

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE25 September 2025Report by Director of EducationWEST PARTNERSHIP COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK 2025-26**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform East Renfrewshire's Education Committee of the contents of the West Partnership's Collaborative Framework 2025-26

RECOMMENDATION

2. Education Committee is asked to note and comment the report.

BACKGROUND

3. Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs) were established in 2017 as a national initiative to bring about improvement for all schools in Scotland. They are intended to bring together local authorities and Education Scotland, facilitating collaborative working and providing educational support to practitioners.
4. The Glasgow City Region Education Improvement Collaboration, known as the West Partnership brings together authorities from across the Glasgow City Region; East Renfrewshire is a member of the West Partnership.
5. Education Committee approved the content of the West Partnership Improvement Plan in September 2024 and noted the progress and impact that had been made between 2017 and 2025 in June 2025.
6. Following the Cabinet Secretary announcement to cease funding for regional improvement collaboratives in March 2025, a new collaborative framework has been agreed across the West Partnership.

REPORT

7. Previously, Regional Improvement Collaboratives were required to produce an annual improvement plan which outlines the vision, purpose and key activities of the collaborative for the year ahead.
8. The report by Professors Chapman and Donaldson summarised the evidence generated over 7 years that had enabled the West Partnership to collaborate effectively, they highlighted the following key factors:
 - strategic leadership;
 - networked learning and collaboration;

- building data-informed systems, tools, and resources;
 - evidence-based models of good practice;
 - planning and organisation;
 - practitioner-led programmes;
 - scaling through peer recommendation; and,
 - focusing on 'hot issues'.
9. Their report also notes the importance of 'clarity of overall purpose allied to genuine delegated decision making and effective evaluation should be part of the approach to governance and leadership in any ongoing regional collaboration'. As such, the need for a clear framework and plan remains critical to ensure that ongoing collaboration is effective and makes a difference for practitioners, ELC settings and schools.
 10. The West Partnership Collaborative Framework 2025-26 (Appendix 1) sets out the key areas for collaborative action to bring about further improvement across the Glasgow City Region.
 11. Education Committee should note that the plan captures those areas where collaboration between the partners will be beneficial. Not all schools or local authorities will participate in all activities, but the plan sets out the partnership's offer to schools, based on what stakeholders have indicated they would benefit from.
 12. As such the plan does not replicate or duplicate the individual local improvement plans of each partner authority, but enhances our own efforts to support and challenge schools to improve.
 13. The four main workstreams will be: Early Level; Leadership of Learning; Inclusion and Emerging Priorities.
 14. The approach towards groups and networks that was introduced in 2022-23 will continue. These networks meet with a common purpose to enhance the work of the local authorities in themed areas such as curriculum, additional support needs and quality improvement. East Renfrewshire is benefitting from the collaboration and support from the networks.
 15. The 2025-26 Collaborative Framework was considered at the last West Partnership Overview Group meeting on 22 August 2025. This group, which comprises of Directors, Head teacher representatives and Professors Chapman and Donaldson, reviewed the framework and noted that it would be considered by each Council area through its own local governance arrangements.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

16. The Scottish Government made £3 million of funding available nationally to support the work of RICs for financial year 2024-25. In 2025-26 no funding has been made available nationally.
17. Any financial implications will be met from the Education Department's budget.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

18. Over the past session, self-evaluation and stakeholder engagement resulted in the creation of the new high-level framework.
19. The Overview Group has engaged with Education Scotland and The Centre for Teaching Excellence to ensure that the West Partnership is aligned and complements what is available nationally.

CONCLUSION

20. There is strong evidence that the focus in the West Partnership on excellence and equity, underpinned by an approach which enables staff to take collective action and deliver improvement is clearly adding value. The new Collaborative Framework means that the West Partnership will be well placed to continue to meet the needs of its stakeholders and support improvement in the future.

RECOMMENDATION

21. Education Committee is asked to note and comment the report.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
25 September 2025

Report Author
Mark Ratter, Director of Education
Tel: 0141 577 8635
Mark.Ratter@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Appendices
Appendix 1: West Partnership Collaborative Framework 2025-26

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The West Partnership Collaborative Framework 2025-26

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1. Introduction

As the West Partnership¹ enters its eighth year, the commitment to continue working together to improve outcomes for all the children, young people and their families across the eight local authorities is stronger than ever.

