

MINUTE
of
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting, held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on Thursday 3 April 2025.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson (Chair)
Councillor Kate Campbell
Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Katie Pragnell (Vice Chair)

Councillor Colm Merrick
Councillor Gordon Wallace
Ms Fiona Gilchrist
Ms Evelyn Yedd*

Councillor Anderson in the Chair

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Janice Collins, Head of Education Services (Quality Improvement and Performance); Joe McCaig, Head of Education Services (Provision); Siobhan McColgan, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity); Graeme Hay, Education Senior Manager (Leading Change); and Lesleyann Burns, Democratic Services Officer.

Also Attending:

Suzanne Martin, Head Teacher, St. Joseph's Primary School; Chris Atherton, Depute Principal Educational Psychologist; Clare Creighton, (Quality Improvement Manager); and Seana Moore, Head Teacher, Isobel Mair School.

Apologies:

Councillor Tony Buchanan; Councillor Danny Devlin and Ms Dorothy Graham.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1168. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

1169. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education informing members of the report produced by Education Scotland following its inspection of St. Joseph's Primary School. A copy of the inspection report accompanied the report.

The inspection had been carried out by Education Scotland in January 2025. It had covered key aspects of the work of the school and had identified particular strengths and areas for improvement using the full model of the Education Scotland six-point scale and self-evaluation framework.

In assessing the indicators of quality in the school, Education Scotland found 4 aspects of the work to be very good: leadership of change, learning, teaching and assessment, ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion and raising attainment and achievement.

The report highlighted leading practice across Scotland and noted the following as an area worth sharing more widely nationally: The effective approaches, which support children to assess how well they were learning and to recall their prior learning. This was effective in supporting how children independently assess how much support they required in their next steps in learning. Teachers supported children well with this through structured questions, opportunities for children to reflect on their learning and use of individual digital profiles. These profiles were helpful for children to reflect on their learning as they progress through school.

Particular strengths highlighted by the inspection team included the highly effective headteacher providing strong leadership and direction to the work of the school. The headteacher was supported very well by the deputy headteacher and principal teachers. Together, with all staff, they were highly ambitious for all children. Children were happy, enthusiastic and confident, they were successful and independent learners. Together staff and children created a welcoming, nurturing, caring and inclusive ethos which supported positive relationships and a strong sense of community. All staff worked well together as a team, this resulted in high quality learning and teaching which was leading to very strong levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.

The inspection team also identified 2 areas for improvement. One was to continue to build on the highly effective practice in learning, teaching and assessment, the other was to continue to develop approaches to the tracking and monitoring of skills across the curriculum as planned.

Members all congratulated the head teacher on the report and supported the fact that the report was done in the long model. The head teacher provided more detail around the programme for outdoor learning; she also explained the 'No hands up' approach, which allows children more time to think before responding to a question.

The Committee heard from Suzanne Martin, Head Teacher, she commended the strong sense of community throughout the school and that she was delighted that leadership had been recognised in the report. She highlighted that the practices in place were worth sharing more widely. She thanked everyone involved including the children and the Education Committee.

Having heard members commend the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (a) to note the content of the Education Scotland report on St. Joseph's Primary School; and
- (b) to approve the action plan to address the agreed areas for improvement.

Councillor Anderson indicated at this point that the items of the agenda would be considered in the order shown below.

REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING (ASL) REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

1170. The Committee considered the report on the progress of East Renfrewshire Council Additional Support for Learning (ASL) Review recommendations. The report detailed how a national review of the implementation of additional support for learning in schools was carried out by Angela Morgan (2020) which considered the implementation of the Additional Support for Learning legislation and how this was applied to practice across authorities.

The East Renfrewshire review considered how we provided high quality support to children and young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN) who attended specialist provision whilst also providing enhanced ASN provision in our mainstream schools through sharing of specialist knowledge, training and resources.

Based on the findings of the review there were 19 recommendations that were agreed and these were organised into 4 categories – Vision; Culture and Climate; Specialist Provision and Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL).

It was explained how the ASL Oversight Group had overseen the planning, implementation and evaluation of the ASL Review in East Renfrewshire, an extensive consultation had taken place during the data gathering phase of the ASL review and this had been used to inform the actions that had been taken moving forward. Pupils and parents had also been widely involved in the consultation and evaluation of a range of activity linked to the ASL review.

It was recognised that inclusion is an ongoing journey, not a destination and that sustaining this drive for improvement in the area of ASN required continuous commitment and effort in all of the workforce.

