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Date: 30 September 2022

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TO: Councillors A. Anderson (Chair), K. Pragnell (Vice Chair), and Councillors T. Buchanan, K. Campbell, D. Devlin, C. Merrick, O. O'Donnell and G. Wallace; and Dr F. Angell; Ms F. Gilchrist; Ms D. Graham; and Mr D. Morris.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Education Committee will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Eastwood Park, Giffnock, on **Thursday, 6 October 2022 at 10.00am**.

The agenda of business is as listed below.

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DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence.**
2. **Declarations of Interest.**
3. **Care Inspectorate Report on Joint Inspection of Children's Services for Children and Young People at Risk of Harm in East Renfrewshire Council – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 3 - 42).**
4. **Improving outcomes through the Pupil Equity Funding – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 43 - 58).**
5. **Review of Sustainable Rate for Early Learning and Childcare Funded Provision – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 59 - 62).**
6. **West Partnership Improvement Collaborative: Evaluation Report 2021-22 – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 63 - 90).**
7. **West Partnership Improvement Collaborative Improvement Plan 2022-2023 – Report by Director of Education (copy attached, pages 91 - 114).**

This document can be explained to you in other languages and can be provided in alternative formats such as large print and Braille. For further information, please contact Customer First on 0141 577 3001 or e-mail customerservices@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

A recording of the meeting will also be available following the meeting on the Council's YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/eastrenfrewshire/videos>

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEETHURSDAY 6 OCTOBER 2022Report by Director of EducationCARE INSPECTORATE REPORT ON JOINT INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF HARM IN EAST RENFREWSHIRE**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform Education Committee of the excellent report by the Care Inspectorate on the Joint Inspection of children's services for children and young people at risk of harm in East Renfrewshire.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Education Committee is asked to note and comment on the contents of the Care Inspectorate report on the Joint Inspection of children's services for children and young people at risk of harm in East Renfrewshire.

BACKGROUND

3. In March – July 2022, Services for Children and Young People in East Renfrewshire were inspected by a team led by the Care Inspectorate. The inspection team also included inspectors from Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland. It covered the range of services in East Renfrewshire that have a role in child protection and identified particular strengths.

4. The inspection team assessed and reported on the following 4 statements:

- Children and young people are safer because risks have been identified early and responded to effectively;
- Children and young people's lives improve with high-quality planning and support, ensuring they experience sustained loving and nurturing relationships to keep them safe from further harm;
- Children and young people and families are meaningfully and appropriately involved in decisions about their lives. They influence service planning, delivery and improvement; and,
- Collaborative strategic leadership, planning and operational management ensure high standards of service delivery.

5. In addition the inspection team reported on Quality Indicator 2.1 which considers the extent to which children and young people:

- Feel valued, loved, fulfilled and secure;
- Feel listened to, understood and respected;
- Experience sincere human contact and enduring relationships; and,
- Get the best start in life.

6. The report was published on 16 August 2022 and is attached as Appendix 1.

REPORT

7. In assessing Quality Indicator 2.1 the inspection team found the work of the partnership to be excellent, East Renfrewshire's Children's Services Partnership are the first in the country to receive an evaluation of Excellent for Quality Indicator 2.1.

8. Excellent is defined by the Care Inspectorate as:

Sector leading and supports experiences and outcomes for people which are of outstandingly high quality. There is a demonstrable track record of innovative, effective practice and/or very high-quality performance across a wide range of its activities and from which others could learn. We can be confident that excellent performance is sustainable and that it will be maintained.

9. The particular strengths highlighted by the inspection team in relation to QI 2.1 and the 4 statements include:

- Staff recognised and responded quickly to concerns raised about children and young people at risk of harm. Very effective collaborative early interventions were preventing risk from escalating.
- Children and young people at risk of harm were benefiting from high-quality assessments, plans and support from a wide range of services. These were impacting positively on their safety and wellbeing.
- The safety and wellbeing of children and young people who were at risk of harm was improving as a result of the caring relationships they had with key members of staff. Children and young people were listened to and respected.
- Children and young people at risk of harm and their families were actively participating and influencing service planning, delivery and improvement.
- The partnership was successfully using data and quality assurance information to inform and support decision making, service planning and delivery. This helped to identify emerging risks and inform future priorities.
- The partnership was providing strong and effective leadership and shared a very strong vision for children and young people. This continued throughout the Covid-19 pandemic ensuring appropriate supports reached the families who were in most need.
- The partnership has a strong track record of continuous development and improvement of its services. Focused plans were in place to support improvements and build on achievements. They had realistic goals and strong measures in place to monitor progress with clear timescales.

10. The report confirms the excellent joint work of children's services in East Renfrewshire to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people at risk of harm.

11. The inspection team did not identify any notable gaps in services or any significant areas for improvement during the inspection. They are confident that children's services in East Renfrewshire have the capacity to build on achievements and strengthen service delivery.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

12. There are no financial or efficiency implications related to this report.

CONSULTATION

13. During the inspection, there was engagement with a range of partners including:
- 32 children and young people and 35 parents and carers;
 - 308 survey responses from staff working in a range of services; and,
 - 100 staff participated in focus groups

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

13. In partnership with other Council services the department will continue to self-evaluate its performance and build on the excellent practice identified.

CONCLUSION

14. This report summarises the Care Inspectorate's assessment of the Joint Inspection of children's services for children and young people at risk of harm in East Renfrewshire. The inspection report shows that we are achieving successful outcomes for our children, young people and families.

RECOMMENDATION

15. Education Committee is asked to note and comment on the contents of the Care Inspectorate's report on Joint Inspection of children's services for children and young people at risk of harm in East Renfrewshire.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
6 October 2022

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Report of a joint inspection of services for children and young people at risk of harm in East Renfrewshire

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Report of a joint inspection of services for children and young people at risk of harm in East Renfrewshire

Prepared by the Care Inspectorate in partnership with Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland

16 August 2022

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Introduction

Our remit

At the request of Scottish Ministers, the Care Inspectorate is leading joint inspections of services for children and young people at risk of harm.

The remit of these joint inspections is to consider the effectiveness of services for children and young people up to the age of 18 at risk of harm. The inspections look at the differences community planning partnerships are making to the lives of children and young people at risk of harm and their families.

Joint inspections aim to provide assurance on the extent to which services, working together, can demonstrate that:

1. Children and young people are safer because risks have been identified early and responded to effectively
2. Children and young people's lives improve with high-quality planning and support, ensuring they experience sustained loving and nurturing relationships to keep them safe from further harm
3. Children and young people and families are meaningfully and appropriately involved in decisions about their lives. They influence service planning, delivery and improvement
4. Collaborative strategic leadership, planning and operational management ensure high standards of service delivery.

The inspections also aim to consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the continuation of practice to keep children and young people safe.

The terms that we use in this report

- When we say **children at risk of harm**, we mean children up to the age of 18 years who need urgent support due to being at risk of harm from abuse and/or neglect. We include in this term children who need urgent support due to being a significant risk to themselves and/or others or are at significant risk in the community.
- When we say **young people**, we mean children aged 13-17 to distinguish between this age group and younger children.
- When we say **parents** and **carers**, we mean those with parental responsibilities and rights and those who have day to day care of the child (including kinship carers and foster carers).
- When we say **partners or partnership**, we mean leaders of services who contribute to community planning. This includes representatives from the health and social care partnership, East Renfrewshire council, NHS Greater

Glasgow and Clyde, Police Scotland, Scottish Children's Reporters Administration and third sector.

- When we say **staff**, we mean any combination of people employed to work with children, young people and families in East Renfrewshire.

Appendix 2 contains definitions of some other key terms that we use.

Key facts

**Total population:
95,980 people**

This is an increase of 0.5% from 96,060 in 2020. Over the same period, the population of Scotland increased by 0.0%.

In 2021 20.4% of the population were under the age of 16, above the national average of 17%.

In 2020/21, East Renfrewshire had a rate of 0.4 for number of children on the child protection register (per 1,000 of the 0 –15yr population), lower than the Scottish average of 2.3

The rate of child protection investigations (per 1,000 of the 0 –15yr population) was 0.6, this was lower than the Scottish average of 12.8.

8 (7%) of East Renfrewshire's 122 data zones are in the 20% most deprived in Scotland. It is estimated 3,060 children and young people (16%) could be living in poverty in East Renfrewshire in 2020/21.

East Renfrewshire had 56 incidents per 10,000 population of domestic violence recorded by Police Scotland in 2020/21. This was lower than the national average of 119.



Our approach

Inspection teams include inspectors from the Care Inspectorate, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland, and Education Scotland. Teams also include young inspection volunteers, who are young people with direct experience of care or child protection services. Young inspection volunteers receive training and support and contribute to joint inspections using their knowledge and experience to help us evaluate the quality and impact of partners' work.

We take a consistent approach to inspections by using the [quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection](#), published in August 2019. Inspectors collect and review evidence against all 22 quality indicators in the framework to examine the four inspection statements. We use a six-point scale (see appendix 1) to provide a formal evaluation of quality indicator 2.1: impact on children and young people.

How we conducted this inspection

The joint inspection of services for children at risk of harm in the East Renfrewshire community planning partnership area took place between 28 February and 13 July 2022. It covered the range of partners in the area that have a role in meeting the needs of children and young people at risk of harm and their families.

- We listened to the views and experiences of 32 children and young people and 35 parents and carers. This included face-to-face meetings, telephone or video calls and survey responses.
- We reviewed practice by reading a sample of records held by a range of services for 60 children and young people at risk of harm.
- We reviewed a wide range of documents and a position statement provided by the partnership.
- We carried out a staff survey and received 308 responses from staff working in a range of services.
- We met virtually with approximately 100 staff who work directly with children, young people and families.
- We met virtually with members of senior leadership teams, committees and boards that oversee work with children at risk of harm and their families.

We are very grateful to everyone who talked to us as part of this inspection.

As the findings in this joint inspection are based on a sample of children and young people, we cannot assure the quality of service received by every single child and young person in East Renfrewshire who may be at risk of harm.

Key messages

1. Staff recognised and responded quickly to concerns raised about children and young people at risk of harm. Very effective collaborative early interventions were preventing risk from escalating.
2. Children and young people at risk of harm were benefiting from high-quality assessments, plans and support from a wide range of services. These were impacting positively on their safety and wellbeing.
3. The safety and wellbeing of children and young people who were at risk of harm was improving as a result of the caring relationships they had with key members of staff. Children and young people were listened to and respected.
4. Children and young people at risk of harm and their families were actively participating and influencing service planning, delivery and improvement.
5. The partnership was successfully using data and quality assurance information to inform and support decision making, service planning and delivery. This helped to identify emerging risks and inform future priorities.
6. The partnership was providing strong and effective leadership and shared a very strong vision for children and young people. This continued throughout the Covid-19 pandemic ensuring appropriate supports reached the families who were in most need.
7. The partnership has a strong track record of continuous development and improvement of its services. Focused plans were in place to support improvements and build on achievements. They had realistic goals and strong measures in place to monitor progress with clear timescales.

Statement 1: Children and young people are safer because risks have been identified early and responded to effectively

Key messages

- Joint working and preventative approaches were helping children and their families to receive personalised support when it was needed to prevent risks escalating.
- Staff recognised and responded quickly to initial concerns about children and young people. Information was being shared effectively without delay.
- Staff worked in highly effective ways to continue to provide support and minimise the impact of the pandemic

Prevention

Partners' commitment to prevention and early help formed the basis for family services to support children and young people to remain at home with their families and within their community. Family support was effectively integrated into service provision. It focused on supporting existing strengths and abilities rather than focusing on the problem or concern.

Staff shared a common understanding of the **getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) principles** and **national practice model**. This had helped to promote a strong culture of collaborative working and staff responding in an effective and timely way to protect children at risk of harm. A range of early identification and intervention approaches and services were being used successfully to prevent risk from escalating.

Request for Assistance is a multi-agency service, accessible to education, health, or any other service, as well as the public, where they believe a child or young person needs help. The service ensured that children and their families receive a prompt response to referrals or inquiries. Partner agencies that made referrals were also supported in a timely way and offered advice to strengthen the preventative approach to children, young people and their families.

The Request for Assistance approach ensured a tiered and proportionate response for additional intervention. This enabled early identification and personalised support for families, with safety planning initiated at the point of a concern being raised. From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, the Request for Assistance team completed a total of 1,047 initial assessments, with only 19% requiring targeted intervention. These figures were consistent with the previous year's activity. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, this service and other preventative approaches continued with positive collaborative working to keep children at risk of harm, safe and provided with meaningful support. Staff continued to deliver on their statutory duties.

Recognition and initial response to concerns

Staff, including those who worked with adults, worked well together to protect children and young people and keep them safe. Children at risk of harm were being kept safe because staff identified concerns and shared them effectively and without delay. This included concerns that came to light outside normal working hours and at weekends. We evaluated the immediate response to concerns in almost all records that we read as good or better. We evaluated the majority as very good. Inter-agency child protection arrangements and guidance provided the required instruction for all staff working with children and young people. Strong collaborative contributions with the involvement of police, social work, health and education were evident in initial multi-agency meetings.

The protective arrangements for older young people at risk of harm were effective when considering the most appropriate route, including **care and risk management** and vulnerable young person processes. The Youth Intensive Support Service (YISS), with its clear focus of early prevention and strong collaborative working with the police, responded to those young people at risk of harm. Through the provision of flexible intensive support, it ensured young people and their families were listened to and involved in the assessment, decision making and planning of their care and support.

Pre-birth planning arrangements were effective, with the majority of pre-birth referrals progressed through the Request for Assistance team. These arrangements were enhanced by the **Special Needs in Pregnancy Service (SNIPS)** multi-agency meetings. East Renfrewshire saw an increase in pre-birth referrals to the Request for Assistance team of 13.3% in 2020/21 from the preceding year, however the number progressing to registration decreased.

Follow-up to concerns

The **interagency referral discussion (IRD)** guidance was updated to ensure it incorporated all aspects of the **Scottish child interview (SCIM) model** and **Joint Investigative Interview pilot** process then shared with the **North Strathclyde partnership**. These developments strengthened the IRD procedures. Concerns for children and young people were being responded to very effectively and without delay. Appropriate information sharing, clear decisions about next steps and meaningful intervention were helping to protect children and young people. IRDs continued to take place during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The inclusion of education staff in the IRD process since 2020 positively impacted on decision making in relation to next steps for the child or young person. The level of rich information provided enhanced the assessment and decision making.

Concerns received for a child or young person not previously known to services were managed by the Request for Assistance team. The team manager liaised directly with police and ensured decisions regarding the need for an IRD were taken in a timely way. Where immediate risk of harm was identified, safety planning began before the IRD to minimise risk and secure the safety of the child. This was supported during record-reading activity and engagement with families and staff.

We evaluated the quality of follow-up to concerns as very good in most of the records we read. Staff considered the need for safety planning, medical examination and legal measures in almost all records.

The inclusion of East Renfrewshire in the North Strathclyde Partnership, and their developments in relation to the Scottish child interview model (SCIM) approach were ensuring coordinated protective responses to children and young people. Progress was being made towards the vision of a Child's House for Healing (Bairn's Hoose) in East Renfrewshire. This development was bringing together child protection and justice services into one place. Two premises had been secured in East Renfrewshire for development of the first **Bairn's Hoose** in Scotland.

We considered the multiple strands to the approach and the co-location to be extremely helpful. Children and young people benefitted from the trauma and recovery approach adopted by the joint investigative interview pilot and were able to tell what had happened to them. This was reflected in the initial evaluation from the Crown Office and Scottish Children's Reporter Administration. While numbers were low, all information from the joint investigative interviews was deemed able to be used as **Evidence in Chief** with no inadmissible material identified. This was reducing the possibility of the child experiencing the trauma of giving evidence in a formal court environment.

Performance management and quality assurance

The well-established framework for collating data and audit activity effectively informed and supported improvement in the quality of child protection practice across the partnership.

The **child protection committee** used data to maintain oversight of service provision, emerging trends, and the impact of service provision. The use of the **minimum dataset for child protection committees in Scotland** provided trend information and an analysis of the data. Additional measures used in the area enhanced partners' understanding of local child protection activity and identified emerging trends such as the continued high levels of domestic abuse. While local recorded incidents of domestic abuse were significantly lower than the national average, domestic abuse continued to feature as one of the consistent concerns within interagency referral discussions. The overall proportion of IRDs where domestic abuse was listed as a significant concern remained at 31% throughout 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Other data included detail relating to increased numbers of peer-on-peer abuse which resulted in focused activity within schools. We found the partnership routinely reviewed data and effectively used it to inform planning. Data captured from the new Scottish child interview model was extensive and provided clear success detail. For example, since the pilot launch the disclosure rate from children and young people had been maintained at 80%. Given the pandemic period and the complexities this had presented across services, we considered this to be a positive outcome.

Good practice example:

The Youth Intensive Support Service (YISS) was making a positive difference in the lives of young people at risk of harm, and their families. The team's ethos is to support young people and ensure their rights are upheld and promoted. The service provides intensive intervention (including out of hours and weekend support) to enhance recovery from trauma, neglect and abuse. Additionally, the service provides the defined pathway for protective processes for young people at risk of harm.

The service supports children and young people aged 12 – 26 years, who are at risk of being accommodated, custody, placement breakdown and hospitalisation due to poor mental health. Support is also provided to young people who are looked after, in continuing care or in aftercare.

The School Nursing Service is aligned to the Youth Intensive Support Service. Both services adopt a relational-based approach to effectively engage the hardest to reach young people by co-ordinating and providing multi-dimensional support plans. The responsiveness of the service to the young person's needs has made mental health support more accessible.

The success of the Youth Intensive Support Service was reflected during the Covid-19 pandemic with an average of 81% of young people having contact at least fortnightly. Young people told us the support they received had made a positive difference to their lives. The approach taken by staff working together helped them to accept support to keep them safe. We consider this relational-based collaborative approach, which resulted in positive outcomes for young people and their families, to be an example of good practice.

From the period between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, YISS directly supported 155 young people and their families.

- 38 were care experienced young people in receipt of continuing or aftercare support.
- 45 care experienced young people were supported through East Renfrewshire's **Family Firm**.
- 62 were assessed as being of immediate risk of custody.

Statement 2: Children and young people's lives improve with high-quality planning and support, ensuring they experience sustained loving and nurturing relationships to keep them safe from further harm

Key messages:

- Children and young people at risk of harm were benefitting from high-quality assessments and plans that were impacting positively on their safety and wellbeing.
- Children and young people at risk of harm were being effectively supported by a wide range of universal and intensive, targeted services. They were available to almost all children and young people at risk of harm at the time they were most needed.
- Children and young people at risk of harm, and their families felt fully supported as a result of the quality of the relationships between them and key staff.
- Strong partnership working was protecting children and young people from further harm and improving outcomes. The partnership arrangements and flexible supports to families continued throughout the pandemic.

Assessment and planning to reduce risk

From our review of children's records, we found children and young people experienced improvements in their wellbeing as a result of high-quality assessments, planning and help they received.

The partnership implemented the **Signs of Safety** approach across all services as the most effective framework to assess and manage risk for children and young people while supporting families. The approach recognised the need to define harm, outline danger and identify safety goals. Children's assessments and plans clearly benefitted from the use of the Signs of Safety analytical tools such as the harm matrix, scaling questions, the danger or worry statements and the safety and wellbeing goals. They provided children and their families with opportunities to fully engage in assessment activity and decision-making.

Multi-agency assessments effectively considered the needs, protective factors, and risks for children at risk of harm. Assessments consistently included the feelings, thoughts and experiences of the child and their parent or carers. They provided analysis and held clear evidence of management oversight. Our review of children's records supported this as we evaluated the quality of assessments as good or better in almost all, the overwhelming majority of which were very good. This demonstrated consistent high-quality practice.

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) principles were being used skilfully as the basis for all assessments and plans and were leading to improvement in the lives of children and young people. High-quality assessments and care planning were being used effectively to support staff to understand and respond to risks of harm. Chronologies were in place for all records and the addition of the harm matrix from the Signs of Safety model complemented the quality with an evaluation of good or above in most records.

Care planning and reviewing

All children and young people had a high-quality plan that set out how the needs, protective factors and risks identified in the assessment were to be addressed and by whom. We evaluated the quality of plans as good or better in most records reviewed. Plans were produced in a timely manner. Staff from across services who had responsibilities in the plans monitored and reviewed progress effectively. These processes were firmly embedded and working well.

Most reviews were held within expected timescales despite the impact of the pandemic. We evaluated the quality of the reviews as good or very good in almost all records reviewed. Review minutes helpfully recorded oversight of the plan, the progress of actions and the involvement and voice of the child and their parent or carer. However, in a few of the records we read, there were no minutes. This was in line with the young person's safety planning protocol.

Staff adapted their collaborative working arrangements during the Covid-19 pandemic. Review arrangements were appropriately altered and ensured continued engagement across services and with families. For example, effective use of technology resulted in virtual, or hybrid models being introduced. We evaluated the continuity of collaborative working between agencies, during the periods in which there were restrictions due to the pandemic, as good or better in almost all records reviewed. We heard continuously from staff about the 'business as usual' approach throughout the pandemic. This view was echoed by parents with one noting, "there was no difference in the face-to face contact or meetings".

Availability and effectiveness of support

Children and young people at risk of harm were being helped to stay safe, healthy and well, and to recover from their experiences. Interventions designed to reduce risk and meet needs had been successful in almost all the records we reviewed. A range of services that understood and responded to the impact of trauma on people's lives were successfully helping to keeping children safe and improve their wellbeing.

Practical help and therapeutic support were available from universal services, and targeted and intensive supports were provided by statutory and third sector partners. Supports such as Intensive Family Support Service, Youth Intensive Support Service and the Inclusive Support Service were effectively providing flexible responses to

meet the needs of children and young people in their recovery from abuse and neglect.

Staff in services worked hard to be responsive and improve emotional health and wellbeing for children and young people who needed it. Rising levels of demand for mental health support during the pandemic resulted in the priority development of the multi-agency Healthier Minds Service, aligned to school communities. Children and young people's mental health benefitted from the collaborative approach to identify opportunities to strengthen their mental wellbeing. This new service provided early help and complemented the already established **child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS)**. Between November 2020 and April 2022, the service responded to 602 referrals, the majority for youth counselling. Children and young people accessing the service reported improvements in their mental wellbeing.