The Partnership's **Collaborative Framework** for 2025-26 sets out our shared priorities for the coming year. Driven by our vision *to embed the values of **equity, excellence and empowerment** in everything we do, building a collaborative, **networked learning system** to improve learning **experiences and outcomes** for every learner across the region*, these build on our existing strong foundation of collaborative improvement activity.

The Framework is built around continued collective action with a strong focus on what we can do together to:

- close the poverty-related attainment gap; and,
- improve attainment and achievement for all the children and young people across the eight WP local authorities.

This year there are four workstreams in the Framework, each has a small number of priorities.

- i. Early Level
- ii. Leadership of Learning
- iii. Inclusion
- iv. Emerging Priorities

For the eight local authorities in the WP, geographical proximity offers opportunities to maximise collective expertise and address identified aspects of national and shared local priorities together. The Collaborative Framework is our vehicle to do that.

2. The West Partnership context

- 8 local authorities across the west of Scotland; East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, South Lanarkshire, and West Dunbartonshire.
- 35% of Scotland's school population attend a West Partnership school.
- Over 1000 nurseries, primary, secondary, and special schools.
- More than 246,000 children and young people.
- Over 50% of all West Partnership pupils reside in SIMD quintiles 1 and 2.
- Data from the Children In Low Income Families (CILIF) dataset suggests that 40% of Scotland's children living in low-income families reside in West Partnership local authorities.

¹ The West Partnership is a collaborative group of eight local authorities – East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire

3. Our operating principles

i. Collaboration to build a Networked Learning System

Miranda and Chapman (2021) describe the Networked Learning System as providing:

‘...a values driven, systemic perspective to improvement at all levels of the system.’

The Partnership’s approach has always been underpinned by the aim of building a Networked Learning System across the region, empowering all its educators to drive improvement. All the work is designed to enable connection, recognising that a range of models and levels of collaboration are required at different times, over different timescales and for different contexts.

Our shared definition of collaboration remains:

We will work together to understand and improve pedagogy for agreed purposes, which will lead to better outcomes, informed by evidence and critical self-reflection.

For the purposes of planning and evaluation we describe collaboration using a non-hierarchical, three-part framework that was built from evaluation evidence gathered in previous years. The three aspects of collaboration are:

- Association and networking;
- Knowledge exchange; and,
- Collaborative working

ii. Activity is driven by practitioners

The number of teachers, practitioners and officers who actively participate in the work of the Partnership has increased year on year. People get involved through professional learning, being part of a network or developing and sharing materials that will be useful to everyone. Collaboration around a shared agenda is the common thread. This means that work is driven and led by those that will use and benefit from it, including teachers, early years practitioners and school leadership teams. This can be seen in examples from the Collaborative Framework such as:

- the teachers in *Leadership of Learning Groups*, focussing on different aspects of pedagogy, building and quality assuring materials for everyone to use; and,
- school leaders and officers exploring what’s possible with project-based learning and wider achievement in the *Senior Phase Profiling Group*.

The Partnership includes everyone in schools, establishments and central teams and everyone can both contribute to and benefit from our collective efforts.

Our ambition is to create the conditions for authentic empowerment, with the ownership of change and improvement, sitting with those who deliver it for our children and young people.

iii. Evidence informed action and practice

Our focus is always firmly on identifying what we can do as a Partnership that will add value across the eight local authorities. We do this through robust self-evaluation and the use of evidence. In the coming year evaluation evidence will be collected across the four workstreams by all those involved in them. We will continue to use our three strategic drivers of improvement as a filter for the evidence we gather. They are:

- fostering collaboration across the system;
- increasing knowledge, understanding and confidence to deliver improvement; and,
- changing practice to impact positively on children, young people and their families.

4. Governance and Leadership

The Partnership has a revised set of governance and leadership arrangements for 2025-26. This is how we will monitor the implementation and impact of the Collaborative Framework.

The structure sees the introduction of a new Headteacher Reference Group to increase the reach and range of voices that contribute to and guide our work.

The Overview Group

Membership: Director / Chief Education Officer for each WP local authority
Graham Donaldson and Chris Chapman, University of Glasgow
Two members of the Headteacher Reference Group

Purpose: to provide direction, intelligence and advice that shapes the Collaborative Framework, and scrutiny for the programmes, networks and groups.