A question was asked on how regularly Pupil Support Assistant's (PSA) received training and whether parents can request for their child to have an individual assessment plan. It was confirmed that the Education Department had developed a range of professional learning for PSAs including a programme called 'Keeping Trauma in Mind', this has been so successful that a level 2 was now being introduced with PSA's co-delivering the training. It was also confirmed that a PSA induction programme along with guidance had been developed and that this was an ongoing piece of work. Regarding individual assessment plans for pupils, this would be done through the school and the link Educational Psychologist.

Having heard members commend the report, the Committee agreed to note the content of the Education Departments Executive Summary on the progress of East Renfrewshire council ASL Review Recommendations.

SPOTLIGHT ON LEARN WELL SERVICE AND ISOBEL MAIR SCHOOL

1171. Councillor Anderson invited Seana Moore, Head Teacher Isobel Mair School and Claire Creighton, Quality Improvement Officer to showcase Isobel Mair School. Seana Moore started off by thanking everyone and explaining that she started her new post in January 2025. She went on to explain how work starts with the Family Centre, then continues onto Primary School and Secondary School with the full account of Curriculum for Excellence being taken on board. She confirmed that all learners have now secured positive destinations for the

coming year. Members were able to talk to some of the pupils prior to Committee who showcased and discussed how their curriculum had enabled them to develop throughout their time at Isobel Mair School.

Seana Moore reflected that in February 2023, the Scottish Government commissioned a literature review on 'Transitions to adulthood for disabled young people', which explored experiences and best practices that supported these young people. She reflected on how it's hard to support this as well as the challenges faced in sustaining this onto adulthood, and the school recognises that. She explained that the majority of children within the Family Centre and Primary School had complex learning needs with an increase in those with complex medical needs. When designing the curriculum they are required to look at the youngest in P1 and seek to see what they are preparing them for in adulthood post school. Going forward it was reflected that it was important to ensure that focus was kept on the purpose of education for learners and continuation of core skills which equipped them to be the best they could be.

Clare Creighton commended the work that Seana had done. It was reiterated that there were children and young people with complex needs across many East Renfrewshire's schools. To address this, a transitions team was established in 2022 which had a multiagency approach. This meets 5 times a year, along with 5 separate meeting for Isobel Mair School to discuss possible supports for the children and young people. She highlighted the work of the Communities Pathways team which Members had been given the opportunity to see before the Committee commenced. Across the 7 secondary schools, 3 areas were being looked at to develop the curriculum for young people with additional support needs, this would be developed in these schools as well as Isobel Mair School. She highlighted how crucial partnership working had been as this reassured both parents and young people.

Chris Atherton, Depute Principal Educational Psychologist was then invited to do a presentation on Learn Well. He presented to the Committee that referrals come as a result of emotionally based school absence. He went on to explain that they helped care experienced pupils in years S1 – S4 who's attendance had fallen below 70%. These pupils were supported with learning as well as their wellbeing and tend to have additional support needs.

Learn Well received different funding for various places. Since 2022 there had been over 50 plus young people supported by Learn Well. On average the attendance is 62 – 66%, feedback and quotes were shown on the presentation from both young people and families. He confirmed that they had worked in collaboration with the both the schools and families.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROMISE 5TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRESS REPORT

1172. The Committee considered the report by East Renfrewshire Children's Services on The Promise. The paper highlighted the work undertaken by East Renfrewshire Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership, and the wider Children's Planning Partnership - the Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership – in promoting The Promise. The report highlighted progress with local implementation over the period 2020 to 2025. The local partnership acknowledged that whilst progress has been made there is much still to do to be fully Promise compliant by 2030.

The Promise Oversight Board published their [report](#) in 5 February 2025 to mark the five year mid-way point in the ten year programme. It concluded that the national journey was behind schedule but still on course to be achieved by 2030. The report stated that to get there will "*require pace, renewed purpose, and everyone to play their part*" over the next five years. It highlighted the statutory provisions of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2024 that related to public bodies as corporate parents and was clear all of these local and national

organisations must fulfil their responsibilities if children and young people were to get the support they required from across the system.

The Calls to Action from the Oversight Board Report were being considered by our local multi agency Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership and where necessary we will ensure areas for improvement are included within A Place To Grow. The paper set out a range of activity undertaken within the Education Department to deliver on the actions set out in The Promise Plan 2020-23.

The Committee welcomed this paper and acknowledged that work is ongoing. It was noted that 100% of looked after children who had left school in 2022-23 were in a positive destination.

Education Committee agreed to:

- a) note the publication of the national Promise Oversight Board 5th Anniversary Report (2025);
- b) note and comment on the Education Department update on implementation of The Promise in East Renfrewshire; and,
- c) note that a full report on the progress of The Promise will be taken to Council on 23 April 2025.

CHAIR