During the pandemic, services remained available but were adapted to ensure that children and young people continued to receive the right help and support. Childcare Hubs were introduced and focused on increasing contact with children and families at a time of increased risk due to children not attending school or other services. Children also benefitted from being provided with electronic devices as part of the digital inclusion programme. Over 3,500 devices were supplied to them. The partnership delivered a very successful Enrichment Activity Programme designed to increase face-to-face contact during the pandemic and this allowed children to try new skills outside of their home, build confidence and encouraged them to socialise and feel part of their community.

Children and adults affected by domestic abuse were supported through better safety planning following the implementation of the **Safe & Together model** and the **multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC)**. Therapeutic and practical support provided by Women's Aid was embedded and enhanced by additional funding from the East Renfrewshire Communities Mental Health & Well Being Fund. Information collated by the Violence against Women and Girls Partnership reported improved outcomes for children's safety, health and wellbeing, confidence, and self-esteem. To help meet increased demand for safe accommodation during the national lockdown period, additional local authority housing, designated as a refuge, had been made available. This resulted in mothers and their children being kept safe from further harm.

Involvement in the national **Equally Safe at Work programme** was strengthening opportunities for learning and development about gender-based violence for staff across services. The training frontline staff received in the application of the **domestic abuse and stalking, and harassment (DASH)** risk assessment tool resulted in early identification of risks to children and young people.

The collaborative approach adopted across services provided responsive and needs-led support to children at risk of harm and their families. We evaluated the effectiveness of work carried out to reduce risk of abuse and neglect as good or very good in the records reviewed. The effectiveness of work to reduce risks posed to

children and young people as a result of parents' or carers' circumstances or behaviour was evaluated as good or better in almost all records. Most children, young people, parents and carers shared the view that they benefitted from the support provided.

Protocols and practice guidance, such as inter-agency child protection procedures and gender-based violence guidance were providing the required instruction for all staff working with children and young people.

Good practice example:

Healthier Minds Hub

In recognition of the identified increase in mental health concerns for children and young people, the partnership invested in multi-agency mental health provision. The Healthier Minds Hub is East Renfrewshire's framework for supporting and nurturing the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and families. It is also a resource for staff. The component parts of the hub are:

- Family Wellbeing Service
- Healthier Minds Service
- School Wellbeing Service
- Youth Counselling Service.

The hub is enhanced by the Healthier Minds website and resources.

The hub has representatives from CAMHS, Social Work, Youth Counselling, Educational Psychology, and the Family Wellbeing Service which is delivered by Children 1st. Hub members meet weekly to consider referrals. The needs of the child or young person determine the route for provision of the optimal support. The newly-formed, multi-agency recovery team, Healthier Minds service, was developed and aligned to school communities to identify and ensure delivery of mental wellbeing supports that promote children and families' recovery.

The three key elements of the service are:

- strategic mapping and support to maximise school community capacity to be trauma responsive
- provision of direct services to children and families to build on strengths and improve social, emotional and mental wellbeing
- strengthening of the existing school counselling model.

One young person described how the trusting relationship with the staff had supported them to overcome many challenges such as not attending school, difficult relationships at home and an eating disorder. The young person detailed how this support impacted positively on their wellbeing.

The Healthier Minds Service gathers data effectively to evaluate and improve its work. Recent self-evaluation shows that more girls accessed the service and Black and minority ethnic groups were underrepresented. Staff considered how to

address these issues and introduced a worker with a focus on sport to encourage boys to access services.

602 Referrals were received between 25 November 2020 and 30 April 2022. The majority (247) were referred to the Youth Counselling Service, 179 were referred to Healthier Minds Team, and 104 continued with existing services. The majority of persons referred were female and aged 13-16 years.

Quality of relationships

The quality of relationships between key staff and families was an area of particular strength.

In response to our survey, all parents and carers reported that their child had the right help to keep loving and supportive relationships with people they cared about. They also reported positively about their established relationships with staff members. They told us that staff communicated well and helped them to understand what needed to change to keep their child safe. This reflected the opportunities provided for parents and carers to engage in difficult conversations. Most agreed that staff took their views seriously. Among the many positive comments we heard, one parent commented that the relationship with the social worker had helped them recognise and understand the need for child protection registration and noted their daughter to be happier and more confident.

Staff formed and sustained trusting relationships with children at risk of harm and their parents and carers. Staff were confident that they took time to understand the strengths and needs of children and young people and these positive relationships helped them respond effectively. The quality of relationships was helping children and young people understand why staff were involved with them and their family.

Statement 3: Children, young people and families are meaningfully and appropriately involved in decisions about their lives. They influence service planning, delivery, and improvement.

Key messages:

- Meaningful involvement of children and young people at risk of harm, and their families was very well rooted across services. Their views and experiences were at the heart of all decision making about what mattered to them.
- Advocacy was routinely offered to children and young people within protective and looked after processes.
- Children and young people at risk of harm and their families were actively participating and influencing service planning, delivery, and improvement. Their involvement helped evaluate, shape, and deliver services.

Meaningfully involving children, young people and their families in decisions about their lives.

The partnership was fully committed to the promotion and protection of children's rights in line with the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**. The principles of the UNCRC were reflected in every aspect of policy making. Partners were demonstrating clearly their commitment to ensuring that these principles were implemented in practice every day across services for children and young people.

Meaningful involvement of children and young people and their families was very well rooted across services. The views and experiences of children and young people at risk of harm were at the heart of all decision making. In almost all records read, children and young people and their parents and carers expressed their opinions in decisions that were affecting their lives.

Parents were routinely involved in multi-agency planning and decision-making and were listened to and respected; even when they did not agree with decisions being made. There was consensus among parents about this, and one parent commented "I didn't lose my independence and could be involved in decisions. It actually helped to know they (social workers) were there" and "working with our social worker made it easier".

Most parent and carer survey respondents said that workers communicated well and helped them to understand what needed to change to keep their child safe. Most agreed that staff listened to them and took their views seriously and almost all found the involvement of services helpful.

Children and young people told us that their worker listened to their views and opinions about what matters to them. Staff spent time with them and gave them the help they needed. Importantly, young people believed that their lives had improved because of the support they received.

In almost all the records we read, the ways in which children, young people, and parents and carers were listened to, heard and involved by professionals was rated as good or better, with the majority rated as very good. In almost all records, children and young people and a parent or carer contributed to an initial multi-agency meeting, where appropriate.

Frameworks such as the national practice model and Signs of Safety tools were effectively used by staff to minimise communication barriers and encourage the participation of children and young people and their families. Tools such as 'the three houses', 'danger or worry statements', 'scaling questions' and the 'safety and wellbeing goals' were helping families become more involved in their own assessments and decision-making and in working in partnership with key staff to make changes in their lives.

Independent advocacy

Independent advocacy was routinely offered to children at risk of harm. The partnership's own data indicated that a high proportion (76%) of children subject to child protection processes had been offered advocacy. Nonetheless, partners were determined to improve on this and had set themselves the goal of increasing the numbers of children offered advocacy. In almost all survey responses, children and young people told us they had an adult they could trust to talk to about things that were important to them or when they are not happy about something. Almost all said they had someone who explained their rights to them. This provided us with a high level of confidence that children and young people can access appropriate support to advocate for them.

We have a high level of confidence that parents and carers had opportunities to access the appropriate support to advocate for them. The majority of parents and carers responding to our survey said that they had the opportunity to speak with an independent advocacy worker. Although independent advocacy for parents and carers was not universally available, most parents agreed that staff listened to them and took their views seriously, and almost all found the involvement of services helpful. The partnership had identified that advocacy was an area they wanted to strengthen and had included it in the child protection committee improvement plan 2020-23.

Staff maintained strong relationships with families throughout the pandemic. Virtual and face-to-face meetings supported children, young people and their families to share their views. The majority of children and young people who responded to our survey said that they had enough contact with their worker during Covid-19 lockdown most or all of the time.

Involvement of children, young people and families in influencing service planning, delivery and improvement.

The partnership was taking positive action to ensure that policies, planning arrangements and service developments fully reflected the views of children and young people. Young people told us they believed they were making a difference and that their personal confidence had increased as a result. The partnership had established a strong culture of participation and engagement. Creative approaches to communication and consultation were having a positive effect on the development of services. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the partnership continued to support participation with harder to reach children and young people. Examples included creative consultation around a vision for the children and young people's services plan and involvement in the consultation of school nursing services.

Information from extensive consultations and co-production events that drew on the lived experiences of children and young people, and parents and carers was used well to inform improvements in services. Children and young people at risk of harm were important contributors in the production of the **children and young people's services plan** and the development of the key priorities. Partners' desire for the experiences of young people to better inform service design and delivery was central to the approach.

Commendably, the partnership routinely involved children and young people at risk of harm, and families in service development. The partnership engaged with children and young people in a variety of ways including surveys and consultation activities. Services had well established systems in place to gather feedback about children, young people and families' experiences of the supports they received as well as their views about the quality.

The champions board was offering young people opportunities for leadership and to influence policy and practice development. Young people involved with the champions board told us that they were encouraged to share their views and expertise, even when their views might challenge the partnership. In recognition that the views of younger care experienced children were under-represented, the mini-champs group for those aged 8-12 years was formed. Young people in the champions board were responsible for shaping the agenda. They identified themes and influenced change.

As a result of the influence of the champions board and feedback from parents and children, the Healthier Minds service was developed. The champions board also influenced the establishment of care experienced traineeships. Care experienced trainees were supporting the partnership to further improve their approach to participation and consultation. This included ensuring the voice of older young people at risk of harm was heard and influencing development.

Other influencers such as young people who were at risk of offending, were actively engaged in the co-development of harm reduction programmes. This included a

programme with police, which took a young person through a mock custody process. Some young people who were involved in carrying knives helped frame and took part in the local No Knives, Better Lives campaign, which heightened young people's and community awareness.

In partnership with Children's Hearing Scotland, young people with experience of secure care delivered training to children's panel members. Inclusion of young people in the recruitment of some staff across the health and social care partnership and council was well-established. Staff described the value of young people's involvement as thought provoking.

The Request for Assistance team was formed after a co-production event. The partnership listened to families who wanted a simpler referral and service and made changes to reflect identified needs.

Some parents fed back that they found core group meetings daunting. As a result of this feedback, these meetings could now take place in the family home, where appropriate. This was helping families to be more actively engaged in key processes. Aligning with Signs of Safety, children, young people and their families have helped review how plans are produced. Work was undertaken to adapt language and to make plans more concise, so that people are clearer about their plans.

Good practice example:**Participation and engagement**

The partnership produced a report, Children's Rights in East Renfrewshire, that describes how it promotes, supports and upholds children's rights. The principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) underpinned all policy, practice, and services across children's services. Meaningful involvement of children and young people and their families was very well rooted across services.

Partners were ensuring that children and young people, and their parents and carers were at the heart of decisions that affect their lives at an individual level as well as in wider society. They demonstrated this by:

- staff building strong, trusting, and respectful relationships with children, young people, and their families
- listening to children and promoting their participation
- focusing on strengths and assets of families
- an informed workforce that understood the risks and needs of children, young people and their families and the implications of them for the families they are working with.

The focus on strengths meant that individuals and families were at the very heart of the planning and decision-making process and integral to delivering the overall vision for children and young people in East Renfrewshire.

Staff effectively used the ethos and tools from the Signs of Safety approach to build trust and listen to the views of children, young people, and families. Tools such as the three houses, danger or worry statements, scaling questions and the safety and wellbeing goals were helping families become more involved in their own assessments and decision-making. They were empowering families to work in closer partnership with key staff to make changes in their lives.

Children, young people, parents and carers told us they were encouraged to share their views and expertise, even when their views might challenge the partnership.

The quality of relationships was helping children and young people understand why staff were involved with them and their family.

Children and young people told us that their worker listened to their views and opinions about what matters to them. Workers spent time with them and gave them the help they needed in most cases. Importantly, young people believed that their lives had improved because of the support they received.

Statement 4: Collaborative strategic leadership, planning and operational management ensure high standards of service delivery

Key messages

- Strategic leaders collectively demonstrated a very strong drive and ambition to continually improve performance, standards and outcomes for children.
- The partnership used data and quality assurance information very successfully to ensure their work was truly effective and having a positive impact on children's lives. It enabled them to identify future priorities and plan the right action to meet them.
- The partnership was providing strong and highly effective leadership and shared a very strong vision for children and young people. They ensured that children and families continued to get the support they needed throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Leaders were highly visible across the partnership and available to the workforce.

Strategic leaders collectively demonstrated a very strong drive and ambition to continually improve performance, standards and outcomes for children. In the period since the joint inspection of services for children and young people in 2014, leaders' determination to streamline the integration of services and improve practice was evident. Examples included the successful redesign of children's services and the improvement of the IRD processes. More recently, investment in intensive support for children, young people and families was preventing escalation of risks and was supporting children and young people to remain at home in their communities, where appropriate. The implementation of the Signs of Safety framework was empowering families to be more actively involved in their assessments and plans.

The partnership shares a very strong vision for "children to grow up loved, respected and given every opportunity to fulfil their potential, to be safe, equal and healthy, have someone to trust, have friends, but most of all HOPE". This was underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and was well understood and received by staff across services. It led to an exceptionally high degree of motivation and drive to deliver the best possible outcomes for children and young people at risk of harm, and their families.

Senior leaders, elected members and staff across the partnership recognised their responsibilities to improve opportunities for children, young people and families. Leaders were well sighted on the challenges within their communities and the potential for these to negatively impact on outcomes for children and families. Leaders demonstrated collective ownership and a shared commitment to embedding the culture, systems and practices of the Getting it Right for Every Child approach across services. This was supporting good multi-agency working to reduce risk and

improve children and young people's wellbeing. This was underpinned by a strong approach that valued respect, inclusiveness, and cooperation.

We were confident that leaders are holding one another to account and challenging each other and themselves about what they could do better or differently to enhance outcomes for children, young people and families.

The **chief officers' public protection group** was the primary strategic group overseeing public protection matters. Clear lines of accountability and well-established governance arrangements were in place between the child protection committee and chief officers. Leaders had well-established and robust governance arrangements in place that are ensuring clear oversight and connectivity within children's services planning and across wider community planning. Collective accountability and responsibility for leading integrated services for children and young people was very well embedded.

Purposeful corporate parenting was a clear priority for leaders, and elected members were highly committed and ambitious to deliver improved outcomes. There was a consistent approach to corporate parenting planning. Central to the approach was the inclusion of the expertise of children and young people based on their experiences, to better inform service design and delivery for children and young people at risk of harm.

Strategic and operational leaders had comprehensive knowledge of the existing risks and needs of children, young people and families in their communities. They had identified emerging risks and needs of groups of young people and were planning appropriately to address them. This included the risks to and needs of young people seeking **asylum** and increasing numbers of children and young people with neurodiverse conditions such as autism.

Strategic and operational leaders and staff across services were intelligently using data to support, maintain oversight of performance and drive improvement. Partners knew themselves well through their evidence-based self-evaluation and effective use of performance data and quality assurance. The child protection committee demonstrated continuous improvement and monitored a range of performance data about key processes. As a result, leaders were well-sighted on areas of strength and where they should target their efforts for further development.

The 2020-2023 children and young people's service plan, *At Our Heart*, provided a coherent strategy, clear direction and key priorities for integrated children's service planning for the next three years. It was informed by the strong approach to using data on a partnership basis.

Leaders and managers at all levels were successfully sustaining a very strong culture of engaging, supporting and motivating staff across agencies to deliver high-quality services. Opportunities were made available for staff to continually reflect and learn from best practice. This embedded culture of developing the strengths, skills

and knowledge of the workforce is empowering frontline managers and staff to make decisions and deliver creative and flexible services.

Leaders were highly visible to staff, and managers were viewed as approachable and available, recognising and appreciating the hard work and often difficult situations staff were regularly faced with. This contributed to staff feeling valued and being highly motivated.

The partnership has worked closely with children and young people to learn more about their experiences of the supports they received. They have used this learning to determine what has worked. A strong ethos of innovation and creativity encouraged them to improve the quality of their work and practice. A learning and improvement culture was very evident across services. Agencies worked together collaboratively with many examples of meaningful use of research, relevant data and other learning opportunities informing developments. For example, the partnership was embracing **whole system** change in response to external drivers such as **The Promise** and the **National Guidance for Child Protection**.

Senior leaders and their teams responded quickly to the emerging Covid-19 pandemic. They effectively used their extensive knowledge to provide the best safeguarding arrangements for each individual child. Thorough strategic oversight ensured that children, young people and their families continued to have the appropriate support to keep them safe and well.

At the start of the pandemic, the partnership quickly produced comprehensive child protection and looked after children contingency guidance for frontline managers and staff to ensure that high-risk situations were effectively managed. For example, it offered helpful advice on IRDs, **joint investigative interviews**, undertaking home visits and child protection case conferences.

Throughout the pandemic, staff across the partnership continued to maintain support to families in a variety of ways, including face-to-face meetings and virtually. They described their support to families as 'business as usual'. It was evident that staff worked collectively above and beyond in very difficult circumstances to ensure that those in most need received practical, financial and wellbeing support and that children were kept safe. This meant that staff undertook tasks that may not have been part of their usual duties.

The health and wellbeing of staff, personally and professionally, was impacted as the pandemic progressed. Staff told us about the loss of a work/life balance, increased stress and tiredness. The partnership added 'support for resilience and staff wellbeing' as a new strategic priority and introduced a variety of measures to promote staff wellbeing. These included a health and wellbeing champion and a health and wellbeing group. Along with informal and formal wellbeing conversations with managers and colleagues, staff had access to resources and information that could improve their wellbeing. The partnership was very committed to ensuring that working arrangements were sustainable and that staff felt safe and supported.

The partnership has a solid track record of delivering continuous improvement. The impact and the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in delays in progressing elements of planned development and improvement work. Nevertheless, the partnership remained fully committed to strengthening practice and improving the safety and wellbeing for children and young people and their families.

The partnership had agreed nine key priorities in the children and young people's services plan to support improvement. These included actions to further enhance:

- protecting the most vulnerable children, young people and families
- corporate parenting and implementation of the Promise
- responding to the mental, emotional, and health and wellbeing needs of children and young people.

The child protection committee's three-year comprehensive business improvement plan incorporated elements of the children's services plan priorities and appropriately focused on safety planning for children, participation, management oversight and multi-agency working. It also included planning for recovery across the multi-agency partnership to "ensure that children, young people and their families are supported to recover from the immediate and longer-term impact of the pandemic".

Combined, these plans, based on evidence gathered by the partnership, provided targeted improvement actions to build on the partnership's achievements and strengthen practice.

We are confident that these plans are resourced, focused, have realistic targets and timescales, and are the basis for continuing to strengthen areas of practice and sustain the very supportive culture that is embedded.

Evaluation of the impact on children and young people - quality indicator 2.1

For our inspections of services for children at risk of harm, we are evaluating quality indicator 2.1. This quality indicator, as it applies to children and young people at risk of harm considers the extent to which children and young people:

- feel valued, loved, fulfilled and secure
- feel listened to, understood and respected
- experience sincere human contact and enduring relationships
- get the best start in life.

Evaluation of quality indicator 2.1: Excellent

We found strengths that significantly impacted on the experiences and outcomes for children and young people at risk of harm. There was a long track record of innovative, effective practice and very high-quality performance across a wide range of activities and from which others could learn. The partnership was fully committed to the promotion and protection of children's rights.

- Nationally reported statistics showed sustained positive trends in child health, educational attainment and positive destinations for school leavers.
- Children and young people were getting the best start in life. Strong partnership working across the universal and targeted intensive services was safeguarding their safety, health and wellbeing.
- Children and young people were being kept safe because of timely and highly effective intervention. They benefitted from staff working in partnership with them to reduce risks and build resilience.
- Children and young people at risk of harm were benefitting from enduring and trusting relationships with workers who were interested in them and took time to get to know them and build relationships with them.
- A wide range of health and wellbeing services was improving children and young people's emotional health. The Healthier Minds service was offering more timely and appropriate support to children and young people aged 10-18.
- Children and young people were benefitting from targeted supports in education services to help them engage in learning. Young people were successfully setting their own goals to help build and achieve qualifications through alternative and bespoke timetables. Efforts were taken to maximise a range of opportunities, including outdoor learning and forest schools.
- Children and young people at risk of harm were participating meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives. They told us that they felt listened to and their views mattered.

- Children and young people were well supported to exercise their rights to make real choices in matters that were affecting their lives. Advocacy was routinely offered to children and young people at risk of harm. Children and young people told us they had an adult they could trust to talk to about things that were important to them, or when they were not happy about something.
- Children and young people were benefiting from a range of opportunities to contribute to service planning. The partnership's extensive participation and engagement approaches were successfully supporting a wide and diverse range of routine consultation and engagement. The partnership recognised young people were the experts. Their contributions significantly improved services and directed the change. Examples included the redesign of children's services, the influence of the champions board on the development of the healthier minds service and the establishment of care experienced traineeships.
- The partnership was effectively supporting older young people to benefit from modern traineeships and supported employment.

We can be confident that excellent performance is sustainable and that it will be maintained. Therefore, we evaluated quality indicator 2.1 impact on children and young people as **excellent**.

See appendix 1 for more information on our evaluation scale.

Conclusion

We are confident that the lives of children and young people at risk of harm in East Renfrewshire are improving as a result of services delivered by the partnership. We are confident that partners have the capacity to build on their achievements and strengthen service delivery. We did not identify any notable gaps in services, nor did we identify any significant areas for improvement during the inspection.

This is based on the following.

- The collective leadership, direction and accountability demonstrated by partners to deliver the best possible outcomes for children and young people at risk of harm.
- The strong relational-based approach that was the foundation for collaborative working across agencies and with children, young people and their families.
- Partners actively engaging with children, young people, and their families in order to empower them to be more involved in identifying their needs and improving outcomes.
- The effective use and analysis of data to inform decisions and target resources.
- The partnership having already identified their achievements and areas of practice that they wanted to strengthen.
- The evidence of improvement in safety and wellbeing outcomes for children, young people at risk of harm, and their families.

What happens next?

The children and young people's services plan and the child protection committee business plan are the partnership's key improvement documents. They are focused and have realistic targets and timescales. The partnership has oversight as part of the quality assurance process. The Care Inspectorate will continue to engage with the partnership and offer support for continued improvement through our link inspector arrangements.

Appendix 1: The quality indicator framework and the six-point evaluation scale

Our inspections use the following scale for evaluations, which is outlined in the [quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection](#), published in August 2019.