Headteacher Reference Group

Membership: Headteachers / centre leaders from early years, primary, secondary and ASN and all eight local authorities.

Purpose: to act as a consultative forum for the West Partnership by representing the views of headteachers and support the development and monitoring of the Collaborative Framework

Strategic Group for each workstream

Membership: Director / Chief Education Officer sponsor(s)
Senior officer from each local authority

Purpose: use and shape the priorities to shape and guide the activity in each of the workstreams. This includes shaping plans, hearing from groups and networks and interrogating impact evidence to inform next steps.

Operational groups and networks

Membership: Group members are identified based on the focus of the group. Some groups operate all the time and some work together for shorter periods around a specific priority.

Purpose: to plan, undertake and evaluate activity related to the priorities. This includes selected established West Partnership programmes.

Collaboration Officer

The Collaboration Officer is a key connector across all the groups and networks, providing a linking and overview function for the Collaborative Framework and its priorities.

5a. The Collaborative Framework – our priorities

As mentioned previously, the Partnership's priorities for 2025-26 were created using a range of self-evaluation evidence from stakeholders, programme evaluations, groups and networks. The priorities for each workstream are set out in the table below. The strategic group for each workstream oversees progress with these.

| Workstream | Early Level | Leadership of Learning | Inclusion | Emerging Priorities |
|------------|---|--|--|---|
| Priorities | 1. To support establishments with self-evaluation for self-improvement 2. To promote high quality pedagogy and assessment in the early years to improve experiences and outcomes for all | 3. To promote high quality approaches to learning, teaching and assessment 4. To continue to strengthen and develop the networked learning system 5. To build collective capacity and expertise in curriculum design , aligned to the national CIC work | 6. To promote high quality approaches to inclusion and support for learners and families in specialist and mainstream provision. Focus areas for the coming year will be: a) Included, Engaged, Involved Part 3 b) Tribunals c) Respect Me refresh d) Summer provision arrangements for children and young people with ASN | 7. To provide an overview of resources, support and effective practice in addressing misogyny and knife crime 8. To strengthen quality improvement approaches in order to increase the quality of support provided to schools and early years establishments 9. To provide guidance on effective approaches to managing child-friendly complaints procedures |

5b. The Collaborative Framework – our groups and networks

Over recent years the number of groups and networks collaborating around shared aims across the Partnership has expanded. Some of these groups have existed for a number of years, pre-dating the WP, some for a few years and some that are much more recent. The Collaborative Framework is built flexibly, assuming that some groups will work together over a long period and others may do so for only a few months to meet a specific shared need. It is also possible that the list of groups may change over the course of the year to meet emerging needs.

Groups and networks are an essential component of the work that we do together in building a Networked Learning System. These groups provide a mechanism to:

- drive improvement
- maximise collective expertise and experience;
- efficiently address shared challenges;
- build professional networks across schools, establishments and local authorities; and,
- build collaboration around a flexible structure matched to need.

The groups and networks included in the Collaborative Framework are set out in the table below.

| Workstream | Early Level | Leadership of Learning | Inclusion | Emerging Priorities |
|---------------------|----------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Groups and networks | Strategic Group | Strategic Group | Strategic Group | |
| | Operational Group(s) | Maths and numeracy | Operational Group | Misogyny and knife crime – overview of resources and support |
| | | Literacy | ASN headteachers | Inter-authority approaches to quality improvement |
| | | Assessment and moderation | Community Learning and Development | Child-friendly complaints |
| | | English as an Additional Language | Home Learning | |
| | | Gaelic | | |
| | | Senior Phase Profiling | | |
| | | Improving Our... Leads | | |
| | | Improving Our... Departments Faculties | | |
| | | Improving Our... Schools | | |
| | | Delivering Mentorship | | |
| | | Leadership of Learning- 3 groups | | |

5c. The Collaborative Framework – our programmes

In 2025-26 the Partnership is running six professional learning programmes. All of them have a strong track record of success over several years. The programmes are overseen by the Leadership of Learning Workstream.

