
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	14 June 2022
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/34/22/RB
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Subject:	Education Update Report – Overview of National and Local Initiatives		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to give an update on national and local projects and initiatives linked to education.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report contains updates on the following:

COVID -19 updates

- Latest guidance to schools and ELCs update

Service updates

- Attendance update
- Latest update from SQA
- Elective Home Education Consultation
- Parental Engagement (PIE) Consultation
- Professional Learning GTCS award
- National Improvement Framework - A consultation on enhanced data collection for improvement
- National consultation on school uniform

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to note the updates contained within this report

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 COVID 19 UPDATES

4.1 Reducing the risks in schools guidance

Schools and ELCs have been following guidance on reducing risks in schools since the 1st of May 2022. This guidance is non-statutory. It provides an outline of the principles for managing schools at this time. In the main most of the mitigation requirements have been withdrawn, however we encourage and support where individuals wish to continue wearing masks for example. Where a risk assessment determines this would be required in relation to the health needs of an individual pupil this will be required. We continue to promote and encourage good hygiene habits including handwashing.

The latest version of this guidance can be found at this link:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-reducing-the-risks-in-schools/>

4.2 Attendance

Since our return from the Easter holidays and at the time of writing attendance has improved back to a picture we were more familiar with pre pandemic. Overall averages for the full year will be affected by the infection rates of the autumn and spring terms. Inverclyde schools remain broadly in line and above the overall national average.

More data on this can be found at the link below. Please note that from 2nd May onwards the Scottish Government have removed the covid/non-covid absence part.

COVID19 - Schools and Childcare Information August 2021 | Tableau Public:

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/sg.eas.learninganalysis/viz/COVID19-SchoolsandChildcareInformationAugust2021/Introduction>

Staff absence rates are much improved in comparison to the last report to committee in March 2022. This means that the additionality in schools in not being used to cover staff absences in the same way and can be used to best effect to support ongoing recovery work.

4.3 Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) update

The exam diet began on Tuesday 26 April 2022 and runs until Wednesday 1 June 2022. Results day this year is Tuesday 9 August 2022.

Young people in S4-6 are currently on study leave and schools are offering continued support through subject workshops in the lead up to the exam. Schools are also constantly accessible for young people who choose to study in school rather than at home. For those young people who are not undertaking formal exams because they have completed courses that are assessed by teaching staff, West College Scotland have offered a series of taster courses over the month of May.

Looking ahead to 2022-23, SQA have confirmed that the modifications made to courses for 2021-22 will remain in place next session. This is in recognition that disruption to learning will not go away after the summer and will give clarity to staff to begin preparations.

4.4 Scottish Government Home Education Guidance Consultation

This consultation seeks the local authority's views on the draft updates to the existing Home education guidance, published in 2007. This guidance is published under Section 14 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000, and local authorities are to have regard to the guidance. The draft guidance sets out the roles and responsibilities of local authorities and parents in relation to home education. It provides information on the relevant law and the process for withdrawing a child from school. The draft guidance also offers information and guidance for local authorities and parents on developing positive relationships based on mutual trust that function in the best interests of the child or young person. Inverclyde Education Services will submit a written response to this consultation and will also contribute to a West Partnership response by 13 July 2022.

Scottish Government will consider all the responses and feedback gathered from meetings with

stakeholders, and will publish a response to the consultation. Following this Scottish Government will publish an updated home education guidance document.

The consultation paper can be accessed here [Home education guidance: consultation – https://www.gov.scot/publications/home-education-guidance-consultation/](https://www.gov.scot/publications/home-education-guidance-consultation/) . Additional time was built in to this consultation period to take account of the pre-election period for the Local Authority elections on 5 May 2022.

4.5 Inverclyde Parental Engagement Strategy

There is a requirement by law (the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006) to produce a Parental Engagement strategy for the local authority and to meet requirements to refresh the Strategy every three years, taking into account the Scottish Government's 'Learning Together' strategy when doing so. We presently have an Inverclyde Council Education Services Parental Engagement Strategy which is under review.

In February 2022 Inverclyde Education Services participated in the National Parental Involvement and Engagement Census, a wide scale survey of parents and families, to gather parental views and opinions of our current educational provision and to identify available opportunities for parents to become engaged in their child's learning and in school improvement. Further consultation with representatives of Parent Councils, school leadership teams and partners has been carried out over this academic year to support the review of Inverclyde Parental Engagement Strategy.