- **6 Excellent** - Outstanding or sector leading
- **5 Very Good** - Major strengths
- **4 Good** - Important strengths, with some areas for improvement
- **3 Adequate** - Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
- **2 Weak** - Important weaknesses – priority action required
- **1 Unsatisfactory** - Major weaknesses – urgent remedial action required

An evaluation of **excellent** describes performance which is sector leading and supports experiences and outcomes for people which are of outstandingly high quality. There is a demonstrable track record of innovative, effective practice and/or very high-quality performance across a wide range of its activities and from which others could learn. We can be confident that excellent performance is sustainable and that it will be maintained.

An evaluation of **very good** will apply to performance that demonstrates major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There are very few areas for improvement. Those that do exist will have minimal adverse impact on people's experiences and outcomes. While opportunities are taken to strive for excellence within a culture of continuous improvement, performance evaluated as very good does not require significant adjustment.

An evaluation of **good** applies to performance where there is a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement. The strengths will have a significant positive impact on people's experiences and outcomes. However, improvements are required to maximise wellbeing and ensure that people consistently have experiences and outcomes which are as positive as possible.

An evaluation of **adequate** applies where there are some strengths, but these just outweigh weaknesses. Strengths may still have a positive impact but the likelihood of achieving positive experiences and outcomes for people is reduced significantly because key areas of performance need to improve. Performance which is evaluated as adequate may be tolerable in particular circumstances, such as where a service or partnership is not yet fully established, or in the midst of major transition. However, continued performance at adequate level is not acceptable. Improvements must be made by building on strengths while addressing those elements that are not contributing to positive experiences and outcomes for people.

An evaluation of **weak** will apply to performance in which strengths can be identified but these are outweighed or compromised by significant weaknesses. The

weaknesses, either individually or when added together, substantially affect peoples' experiences or outcomes. Without improvement as a matter of priority, the welfare or safety of people may be compromised, or their critical needs not met. Weak performance requires action in the form of structured and planned improvement by the provider or partnership with a mechanism to demonstrate clearly that sustainable improvements have been made.

An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** will apply when there are major weaknesses in critical aspects of performance which require immediate remedial action to improve experiences and outcomes for people. It is likely that people's welfare or safety will be compromised by risks which cannot be tolerated. Those accountable for carrying out the necessary actions for improvement must do so as a matter of urgency, to ensure that people are protected, and their wellbeing improves without delay.

Appendix 2: Key terms

Note: more key terms that we use are available in [The Guide](#) to our inspections.

Asylum-seeking young people: a person under 18 years of age or who, in the absence of documentary evidence establishing age, appears to be under that age who is applying for asylum in their own right and is separated from both parents and not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom has responsibility to do so.

Bairns' Hoose (Barnahus approach): a multi-agency co-ordinated approach designed to reduce the number of times children and young people who are victims or witnesses to abuse or violence have to recount their experiences to different professionals. The approach aims to make child protection, health, justice, and recovery services available in one setting.

CAHMS (child and adolescent mental health services): the NHS services that assess and treat children and young people with mental health difficulties. CAMHS includes psychological, psychiatric and specialist social work support, addressing a range of serious mental health issues.

Care and risk management (CARM): processes that are applied when a young person has been or is at risk of being involved in behaviours that could cause serious harm to others. This includes sexual or violent behaviour that may cause serious harm.

Champions board: these allow young people to have direct influence within their local area and hold their corporate parents to account. They also ensure that services are tailored and responsive to the needs of care experienced young people and are sensitive to the kinds of vulnerabilities they may have as a result of their experiences before, during and after care.

Chief officers' public protection group: The collective expression for the local police commander and chief executives of the local authority and NHS Board in each local area. Chief officers are individually and collectively responsible for the leadership, direction and scrutiny of their respective child protection services and their child protection committees.

Children and young people's services plan is for services that work with children and young people. It sets out the priorities for achieving the vision for all children and young people and what services need to do together to achieve them.

Child protection committee (CPC): the locally-based, inter-agency strategic partnership responsible for child protection policy and practice across the public, private and third sectors. Working on behalf of chief officers, its role is to provide individual and collective leadership and direction for the management of child protection services in its area.

Domestic abuse and stalking and harassment (DASH) risk assessment: The DASH tool (domestic abuse, stalking, harassment and honour-based violence assessment) is part of the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) referral. It's a risk assessment form to help work out the risk level for the victim. The DASH form gives vital information to safeguarding professionals.

Early and effective intervention: includes methods and approaches that provide options to deal with and support children, young people and families in a timely and proportionate way. Earlier, suitable interventions that address their needs result in less exposure to harm.

Equally Safe at Work: an innovative employer accreditation programme developed by Close the Gap, Scotland's expert policy advocacy organisation working on women's labour market equality. It supports employers to improve their employment practice to advance gender equality at work and prevent violence against women.

Evidence in chief: the evidence given by a witness. In certain circumstances, a written or video-recorded statement may stand as a witness's evidence in chief.

Family Firm: the East Renfrewshire Family Firm programme provides one-to-one personalised employability support for care experienced young people aged 16-26 years. Aligned to the Youth Intensive Support Service, they offer practical advice, guidance and further training based on the young person's needs and aspirations.

Family nurse partnership: an evidenced-based, licenced, intensive home visiting programme offered to young, first-time mothers in Scotland by family nurses from pregnancy until their child's second birthday.

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC): is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them.

Independent advocacy: a service that supports a child or adult to express their own needs and views and make informed decisions on matters that influence their lives. Independent advocacy is when a person providing the advocacy is not involved in providing services to the child or adult, or in any decision-making process regarding their care.

Interagency referral discussion (IRD): the start of the formal process of information sharing, assessment, analysis and decision-making following reported concerns about abuse or neglect of a child or young person under the age of 18 years, in relation to familial and non-familial concerns.

Joint investigative interview pilot: the aims of this new approach are to improve the quality of experience of child victims and witnesses, minimise re-traumatisation, and improve the quality of evidence gathered during joint investigative interviews to prevent the need for these children to have to give evidence in person as part of child protection, court or children's hearing processes.

Minimum dataset for child protection committees in Scotland: a set of agreed measurements, criteria or categories required to create a robust understanding of information about a service. The data populated through these measures provide a baseline and then a progress measurement for the planning and development of services delivered.

Multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC): a meeting in which agencies identify and talk about the risk of future harm to people experiencing domestic abuse and their children and draw up an action plan to manage that risk.

The National Guidance for Child Protection: describes responsibilities and expectations for all involved in protecting children in Scotland. The Guidance outlines how statutory and non-government agencies should work together with parents, families and communities to prevent harm and to protect children from abuse and neglect. Everyone has a role in protecting children from harm.

National practice model: a dynamic and evolving process of assessment, analysis, action and review, and a way to identify outcomes and solutions for individual children or young people.

Neurodiverse: refers to the diversity of all people but is often used in the context of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) as well as other neurological or developmental conditions such as ADHD or learning disabilities.

North Strathclyde partnership: comprised of four local authority areas: East Renfrewshire, East Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde, and Renfrewshire; two policing divisions: G (East Dunbartonshire and East Renfrewshire) and K (Inverclyde and Renfrewshire); Children 1st; NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, SCRA and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

The Promise: the main report of Scotland's independent care review published in 2020. It reflects the views of over 5,500 care experienced children and adults, families and the paid and unpaid workforce. It described what Scotland must do to make sure that its most vulnerable children feel loved and have the childhood they deserve.

Safe and Together: a practice model that aims to improve how child welfare systems and practitioners respond to the issue of domestic abuse. It provides a common framework for practitioners to consider and discuss concerns, challenges and solutions for families.

Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM): a trauma-informed, best practice model that seeks to secure best evidence for court processes and inform assessment of risk to the child and other children.

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA): an executive non-departmental public body of the Scottish Government with responsibility for protecting children at risk.

Signs of Safety approach: child-focused and inclusive of children young people and families. It incorporates risk assessment, risk management, care planning and safety planning. The approach makes use of professional knowledge and knowledge from families and their wider networks to rigorously explore harm and danger alongside existing strengths and safety within the family. It aims to work in partnership with families to reduce risks and increase safety by building on the family's strengths, resources and networks to change the everyday lived experience of the child.

Special Needs in Pregnancy Service (SNIPS): provides a specialist service to women who are pregnant and have alcohol and or drug misuse issues and their babies. This includes people who are in hospital and those living in the community and includes pre and ante natal assessment.

United Nations Convention of the Rights of the child (UNCRC): A widely ratified international statement of children's rights.

Whole-system approach: involves applying systems thinking, methods and practice to better understand public health challenges and identify collective actions.

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE6 October 2022Report by Director of EducationIMPROVING OUTCOMES THROUGH THE PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To inform Education Committee of:
 - a) the progress made by schools during 2021-22 in improving outcomes through their use of Pupil Equity Funding; and,
 - b) the interventions used and the good practice developed by schools to improve excellence and equity, and achieve positive outcomes for all children and young people during 2021-22.

RECOMMENDATION

2. It is recommended that Education Committee comment on and note this report as a summary of the progress made by schools in improving outcomes through the Pupil Equity Funding during 2021-22.

BACKGROUND

3. The Education Department's vision statement "Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences" reflects the commitment and expectation that all learners will be supported to realise their potential.
4. Members will be aware of the Local Improvement Plan 2021-2024, which outlines high level areas for improvement for all services and schools. The plan includes '*An Improvement in the attainment of disadvantaged children and young people*' as one of the expected outcomes and impacts. Previous Local Improvement Plans contained similar objectives, which have been reported on through the annual Standards and Quality Report.
5. Elected members will also be aware that the Outcome Delivery Plan 2021-24 includes, as in previous years, specific indicators and targets relating to the performance of disadvantaged children and young people.
6. The Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched by the First Minister in February 2015. This included establishing the £750 million Attainment Scotland Fund. The Scottish Attainment Challenge is focused on achieving equity in education, specifically by ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.
7. As part of the Attainment Scotland Fund, the Scottish Government has allocated additional funding directly to schools, targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap. The Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) was initially made available from April 2017. In 2021-22, for each

child in a publicly funded establishment who was eligible and registered for free school meals, schools were allocated £1,200. An additional £20m Pupil Premium was allocated by Scottish Government in 2021-22 to support education recovery efforts for children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. This represented a 15% uplift to the PEF allocations to individual schools. In total East Renfrewshire schools were allocated £1.62 million in 2021-22; Appendix 1 provides a summary of the allocation by school.

8. National guidance is provided annually by the Scottish Government to help schools plan how they invest their PEF allocation. This guidance contains a number of key principles including:

- Head teachers must have access to the full amount of the allocated PEF
- The PEF must enable schools to deliver activities, interventions or resources which are clearly additional to those which are already planned
- Head teachers must work in partnership with each other, and their local authority, to agree the use of funding, taking account of the statutory responsibilities of the authority to deliver educational improvement, secure best value, and the authority's role as employer
- Parents and carers, children and young people and other key stakeholders should be involved in the planning process
- Funding must be provided for targeted support for children and young people affected by poverty to achieve their full potential; although PEF is allocated on the basis of free school meal eligibility, head teachers can use their professional judgement to bring additional children into targeted interventions
- Schools must have plans in place at the outset to evaluate the impact of the funding.

9. The Education Department has provided additional local guidance to support schools in their use and reporting of the Pupil Equity Fund. This is revised annually and is specific to our local circumstances. The advice is set in the context of the existing approaches to self-evaluation for school improvement and takes account of existing sources of research and evidence.

10. Head teachers were asked to develop PEF plans detailing how resources would be used to provide targeted interventions in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing to close the poverty related attainment gap. In developing these plans head teachers were asked to set out their rationale for the use of the funding, based on a clear contextual analysis which identifies the poverty related attainment gap in their schools and takes cognisance of evidence about what is known to be effective at raising attainment for children affected by poverty. PEF plans also reflected the need to support disadvantaged pupils' recovery from the global pandemic through this resource in a context of ongoing disruption during 2021-22.

11. In developing their PEF plans schools were asked to ensure collaboration with pupils, parents and carers, Trade Union colleagues, community partners and their cluster.

12. The Quality Improvement Team and the Education Leadership Team worked alongside schools to provide support and challenge as Head Teachers formulated their PEF plans.

REPORT

13. As part of the conditions associated with the grant for the PEF, the Education Department is required to produce a report summarising outcomes and performance at an authority level. In order to reduce duplication and bureaucracy this is linked to existing reporting requirements as set in the Standards in Schools etc. Act 2000. This report sets out a high level summary of the progress of East Renfrewshire schools in improving outcomes through the use of their PEF during 2021-22. Summary performance results are attached in Appendix 2.

14. In line with the national priorities the Local Improvement Plan includes a number of activities which are intended to bring about improvement in the attainment and experiences for all pupils. For example, improved reading, writing and mathematics throughout the years of the broad general education and improved attainment in the senior phase. These outcomes for all pupils are also summarised in Appendix 2.

15. The Education Department and schools have an unrelenting focus on achieving excellence for all pupils in East Renfrewshire. The additional interventions targeted at achieving equity for pupils experiencing disadvantage, are also supported and enhanced by the wide range of improvement activities undertaken to improve the curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment for all.

16. A range of measures were used to provide evidence of attainment including standardised tests, Curriculum for Excellence attainment, class and school assessments and data from online literacy and numeracy programmes. Effective use of data played a significant role in selecting, monitoring and targeting interventions.

17. As part of national scrutiny of local authority progress with the Scottish Attainment Challenge, officers worked with a link Education Scotland Attainment Advisor in June 2022 to evaluate the progress made in tackling educational inequity over the period from 2019-22. The resulting Education Scotland Recovery and Progress Report highlights the following key strengths in East Renfrewshire:

- The impact of the reading recovery programme on pupil engagement and attainment;
- Numeracy and literacy progress as measured through Curriculum for Excellence levels;
- Improvement in attendance, pupil motivation, engagement, confidence and self-esteem;
- Professional learning and collaborative opportunities for practitioners to support equity;
- The development of the Child Poverty Delivery Improvement Group, established in 2019 to support coordinated working across services to reduce the impact of child poverty;
- An increase in collaborative working with other establishments, partners, parents and local businesses;
- Leadership opportunities which have resulted in increased understanding of poverty-related barriers to learning, motivation and job satisfaction.

18. Established improving trends in attainment data have been interrupted from 2020 onwards following the COVID-19 pandemic. National comparison data for 2021-22 is not yet available, however a number of national research reports have evaluated the likely impact of the pandemic on children and young people. Scottish Government's report '[Scotland's Wellbeing: The Impact of COVID-19](#)' highlights the likelihood of:

- Negative impact on educational attainment for all age cohorts
- An increase in the poverty-related attainment gap due to differential experiences during the pandemic
- Negative effects on resilience, confidence, wellbeing and happiness of children and young people due to family pressures and uncertainty.

19. There is a strong link between children's attendance and attainment, therefore all ERC schools focus on increasing the attendance of all children and young people in order to maximise opportunities for learning. Schools worked to support all children and young people to successfully re-engage with in-school learning throughout 2021-22. Developing positive, inclusive learning environments and reducing exclusions leads to improved outcomes for all, particularly disadvantaged children and young people.

20. Children and young people experiencing poor health and wellbeing are more at risk of not achieving their potential. As part of their PEF plans establishments ensured that they adopted strategies to increase pupil motivation, engagement, resilience and wellbeing. PEF funding was also used to help reduce the Cost of the School Day to support the wellbeing of families living with poverty, including hidden poverty.

21. Head teachers used PEF funding in a variety of different ways to support learners in 2021-22. Almost all interventions were focused on mitigating the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged learners. At an individual establishment level improvements reported by head teachers included reference to the following:

- ✓ Attainment in reading and mathematics as measured by standardised test scores
- ✓ Numeracy and literacy progress as measured through Curriculum for Excellence levels
- ✓ Reading age of pupils, reading comprehension skills, basic decoding skills, spelling and attainment in writing
- ✓ Pupil motivation, engagement, confidence and self-esteem
- ✓ Pupil attendance
- ✓ Family engagement in children's learning.

The above list is not exhaustive and plans for each individual school will be available on school websites.

22. All schools reported a number of challenges in implementing planned interventions during 2021-22, most notably the ongoing disruption to staffing caused by COVID-19 and high levels of pupil absence. Current attainment data indicates the ongoing impact of frequent disruption to children's education since session 2019-2020, for example the cumulative impact of disruption during P2, P3 and continuing into P4 has contributed to lower percentages of pupils in P4 attaining expected CfE levels in literacy and numeracy in 2021-22.

Next Steps

23. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic represents a significant challenge to improving the equity of education outcomes and this is reflected in recent attainment data (Appendix 2). Schools are well informed through their own analysis of data and intelligence about the needs of their communities, and are keenly focused on addressing increasing inequity with support and challenge from the Education Department.

Areas where further improvement/development is necessary include:

- Improving attendance in primary and secondary schools, with a particular focus on emotionally-based school absence (EBSA)
- Reducing the poverty-related attainment gap in literacy and numeracy between the most and least disadvantaged learners
- Supporting ongoing recovery in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing outcomes for all learners.

24. A refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched in March 2022. This includes Strategic Equity Funding for the education department to provide further support and challenge to schools to improve education outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty and tackle the poverty related attainment gap from 2022-26.

25. The department's Strategic Equity Funding Plan was presented to the Committee in September 2022. The Plan outlines how we will bring about improvement through a strategic focus on Wellbeing (Readiness to Learn), Learning and Teaching (Pedagogy for Equity) and Raising Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy.

26. The department refreshed its guidance to schools on Using PEF to tackle the Poverty-related Attainment Gap in May 2022 (Appendix 3), following the publication of new national guidance on the use of PEF. The refreshed guidance outlines a strengthened approach to central quality assurance of the use of PEF from 2022-23, which will be delivered in partnership with our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor. The department has also planned a Thematic Review of the Impact of PEF to take place in February 2023. These national and local approaches will enhance existing processes for collaboratively evaluating progress, and will support the planning of next steps to reduce inequity.

27. The Education Department uses target setting (setting of stretch aims) as an integral part of our evaluation, planning and improvement processes to support reflection and raise standards. We are in the process of collaborating with our schools to update these targets and will advise Education Committee at a future meeting.

28. This report is supplemented by a presentation to Education Committee on the progress made by two schools in improving outcomes for pupils through the use of their Pupil Equity Fund. This will illustrate the strategies and good practice developed by some schools and help members to continue to support and adequately challenge the department and schools to seek further improvement.

FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

29. This report provides evidence of improvements made as a consequence of additional funding from the Scottish Government, to support schools in closing the poverty related attainment gap. East Renfrewshire schools were allocated £1.62 million in 2021-22. Robust monitoring arrangements have been put in place for PEF, which ensure that the Education Department and Head Teachers have regular oversight of school level expenditure. PEF expenditure is separated from core school budgets, ensuring spending is not subsumed within the overall school budget and can be easily tracked and monitored.

30. Based on the 2021-22 financial year end 66% of the 2021-22 grant was spent. Schools are able to carry forward unspent funds into the new 2022-23 financial year and details of final spend across all schools for session 2021-22 will be available in due course.

31. East Renfrewshire schools have been allocated £1.47 million for 2022-23. Appendix 1 provides details of individual establishment allocations.

32. During 2021-22 schools were allocated additional funding from the department to support those pupils across the authority whose attainment is in the lowest 20% for literacy and numeracy. This money was aligned to complement and enhance PEF interventions at school level where appropriate, in order to maximise the impact of work to reduce the poverty-related attainment gap.

33. PEF allocations have been agreed for the next four years and will remain static over this period. Head teachers have been asked to consider ways in which they can develop and sustain improvements over a four-year period while also taking account of the significantly increasing costs of resources associated with inflation, including staffing. There are no other specific financial implications arising from this report.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

34. This report focuses on the primary and secondary schools' progress in improving outcomes for pupils through the Pupil Equity Funding; however many of the results could not have been achieved without excellent partnership working across the Council, especially with parents/carers and other cluster schools.

CONCLUSION

35. This report provides a high level overview of East Renfrewshire Council's Education Department's progress in improving outcomes for pupils through the Pupil Equity Funding and illustrates strategies and areas of good practice developed by schools. The information presented here shows a positive picture and where there are particular areas for further improvement.

36. The department will continue to self-evaluate its performance, share best practice across establishments and take the necessary steps to progress those areas identified where there is further scope for improvement as noted above.

RECOMMENDATION

37. It is recommended that Education Committee comment on and note this report as a summary of the progress made by schools in improving outcomes through the Pupil Equity Funding during 2021-22.

Mark Ratter
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6 October 2022

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Appendices

1. Pupil Equity Funding Allocation: 2020-21 and 2021-22
2. Progress of ERC Schools in Improving Attendance, Exclusions and Attainment in 2021-22
3. Guidance to schools: Using PEF to Tackle the Poverty-related Attainment Gap

Background Papers

1. Local Improvement Plan 2022 - 2025
2. Outcome Delivery Plan 2022 – 25
3. Standards and Quality Report 2020 – 21
4. ['Scotland's Wellbeing: The Impact of COVID-19'](#)
5. [Education Scotland: Equity Audit](#)

APPENDIX 1**PEF Allocations by School 2021-22 and 2022-23**

School	Allocation 2021-22	Allocation 2022-23
Braidbar Primary School	£ 19,848	£ 22,050
Busby Primary School	£ 30,875	£ 44,100
Calderwood Lodge Primary School	£ 15,928	£ 17,150
Carlibar Primary School	£ 118,844	£ 113,925
Carolside Primary School	£ 11,027	£ 19,600
Crookfur Primary School	£ 29,405	£ 36,750
Cross Arthurlie Primary School	£ 71,062	£ 71,050
Eaglesham Primary School	£ 31,855	£ 34,300
Giffnock Primary School	£ 22,054	£ 28,175
Hillview Primary School	£ 60,035	£ 57,575
Kirkhill Primary School	£ 36,756	£ 32,400
Maidenhill Primary School	£ 9,802	£ 8,640
Mearns Primary School	£ 61,260	£ 54,000
Neilston Primary School	£ 50,233	£ 58,800
Netherlee Primary School	£ 25,729	£ 25,725
Our Lady Of The Missions Primary School	£ 37,981	£ 33,480
St Cadoc's Primary School	£ 24,504	£ 21,600
St Clare's Primary School	£ 22,054	£ 22,050
St John's Primary School	£ 55,134	£ 68,600
St Joseph's Primary School	£ 17,153	£ 18,375
St Mark's Primary School	£ 120,070	£ 118,825
St Thomas' Primary School	£ 25,729	£ 26,950
Thornliebank Primary School	£ 34,183	£ 29,400
Uplawmoor Primary School	£ 3,308	£ 2,450
Barrhead High School	£ 60,035	£ 69,825
Eastwood High School	£ 55,134	£ 63,700
Mearns Castle High School	£ 42,882	£ 41,650
St Luke's High School	£ 73,512	£ 78,400
St Ninian's High School	£ 40,432	£ 40,425
Williamwood High School	£ 33,080	£ 41,650
Woodfarm High School	£ 47,415	£ 39,960
Isobel Mair School	£ 123,745	£ 129,850
Total	£ 1,622,719	£ 1,471,430

APPENDIX 2

Attendance and Exclusions

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Primary Attendance: P1-7	96.3	95.6	93.9
Secondary Attendance: S1-5	93.0	94.3	91.4
Number of exclusion incidents per 1000 pupils - Primary	0	0.2	0
Number of exclusion incidents per 1000 pupils - Secondary	4.6	2.3	5.1

No Care Experienced children and young people were excluded from school in 2021-22.

