441)**	**0.000**	**0.00%**	**0.000**	**0.000**
EXPENDITURE						
EMPLOYEE COSTS	247.578	243.628	(3.950)	-1.60%	(3.950)	0.000
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
TRANSPORT RELATED EXPENDITURE	0.117	0.121	0.004	3.85%	0.000	0.004
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	6.787	3.099	(3.688)	-54.34%	(3.666)	(0.022)
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	1.707	1.707	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
SUPPORT SERVICES CHARGES	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
	256.190	248.556	(7.634)	-2.98%	(7.616)	(0.018)
	245.749	238.115	(7.634)	-3.11%	(7.616)	(0.018)

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY Aug-23 EDUCATION - NON DEVOLVED						Appendix 2
	CURRENT BUDGET 2023-24 £m	FORECAST 2023-24 £m	VARIANCE £m	VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m
TOTAL COST OF SERVICES	**189.086**	**195.232**	**6.147**	**3.25%**	**5.032**	**1.115**
LESS: CORPORATELY MANAGED ITEMS	**64.185**	**64.185**	**0.000**	**0.00%**	**0.000**	**0.000**
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	**124.901**	**131.048**	**6.147**	**4.92%**	**5.032**	**1.115**
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET						
PRIMARY EDUCATION	25.691	27.804	2.113	8.23%	1.898	0.216
SECONDARY EDUCATION	25.800	27.334	1.533	5.94%	1.553	(0.020)
NURSERY EDUCATION	23.854	24.003	0.149	0.62%	0.026	0.123
SPECIAL EDUCATION	34.675	35.833	1.157	3.34%	0.671	0.487
AREA GROUPS	0.605	0.605	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION	4.484	4.825	0.341	7.60%	0.000	0.341
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	0.079	0.079	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
FIFE MUSIC SERVICE	2.816	2.816	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
SUPPORT SERVICES	3.167	3.161	(0.006)	-0.20%	0.000	(0.006)
GENERAL EDUCATION	0.881	1.755	0.873	99.06%	0.885	(0.012)
CHILDCARE	2.848	2.834	(0.014)	-0.48%	0.000	(0.014)
	124.901	131.048	6.147	4.92%	5.032	1.115

SUBJECTIVE GROUPING	CURRENT BUDGET 2022-23 £m	FORECAST 2023-24 £m	VARIANCE £m	FORECAST VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	**124.901**	**131.048**	**6.147**	**4.92%**	**5.032**	**1.115**
INCOME	**(46.332)**	**(46.606)**	**(0.274)**	**0.59%**	**(0.182)**	**(0.092)**
EXPENDITURE						
EMPLOYEE COSTS	95.746	100.354	4.609	4.81%	4.037	0.571
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	29.971	30.129	0.158	0.53%	0.000	0.158
TRANSPORT RELATED EXPENDITURE	16.243	17.338	1.095	6.74%	0.622	0.473
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	15.789	15.644	(0.146)	-0.92%	0.093	(0.238)
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	13.465	14.164	0.698	5.19%	0.462	0.236
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	0.018	0.025	0.007	41.29%	0.000	0.007
SUPPORT SERVICES CHARGES	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
	171.233	177.654	6.421	3.75%	5.214	1.207
	124.901	131.048	6.147	4.92%	5.032	1.115

14 November 2023

Agenda Item No 11

Education Service

Capital Investment Plan 2023-2024: Progress Report

Report by:
Shelagh McLean, Head of Education (Early Years and Directorate Support)

Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report provides members with information on the overall progress of the Education Service capital programme, for the current financial year, 2023-24, as well as informs members of progress on our major projects.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that members:

i)   note the financial position as detailed in this report, and

ii)   note that the budget has been revised to reflect the outcome of the Capital Plan review and the annual re-phasing exercise undertaken in June 2023.

Resource Implications

There are no direct resource implications. At the present time the Directorate is projecting a final outturn of £72.889m. The plan is showing a minor variance in the current year, as of August 2023.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report. However, there is a risk that the actual outturn will vary from the projection contained in the report. Any potential over or under spend will be managed within the capital programme in 2023-2024 and the programme re-profiled over future years.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed, and is not necessary, as no change or revision to existing policies is proposed.

Consultation

Not Applicable.

