

MINUTE
of
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minute of meeting, held at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on Thursday 25 September 2025.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson (Chair)
Councillor Tony Buchanan
Councillor Kate Campbell
Councillor Julie Ann McHale

Councillor Colm Merrick
Councillor Owen O'Donnell
Ms Fiona Gilchrist
Mr Des Morris

Councillor Anderson in the Chair

(*) indicates remote attendance

Attending:

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

Also Attending:

Jennifer Miller, Head Teacher, Thornliebank Primary School; Donna Jeffries, Head of Centre, McCready Family Centre; Yvonne Donaldson, Head Teacher, Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class and Kelly Linn, Netherlee Primary School and Nursery Class.

Apologies:

Councillor Katie Pragnell, Councillor Gordon Wallace and Dorothy Graham.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1320. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT ON THORNLIEBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL

1321. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education informing members of the report produced by Education Scotland following its inspection of Thornliebank Primary School. A copy of the inspection report accompanied the report.

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The inspection had been carried out by Education Scotland in May 2025. It had covered key aspects of the work of the school and Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig (Gaelic Medium Education) and had identified particular strengths and areas for improvement using the Education Scotland short model for inspection.

In assessing the indicators of quality in the school, Education Scotland found 2 aspects of the work to be good: learning, teaching and assessment; and raising attainment and achievement.

Particular strengths highlighted by the inspection team included:

- Children are confident and articulate. They engage positively in their learning. They work well together, support one another and demonstrate the school's values well. Children are very proud of their school.
- The headteacher works effectively with the whole staff team to create a warm, welcoming and nurturing climate for learning. As a result, children feel safe, valued and cared for.
- Staff implement a range of high-quality interventions for children who require additional support in their learning. This is helping them to make improved progress in their learning.
- Children are making very good progress in developing their understanding of spoken Gàidhlig. They are supported very well by the teachers' skilful use of immersion approaches.

It was particularly pleasing that whilst in its infancy, the inspection team highlighted the high quality provision on offer from Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig.

Members all congratulated the head teacher on the report. The recommendations that were given in the report are already identified by the schools' self evaluation and form part of the action plan.

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

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

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT (PIE) STRATEGY 2025-28

1322. The Committee considered a report updating them on the Parental Involvement and Engagement (PIE) Strategy 2025-28.

The report updated Elected Members on the approaches taken to meet the duties outlined in the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 in East Renfrewshire schools between 2022 and 2025, and to seek approval for the Parental Involvement and Engagement (PIE) Strategy 2025–2028.

The PIE Strategy 2022–2025 focused on three key aims: Communicate, Collaborate, and Consult. It was informed by extensive consultation and a PIE census involving over 1,100 parents.

The strategy had been developed through consultation with parents, Head Teachers, PIE Coordinators, Parent Council Chairs, and other stakeholders.

A presentation was given to the Members by Donna Jeffries, Yvonne Donaldson and Kelly Linn. They provided two excellent examples of how parental involvement and engagement has worked in their establishment and the difference that it has made to all involved.

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

- (a) to note the finding of the report (Appendix 1/2);
- (b) to approve the Parental Involvement and engagement Strategy 2025-2028; and
- (c) to the Director of Education supporting all educational establishments to implement this strategy.

DRAFT ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY 2025-28

1323. The Committee considered a report updating them on the approaches taken to improve accessibility for children and young people with additional support needs (ASN) in East Renfrewshire settings and schools, and to seek approval for the Accessibility Strategy 2025–2028.

The strategy set out the vision that Education planned to achieve, the progress made to date and agreed actions to further improve accessibility. It aimed to ensure those responsible for the delivery of education and ELC were aware of their legal duties and provided advice on how we will meet the accessibility planning duties as stated in the Education (Disability Strategies and pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002.

Between 2018 – 2025 several actions were taken forward to improve accessibility for children and young people with additional support needs in East Renfrewshire Council schools and ELC settings.

A review of the Accessibility Strategy will be undertaken in June 2028 to evaluate progress over the full three years and to identify new actions for the following three years. Measurement of progress will be informed by feedback and evidence provided by ELC settings and schools, through relevant quality improvement activity and by information provided by children and young people with additional support needs, including disability, and their families. A report on the impact of delivery over the three years will be reported to East Renfrewshire Education Committee in session 2028-29.

The question was asked of how people were consulted and who was consulted. It was confirmed that various groups were consulted ranging from pupil council, parent council chairs to focus groups and equalities parents groups which consisted off roughly 30 parents whom represented around 30 schools.

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

- (a) to note the progress made in advancing accessibility for learners with ASN in East Renfrewshire settings and schools;
- (b) to approve the Accessibility Strategy 2025-2028; and

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- (c) to the Director of Education supporting all educational establishments to implement this strategy.

WEST PARTNERSHIP COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK 2025-26

1324. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education on the contents of the West Partnership's Collaborative Framework 2025-26.

The report by Professors Chapman and Donaldson in March 2025 summarised the evidence generated over 7 years that had enabled the West Partnership to collaborate effectively.

The report also noted 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.

The West Partnership Collaborative Framework 2025-26 (Appendix 1) set out the key areas for collaborative action to bring about further improvement across the Glasgow City Region.

The 2025-26 Collaborative Framework was considered at the last West Partnership Overview Group meeting on 22 August 2025. This group, which comprised 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.

Members vocalised that they were pleased to see this work was still being continued and enquired as to how this was being funded. The Director of Education advised that the 8 Directors agreed to a reduced staffing to allow this to continue and that each local authority contributes to this depending on the size of the population the authority covers, this means that ownership is more vital.

Education Committee noted the content of the West Partnership Collaborative Framework 2025-26.

PERFORMANCE PRESENTATION

1325. The Committee considered a presentation on the performance of East Renfrewshire schools across the Broad General Education (BGE) and Senior Phase for the academic year 2024–25.

Members noted that East Renfrewshire continued to perform strongly in Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) attainment measures. In the BGE, the percentage of pupils achieving expected levels in literacy and numeracy remained consistently high. Although the national figures are not available, as yet, it is anticipated that the trend of being the highest performing local authority will remain., Stretch aims for literacy and numeracy were broadly met or exceeded, with equity gaps narrowing year-on-year.

Performance in the Senior Phase also showed significant progress. S4 pupils achieved record-breaking results in National 5 awards, with a marked increase in the proportion attaining 8 or more qualifications. S5 and S6 cohorts demonstrated resilience and growth, with

improvements in Higher and Advanced Higher outcomes. Insight tariff points analysis indicated a closing of the attainment gap across S4, S5 and S6 for all SIMD quintiles.

School leaver destination data highlighted that over 98% of pupils entered positive destinations, outperforming both the national and virtual comparator figures. Attendance rates in both primary and secondary sectors improved from 2023-24 to 2024-25.

The Committee welcomed the range of improvement case studies, including bespoke employability programmes and targeted support for care-experienced young people. Members commended the innovative approaches to supporting wellbeing, inclusion, and post-school transitions.

Education Scotland inspection findings were also shared, with East Renfrewshire schools receiving high ratings across key quality indicators. Stakeholder feedback reflected high levels of satisfaction among pupils, parents, and staff.

The Committee acknowledged the continued commitment of school leaders, staff, and partners in delivering high-quality learning experiences and improving outcomes for all learners. The Committee thanked Mrs Collins for an excellent presentation.

CHAIR