Primary Attainment: Excellence

Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 Pupils

	2018-19	2020-21	2021-22
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Reading	91%	90%	89%
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Writing	88%	87%	87%
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Talking & Listening	94%	94%	93%
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Numeracy	91%	90%	90%

**No data was collected for 2019-20 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic*

Primary attainment in reading, writing, talking and listening and numeracy has decreased over the last three years.

Primary Attainment: Equity

Based on number of pupils registered for Free School Meals (FME) and the number of pupils living in deciles 1 and 2 (based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation).

	Pupils registered for Free School Meals			Pupils living in SIMD deciles 1 and 2		
	2018-19	2020-21*	2021-22	2018-19	2020-21*	2021-22
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Reading	71	74	68	78	73	68
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Writing	64	67	64	73	69	62
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Talking & Listening	85	84	64	91	83	77
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Numeracy	74	71	70	60	75	68

**No data was collected for 2019-20 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic*

With the exception of writing, the attainment of pupils registered for free school meals across the main curricular areas has decreased over the last three years. For pupils living in SIMD deciles 1 and 2, attainment has decreased significantly across the main curricular areas except in numeracy.

Primary Attainment: Closing the Gap

	Percentage Change from 2018-19 to 2021-22		
	All Pupils	Pupils registered for Free School Meals	Pupil living in SIMD deciles 1 and 2
Reading	2% decrease	3% decrease	10% decrease
Writing	1% decrease	11% decrease	11% decrease
Talking & Listening	1% decrease	21% decrease	14% decrease
Numeracy	1% decrease	4% decrease	8% increase

From 2018-19 to 2021-22, overall attainment across the four curricular areas has decreased for all pupils and for pupils registered for free school meals and living in SIMD deciles 1-2. However, it has decreased for the latter 2 groups at a faster rate. As a result, the poverty related attainment gap has grown for our most disadvantaged primary aged pupils in P1, P4 and P7 over the last three years.

It should be noted that the numbers of those children registered for Free School Meals and/or living in SIMD deciles 1 and 2 represent a small percentage statistically (approximately 6%) of this demographic in East Renfrewshire.

Secondary Attainment: Excellence

Percentage of S3 Pupils

	2018-19	2021-22*
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level - Reading	97.5	97.1
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level - Writing	96.2	96.9
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level – Talking & Listening	96.8	96.9
% Attaining or Exceeding Third Level - Numeracy	96.0	97.9

**No data was collected for S3 in 2019-20 or 2020-21 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic*

	2018-19	2021-22
% Attaining Fourth Level - Reading	80.9	82.6
% Attaining Fourth Level - Writing	79.7	82.8
% Attaining Fourth Level – Talking & Listening	81.5	81.6
% Attaining Fourth Level - Numeracy	78.4	83.5

**No data was collected for S3 in 2019-20 or 2020-21 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Secondary attainment (S3) at third and fourth levels in writing, talking and listening and numeracy has increased over the last three years. Reading has increased over the last three years at level 4 but decreased at level 3.

Secondary Attainment: Equity

Based on number of pupils registered for Free School Meals (FME) and the number of pupils living in deciles 1 and 2 (based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation).

Third Level

	Pupils registered for Free School Meals		Pupils living in deciles 1 and 2	
	2018-19	2021-22*	2018-19	2021-22*
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Reading	90.0	89.7	97.7	94.5
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Writing	92.0	89.7	97.7	93.2
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Talking & Listening	93.0	90.6	95.4	94.5
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Numeracy	88.0	89.8	93.1	95.9

**No data was collected for S3 in 2019-20 or 2020-21 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Fourth Level

	Pupils registered for Free School Meals		Pupils living in deciles 1 and 2	
	2018-19	2021-22*	2018-19	2021-22*
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Reading	65.0	65	60.9	64.4
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Writing	60.0	63.3	59.8	67.1
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels – Talking & Listening	63.0	63.3	69.0	67.1
% Attaining or Exceeding Expected Levels - Numeracy	54.0	50.9	54.0	54.8

**No data was collected for S3 in 2019-20 or 2020-21 as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Secondary Attainment: Closing the Gap**Third Level**

	Percentage Change from 2018-19 to 2021-22		
	All Pupils	Pupils registered for Free School Meals	Pupils living in deciles 1 and 2
Reading	0.4% decrease	0.3% decrease	3.2% decrease
Writing	0.7% increase	2.3% decrease	4.5% decrease
Talking & Listening	0.1% increase	2.4% decrease	0.9% decrease
Numeracy	1.9% increase	1.8% increase	2.8% increase

Fourth Level

	Percentage Change from 2018-19 to 2021-22		
	All Pupils	Pupils registered for Free School Meals	Pupils living in deciles 1 and 2
Reading	1.7% increase	0	3.5% increase
Writing	3.1% increase	3.3% increase	7.3% increase
Talking & Listening	0.1% increase	0.3% increase	1.9% decrease
Numeracy	5.1% increase	3.1% decrease	0.8% increase

At third level, from 2018-19 to 2021-22 with the exception of numeracy for pupils living in SIMD 1 and 2, the attainment of disadvantaged secondary pupils increased at a lower rate than the overall cohort or decreased. This demonstrates an increase in the poverty related attainment gap for pupils at this level.

At fourth level, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in numeracy either decreased or increased at a significantly lower rate than all pupils. Conversely attainment in Writing increased at a higher rate than for all pupils, indicating a reduction in the poverty-related attainment gap in this skill.

APPENDIX 3

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Guidance on using Pupil Equity Funding to tackle the poverty-related attainment gap

This guidance sets out the key considerations for schools in East Renfrewshire when planning how to use Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty. It draws on the national guidance provided by Scottish Government, including the [National Operational Guidance 2022](#) and [Scottish Attainment Challenge Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#). The refreshed mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge is **to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap**. This mission must be at the centre of all PEF decision making.

Schools should set ambitious and achievable annual aims to improve outcomes for children and young people affected by poverty, which will lead to improvements in literacy and numeracy and support health and wellbeing. School aims should be aligned to local authority stretch aims.

It is essential that PEF funding is used to support activities, approaches or resources which are **clearly additional to universal** improvement plans and are carefully targeted at improving outcomes for those children and young people impacted by poverty. In this respect PEF supports children's equal right to education, as outlined in [Article 28 of UNCRC](#).

Scottish Government has defined six general principles for PEF planning: that it should be **collaborative, evidence informed, ambitious** and **evaluative**, and that it should detail the approaches to be taken to **measuring progress** and **embedding quality assurance processes**.

The above principles represent effective improvement planning and mirror the requirements of all School Improvement Plans in East Renfrewshire, as set out in the [2022 Guidance on Standards and Quality Reporting and School Improvement Planning](#). As is the case with School Improvement Plans, schools in East Renfrewshire retain autonomy in how they choose to present their Pupil Equity Plans. Schools may find that using the same format for PEF planning and School Improvement Planning helps to streamline documentation and reduce bureaucracy, while also supporting the creation of aims which are SMART and evidence-based.

Evidence Informed Rationale**Evidence informed:**

Plans are based on data and a clear understanding of the context of communities they will be implemented.

This data should include: local & national data and reference to research including SAC Theory of Change and Logic Model.

All use of PEF funding must be underpinned by a clear rationale based on evidence. Head teachers should be able to show how [data](#) has informed their decisions and what sources of [evidence](#) (Appendix 1) they have consulted that indicates that the planned interventions are likely to improve outcomes for learners impacted by poverty. This contextual analysis must support all planned use of PEF.

*'Head teachers must develop a clear **rationale** for use of the funding, based on a **robust contextual analysis** of relevant data which identifies the poverty-related attainment gap in their schools and learning communities and plans must be grounded in evidence of what is known to be effective at raising attainment for children affected by poverty.'*

PEF National Operating Guidance

While Free School Meal entitlement remains a useful way to identify many children and young people impacted by poverty, schools are also encouraged to look more broadly at the range of data and evidence they can access to identify learners who should benefit from PEF funding, including SIMD. The local [Child Poverty Action Plan](#) and national [Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan](#) highlight the following poverty risk factors which should be explored at school level:

- Lone parent families
- Minority ethnic families
- Families with a disabled adult or child
- Families with a young mother
- Families with a child under one
- Larger families (3+ children).

Collaboration



Collaborative:

Actively engage children, young people, families, communities, staff and partners in planning process.

Collaboration across schools and clusters, with community partners such as [Community Learning and Development](#), and with wider partners may provide opportunities to increase the reach and impact of PEF. Opportunities to pool resources should be explored wherever there is the potential to better meet the identified needs of targeted learners.

Close collaboration with the school's Educational Psychologist can help to ensure intersectional disadvantages are taken account of in planning targets and measures.

National organisations and third sector partners such as Child Poverty Action Group can support schools to reduce the impact of poverty on education outcomes. Reducing costs to families and increasing family income are important levers in tackling poverty, and can have a profound impact on wellbeing and learning. Schools should work with stakeholders to evaluate the [Cost of the School Day](#) and use PEF to reduce costs to families. Through effective collaboration PEF may also be used to increase family income, for example by working in partnership with the Money Advice and Rights Team.

As with all school improvement activities, all stakeholders should be involved in PEF planning and evaluating processes. Stakeholder engagement should be clearly outlined within planning and reporting.

Parents are key partners in improving outcomes for children and schools should involve parents in their PEF planning. Participatory budgeting (PB) is an effective way to engage with both parents and pupils, in particular those who face barriers to participation. The education department's [Participatory Budgeting Guidance for schools](#) outlines approaches and key considerations for successful PB.

Ambitious Aims, Measuring Progress & Evaluation



Setting ambitious and SMART aims:

Aims should be smart, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. They also need to be ambitious enough to achieve long term goals of closing poverty-related attainment gaps.

outcomes.

Aims should be developed annually which identify who will benefit, what will change, by how much and when. It is important that the [measures](#) of progress are clearly defined with sufficient detail at the outset, so that progress can be tracked closely over time. It may be helpful to consider at the planning stage what the next step will be, if tracking indicates that the planned approach is not leading to positive



Evaluative:

All plans should have aims and measures which allow leaders to clearly state whether aims have been achieved.



Measuring progress:

SMART measures and baseline data are needed to be able to show progress towards aims. Regular tracking and monitoring will support staff respond timeously to interventions which are not having the desired impact and make adaptations.

*'Schools must have plans in place at the outset to evaluate the impact of the funding. These plans should outline **clear outcomes** to be achieved and how progress towards these, and the impact on closing the poverty-related attainment gap, will be **measured**. If, as a result of this ongoing monitoring, the plans are not achieving the results intended, these plans should be amended. Plans for sustainability must be considered as part of this.'* PEF National Operating Guidance

Pupil wellbeing is an essential pre-requisite to learning and attainment. In developing aims, schools should take a holistic view of pupil outcomes and consider the most appropriate indicators of improvement for children impacted by poverty. The following Key Indicators should be considered:

- Attainment
- Attendance
- Inclusion
- Engagement
- Participation

Teaching staff who know pupils well have a key role to play in helping to identify the most appropriate aims and measures, as well as in establishing baseline data and tracking the impact of interventions.

Schools should plan how they will know that outcomes are on track to being achieved. Measures should indicate where evidence will be found and what this will look like. Regular monitoring of progress towards outcomes should be planned across the year and adaptations made if required. It may be helpful to consider short, medium and longer term aims across the four-year period for identified learners. Aims should be ambitious and represent the best possible improvements in outcomes for learners over time.

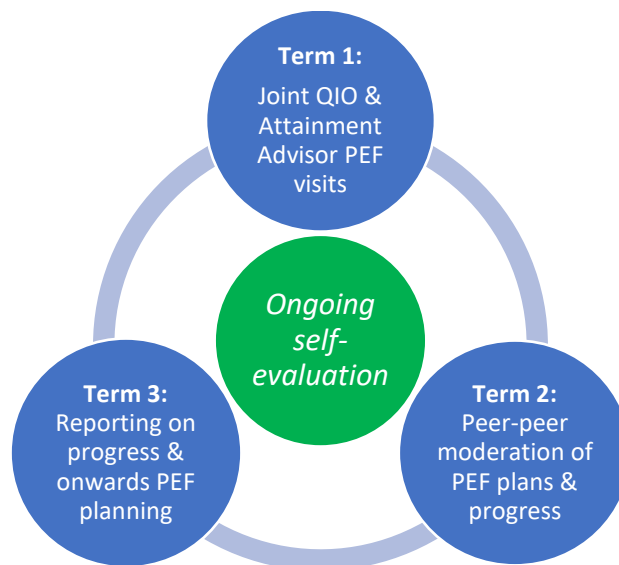
Quality Assurance



Quality assurance processes embedded to support the development and implementation of SAC plans. This can be both internal or external, involve peers or senior leaders.

PEF Plans and School Improvement Plans should clearly identify how progress will be monitored and evaluated. School Standards & Quality Reports should also outline progress with improving outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty.

The Education Department will support and challenge schools to monitor and evaluate the impact of their approach to PEF throughout the cycle as follows:



Schools will be expected to report on the impact of Pupil Equity Funding to their Parent Council. Pupil and parent friendly versions of plans for, and reports on, the use of PEF should be made available. Head Teachers should also discuss with Trade Union colleagues their plans for the funding, in line with departmental policy on school improvement planning and DSM.

The checklist in Appendix 2 may help schools to identify the effectiveness of their approach to allocating PEF.

'...reports must be made publicly available so that parents and carers can easily access, understand and where appropriate, challenge, what is happening in their school with regard to Pupil Equity Funding.'

Effective School Improvement

Planning 2022/23

Finance

The following points should be considered by Head Teachers when making spending decisions:-

- PEF expenditure may cover staff costs (teaching and non-teaching posts), resources, equipment or services.
- Funding **must** provide additionality to core service delivery via new or enhanced activities.

- ERC HR and procurement policies and procedures must be adhered to.
- The Parent Council, DSM (Staff Consultative, including TU representatives) Committee and Pupil Council should be consulted on proposals.
- The full cost of absence cover for PEF funded posts (including long-term sickness and maternity leave) must be met from within existing devolved budgets (since no additional government funding has been provided separately for this)
- Schools should also be aware that the impact of any future pay awards for posts established from the PEF will be met from this resource.
- Teachers employed using PEF monies will be excluded from ERC's contribution towards the national commitment to maintain the pupil: teacher ratio as measured via the annual census.
- Any temporary promoted posts funded by PEF may be subject to job-sizing.
- PEF allocations will be included in the 2022/23 entitlement budget for each school under a unique ledger code. To allow monitoring of spend, a number of new ledger codes were created and once spending plans are finalised funding should be vired as appropriate to each of these new budget lines.
- Business Support Managers will have a key role in ensuring PEF costs are being recorded accurately.
- Funding will be for financial year 2022/23; any remaining balance can be carried forward but must be spent before the end of session 2022/23.
- Funding allocation will remain in place for 4 years, therefore schools must consider the potential impact of inflation and other external factors on their spending plans.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEETHURSDAY 6 OCTOBER 2022Report by Director of EducationREVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE RATE FOR EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE FUNDED
PROVISION**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To seek committee approval for:
 - The increase in the sustainable hourly rate paid to funded providers to £5.69;
 - The backdating of the new sustainable rate for all hours provided since the beginning of the 2022/23 session on 15th August 2022.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Education Committee is asked to approve the increase in the sustainable rate paid to all funded providers for the provision of funded early learning and childcare and the backdating of the new rate for all hours provided in session 2022/23.

BACKGROUND

3. In line with the Scottish Government's expansion of early learning and childcare (ELC) provision, all three and four year old children, in addition to eligible two year olds, have a statutory entitlement of 1,140 hours of funded provision per year. This provision has been available to families in East Renfrewshire since August 2020, a year earlier than the revised Scottish Government implementation date of August 2021.

4. The Scottish Government's Funding Follows the Child policy identifies all ELC provision as 'provider neutral', regardless of whether it is a public, private or voluntary organisation. This ensures that families are able to access the provider of their choice, as long as the provider meets the criteria set out in the National Standard, wishes to deliver the funded entitlement and has space available. Within East Renfrewshire, families have a range of choices to best meet their own personal circumstances, across local authority provision in both nursery classes and family centres, in addition to 14 private, voluntary and independent nurseries and 17 childminders. These are known as funded providers. Where a family wishes to access their child's entitlement in a funded provider, the Council pays an hourly rate to the provider directly. This is known as the sustainable rate.

5. In 2017, the Council outlined its proposed rate, 3 years prior to the expansion of the statutory entitlement to 1,140 hours per year, setting out the intention to increase the rate from £3.50 to £5.31 from August 2020. In 2019, prior to the increase in the hourly rate, the Council, alongside our partner authorities across the West Partnership, commissioned an independent review of delivery costs, undertaken by Ipsos-Mori. The rate of this initial study was £4.12, considerably lower than the rate proposed at that time. However, given the desire to set a sustainable rate for our funded providers, the Education Department, in line with most West Partnership authorities, proceeded with the initially proposed rate.

6. For the current session, around 25% of children accessing their funded entitlement will do so within a funded provider. For such children, the Council pays an hourly rate to each provider of £5.31 for the provision. In addition, a payment of £0.50 per hour is made for food provision, in addition to a £0.58 payment per session as part of the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme.

REPORT

7. When setting the existing rate, the Council agreed to review the rate for 2022/23, ensuring it remained sustainable for both providers and the authority, in line with the Scottish Government's national approach. Given the ongoing disruption of the pandemic over the last two years and the change to committees resulting from the local elections, there has been a delay to the implementation of the new rate for this session. The department has continued to communicate with funded providers to advise of the delay.

8. The Scottish Government commissioned Ipsos-Mori to undertake a further cost collection exercise amongst providers across Scotland for all 0-5 provision. The results of the exercise were shared with local authorities in May 2022. Unfortunately, only three funded providers within East Renfrewshire shared information with Ipsos-Mori and, therefore, localised data was not made available. Data from across the entire West Partnership has been shared with the eight partner authorities and this has informed the review of the sustainable rate.

9. In setting the rate, the Council has sought to establish a process which is data informed, consistent and fair. To support this process, we have collaborated with colleagues across the West Partnership to streamline our approach. This aims to ensure that those providers working across a number of authorities do not have to engage with significantly different methodologies in understanding how each local rate has been reached. However, whilst we have looked to take a consistent approach, each authority has its own geography, demographics and wider support package which will result in different rates being paid.

10. A number of key factors have been built in to the review of the sustainable rate:

- Supporting providers to pay the Scottish Living Wage
- Reflecting the cost pressures facing providers
- Consideration of the seasonality of provision
- Providing an appropriate margin to provide support for reinvestment

11. In considering any new rate, it is essential that the department remains mindful of the financial pressures facing the Council and ensures it remains affordable beyond the current financial year. In addition, there remains uncertainty about the funding available to the Council beyond the current year for the provision of ELC. The department continues to raise this nationally with the Scottish Government.

12. Following the conclusion of the review, it is proposed that the sustainable rate for all hours provided henceforth be set at £5.69 per hour. This single rate will be paid for all eligible children aged 2-5 accessing their entitlement in a funded provider. It is proposed that this rate be backdated for the entirety of the current session, with all hours provided since 15th August 2022 updated. Providers will continue to receive a £0.50 per hour sum for food provision and £0.58 per session as part of the Scottish Milk and Health Snack Scheme.

13. Given the consolidation of a single unified rate for all funded provision, any funded provider currently delivering the entitlement to an eligible two year old will continue to be paid at the existing rate. This will be in place only until such time as those two year old children turn three. This is only for the short transition period and will not apply for any two year old children starting nursery from October 2022 onwards.

14. In addition to the sustainable rate, funded providers within East Renfrewshire continue to have access to a wide range of additional high quality supports, including free at the point of access professional learning, access to a teacher, support from the department's Educational Psychology Service and Development Officer and financial support towards external training costs. We will continue to work with providers to ensure that they continue to have access to this support.

15. In supporting the continued review of the sustainable rate, it has been confirmed in the Financial Sustainability Health Check that the Scottish Government are committed to updating the data collection exercise annually. This will see updated information published by the end of August each year to support future reviews. In this context, the proposed rate is for one year only and any future rates will be subject to review.

FINANCE & EFFICIENCY

16. The proposal to increase the sustainable rate will result in additional costs being incurred for the provision of ELC for children accessing their entitlement within a funded provider.

17. At present, a total of 587 children are set to access all or part of their statutory entitlement in a funded provider during the 2022/23 session. Across the 2022/23 financial year, this will have a total estimated additional cost of £120k which has been factored into projected costs for this financial year. It should be noted that, in line with the Funding Follows the Child policy, this number and therefore the costs of provision will change on an ongoing basis.

18. The ongoing financial impact of any increases to the rate paid to funded providers will be taken into account as part of the annual budget setting process for the department.

CONSULTATION

19. The review of the sustainable rate has been primarily informed by the Ipos-Mori cost collection exercise which all funded providers across Scotland were invited to participate in. Unfortunately, a significant majority of providers did not participate, resulting in East Renfrewshire specific data not being made available. Data from across the West Partnership has been used to support the development of the revised rate.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

20. The Education Department values the strong partnership approach in ensuring the delivery of the statutory entitlement to all eligible children on a 'provider neutral' basis. The department has engaged with funded providers in advance of the committee to explain the review process and the new proposed rate.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

21. At this stage, there are no direct implications in terms of staffing, legal, equalities, sustainability or climate change for the Education Department or the wider Council.