The reviewed strategy, to be launched in the next academic session, will identify areas for improvement for both the Education Authority and all of our educational establishments, and will reflect the continued development of family learning approaches as part of the Inverclyde Attainment Challenge and use of pupil equity funding to help support family engagement. Through the development of strengthened school and parent partnerships across our educational establishments, the reviewed strategy will seek to ensure that parents are fully informed about their children's education and learning, are welcomed and involved in the life of their child's school, are able to support learning at home and to participate fully in family learning activities, are encouraged to express their views and take part in decision making and are involved in forums for discussion and debate on education policy.

4.6 GTC Scotland Excellence in Professional Learning Award

The Inverclyde Education Professional Learning Community has been presented with an Excellence in Professional Learning Award for Schools and Learning Communities by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland), the teaching profession's independent registration and regulation body.

This award celebrates and recognises schools and learning communities that support and lead professional learning which has a significant and sustained impact on teachers, classroom practice and the learning of children and young people. For Inverclyde, it places a spotlight on the excellent work taking place in our classrooms and early years' establishments.

The application was submitted in 2020 however due to the pandemic it has taken 2 years to be awarded.

The areas of highly effective practice that led to the achievement include:

- The wealth of Professional Learning opportunities delivered by the Attainment Challenge Team and practitioners across the authority.
- The Model of Professional Learning delivered by the Attainment Challenge Team where Professional Learning has been used to develop and deepen knowledge about learning and teaching, subject knowledge, and curriculum and policy, backed up with coaching and modelling in class to fully embed and ensure sustainability.
- The commitment of teachers and early years' practitioners to Leadership Pathways which provide opportunities for effective collaboration and professional support.
- The focus on succession planning to prepare practitioners for the next step in their

career, evidenced through the range of programmes available.

- The bespoke nature of a range of programmes to meet staff needs, developed in light of robust self-evaluation. Key areas of development include an increased focus on the analysis of data to further inform improvements, additional training to support health and wellbeing and a greater focus on early years.

The Inverclyde Professional Learning Community joins 19 schools and teacher learning communities from across Scotland that have received the award this year.

4.7 National Improvement Framework - A consultation on enhanced data collection for improvement

In 2021, both the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Audit Scotland published reports which made recommendations relating to data collection and the need to ensure it reflects the ambitions of a Curriculum for Excellence.

In light of these recommendations, there are two areas of focus for this consultation:

- how to ensure that the basket of key measures to assess progress towards closing the poverty related attainment gap reflects the wider ambitions of the curriculum
- the value of the wider data for improvement purposes, both qualitative and quantitative, and the range of data needed by schools, education authorities and at the national level in order to fulfil their different requirements

The results of this consultation will also inform the plans for a national discussion on the vision for Scottish education, which is being taken forward in response to the recommendation in Professor Ken Muir's report, 'Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/putting-learners-centre-towards-future-vision-scottish-education/>

Education Services will work with school leaders to respond to this consultation by the deadline in July 2022.

A link to more information about the consultation can be found here: <https://consult.gov.scot/national-improvement-framework/a-consultation-on-enhanced-data-for-collection/>

4.8 The Scottish Government has launched a consultation to seek views on school uniform in Scotland. The consultation will run from 19 May 2022 until 14 October 2022.

They are seeking the views of anyone with an interest in school uniform on a range of questions which will be used to inform national policy and guidance on school uniform in Scotland. The consultation is running over an extended period which includes school summer holidays. The consultation has been extended to enable education authorities and schools time to consider and provide their views. It is also recognised that the school summer holidays are usually when families will be considering uniform items for the coming school year.

The consultation is available from our Citizen Space website through the following link: School uniforms in Scotland - Scottish Government - Citizen Space (consult.gov.scot), which includes information on the consultation and how to respond.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

5.2 Legal

None.

5.3 Human Resources

None.

5.4 Equalities

Equalities

- (a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

- (b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES
X	NO

- (c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
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X	NO
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5.5 Repopulation

N/A.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 Yes – the report outlines two conations that the service will respond to and repost back on another carried out in relation to early years.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Where applicable links have been provided in the sections where relevant.