1.0 Background

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the overall progress of projects within the capital programme for the current year, as well as provide an update on projects under individual headings within the capital plan.

1.2 The projected outturn is currently £72.889m, which is showing slippage of (£0.063m), however this may change as projects develop throughout the financial year.

1.3 Appendix 1 provides the cost detail on major projects and programmes within the capital plan, where expenditure exceeds £1m.

1.4 Appendix 2 provides the projected final outturn for Education Service for the year 2023-2024.

2.0 Issues and Options

Key Issues / Risks

2.1 Across the Capital Investment Plan the risk continues that both the timing and the costs of projects could be adversely affected by the current economic climate. Throughout the programme, issues are continuing to be identified in relation to the supply of construction materials, the consequences of which have been considered and reflected in the Capital Investment Plan review which was approved by Fife Council on 22nd June 2023. Monitoring of the impact of any additional costs on projects still in their infancy will continue and any significant impact on timescales and associated risks will be reported to this committee. Where appropriate, any known impact on timing of delivery of projects has been built into the re-phased plan and the overall scale of any additional costs or further delays will be considered as part of future reviews of the Capital Investment Plan.

Major Projects

2.2 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the projected outturn for the major projects and programmes within the Education Service Capital Plan. Within this Dunfermline Learning Campus is projecting a pressure of £1.624m on the project, which is due to an unsuccessful bid for external funding. Work is ongoing to mitigate the pressure where possible through other efficiencies in the project, however any residual pressure will require to be accommodated within the overall Education Capital Plan. Currently, work is progressing well on the project which is replacing Woodmill and St Columba's RC High Schools. The project is expected to spend £54m in the current financial year, with the schools opening in August 2024.

2.3 Other significant projects and programmes of work detailed within Appendix 2 include the project at Lochgelly South Primary School for ground consolidation works and improvements, which is included within the Education Rolling Programme. This project is estimated to spend £5.000m this financial year across both the main project at Lochgelly South Primary School and the associated project at St Kenneth's Primary School, including the provision of accommodation for the decant of pupils from Lochgelly South. Also included is initial work on the Inverkeithing High School replacement project of £4.500m (included within the Secondary School Development project in the Capital Plan). Previous reports have referenced the projects within Early Learning and Childcare, which has resulted in significant investment to provide accommodation for the expansion of early years

provision to 1140 hours. The major projects delivered from this programme are now mostly complete, with the new nursery at Methilhaven now open.

Potential Risks and Actions

2.4   The Council's approved Capital Plan includes £213m investment in respect of Secondary Schools in West Fife, which includes the Dunfermline Learning Campus (DLC) and the Inverkeithing High School replacement. The budgets for the projects reflect the funding arrangements of the Scottish Government's Learning Estate Investment Plan (LEIP), which requires the Council to fund the up-front cost of construction, with Government support coming in the form of a revenue contribution based on the achievement of outcomes. The project is progressing in line with the required timeline with the campus due to open in August 2024. The council has approval through LEIP Phase 2 funding for the replacement of Inverkeithing HS and the estimated financial impact of this is included in the Plan. A decision on LEIP Phase 3 was advised by Scottish Government on 30 October, with the Council's bid for a replacement High School in Glenrothes in the later years of the plan not being accepted. Feedback from Scottish Government indicated that, although the bid met the criteria, and was aligned with the aims of the Learning Estate Strategy, priority was given to Councils who did not have successful bids in Phase 1 and 2, with the focus being around replacing a small number of schools in the very worst condition.

2.5   Within Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), there is one project due to be completed during this financial year at Raith Lodge, and contingency arrangements are in place until these facilities are complete and operational.

2.6   Scottish Government have indicated that it is still their policy intention to expand the provision of Free School Meals to all Primary pupils (currently up to and including P5) by the end of this Scottish Parliamentary term, focussing initially on expanding provision to children in Primaries 6 and 7 whose families are in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment. Work has already been undertaken to estimate the costs associated with expanding provision in terms of the works required to school kitchens and dining rooms, and this will require to be prioritised to provide additional capacity. Scottish Government have provided £7.509m of funding to date, and £1.200m of this is programmed to be spent in the current financial year.