CONCLUSION

22. This report outlines the review undertaken to determine the revised sustainable rate to be paid to funded providers for the delivery of the statutory entitlement for all eligible two, three and four year old children. Following on from the review, the report sets out the proposed new rate, seeking approval for the application of the rate and backdating for the entirety of the 2022/23 session.

RECOMMENDATION

23. Education Committee is asked to approve the increase in the sustainable rate paid to all funded providers for the provision of funded early learning and childcare and the backdating of the new rate for all hours provided in session 2022/23.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
6 October 2022

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Local Government Access to Information Act 1985

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE6 October 2022Report by Director of EducationWEST PARTNERSHIP IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE:
EVALUATION REPORT 2021-22**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform East Renfrewshire's Education Committee of the evaluation of work undertaken by the West Partnership (Glasgow Region Education Improvement Collaborative) in 2021 - 2022.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Education Committee is asked to note and comment on 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, facilitate collaborative working and provide 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 noted the progress of the West Partnership and the contents of its Improvement Plan in September 2021.

REPORT

6. The attached report (Appendix 1) details progress over the academic year 2021-2022 towards achieving each of the associated target outcomes and expected impacts as detailed in the West Partnership Improvement Plan for 2021-2022.
7. The report captures the very good progress of the three West Partnership workstreams, even when taking into account the significant challenges that all education staff have faced during the course of another very challenging school session. This is testament to the dedication and commitment of all staff who have worked to support our children and young people.
8. Throughout the report, there are strong examples of how the Partnership is supporting authorities to improve attainment and achievement for all, while closing the poverty related attainment gap. This focus on excellence and equity is underpinned by an approach which enables staff to take collective action and deliver improvement.

9. Included in this report is an overview of the strengthened evaluation model which includes three drivers for improvement. The report showcases progress in enhancing collaboration, improving knowledge and confidence and changing practice. Three main illustrations demonstrate impact in the Primary Curriculum Programme, Improving Our Schools and Keeping Trauma in Mind Programme through a range of qualitative and quantitative data.
10. Critical indicators have been updated demonstrating progress across the region.
11. The paper was considered and endorsed at the last Glasgow City Region Education Committee on 22 September 2022 with the recommendation that each Council area considers the report through its own local governance arrangements.
12. The latest version of the West Partnership's Improvement Plan 2022 – 2023 is the subject of a separate paper to this committee.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

13. There are no financial or efficiency implications arising from this report.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

14. The progress of the West Partnership has been recognised externally through research carried out by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change, Glasgow University (ROC). In their *Reflections of the West Partnership Recovery to Renewal: Reimagining the Future (2022) Report*, the ROC findings complement that of the evaluation report, thereby providing strong triangulation to internal evaluations. Key findings are included in the evaluation report; the full ROC report is [available online](#).

RECOMMENDATION

15. Education Committee is asked to note and comment on the report.

Mark Ratter
 Director of Education
 6 October 2022

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Appendix 1
 The West Partnership Evaluation Report 2021-22

Background Papers
 West Partnership Improvement Collaborative: Improvement Plan 2021-22
https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/6972/Education-Committee-Item-06-30-September-2021/pdf/Education_Committee_Item_06_-_30_September_2021.pdf?m=637679876901470000

The West Partnership


EVALUATION REPORT 2021-2022

**Equity, Excellence
& Empowerment**



GLASGOW
CITY REGION
Education

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Introduction



The West Partnership has a clear vision: we want to embed the values of equity, excellence and empowerment in everything we do, building a culture of where we work collaboratively across our eight local authority areas to continually improve learning experiences and outcomes for every learner across the Glasgow City Region.



This report details progress over the academic year 2021-2022 towards achieving each of the associated outcomes and expected impacts as detailed in the West Partnership Improvement Plan.

Increasingly, we are seeing the benefit of the West Partnership Regional Improvement Collaborative and the impact it makes to our teachers, practitioners and support staff, local authority officers and our communities. While this report highlights areas of success, the work of the West Partnership has also been recognised by external evaluations carried out by the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change as well as our work highlighted in Research Scotland's national evaluation of Regional Improvement Collaboratives.

Our three workstreams of Wellbeing for Learning; Leadership, Empowerment and Improvement; and Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment are designed to focus on what matters most, and this report captures the very good progress made across each area. Once again, this work reflects the outstanding commitment of all education staff who were tasked with navigating

ongoing public health measures while ensuring a 'normal' education experience for children, young people and their families.

We continue to benefit from the move towards more flexible ways of working across the West Partnership through the use of digital technology. This has allowed us to provide an expanded offer across the West Partnership area and this is reflected in the increased numbers of practitioners participating in the work of the partnership. However, while this will continue, we also recognise that face to face professional learning opportunities remain a crucial part of our delivery model.

We continue to strengthen our networked learning system; a system that enables collaboration, encourages connectedness and helps practitioners at all levels. Please take time to read about the many examples of work where we have been able to see the increasing influence of the West Partnership and its impact.

.....
Tony McDaid, Regional Lead Officer West Partnership

West Partnership Evaluation Report

Our annual evaluation report provides an overview of the collective impact and added value of the West Partnership activity which is delivered through three core workstreams. These are:

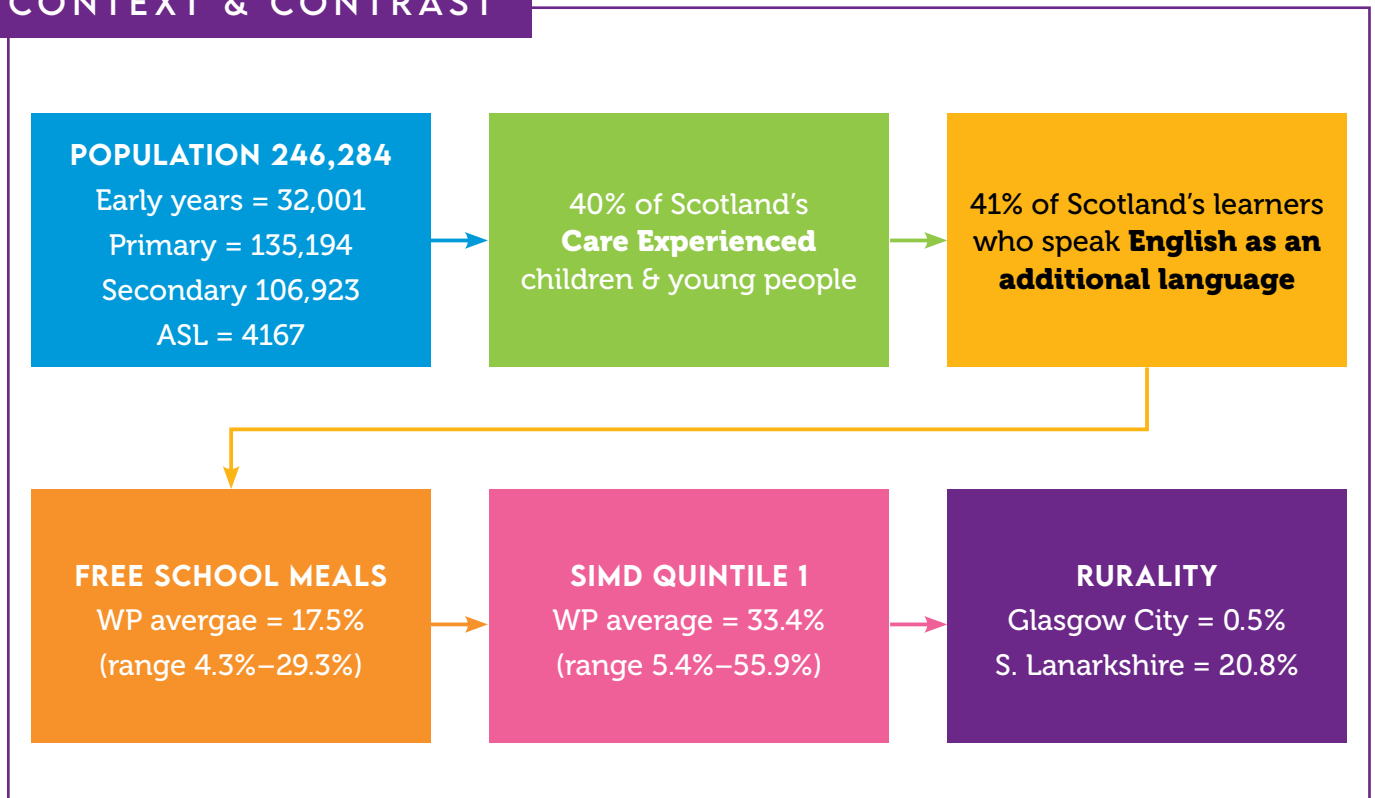
- ➔ Wellbeing for Learning (WFL)
- ➔ Leadership, Empowerment & Improvement (LEI)
- ➔ Curriculum, Learning, Teaching & Assessment (CLTA)



VISION

The West Partnership has a clear 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 increase attainment for every learner across the region.

CONTEXT & CONTRAST



West Partnership Evaluation Report

REACH & IMPACT



5600
TWITTER
FOLLOWERS



1000
NEWSLETTER
SIGN-UPS

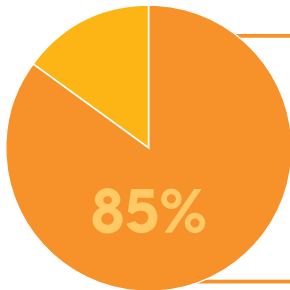


14,985
WEBSITE
USERS



OVER 3100 COLLEAGUES

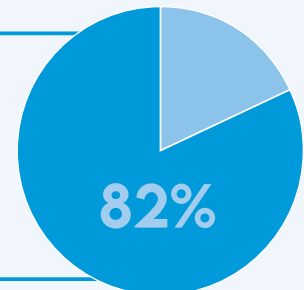
PARTICIPATED IN A WEST PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY THIS YEAR.



85% of respondents
reported an increase
in knowledge



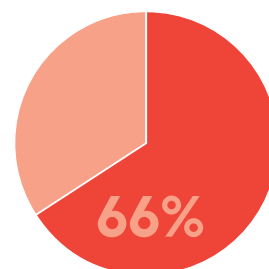
82% of respondents
reported an increase
in confidence



West OS used by just over
40,000 learners nationally
and just under **15,000** from
within the **West Partnership region.**

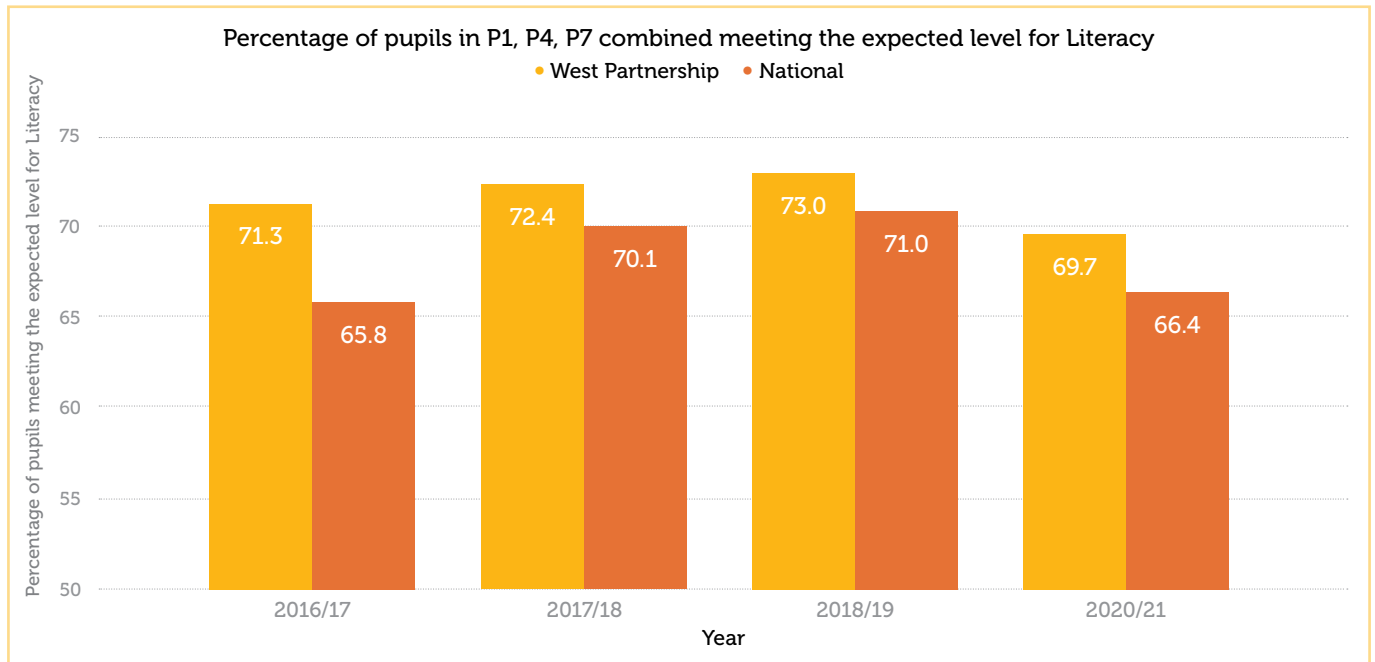
West OS 
WEST PARTNERSHIP ONLINE SCHOOL

Every secondary school in the
West Partnership **used West OS**
and **66% of primary schools**
also used the tools.

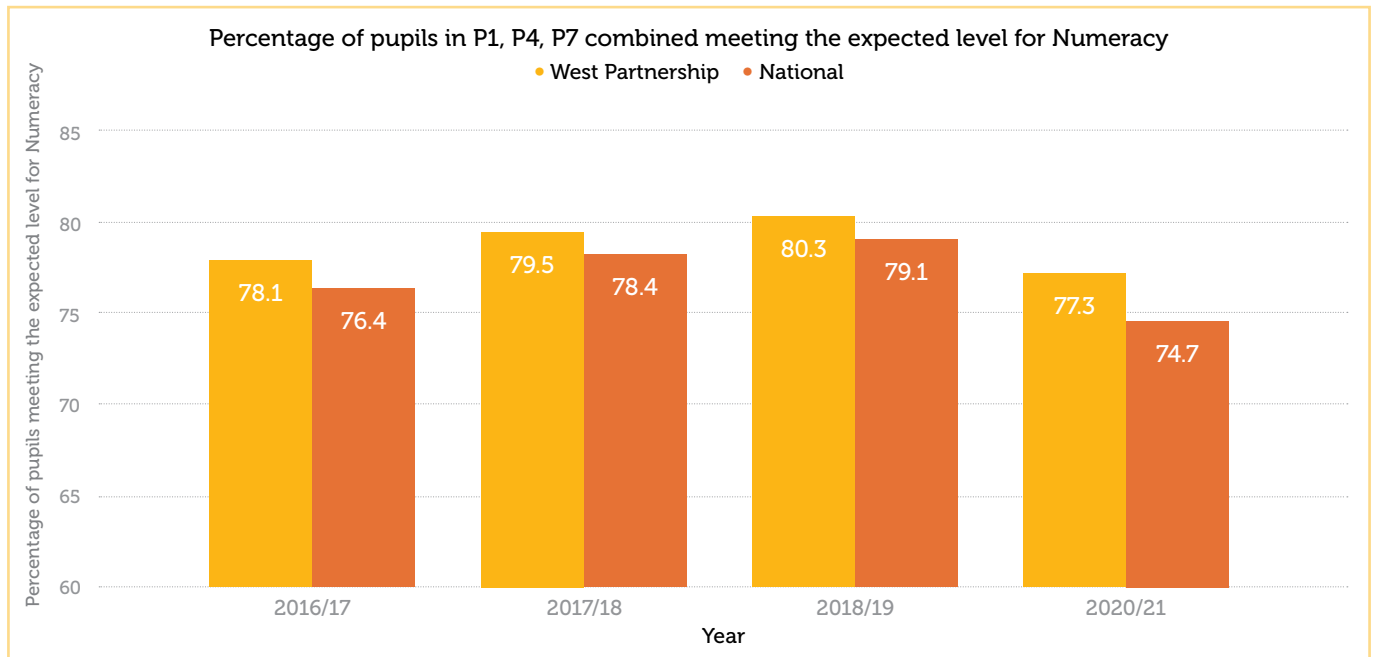


How does the West Partnership compare?

BROAD GENERAL EDUCATION



Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence data was not collected in the 2019/20 academic year as a result of the pandemic. Data from 20/21 shows a decrease in the number of primary pupils meeting their expected levels at P1, P4 and P7 in Literacy (a combined measure which requires meeting the expected level at Listening and Talking, Reading, and Writing). Data from 20/21 shows a decrease of just over 3% percentage points (3.3%) when compared with their pre-pandemic 18/19 cohort. West Partnership primary pupils continue to be more likely to meet their expected levels compared to their national peers.

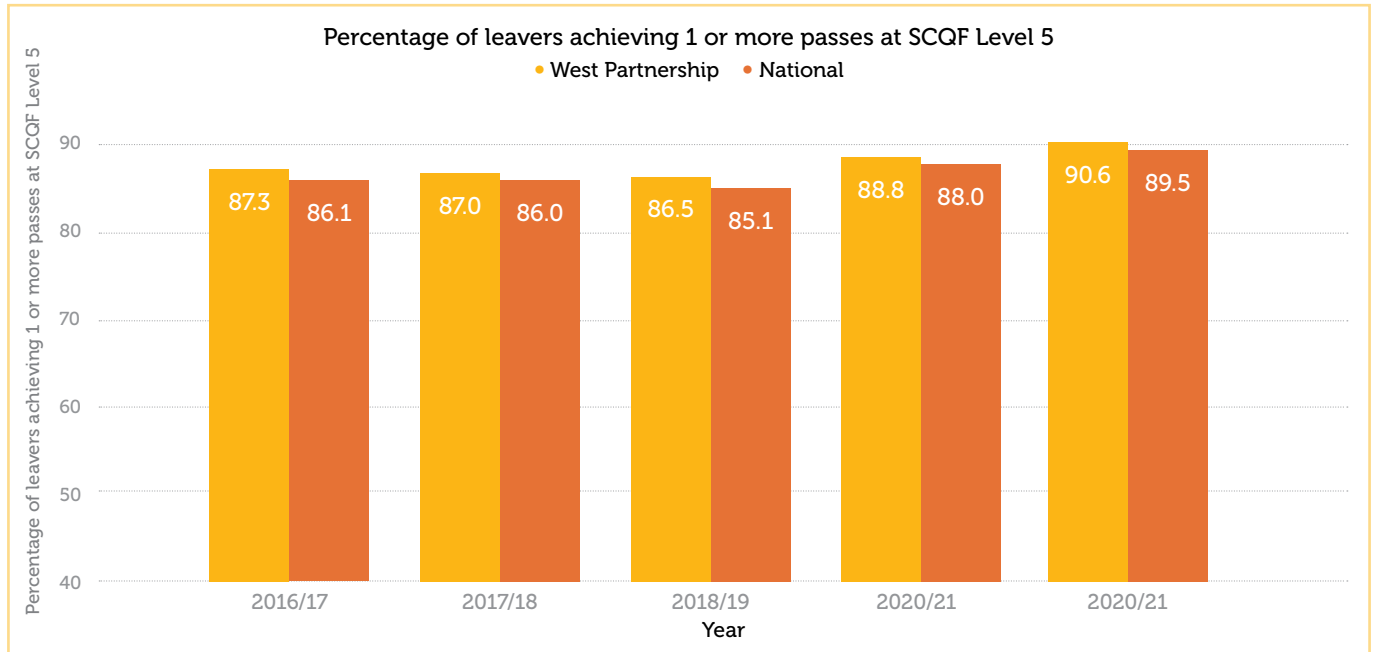


As in the Literacy figures presented above, the latest data on Primary pupils meeting the expected levels in Numeracy has fallen compared to pre-pandemic cohorts. A decrease of 3 percentage points was experienced in this measure with 77.3% of pupils meeting their expected level in Numeracy compared to 80.3% in 18/19. Primary pupils in the West Partnership continue to be more likely to meet their expected level in Numeracy when compared with the national figure.

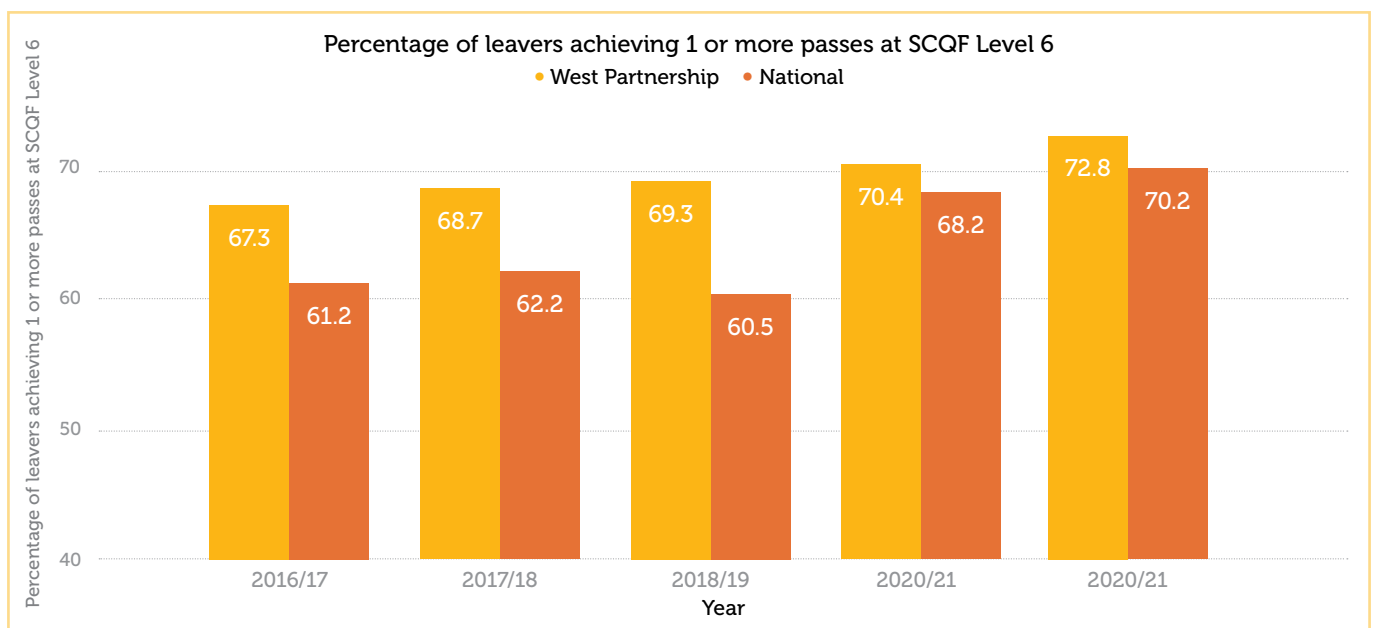
How does the West Partnership compare?