The Improving Our Programmes meet different needs for practitioners, establishments and education authorities. They are developed and driven by teachers and leaders across the Partnership's local authorities. All of them have the same focus on:

- the effective use of **evidence** and **enquiry** to drive change;
- high quality **self-evaluation** undertaken collectively and individually;
- improving **learning and teaching and assessment**;
- a relentless focus on **equity and excellence** for all children and young people; and,
- developing **networks** and working **collaboratively across boundaries**.

| Programme | Designed for | Duration |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Improving Our Classrooms | Individual teachers in primary, secondary and ASN sectors | 1 year |
| Improving Our Schools | Whole primary schools | 14 months |
| Improving Our Departments and Faculties | Departments / faculties in secondary schools – all subjects | 14 months |
| Improving Our Pedagogy | Teachers and practitioners in any sector | 5 weeks (1 hr per week online) |
| Delivering Mentorship | Individual teachers in primary, secondary and ASN sectors | 1 year |
| Thinking About Headship | Experienced depute heads in all sectors and, in some cases, experienced primary principal teachers | 10 months |

More information on all programmes above, and how to take part in them, can be found on the [West Partnership website](#).

6. How will we achieve our priorities?

We will:

Priority 1: To support establishments **with self-evaluation for self-improvement**

- Strengthen the quality and consistency of self-evaluation across early learning and childcare settings by developing and sharing clear guidance aligned with the Quality Improvement Framework.

Priority 2: To promote high quality **pedagogy and assessment** in the early years to improve experiences and outcomes for all

- Build staff capacity in assessment and moderation at Early Level by providing targeted support and professional learning
- Promote effective approaches to play in P1 by providing quality assurance guidance for leaders and information for families.

Priority 3: To promote high quality approaches to **learning, teaching and assessment**

- Deliver high quality programmes focussed on pedagogy, using data effectively and deepening participants' understanding of improvement processes.
- Provide high quality professional learning opportunities in assessment and moderation practices for teachers across the Broad General Education.

Priority 4: To continue to strengthen and develop the **networked learning system**

- Continue to build networks and groups that add value across the Partnership by providing guidance, resources and professional learning.
- Continue to build networks that expand the professional networks of participants beyond the work of the group / programme.

Priority 5: To build collective capacity and expertise in **curriculum design**, aligned to the national CIC work

- Work with Education Scotland and bring groups together to plan and action identified areas where we can work together to build shared understanding and confidence in reshaping the curriculum.
- Identify and share effective practice in curriculum design across the Partnership.

Priority 6: To promote high quality approaches to **inclusion and support** for learners and families in specialist and mainstream provision.

- Share existing and develop new approaches and guidance as required, relating to the four areas of focus below.
 - a) Included, Engaged, Involved Part 3
 - b) Tribunals
 - c) Respect Me refresh
 - d) Summer provision arrangements for children and young people with ASN

Priority 7: To provide an overview of resources, support and effective practice in addressing **misogyny and knife crime**

- Bring together a cross-authority group, including relevant partners, to review existing practice and resources around knife crime and misogyny
- Share collective expertise and collate an overview of effective practices and approaches to share with all establishments.

Priority 8: To **strengthen quality improvement** approaches in order to increase the quality of support provided to schools and early years establishments

- Working with HMI, bring together cross-authority groups of senior leaders to work together and build skills and confidence in effective evaluation practice.
- Undertake an associated programme of planned school and centre visits to apply *How good is our school?* (4th edition) in evaluating learning and teaching in a real context.

Priority 9: To provide guidance on effective approaches to managing **child-friendly complaints** procedures

- Bring together a cross-authority group, including relevant partners, to share existing practice and develop approaches to child-friendly complaints.
- Create guidance / resources that can be shared and adapted for use in each local authority.

7. What will change as a result of the work?

The work we do together will make a difference by:

- improving wellbeing, achievement and inclusion **for our children and young people**;
- improving the confidence, knowledge and practice **of teachers and practitioners**;
- providing **opportunities for collaboration** within and between sectors, schools, centres and local authorities; and,
- building **system leadership capacity** and **sustainable approaches to improvement** across the Partnership.

8. How will we know we are making a difference?

We will gather evaluation evidence from different sources to establish the impact of our work, using the three strategic drivers as a framework for this. The drivers are:

- fostering collaboration across the system;
- increasing knowledge, understanding and confidence to deliver improvement; and,
- changing practice to impact positively on children, young people and their families.