Financial Performance – 2023-2024 projected spend

2.7   Appendix 2 details the projected outturn for 2023-2024 against the main projects and Investment Themes.

2.8   There is slippage of (£0.357m) against the Early Learning and Childcare programme. There was a delay in starting Raith Lodge project on-site as resources were being used on the Lochgelly South Primary and St Kenneth's Primary projects. However, work has commenced now and is on-going.

2.9   There is advancement of £0.543m under Rolling Programme as a number of projects not originally programmed for this financial year have been brought forward.

3.0 Conclusions

3.1   The projected outturn position for the capital programme for Education Service Directorate is £72.889m. There is slippage of (£0.063m) being projected at August 2023.

3.2   The management of capital resources require us to look across financial years, as well as within individual years. The current year performance is only a snapshot of the existing plan and the Directorate will adjust expenditure levels within future years of the plan to accommodate the advancement of projects.

List of Appendices

1.   Project Cost Monitor

2.   Capital Plan 2023-2024 Forecast Expenditure

Background Papers

Not applicable

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FIFE COUNCIL
EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
EDUCATION AND CHILDRENS SERVICES
CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2023-33
TOTAL COST MONITOR - MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Project	Theme	Original Approved Budget £m	Current Project Budget £m	Total Outturn £m	Variance £m	Variance %	Current Project Status	Expected Project Completion Date
Madras College Extension	Opportunities for All		5.713	5.713	-	0.00%	Future Project	2026-27
Dunfermline Learning Campus	Opportunities for All		122.025	123.649	1.624	1.33%	Current Project	2024-25
Extension Secondary School - Viewforth	Opportunities for All	5.989	6.335	6.335	-	0.00%	Future Project	2030-31
New Secondary School - Glenrothes /Glenwood	Opportunities for All	27.532	86.831	86.831	-	0.00%	Future Project	2029-30
Queen Anne High School Extension	Opportunities for All		6.626	6.626	-	0.00%	Future Project	2030-31
Inverkeithing High School Replacement	Opportunities for All		85.000	85.000	-	0.00%	Future Project	2026-27
Lochgelly Primary School	Opportunities for All	9.000	9.000	9.000	(0.000)	0.00%	Current Project	2024-25
Primary School Development Future Projects	Opportunities for All		97.638	97.638	-	0.00%	Future Project	2032-33
Balwearie High School	Maintaining Our Assets	8.300	8.300	8.300	-	0.00%	Future Project	2026-27
Total Major Projects over £5.000m		**50.821**	**427.468**	**429.091**	**1.624**	**0.38%**		
Extension Secondary School - Auchmuty	Opportunities for All	9.62	3.734	3.734	-	0.00%	Future Project	2027-28
New Methilhaven Nursery	Opportunities for All		1.504	1.504	-	0.00%	Completed Project	2023-24
Extension to Freuchie PS	Opportunities for All	2.000	2.000	2.000	-	0.00%	Future Project	2025-26
Primary School Development Future Projects	Opportunities for All		6.282	6.282	-	0.00%	Future Project	2031-32
Total Major Projects over £1.000m		**11.620**	**13.520**	**13.520**	**-**	**0.00%**		
Total Major Projects		**62.441**	**440.988**	**442.611**	**1.624**	**0.37%**		

FIFE COUNCIL Appendix 2
EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
EDUCATION AND CHILDRENS SERVICES
CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2023-33
MONITORING REPORT 2023-24

Expenditure	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Total Outturn £m	Variance £m	Outturn as % of Plan
Building Fife's Future	0.300	(0.016)	0.151	(0.149)	50%
Developers Contributions	-	-	-	-	0%
Early Learning and Childcare	1.195	(0.039)	0.838	(0.357)	70%
Nurseries and Primary Pressures	-	-	-	-	0%
Primary School Development	0.232	-	0.132	(0.100)	57%
Secondary School Development	58.500	27.517	58.500	-	100%
Education Rolling Programme	10.851	2.352	11.394	0.543	105%
Nursery Refurbishment	0.625	0.194	0.625	(0.000)	100%
Free School Meals Expansion	1.200	-	1.200	-	100%
Primary School Structural Pressures	0.050	-	0.050	-	100%
TOTAL EDUCATION SERVICES	**72.952**	**30.008**	**72.889**	**(0.063)**	**100%**
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**72.952**	**30.008**	**72.889**	**(0.063)**	**100%**