SENIOR PHASE

Due to the change in assessment methodology, primarily the implementation of the alternative certification model, comparisons at the senior phase should be treated with some caution.



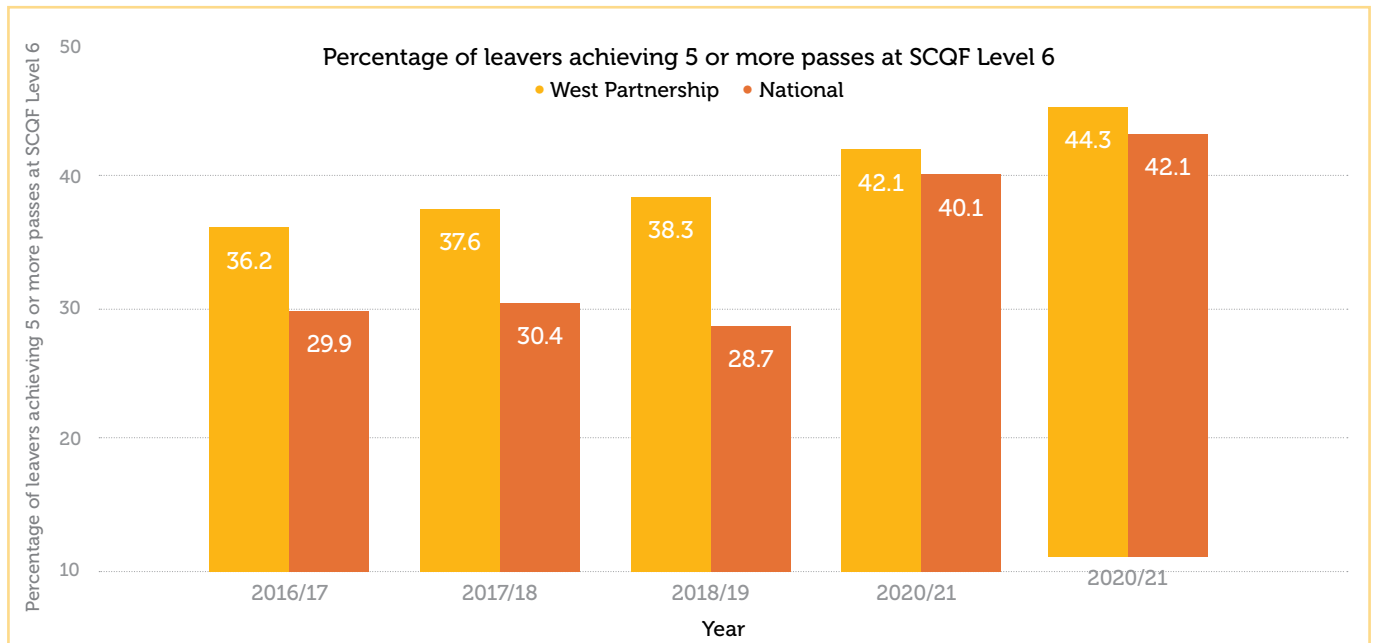
The percentage of leavers achieving 1 or more passes at SCQF Level 5 continues to increase. Just over 90% of West Partnership leavers in 2021 achieved at least 1 Level 5 award, an increase of 3.3 percentage points on the 2017 figure. The West Partnership continues to have a higher percentage of leavers achieving 1 or more awards at this level compared to Scotland as a whole.



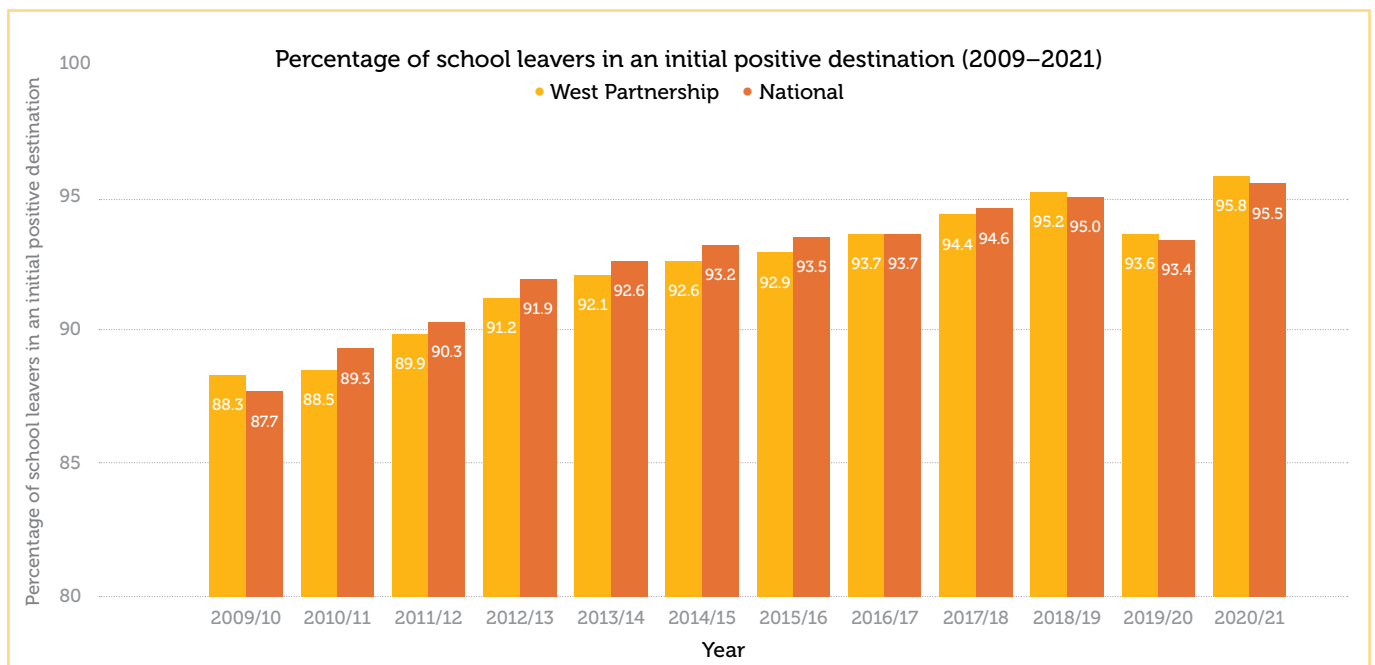
The percentage of leavers achieving 1 or more passes at SCQF Level 6 continues to increase, with just under three-quarters (72.8%) of leavers achieving at least 1 award at Level 6. This continues a positive trend from 2017 when 67.3% of leavers achieved the same feat. As at SCQF Level 5, West Partnership leavers continue to outperform their national counterparts.

How does the West Partnership compare?

SENIOR PHASE



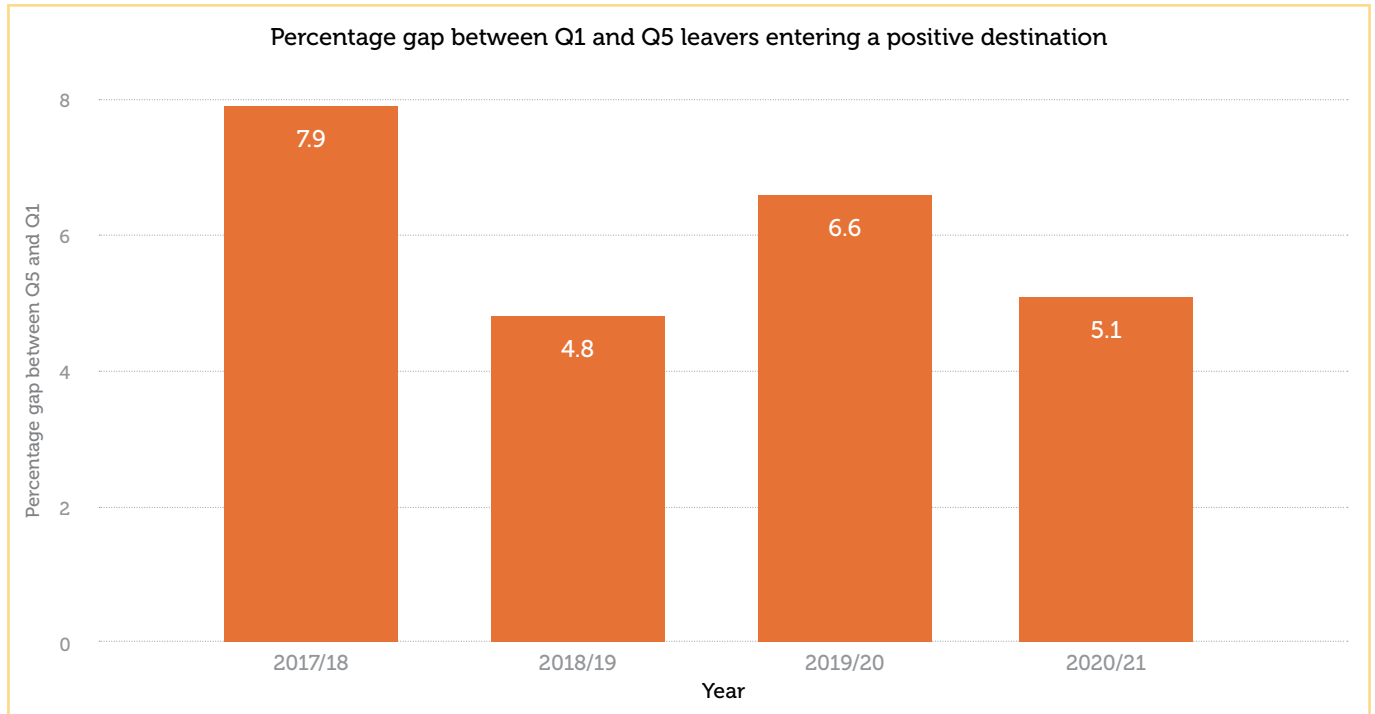
Continued improvement can also be seen in the percentage of West Partnership leavers achieving 5 or more passes at SCQF Level 6. Since 2017 the percentage of West Partnership leavers achieving this standard has increased from 36.2% to 44.3%, an increase of 8.1 percentage points. As in other senior phase attainment measures, a higher percentage of West Partnership leavers achieving this standard than their national peers.



The percentage of West Partnership leavers entering initial positive destinations is at the highest it has been since records began, making up all of the losses experienced in the 19/20 academic year which was impacted by the pandemic. The figure of just under 96% (95.8%) continues the progression from 88.3% in 2010. For the third year in a row, West Partnership leavers were more likely than their national peers to be in an initial positive destination.

How does the West Partnership compare?

SENIOR PHASE



The percentage gap between SIMD Q1 and Q5 leavers entering a positive destination has decreased in comparison to 19/20 but is still slightly larger than the gap experienced by 18/19 leavers. Leavers in the 19/20 cohort were impacted by a lower number of leavers entering employment, a trend reversed in 2021 with 5.5 percentage point more leavers entering employment than in 2020.

Evaluation Framework: Three Drivers of Improvement

This year, the evaluation framework was strengthened to further demonstrate the added value and collective impact of the partnership activity. Through the development of clear workstream outcomes and measures, three common themes emerged from the evidence leading to the creation of the Three Drivers of Improvement Evaluation Framework.

The three drivers of improvement are defined below and summarised in diagram 1. To bring the drivers to life, impact statements from a range of projects and programmes are included.



DRIVER 1: FACILITATING VARIOUS FORMS OF COLLABORATION

We recognise that collaboration is desirable in our system but also that it is necessarily varied with regards to its form. Some collaboration may involve short-term interactions whilst others demand sustained collaborative working around areas of interest.

“I feel that the discussions I have had with other practitioners in the breakout rooms have been valuable. They have given me ideas on how I can develop my enquiry and reassurance that I am on the right track.”

— (PRIMARY CURRICULUM PARTICIPANT)

“The opportunity for young people to work collaboratively and engage with other young people from different teaching and learning environments. Also, the opportunity for young people to impact change and contribute to school improvement planning.”

— (WFL WORKSTREAM)

“It was most beneficial to be part of in-person discussions and share experiences and ideas with colleagues. They were informal way to share ideas and engage in professional dialogue.”

— (LEI WORKSTREAM)

Evaluation Framework: Three Drivers of Improvement

DRIVER 2: ENHANCING PRACTITIONER KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND CONFIDENCE

Our regional improvement collaborative contains just over 19,000 practitioners, some 36% of all practitioners in Scotland. We see our work as enhancing practitioner knowledge, understanding and confidence at all levels, from those newly qualified to those at the most senior level. The enhancement of practitioner knowledge, understanding and confidence is inherently linked to our collaborative working. There is a great amount of expertise and experience across our eight authorities and the exchange of knowledge and sharing of practice is a key way in which the partnership adds value.

Data demonstrating the changes and improvement in practitioner knowledge and confidence is presented in appendix 2.



“My knowledge and practice surrounding metacognition was very limited. This webinar broadened my understanding and gave me some practical tips about things that could be carried out in class.”

— (LEI WORKSTREAM)

“I feel this was highly valuable to me being a probationer. I feel I have to expand my knowledge at every opportunity and this type of conference will provide me with great experience and access to resources. Each workshop I attended has opened my eyes to strategies I will definitely be able to pass on to others while embedding within my own classroom.”

— (CLTA WORKSTREAM)

“It will give me a better understanding of The Promise and allow me to have discussions with staff in school about how this will influence us as teachers and help our young people.”

— (VLN PARTICIPANT)

Evaluation Framework: *Three Drivers of Improvement*

DRIVER 3: SUPPORTING PRACTICE CHANGE AT VARIOUS LEVELS

Our collaborative work and our aim to affect practice change is supported through partnership activity. Practice change at all levels of the system is a key aspiration for the West Partnership. This extends from the way in which our teachers and practitioners deliver in the classroom and playrooms to the ways in which local authority central teams interact across our region. As such, we envisage partnership activity as facilitating practice change as a consequence of a dynamic offering which targets all practitioners irrespective of their role.



“I am making more use of the data I have gathered for my class, and I am now looking at differentiation differently within the class. Differentiation now has many forms of support through different resources, teacher support and varying timescales. I am now also incorporating key questioning within my daily planning to ensure that I am making the most of feedback and hinge point questions.”

— (LEI WORKSTREAM)

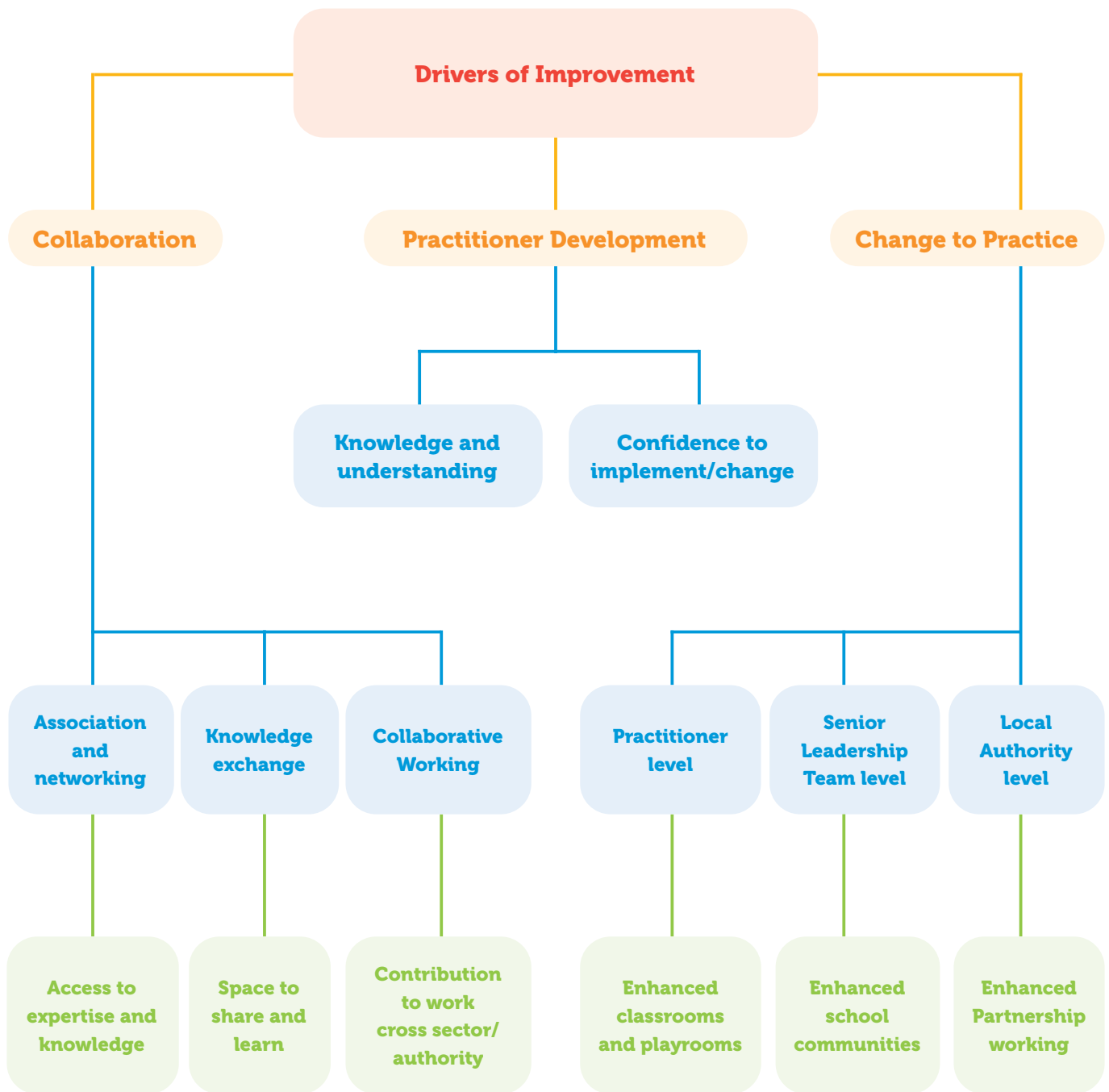
“Allowed deep evaluation of current practice and enhanced staff knowledge. Changes have positively impacted pupil progression”

— (CLTA WORKSTREAM)

“A lot of today’s session helped me reflect and move on from today. I think the Slow-low-low is something that works because I have used before but it was a good reminder. The universal approach makes so much sense and I can see elements of that being put in place in our school as we are also in the process of adapting our school behaviour policy and procedures.”

— (WFL WORKSTREAM)

West Partnership Drivers Model



Three Drivers of Improvement Illustrations

Regular monitoring of progress and impact relating to workstream outcomes and the three drivers of improvement allow The West Partnership to produce Highlight Reports as part of our governance procedures. The most recent can be accessed on the West Partnership website, or by following these links.



Each illustration showcases elements of the three drivers through projects and programmes delivered by the workstreams. The purpose is to demonstrate the added value of participating in partnership activity and the clear impact that this can have on collaboration, knowledge and confidence development and practice change.



THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM PROGRAMME

The Primary Curriculum Programme was an opportunity for colleagues from across 40 schools to collaborate by focusing on curriculum development in their own contexts. The programme centred around the main themes of 'How Do We Do It?' and included participants from all authorities within the West Partnership.

Participants worked with Education Scotland (ES) and researchers from The University of Glasgow's Robert Owen Centre to consider their curriculum in relation to the Refreshed Curriculum Narrative and undertook a related Collaborative Action Research (CAR) project, supported by the Robert Owen Centre team. A senior leader and a class teacher from each school participated in the programme to allow them to share ideas and support each other as they took forward their CAR project.

In the programmes' evaluation, 95% of participants reported that the themes of the sessions met their needs and 86% stated that the structure of the sessions met their needs. Qualitative feedback from participants suggested that the programme had stimulated self-evaluation and change implementation:

“

“It has encouraged me to reflect on my own practice, and have time set aside to build on and improve learners' experiences.”

— (TEACHER, GLASGOW CITY)

”

“

“I would not have approached an adaptation to the school in such an in-depth manner, despite being data rich it's not always data applied but this really focused on applying that data that was collected.”

— (TEACHER, GLASGOW CITY)

”

Three Drivers of Improvement Illustrations

THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM PROGRAMME

After completion of their CAR project, senior leaders and classroom teachers presented the impact and learning with schools from across the West Partnership. From evidence highlighted within presentations, it was clear that changes to practice had resulted in an enhanced learning experience for children. This occurred in a number of ways, with practitioners noting the importance of including children in their learning and completing deep self-evaluation which enhances staff knowledge:



“

“I have had the opportunity to stop and listen to pupil feedback and build a project from their ideas and not just my own.”

— (TEACHER, GLASGOW CITY)

”

“

“Involving children in their learning. Making learning more practical and fun. Understanding that children can gain so much from outdoor learning.”

— (TEACHER, RENFREWSHIRE)

”

“

“Allowed deep evaluation of current practice and enhanced staff knowledge. Changes have positively impacted (on) pupil progression.”

— (TEACHER, SOUTH LANARKSHIRE)

”

The West Partnership Primary Curriculum Programme facilitated the completion of 30 CAR Projects. Each of these projects involved a process of self-evaluation, practice change and an evaluation of the impact of each intervention on children’s experiences and progress. One example of this process was evident when practitioners from one Glasgow primary used their attainment data to identify writing as a priority for their school improvement plan.

Having assessed various potential interventions, the practitioners developed the inquiry question how does the explicit teaching of before, during and after writing strategies increase attainment for targeted learners? The practitioners developed a logical model of improvement proposing that the development of practitioner knowledge, skills and confidence would lead to higher quality learning experiences for pupils and raising attainment.

Practitioners at the school engaged in ‘before, during and after writing strategy’ training. They self-evaluated their knowledge, skills and confidence in teaching writing before and after the training. Practitioners noted how each of these indicators had increased following the training but also how the engagement of learners had improved in the classroom.

Throughout the project, children were asked to give feedback on their experience of developing their writing. Data demonstrated that pupils developed a better awareness of themselves as writers, were more likely to respond appropriately to feedback, were more resilient when making mistakes and were more likely to have positive feelings towards writing as an activity. From teacher judgements it was clear that attainment results had improved for many learners through the use of intervention groups and class strategies.