Key sources of evidence that we will gather are:

- evaluations from programmes and professional learning sessions;
- progress reports from groups and networks;
- feedback on guidance and resources shared;
- stakeholder perspectives on the work of the Partnership; and,
- case studies and practice change spotlights.
- Critical Indicators (see appendix 1)

We will use these to review the impact of our work and identify what we need to do next, sharing this as widely as possible.

9. Get in touch

You can find out more about what we are doing on the West Partnership website.

www.WestPartnership.co.uk

If you have questions or would like to get involved in any of the work we are doing, please get in touch with the Collaboration Officer.

Alison Drever alison.drever@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1 Critical Indicators

The Critical indicators are linked to the West Partnership values – excellence, equity and empowerment. They give us an overview of how the Partnership is performing as a system, areas where we are making progress and those we need to focus on.

| Indicators | Excellence, Equity or Empowerment | 2018/19 Value | 2019/20 Value | 2020/21 Value | 2021/22 Value | 2022/23 Value | 2023/24 Value |
|--|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| % of primary pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in literacy (based on reading, writing and talking and listening) | Excellence | 73.0 | ** | 69.7 | 72.4 | 74.4 | 74.5 |
| % of primary pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in numeracy | | 80.3 | ** | 77.3 | 79.6 | 81.1 | 80.9 |
| % of leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better | | 69.3 | 70.4 | 72.8 | 69.4 | 68.1 | 69.1 |
| % of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better | | 38.3 | 42.1 | 44.3 | 41.5 | 40.6 | 41.8 |
| % of leavers achieving SCQF Level 5 or better in literacy | | 82.6 | 83.1 | 84.6 | 82.7 | 82.3 | 82.5 |
| % of leavers achieving SCQF Level 5 or better in numeracy | | 69.2 | 70.8 | 72.8 | 71.3 | 71.5 | 73.2 |
| Primary Attendance Rates | | 94.2 | N/A | 93.4 | N/A | 91.7 | 92.1 |
| Secondary Attendance Rates | | 90.3 | N/A | 88.4 | N/A | 87.4 | 87.7 |
| Initial School Leaver Destinations (Positive) | | 95.2 | 93.6 | 95.8 | 96.3 | 96.8 | 96.1 |
| % point gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 primary pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in literacy | Equity | 22.4 | ** | 26.1 | 22.6 | 22.5 | 22.6 |
| % point gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 primary pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in numeracy | | 17.5 | ** | 21.7 | 18.3 | 18.2 | 18.6 |
| % point gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better | | 39.6 | 36.9 | 34.8 | 33.4 | 32.6 | 33.2 |
| % point gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better | | 48.1 | 42.5 | 44.0 | 44.7 | 43.1 | 44.7 |
| % point gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 leavers achieving SCQF Level 5 or better in literacy and numeracy | | 34.7 | 35.7 | 34.4 | 34.0 | 33.5 | 34.5 |
| % point gap between Quintile 1 and Quintile 5 leavers entering initial positive destinations | | 4.8 | 6.6 | 5.1 | 4.2 | 3.5 | 4.2 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-----|------|--------------------|------|-------|-----------------|
| % of looked after school leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better | | N/A | N/A | 29.8% ² | | 29.9% | |
| % of looked after school leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better | | N/A | N/A | 8.9% | | 8.3% | |
| Number of Practitioners accessing professional learning opportunities provided by the West Partnership | Empowerment | TBC | 3185 | 3137 | 4467 | 10443 | |
| Percentage of practitioners reporting an increase in their knowledge following participation in West Partnership activities | | NA | NA | 85.1 | 85.3 | 85.8 | |
| % of establishments evaluated as good or better for leadership of change | | 73 | * | * | 91 | 81 | 79 ³ |
| % of establishments evaluated as good or better for learning, teaching and assessment | | 71 | * | * | 88 | 85 | 76 ⁴ |

Appendix 2 Action plans for each priority

² In 2023 the West Partnership board agreed to include two measures which look specifically at the outcomes of looked after children. As this is a smaller population within the West Partnership, these values will only be updated biannually, with 2 years of data combining to form a more reliable sample. As such, the latest data is a combination of 20/21 and 21/22 academic sessions.

³ Based on 32 inspections taking place between June 24 to July 25

⁴ Based on 62 inspections taking place between June-24 to July-25

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