Income	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Total Outturn £m	Variance £m	Outturn as % of Plan
Building Fife's Future	(0.169)	-	(0.150)	0.019	89%
Developers Contributions	-	-	-	-	0%
Early Learning and Childcare	-	-	-	-	0%
Nurseries and Primary Pressures	-	-	-	-	0%
Primary School Development	(0.325)	-	(0.325)	-	100%
Secondary School Development	-	0.002	-	-	0%
Education Rolling Programme	-	-	-	-	0%
Nursery Refurbishment	-	-	-	-	0%
Free School Meals Expansion	-	-	-	-	0%
TOTAL INCOME	**(0.494)**	**0.002**	**(0.475)**	**0.019**	**96%**

14 November 2023

Agenda Item No. 12

Education Scrutiny Committee Workplan

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report supports the Committee's consideration of the workplan for future meetings of the Committee.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Committee review the workplan and that members come forward with suggestions for areas of scrutiny.

Resource Implications

Committee should consider the resource implication for Council staff of any request for future reports.

Legal & Risk Implications

Committee should consider seeking inclusion of future items on the workplan by prioritising those which have the biggest impact and those which seek to deal with the highest level of risk.

Impact Assessment

None required for this paper.

Consultation

The purpose of the paper is to support the Committee's discussion and therefore no consultation is necessary.

1.0 Background

1.1   Each Scrutiny Committee operates a workplan which contains items which fall under three broad headings: performance reporting, planning; and improvement work. These items will often lead to reactive rather than proactive scrutiny. Discussion on the workplan agenda item will afford members the opportunity to shape, as a committee, the agenda with future items of business it wishes to review in more detail.

2.0 Conclusions

2.1   The current workplan is included as Appendix one and should be reviewed by the committee to help inform scrutiny activity.

List of Appendices

1.   Workplan

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:-

None

Report Contact

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Education Scrutiny Committee of 9 January 2024			
Title	**Service(s)**	**Contact(s)**	**Comments**
Inspection Outcomes - Academic Year 2022/23	Education and Children's Services	Jackie Funnell, Karen Lees	Previously considered 21.03.23 min ref 34 (3) refers.
Education Service Revenue Budget 2023-24 Projected Outturn	Education and Children's Services, Finance and Corporate Services	Alison Binnie	
Education Service Capital Investment Plan 2023-24 : Progress Report	Education and Children's Services, Finance and Corporate Services	Alison Binnie	
Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme			

Education Scrutiny Committee of 5 March 2024			
Title	**Service(s)**	**Contact(s)**	**Comments**
Education Service Revenue Budget 2023-24 Projected Outturn	Education and Children's Services, Finance and Corporate Services	Alison Binnie	
Education Service Capital Investment Plan 2023-24 : Progress Report	Education and Children's Services, Finance and Corporate Services	Alison Binnie	
Attendance Report - Update	Education and Children's Services	Gavin Waterston	Six-monthly update since previous report on 22.08.23 - Ref Para 50. (2) of 2023.ES.25 refers.
Swimming Lessons as Integrated Part of Physical Education Courses in Primary Schools	Education and Children's Services	Pamela Colburn	Original Motion to FC 16.03.23.
Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme			

Education Scrutiny Committee of 7 May 2024

Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Destination of School Leavers	Education and Children's Services	Karen Lees, Stuart Booker	Destinations only for school leavers from 18 Secondary schools.
Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme			

Unallocated

Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Revenue/Capital Reports (x4) - for August 2024	Education and Children's Services, Finance and Corporate Services	Alison Binnie	- Education Service Revenue Budget 2023-24 Provisional Outturn - Education Service Capital Investment Plan 2023-24: Provisional Outturn - Education Service Revenue Budget 2024-25 Projected Outturn - Education Service Capital Investment Plan 2024-25: Progress Report
Work to support asylum seekers/refugees and those with English as an additional language in Fife Schools	Education and Children's Services	Deborah Davidson, Jennifer Wilson, Stuart Booker	Raised at meeting on 23.05.23. Minute ref. Para. 44 (2) of 2023.ES.22 refers.
Working Group - Attainment Gap (early years, nursery and P1): Findings/Update	Education and Children's Services	Angela Logue	As agreed at meeting on 24.01.23, Para 31 (5) refers.