Due to the success of this programme, it will be offered to participants across the West Partnership next session. Participants that have completed the programme will share their CAR project with schools next session. It is hoped that participants will be able to use CAR to support improvement in other areas in the future.

Improving Our Schools

Improving our Schools (IOS) focuses on improving attainment and achievement through:

- ➔ high quality self-evaluation across the school and in individual classrooms
- ➔ the use of data to inform targeted interventions
- ➔ improving learning and teaching; and
- ➔ a relentless focus on equity and excellence for all children and young people.

IOS was piloted in session 2021–22 with ten primary schools in five local authorities across the West Partnership. Nine out of the ten schools completed the programme.



IMPACT

All **nine schools** saw positive changes in **knowledge, confidence and understanding**. The three groups that described positive changes were senior leaders, teachers and children.

Leaders in all nine schools described examples where working together using the IOS model had **improved classroom practice**. Teachers shared their expertise through collaborative professional learning activities, peer to peer classroom visits and discussion.

All nine schools **improved attainment** for the children who were part of the targeted interventions.



Improving Our Schools

SCHOOL 1:

Learning & teaching focus	Differentiation
Impact on learning and teaching	Teachers are differentiating learning and teaching more effectively overall and taking more account of children's interests as they do so.
Curriculum focus	Literacy – listening and talking – group talk and discursive talk
Impact of interventions on children	At early level the percentage of children using five or more related skills increased from 29% to 35%.
<p><i>"Fact Story Action has made a big difference to our school. It has really improved tracking conversations for the better."</i></p> <p>— DEPUTY HEAD</p> <p><i>"I now explicitly teach listening and talking each week ... I make better use of differentiation to ensure my neurodivergent learners are included."</i></p> <p>— CLASS TEACHER</p>	

SCHOOL 2:

Learning & teaching focus	Metacognition and retrieval
Impact on learning and teaching	Metacognitive strategies are being used across the school and children can talk about what they are, how they use them and how this helps their learning.
Curriculum focus	Numeracy – fractions and money
Impact of interventions on children	<p>Average scores for the pre and post intervention assessments were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Children focussing on fractions saw scores increase from 33% to 70% — Children focussing on money saw their scores increase from 34% to 83%
<p><i>"What's really stood out for me is the platform it has created for this rich dialogue to take place across the whole school ... This year I've come to appreciate just how important the data of our school is as it leads you to your next steps."</i></p> <p>— CLASS TEACHER</p> <p><i>"Using metacognition, we've really become more independent with planning our work. You can use it in many subjects, you can even use it when you're not in school."</i></p> <p>— PRIMARY 7 CHILD</p>	

Wellbeing for Learning: Keeping Trauma in Mind Programme

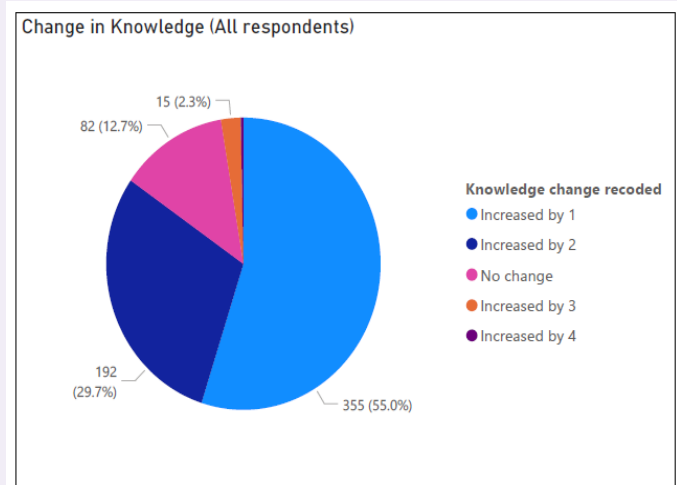
The Keeping Trauma in Mind Programme was an opportunity for colleagues from across the West Partnership to engage in professional learning relating to trauma. The sessions provided participants working in different sectors with an opportunity to understand the impact of trauma and to know how to adapt the way they work to make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people affected by trauma.



The response to the programme offer was high, with 400 attending the sessions. After analysis of the sign-up information, we could see that, across all eight local authorities, 271 different establishments had registered. There were participants from Early Years, Primary, Secondary, ASN, CLD and Social work. Two key aims of the series were to increase the knowledge of participants; and to develop confidence to apply new knowledge.

IMPACT ON PRACTITIONER KNOWLEDGE

We were particularly interested in evaluating the impact of the series on practitioner knowledge. We asked evaluation respondents to rate their knowledge level along a 5-point scale, with 1 being the least knowledgeable and 5 being the most knowledgeable. The chart to the right shows that **87% of respondents reported an increase in knowledge across all sessions**. This means that of 646 completed evaluations, knowledge increases had been reported in 560 of them. The largest increases to knowledge were reported by Early Years practitioners, followed closely by Pupil Support Assistants.



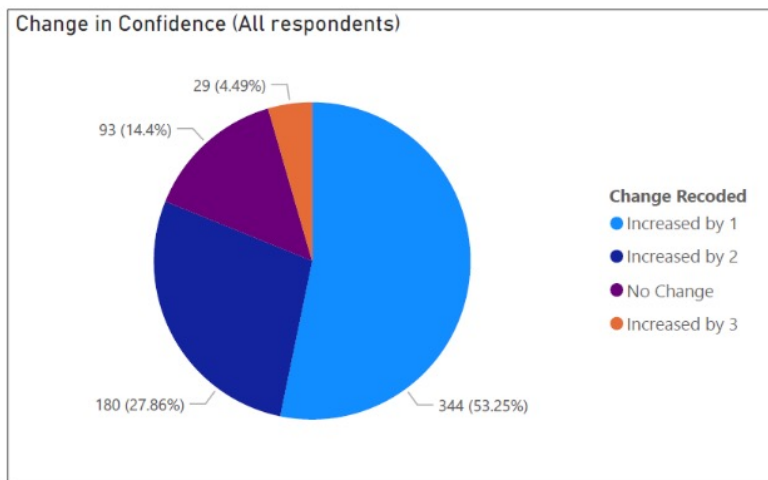
“My role is nurture based and all of this will really impact my work. So many good ideas and this has really helped to deepen my understanding and what I can do to support.”
— (TEACHER, SOUTH LANARKSHIRE)

“I liked learning more about how self-regulation works. Also coming up with practical strategies that can be implemented in my setting.”
— (TEACHER, EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE)

IMPACT ON PRACTITIONER CONFIDENCE

We were also interested in evaluating the impact of the series on practitioner confidence in applying the new knowledge. We asked evaluation respondents to rate their confidence level along a 5-point scale, with 1 being the least confident and 5 being the most confident. **The pie chart shows that 82% of respondents reported an increase in confidence across all sessions.** This means that of 646 completed evaluations, confidence increases had been reported in 530 of them.

Moving forward, a recall process with selected participants who indicated an interest in a practitioner enquiry will take place. A collaborative action research project will allow practitioners to document the implementation of their learning into practice.



Conclusion



This year, the Partnership has made very good progress in driving forward equity, excellence and empowerment across the West and this has been demonstrated throughout the report. Our progress has been further recognised externally through research carried out by the Robert Owen Centre (ROC) for Educational Change. In their Phase III Reflections on the Partnership Recovery to Renewal: Reimagining the Future (2022) report, the ROC findings compliment that of the internal evaluation providing a strong triangulated approach to evaluation.



The key findings included:

- ➔ a strong culture and ethos of collaboration;
- ➔ demonstrable transformative system change;
- ➔ networks building collective agency and capacity at all levels; and
- ➔ added value to local authorities – which translated to significant leadership and learning and teaching developments.

Moving forward, we will continue to add value to our local authorities, be accessible to those who will benefit most from it and focus on activities that have the greatest impact on learner experiences and outcomes.



Conclusion



APPENDIX 1: CRITICAL INDICATORS

INDICATORS	2016-17 BASELINE	2017-18 VALUE	2018-19 VALUE	2019-20 VALUE	2020-21 VALUE
% of primary pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in literacy (based on reading, writing and talking and listening)	71.3	72.4	73.0	**	69.7
% of primary pupils (p1, p4 and p7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in numeracy	78.1	79.5	80.3	**	77.3
% of S3 pupils achieving third level or better in literacy (based on reading, writing and talking and listening)	89.7	90.1	89.6	**	**
% of S3 pupils achieving third level or better in numeracy	90.1	89.7	90.0	**	**
% of S3 pupils achieving fourth level or better in literacy (based on reading, writing and talking and listening)	46.7	48.8	49.7	**	**
% of S3 pupils achieving fourth level or better in numeracy	56.7	57.7	56.5	**	**
% of leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better	67.3	68.7	69.3	70.4	72.8
% of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better	36.2	37.6	38.3	42.1	44.3
% of leavers achieving SCQF Level 5 or better in literacy	81.9	82.8	82.6	83.1	84.6
% of leavers achieving SCQF Level 5 or better in numeracy	69.1	70.2	69.2	70.8	72.8
Number of Practitioners accessing professional learning opportunities provided by the West Partnership	TBC	TBC	TBC	3185	3137
Percentage of practitioners reporting an increase in their knowledge following participation in West Partnership activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	85.1
% of establishments evaluated as good or better for leadership of change	59	63	73	*	*
Primary Exclusion Rates (Rate per 1000 pupils)	9.9	N/A	3.7	N/A	2.6
Secondary Exclusion Rates (Rate per 1000 pupils)	46.8	N/A	23.7	N/A	21.2
Primary Attendance Rates	94.6	N/A	94.2	N/A	93.4
Secondary Attendance Rates	90.7	N/A	90.3	N/A	88.4
Initial School Leaver Destinations (Positive)	93.6	94.4	95.2	93.6	95.8
% of establishments evaluated as good or better for learning, teaching and assessment	57	66	71	*	*

* Impacted by Covid

** BGE data not collected.

Conclusion

APPENDIX 2: COLLECTIVE KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE IMPROVEMENTS

EVENT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	% OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTING AN INCREASE IN KNOWLEDGE	COHORT PRE (1-5)	COHORT POST (1-5)	CHANGE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS INCREASED
ASN Rights Based Training	12	75.0	3.3	4.3	1.0	9
Gambling & Gaming	14	100.0	2.6	4.6	2.0	14
Maths Conference	189	87.0	2.9	4.0	1.1	164
Pedagogy Series	152	88.8			0.0	135
Primary Curriculum	12	100.0	1.8	3.6	1.8	12
PSE Mindfulness	11	72.7	3.4	4.3	0.9	8
PSE Respect Me Anti-bullying	8	100.0	2.5	4.6	2.1	8
PSE Self Harm	9	77.7	3.0	4.1	1.1	7
PSE Self Harm Awareness Training	9	77.7	3.0	4.1	1.1	7
PSE Sexual Content	14	85.7	3.2	4.4	1.2	12
Trauma Series	646	87.0	3.1	4.3	1.2	562
UNCRC ASN	12	75.0	3.3	4.3	1.0	9
UNCRC CLD	10	90.0	2.7	3.8	1.1	9
UNCRC ELC	15	86.6	3.4	4.5	1.1	13
UNCRC Rights Based Training	15	86.6	3.4	4.5	1.1	13
UNCRC Train the Trainer	15	66.6	3.1	4.1	1.0	10
VLN: Autism	21	42.8	3.6	4.0	0.4	9
VLN 1	63	84.1	2.6	3.7	1.1	53
VLN 2	41	85.4	2.3	3.7	1.4	35
VLN 3	25	100.0	2.2	4.0	1.8	25
VLN Parental Engagement	8	75.0	3.8	4.5	0.7	6
VLN Parental Involvement	36	47.2	3.5	4.1	0.6	17

- ➔ 1337 evaluation responses
- ➔ 1137 responses note an increase in knowledge
- ➔ 85% of respondents report an increase in knowledge
- ➔ Average pre-event figure was 2.6
- ➔ Average post-event figure was 3.7
- ➔ Average change on the 5-point scale was 1.1

Conclusion



WEST PARTNERSHIP EVENT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	% OF RESPONDENTS REPORTING AN INCREASE IN CONFIDENCE	COHORT PRE (1-5)	COHORT POST (1-5)	AVERAGE CHANGE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS INCREASED
Maths Conference	189	85.7	2.9	4.0	1.1	162
Moderation Event	46	58.7	3.6	4.2	0.6	27
PSE Mindfulness	11	81.8	2.9	4.2	1.3	9
PSE Respect Me Anti-bullying	8	87.5	2.5	4.1	1.6	7
PSE Self Harm	9	77.7	2.9	3.8	0.9	7
PSE Sexual Content	14	78.6	3.1	4.2	1.1	11
Trauma Series	646	82.0	3.0	4.2	1.2	530
UNCRC ELC	15	93.3	3.0	4.3	1.3	14

- ➔ 938 evaluation responses
- ➔ 767 responses note an increase in confidence
- ➔ 82% of respondents report an increase in confidence
- ➔ Average pre-event figure was 3.0
- ➔ Average post-event figure was 4.2
- ➔ Average change on the 5-point scale was 1



How to connect with us

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE6 October 2022Report by Director of EducationWEST PARTNERSHIP IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE:
IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2022 - 2023**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform East Renfrewshire's Education Committee of the contents of the West Partnership's Improvement Plan 2022 - 2023

RECOMMENDATION

2. Education Committee is asked to approve 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 Collaborative, 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 noted the progress of the West Partnership and the contents of its Improvement Plan in September 2021.
6. An evaluative report on the progress with the implementation of that plan is the subject of another paper to this Education Committee.

REPORT

7. The Partnership is required to produce an annual improvement plan, linked to a three-year planning cycle which outlines the vision, purpose and key activities of the collaborative for the year ahead. The West Partnership Improvement Plan 2022 - 2023 (Appendix 1) sets out the key areas for collaborative action to bring about improvement across the Glasgow City Region.
8. Members 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.

9. 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.
10. Over the past session, a comprehensive range of engagements with key stakeholders took place, complementing the ongoing evaluation activity; giving a clearer set of qualitative and quantitative data to ensure the 2022-23 Improvement Plan meets the needs of practitioners and officers across the West Partnership.
11. The feedback gathered from the stakeholder engagements, recommendations from the Robert Owen Centre evaluation and consensus building conversations with workstream sponsors, workstream members, programme participants and Education Scotland colleagues, all contributed to the Improvement Plan 2022-23.
12. Taking account of all consultation to date, there is clear consensus that existing programmes and activity are broadly meeting the needs of officers and practitioners across the West Partnership. It is suggested most programmes continue, following review and in some cases, augmentation.
13. The three main workstreams will continue to be: Wellbeing for Learning; Leadership, Empowerment and Improvement; and Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment. The Partnership will work closely with local authorities, as well as with colleagues from Education Scotland and the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change, to achieve key objectives set out for each workstream.
14. The approach towards Specialist Networks that was introduced last year will continue. These Specialist Networks meet with a common purpose to enhance the work of the local authorities in themed areas such as curriculum, additional support needs and digital learning. East Renfrewshire is benefitting from the collaboration and support from the networks
15. A revised Plan on a Page has been included which attempts to more clearly articulate: vision, values, purpose and priorities of The West Partnership.
16. The paper was considered and endorsed at the last Glasgow City Region Education Committee on 22 September 2022 with the recommendation that each Council area approves the report through its own local governance arrangements.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

17. The Scottish Government has advised that £6 million of funding has been made available nationally to support the work of RICs for financial year 2022/23. The West Partnership's has been provided with the same funding in 2022-23 as 2021-22, a total of £1,515,500.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

18. In September, the Regional Improvement Collaborative Lead and Senior Partnership Officer met with colleagues from the South West Education Improvement Collaborative (SWEIC), Education Scotland Strategic Director and Senior Regional Advisers to discuss the plan, and that of SWEIC colleagues.

RECOMMENDATION

19. Education Committee is asked to approve the report.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
6 October 2022

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Local Government Access to information Act 1985

Appendix 1 West Partnership Improvement Plan 2022-23

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The West Partnership

IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2022-23

**Equity, Excellence
& Empowerment**



GLASGOW
CITY REGION
Education

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Introduction



The purpose of the West Partnership Regional Improvement Collaborative is to add value to the work of our local authorities, be accessible to those who will benefit most from it and focus on activities that have the greatest impact on learner experiences and outcomes.

The West Partnership relies on teachers and practitioners, local authority officers and our communities working together collectively through planned and targeted activities. By doing so, we continue to see the influence of the West Partnership extend and reach across all of our local authorities with increasing numbers of staff and pupils benefiting from our collective endeavours.



For example, West Online Schools (West OS) has become a vital tool used extensively by staff and thousands of children and young people across the West Partnership and throughout Scotland. Our efforts to support high quality learning and teaching through the Improving Our Classrooms (IOC) programme have been influential in helping many teachers and schools as they strive for the best for their children and young people. Last session, we also introduced a new workstream on Wellbeing for Learning. A number of specialist networks were facilitated through this work as well as a range of professional learning events in areas such as family learning, student voice and Keeping Trauma in Mind.

The West Partnership Improvement Plan 2022-23 aims to build on our successes to date and concentrate on the areas highlighted by key stakeholders as most important to them.

Our three main workstreams of Wellbeing for Learning; Leadership, Empowerment and Improvement; and Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment are designed to focus on what matters, and we will continue to build on these areas.

Our challenge is to ensure as many practitioners as possible interact, learn and contribute across the West Partnership. This means we need to be able to evaluate the impact of the work of the West Partnership and the difference it makes.

This Improvement Plan outlines how we will do this through focussing on the collective impact of the West Partnership through three strategic drivers of improvement and by examining how the partnership:

1. fosters collaboration on a variety of levels;
2. provides professional learning and specialist network opportunities enabling practitioners to increase their knowledge and gain confidence in decision making and delivering improvement; and
3. stimulates changes to practice, impacting on children, young people and their families.

We recognise that it is crucial to collaborate beyond our own boundaries and this session we will continue to work closely across local authorities, as well as with colleagues from Education Scotland, other Regional Improvement Collaboratives and the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change to achieve our key objectives and strengthen on our existing work.

.....
Tony McDaid, Regional Lead Officer, West Partnership

West Partnership Vision

The West Partnership has a clear 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 increase attainment for every learner across the region.

The plan for 2022-23 also includes our response for recovery and renewal as we meet the challenges of supporting improvement as part of the on-going Covid recovery process. We will continue to work collaboratively within and across the system to ensure that we can respond with agility to the changed circumstances in which we now live, providing support and developing flexible approaches to learning and teaching across the region.

The West Partnership sets an ambitious and aspirational agenda to close the poverty-related attainment gap (equity) and improve attainment and achievement for all (excellence). By creating the conditions for authentic empowerment, the ownership of change can be shifted and enable all staff to take collective action to deliver this ambitious vision.

As the largest of Scotland's Regional Improvement Collaboratives, with approximately one third of Scotland's school population, to truly deliver sustainable improvement, change needs to be driven collectively. This means ensuring that every stakeholder is empowered to address the needs of each individual learner, design experiences which will enthuse and engage them and support them to lead their own learning. This will in turn, lead to improvements in learners' achievements and attainment.

In the longer term, there is a commitment to ensure each educator in the West Partnership has the opportunity to engage and collaborate with colleagues and partners to bring about improvement in their class and playrooms.

In the West Partnership, building collective agency to improve results and supporting individuals to work together to secure what they cannot accomplish on their own is a key focus. Our purpose, therefore, is to establish and facilitate networks of professionals to work collaboratively to achieve our vision of equity, excellence and empowerment.

Governance & Operational Structures

OVERVIEW

As part of evaluation and review procedures, the West Partnership continues to reflect on the effectiveness of the existing governance and operational structures, ensuring the Partnership continues to operate efficiently, while adding value to the provision of the eight partner local authorities.

Through a wide ranging review process last session, a revised governance and operational structure evolved, was agreed by the West Partnership Board and endorsed by the Regional Education Committee to ensure that we can proceed with the delivery of this ambitious plan over the coming years. The revised structure builds on the previous governance framework, which had been recognised as a key strength of the West Partnership in our formative years, whilst seeking to strengthen the strategic role of the senior leaders to maintain our ongoing successes.



Governance & Operational Structures

REGIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The West Partnership is overseen by the Glasgow City Region Education Committee (the Committee), made up of the Education Conveners (or similar) from each of the eight partner authorities, as follows:



The Committee is responsible for scrutinising and endorsing the West Partnership Improvement Plan, receiving regular reports on the progress of the plan and its impact on stakeholders. Chaired by the Convener elected by the membership, the Committee is also attended by the eight Directors of Education/Chief Education Officers and the Senior Partnership Officer, with other attendees invited as appropriate.

Additionally, the governance framework in which the Committee operates, provides the opportunity for regular engagement with the Glasgow City Region Cabinet, allowing a further level of oversight and scrutiny, and enabling strategic links to be established with the wider Glasgow City Regional Economic Strategy.

Governance & Operational Structures

WEST PARTNERSHIP BOARD

The West Partnership Board (the Board), has responsibility for the strategic overview of the work of the West Partnership, with overall responsibility for the development and delivery of the West Partnership Improvement Plan, including overall responsibility for the finance and resources for the Partnership.

The Board is made up of the Director of Education/Chief Education Officer of each of the eight partner authorities which make up the West Partnership. In addition, the Board is advised by the West Partnership's Senior Partnership Officer, the Senior Regional Advisor appointed by Education Scotland, and has professorial representation from the University of Glasgow. Staff supporting the work of the West Partnership also attend by invitation.

Specific, identified Board members link with each workstream as sponsors, and have responsibility for the strategic direction of that workstream and for reporting to the Board on its progress. Workstream Lead Officers support Board members with this work and provide leadership for all aspects of the operational activity of the workstream including: planning, implementation, evaluation and reporting.



WEST PARTNERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

Following feedback from the West Partnership core team and partners, a review took place during 2020-21, of the purpose and efficacy of the previous Operational Delivery Group. In order to ensure efficiency and pace of progress, the Operational Delivery Group was replaced by the West Partnership Implementation Group. This is chaired by the Regional Improvement Collaborative Lead (RIC Lead) and attended by the Senior Partnership Officer, Senior Regional Advisor from Education Scotland and professorial representation from the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change at the University of Glasgow. Meeting quarterly, this provides an opportunity for rich professional discussion on the progress of the West Partnership Improvement Plan and the contributions of the core team and partners.



