

THE FIFE COUNCIL - EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – BLENDED MEETING

Committee Room 2, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

18 March 2025

10.05 am – 12.35 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Kathleen Leslie (Convener), Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw, Aude Boubaker-Calder, Ian Cameron, Rod Cavanagh, Eugene Clarke, Altany Craik, Colin Davidson, Linda Erskine, Louise Kennedy-Dalby, James Leslie, Lynn Mowatt, Alistair Suttie, Daniel Wilson, Ann Verner (substituting for Councillor Barrera), Sean Dillon (substituting for Councillor Caffrey) and Mr Ian Macaulay, Church of Scotland.

ATTENDING: Donnie MacLeod, Executive Director, Education Service, Shelagh McLean, Head of Education (Early Years and Directorate Support), Angela Logue, Head of Education (Primary Schools and Improvement Support), Maria Lloyd, Head of Education (Secondary Schools and Specialist Support), Jackie Funnell, Education Manager, Rona Weir, Education Manager, Jennifer Wilson, Headteacher and Vicky Cromar, Principal Teacher, Supporting Learners Service, Emma Clunie, Headteacher, Kirkcaldy North Primary School, Debbie Davie, Deputy Headteacher and Daryl Friel, Depute Headteacher, Levenmouth Academy, Daniel Dewar, Temporary Depute Headteacher and Claire McGovern, Administrative Assistant, Pathhead Primary School, Ashley Birrell, Project Manager and Clair Lawrence, Project Manager, Childcare Management, Titi Akinwande, Lead Performance Analyst and Stuart Booker, Quality Improvement Officer, Education Service; Alison Binnie, Finance Business Partner and Diane Barnett, Committee Officer, Finance and Corporate Services.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Auxi Barrera, John Caffrey and Mr Alastair Crockett, Cupar Baptist Church.

120. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in terms of Standing Order No. 22.

121. MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee of 28 January 2025.

Decision

The committee approved the minute.

122. SUPPORTING REFUGEE, ASYLUM SEEKING AND DISPLACED YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education providing an update on the current support provided to refugee, asylum seeking and displaced children and young people with English as an additional language (EAL) in the education provisions that they attend.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) scrutinised and noted the updates provided; and
- (2) requested a further update report for consideration at its meeting on 17 March 2026.

123. ATTENDANCE UPDATE REPORT MARCH 2025

The committee considered a report by the Head of Education Services providing an update on the progress of attendance of children and young people in schools across Fife as requested by this committee at its meeting on 7 May 2024, including a comparison to the national attendance data provided by the Scottish Government in March 2024.

The report shared updated national attendance data in line with what had been published at the time of writing.

The report also outlined the ongoing work being carried out centrally and by all Fife schools to work to achieve this key priority, as stated in Fife Education's Directorate Improvement Plan 2023-26.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) scrutinised the attendance data and information provided;
- (2) expressed its support of the ongoing work both centrally and by schools in improving attendance;
- (3) requested a further progress report for consideration at its meeting on 17 March 2026; and
- (4) requested that the service arrange an elected member workshop, before the end of May, to consider in more detail issues around school attendance and how best practice and strategies for improvement could be replicated across all schools.

The committee adjourned at 11.55 am and reconvened at 12:05 pm.

124. CHILDCARE SERVICES - EARLY ADOPTER COMMUNITY WORK

The committee considered a report by the Head of Education Services providing an update on the work carried out within the Childcare Services Team as part of the Early Adopter Community work in the Levenmouth Area.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) considered and noted the information provided and the progress made to date; and
- (2) noted the plans to expand the Early Adopter work to other communities in Fife.

125. 2024/25 REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN – EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Education Service and the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services providing an update on the projected outturn financial position for the 2024-25 financial year for the Education Directorate as at 31 December 2024.

Decision

The committee considered and noted the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

126. 2024/25 CAPITAL MONITORING PROGRESS REPORT – EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Education Services and the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services providing an update on the Capital Investment Plan and advising on the projected financial position for the 2024-25 financial year for the Education Directorate.

Decision

The committee considered and commented on the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

127. EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PLAN

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services relating to the committee's consideration of the workplan for future meetings.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the workplan and suggestions were invited from members of the committee for future areas of scrutiny;

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- (2) as outlined at Para No 122 (2) above – ‘supporting refugee, asylum seeking and displaced young people with English as an additional language in education’ – agreed that an update report be presented for consideration at its meeting on 17 March 2026;
- (3) as outlined at Para No 123 (3) above – ‘attendance update report’ - agreed that an update report would be presented for consideration at its meeting on 17 March 2026;
- (4) acknowledged that an update report on ‘swimming for children and young people’ would be presented for consideration at its meeting on 20 May 2025; and
- (5) acknowledged that an update report on ‘strategic equity fund’ would be presented for consideration at its meeting on 20 May 2025.