FINANCE SUBGROUP

The West Partnership Board continues to be supported very well by the Finance Sub-Group. The Finance Sub-group meets quarterly and includes senior representatives from all eight local authorities, providing additional rigour and accountability as well as streamlining financial procedures across the Partnership. They have a particular responsibility for the management of the grant award from the Scottish Government, as well as advising on staffing and other resource issues, as required.



The West Partnership Delivery Model

THE WEST PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Our approach within the West Partnership is underpinned by the development of a networked learning system; a system that enables collaboration, encourages 'connectedness' and supports practitioners at all levels. Our work is built around collaborative learning and practitioners are supported to develop ways of working together that are effective and build upon well-established research based models of delivery. We continue to work in partnership with the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change and the Education Scotland Regional Improvement Team to ensure these approaches to collaborative learning make the greatest difference for our practitioners and learners.

The work of the West Partnership is predominantly delivered through the structure of three key workstreams, each led by a Workstream Lead Officer (WLO), seconded to work with The West Partnership core team.

For 2022-23, the three workstreams are:

- ➔ Wellbeing for Learning;
- ➔ Leadership, Empowerment and Improvement; and
- ➔ Curriculum and Learning, Teaching & Assessment

These workstreams provide 'umbrella themes' for the programmes and activity of the West Partnership. Regular opportunities are provided to link the work of the workstreams and ensure connectivity and cohesion.



THE ROLE OF THE WEST PARTNERSHIP CORE TEAM

A small core team, led by the Senior Partnership Officer, has been appointed to lead and facilitate the operational aspects of the West Partnership Improvement Plan. They work collaboratively to ensure that the Improvement Plan is based on strong self-evaluation, implemented timeously, rigorously evaluated and reported upon to the Board and the Committee. They ensure that all activities and opportunities for colleagues across the Collaborative, provide added value to what is on offer both locally and nationally.



The West Partnership Delivery Model

THE ROLE OF CENTRAL OFFICERS, TEACHERS AND PRACTITIONERS

There is clarity that all colleagues who support learning across the eight connected local authorities are defined as The West Partnership, and not simply the core team. As such, all central officers, teachers and practitioners networking & sharing, collaborating and changing practice together are working towards the values and purpose of The West Partnership. A primary function of the core team is to provide systematic and supported opportunities to work collaboratively with these colleagues. The West Partnership Improvement Plan provides opportunities for colleagues to co-create programmes and activities, such as the forthcoming Secondary BGE Curriculum Programme, as well as participate in those planned and delivered by the core team. This provides a unique setting for collaboration, builds capacity and grows connection, all leading to our vision of a networked learning system.



THE ROLE OF EDUCATION SCOTLAND'S REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

The West Partnership values and benefits from collaborative work with colleagues from Education Scotland's Regional Improvement Team (RIT). This team adds to the West Partnership's existing capacity for improvement and provides a helpful external perspective which draws on good practice from across the country. Education Scotland Workstream Links (WLs) meet regularly with West Partnership WLOs to discuss planning, evaluations and impact of various activities and programmes. They regularly contribute to the delivery of these programmes, providing expertise from a national perspective. They also attend workstream meetings, providing a further opportunity to contribute to the strategic direction of the Improvement Plan. This year, a series of consensus-building conversations with WLs, provided a place to discuss both the 'what' and 'how' of Improvement Plan activities for the coming session. In addition, other colleagues from the RIT have formed 'bubbles' for each workstream, providing a stronger identity across both teams and enhancing the input of other Education Scotland officers to the Improvement Plan.



The West Partnership Delivery Model

SPECIALIST NETWORKS

As part of the extensive Stakeholder Consultation Exercise last session, a renewed format was introduced for the work of some of the networked groups, supported by the West Partnership. These Specialist Networks, comprised of representatives from across the eight local authorities, meet with a common purpose and remit.

Each Specialist Network creates its own short action plan containing 2-3 priorities which have been self-generated from existing local authority focus areas. This allows the work of the West Partnership to support ongoing local authority priorities, rather than add to the burden of central officers. The West Partnership core team support this collaborative approach to overtaking the action plan. The WLOs are also responsible for supporting evaluation and reporting on progress and impact as part of governance procedures.

Specialist Networks have been reviewed and again been planned across all three workstreams with special consideration given to contribution made by Community Learning & Development colleagues, third sector staff and partners in each. Some additional networks have been requested from central officers which are already producing fruitful discussion and change.

The groups planned for 2022-23 include networks for:



The West Partnership core team recognises the high quality work undertaken by a small number of West Partnership Networks which pre-date the establishment of the Regional Improvement Collaborative. Most notable are the Early Years and the Senior Educational Psychologists Networks. WLOs liaise and work alongside these networks to support cohesion and added value.



Developing Through Consultation

The West Partnership remains committed to ensuring that it reflects the views and ambitions of the workforce, parents and learners across the eight partner authorities to achieve our vision of equity, excellence and empowerment.

As the largest of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives, the West Partnership is home to over one third of Scotland's school population, with more than 25,000 headteachers, teachers and support staff working in around 1000 schools and early learning centres, in some of Scotland's most diverse and challenged communities.



Taking account of the on-going pressures on stakeholders, the West Partnership has had to be flexible and agile in its approach to stakeholder engagement as part of the improvement planning process. While regular evaluations are undertaken at the end of professional learning sessions or programmes, it was agreed that a set of 'consensus-building conversations' would be undertaken this session to provide a more holistic review and reflection of the West Partnership's activity during the last session, and allow this feedback to inform the plan for session 2022-23.

The three Workstream Lead Officers, spoke with a wide range of stakeholders including: director sponsors, workstream members, Education Scotland Ws, programme and network participants. The conversations covered topics which included:

- ➔ Purpose of West Partnership; Purpose of West Partnership
- ➔ Motivation for engagement;
- ➔ Strengths of programme or network;
- ➔ Impact of provision (using the lexicon of the three newly-established drivers);
- ➔ Developments for improvement; and
- ➔ Communications.

Feedback has been synthesised and discussed at two whole day sessions with the core team and shared with the Board. It informs the plan for session 2022-23 and was intended to produce a more co-created approach to the improvement planning process.

Evaluating The Impact of The Improvement Plan



The Evaluating and Reporting Lead Officer retains overall responsibility for evaluating and reporting on the progress and impact of the West Partnership's Improvement Plan.

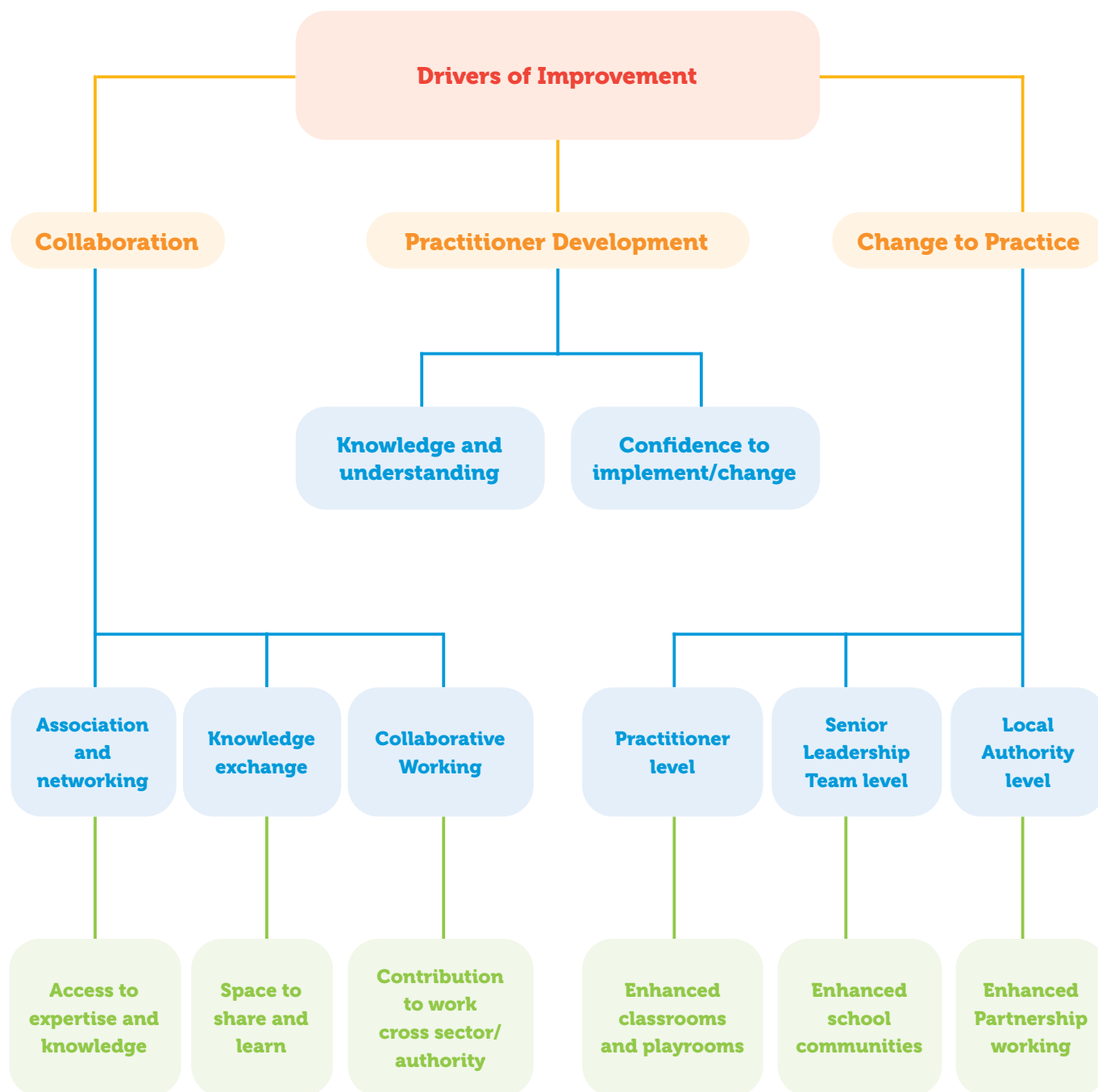
This work, supported by the data analyst, is crucial in supporting the West Partnership to evaluate its activities and programmes, as well as using the quantitative and qualitative evidence to identify future priorities. Regular highlight and evaluation reports include updates on the progress and impact of each workstream, as well as more holistic evaluations. Tools to systematically evaluate the quality of West Partnership professional learning events / programmes, and the important longer term impact on participants and learners allow us to gather evidence to demonstrate the added value of collaboration.

To assist in this process, workstream planning processes focus more acutely on outcome-based planning and reporting, not only on progress, but on impact in the classroom or playroom too. Evaluation strategies and approaches planned by the Workstream Lead Officers at the start of each professional learning session / programme, ensure appropriate and robust evidence is gathered systematically and evaluated. This serves to strengthen the work done in this area by the Evaluating and Reporting Lead Officer.

From exploring qualitative feedback data from our professional learning, collaborative enquiry, and specialist networks this session, the Partnership's work is now conceptualised as being driven by three holistic drivers.

Please see diagram on next page.

Evaluating The Impact of The Improvement Plan



Evaluating The Impact of The Improvement Plan



This year, the evaluation framework was strengthened to further demonstrate the added value and collective impact of the partnership activity. Through the development of clear workstream outcomes and measures, three common themes emerged from the evidence leading to the creation of the Three Drivers of Improvement Evaluation Framework.

The three drivers of improvement are defined below.

DRIVER 1: FACILITATING VARIOUS FORMS OF COLLABORATION

We recognise that collaboration is desirable in our system but also that it is necessarily varied with regards to its form. Some collaboration may involve short-term interactions whilst others demand sustained collaborative working around areas of interest.

DRIVER 2: ENHANCING PRACTITIONER KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND CONFIDENCE

Our regional improvement collaborative contains just over 19,000 practitioners, some 36% of all practitioners in Scotland. We see our work as enhancing practitioner knowledge, understanding and confidence at all levels, from those newly qualified to those at the most senior level. The enhancement of practitioner knowledge, understanding and confidence is inherently linked to our collaborative working. There is a great amount of expertise and experience across our eight authorities and the exchange of knowledge and sharing of practice is a key way in which the partnership adds value.

DRIVER 3: SUPPORTING PRACTICE CHANGE AT VARIOUS LEVELS

Our collaborative work and our aim to affect practice change is supported through partnership activity. Practice change at all levels of the system is a key aspiration for the West Partnership. This extends from the way in which our teachers and practitioners deliver in the classroom and playrooms to the ways in which local authority central teams interact across our region. As such, we envisage partnership activity as facilitating practice change as a consequence of a dynamic offering which targets all practitioners irrespective of their role.

Critical Indicators 2020–21

INDICATORS	2016-17 BASELINE	2017-18 VALUE	2018-19 VALUE	2019-20 VALUE	2020-21 VALUE
% of primary pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in literacy (based on reading, writing and talking and listening)	71.3	72.4	73.0	**	69.7
% of primary pupils (p1, p4 and p7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in numeracy	78.1	79.5	80.3	**	77.3
% of S3 pupils achieving third level or better in literacy (based on reading, writing and talking and listening)	89.7	90.1	89.6	**	**
% of S3 pupils achieving third level or better in numeracy	90.1	89.7	90.0	**	**
% of S3 pupils achieving fourth level or better in literacy (based on reading, writing and talking and listening)	46.7	48.8	49.7	**	**
% of S3 pupils achieving fourth level or better in numeracy	56.7	57.7	56.5	**	**
% of leavers achieving 1 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better	67.3	68.7	69.3	70.4	72.8
% of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 or better	36.2	37.6	38.3	42.1	44.3
% of leavers achieving SCQF Level 5 or better in literacy	81.9	82.8	82.6	83.1	84.6
% of leavers achieving SCQF Level 5 or better in numeracy	69.1	70.2	69.2	70.8	72.8
Number of Practitioners accessing professional learning opportunities provided by the West Partnership	TBC	TBC	TBC	3185	3137
Percentage of practitioners reporting an increase in their knowledge following participation in West Partnership activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	85.1
% of establishments evaluated as good or better for leadership of change	59	63	73	*	*
Primary Exclusion Rates (Rate per 1000 pupils)	9.9	N/A	3.7	N/A	2.6
Secondary Exclusion Rates (Rate per 1000 pupils)	46.8	N/A	23.7	N/A	21.2
Primary Attendance Rates	94.6	N/A	94.2	N/A	93.4
Secondary Attendance Rates	90.7	N/A	90.3	N/A	88.4
Initial School Leaver Destinations (Positive)	93.6	94.4	95.2	93.6	95.8
% of establishments evaluated as good or better for learning, teaching and assessment	57	66	71	*	*

* Impacted by Covid

** BGE data not collected.

The West Partnership Plan on a Page 2022-23



OUR VISION

By building a networked learning system, improve learner experience, attainment and achievement across the West Partnership.

OUR VALUES

EQUITY • EXCELLENCE • EMPOWERMENT

OUR PURPOSE



OUR PRIORITIES

To develop readiness for learning with learners and families

To build networks

To build capacity in leaders at all levels

To promote practice-based research and innovation

To support innovation in curriculum design and promote high quality approaches to pedagogy

OUR DRIVERS:

PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT

Knowledge & Understanding
Confidence

COLLABORATION

Association & Networking
Knowledge Exchange
Collaborative Working

PRACTICE CHANGE

Practitioner
SLT
Local Authority System

TO ACHIEVE OUR PRIORITIES, WE WILL:

SUPPORT

DEVELOP

FACILITATE

CONNECT

COLLABORATE

EMPOWER

West Partnership Delivery Model

Key activities & programmes 2022-23



WELLBEING FOR LEARNING

- ➔ **Youth Ambassadors: PSE & Transition**
- ➔ **Supporting Learners including CLPL for:**
 - Support Assistants
 - Inclusion in Mainstream
 - GIRFEC
 - PSE (EY, Primary & Secondary)
- ➔ **Family Learning Collaborative Enquiry**
- ➔ **Families & Communities:**
 - Youthlink Scotland Collaborative Enquiry
 - CLPL for youth workers
- ➔ **Keeping Trauma in Mind Collaborative Enquiry**
- ➔ **UNCRC, including Young Leaders of Learning**
- ➔ *Family & Community Officers**
- ➔ *Stand-alone ASN Headteachers**
- ➔ *CLD Lead Officers**
- ➔ *Senior Inclusion Lead Officers**
- ➔ *HWB (previous workstream group)**
- ➔ *PSHE EY/Primary/Secondary Officers**
- ➔ *Home Education Officers**
- ➔ *Senior Educational Psychologists**

LEADERSHIP, EMPOWERMENT & IMPROVEMENT

- ➔ **Executive Coaching**
- ➔ **Learning Sets**
- ➔ **Hexagon Coaching**
- ➔ **Thinking About Headship**
- ➔ **Improving Our Classrooms**
- ➔ **Improving Our Schools**
- ➔ **Improving Our Departments**
- ➔ **FOCUS**

CURRICULUM & LEARNING, TEACHING & ASSESSMENT

- ➔ **Assessment & Moderation**
- ➔ **EY / Primary Curriculum**
- ➔ **Secondary BGE Curriculum**
- ➔ **West OS**
- ➔ **Pedagogy**
- ➔ **Play Pedagogy**
- ➔ **School to School Partnership**
- ➔ **Upstream Battle on the Clyde**
- ➔ **Gaelic for practitioners**
- ➔ **Research on Impact of 1140 hours (lead by Evaluation Lead Officer)**
- ➔ *Assessment & Moderation Co-ordinators**
- ➔ *ASN Assessment & Moderation*
- ➔ *Maths Lead Officers**
- ➔ *Literacy Lead Officers**
- ➔ *Gaelic Lead officers**
- ➔ *BGE Curriculum**
- ➔ *English as an Additional Language**
- ➔ *Early Years Senior Officers**
- ➔ *Early Education Leads (Virtual Leadership Network)**

* Items in italics are delivered through facilitated specialist networks as described on [page 10](#).

Outcomes & Drivers Map 2022-23

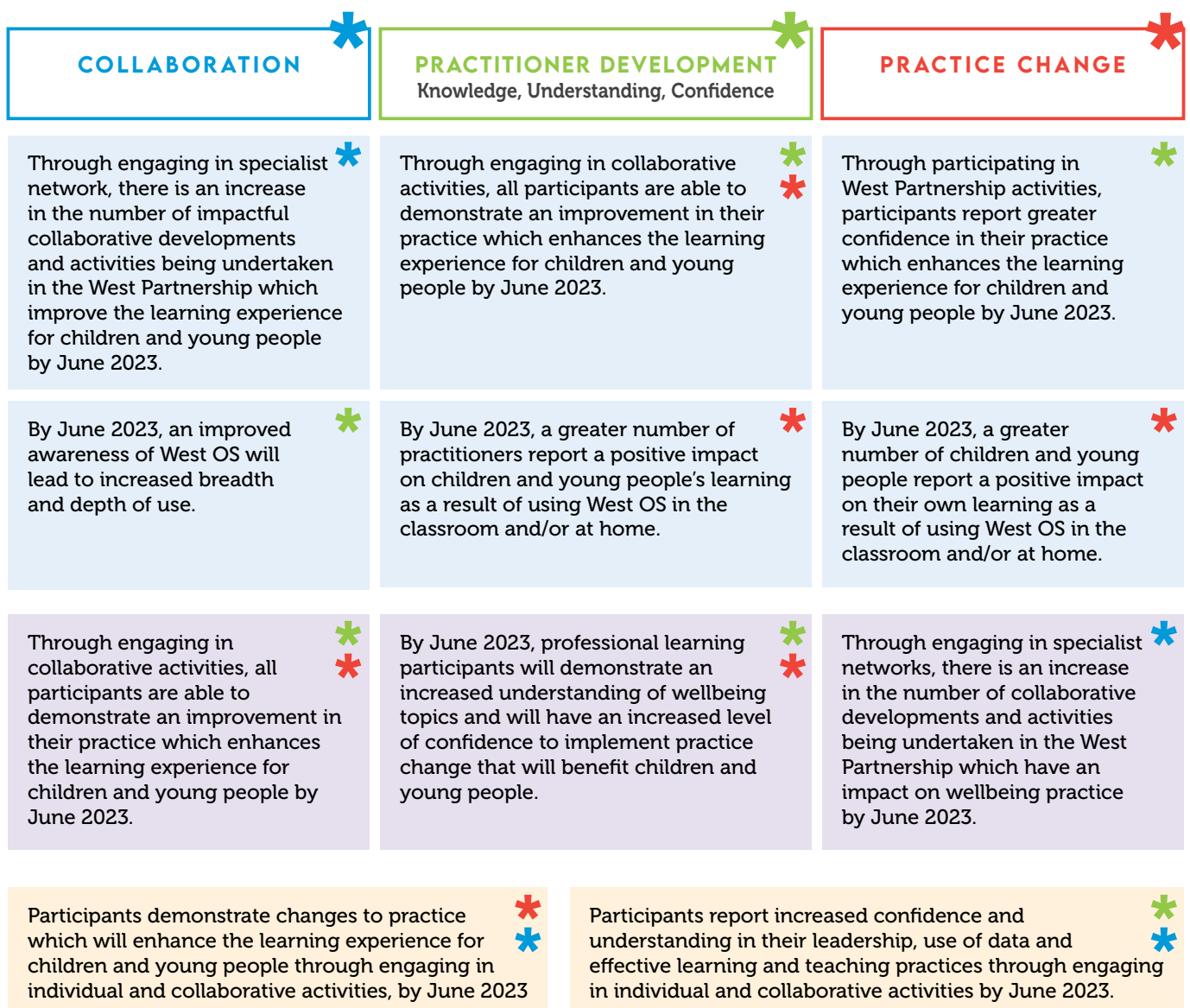


As the work of the partnership matures and programmes develop, there will be an enhanced focus on gathering data and evidence across our three drivers of improvement, with a particular focus on the impact that our work has on children and young people in playrooms and classrooms.

Using a colour code, the drivers for improvement have been mapped against each outcome, demonstrating the weight of evidence which will be gathered on each drive. The graphic aims to demonstrate the link between the workstream outcome, driver for improvement and data which is likely to emerge as a result of partnership activity.

From this graphic, it is evident that our outcomes this year have a clear focus on practitioner development and practice change. This should enable WLO to gather more evidence and data on these two drivers for improvement demonstrating impact on children and young people.

Further information relating to the self-evaluation, improvement planning and evaluation and reporting activity of The West Partnership can be found on their website ([click here](#)).





How to connect with us

WWW.WESTPARTNERSHIP.CO.UK



/ WP_EDUCATION



