

PLEASE NOTE TIMES OF MEETING

A meeting of the Education & Communities Committee will be held on Tuesday 20 May 2025.

The Communities business will commence at 2pm and the Education business at 4pm.

Members may attend the meeting in person at Greenock Municipal Buildings or via remote online access. Webex joining details will be sent to Members and officers prior to the meeting. Members are requested to notify Committee Services by 12 noon on Monday 19 May 2025 how they intend to access the meeting.

In the event of connectivity issues, Members are asked to use the *join by phone* number in the Webex invitation and as noted above.

Please note that this meeting will be live-streamed via YouTube with the exception of any business which is treated as exempt in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

Information relating to the recording of meetings can be found at the end of this notice.

LYNSEY BROWN

Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services

BUSINESS

**** to follow**

1. Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest	Page
<u>COMMUNITIES BUSINESS</u>	
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT	
2. 2024/25 Communities Revenue Budget Update Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Financial Officer	p
3. Communities Capital Programme Progress and Asset Related Items Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Financial Officer	p
NEW BUSINESS	
4. Communities Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p

ROUTINE DECISIONS AND ITEMS FOR NOTING		
5.	Inverclyde Multiply Project Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
6.	Watt Institution Collections Care and Conservation Policy Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
<u>EDUCATION BUSINESS</u>		
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT		
7.	2024/25 Education Revenue Budget Update Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Financial Officer	p
8. **	Education Capital Programme 2024/28 - Progress Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Chief Financial Officer	p
9.	Education and Communities Committee Plan Annual Refresh Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
10.	Education Services Standards and Quality Report April 2024 – April 2025 Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
NEW BUSINESS		
11.	Education Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
12.	ASN Holiday Provision Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
13.	Increase of Sustainable Rate for Early Learning and Childcare Funded Providers Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
ROUTINE DECISIONS AND ITEMS FOR NOTING		
14.	Education Scotland – National Thematic Inspection: Local Authority Approaches to Supporting School Improvement Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
15.	Additional Support for Learning Policy Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p

16.	Education Service Anti-Bullying Policy Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
<p>The documentation relative to the following item has been treated as exempt information in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended, the nature of the exempt information being that set out in paragraphs 6 and 8 of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act</p>		
<p><u>COMMUNITIES BUSINESS</u></p> <p>NEW BUSINESS</p>		
17.	School Transport Contracts (Mainstream) – Results of Tenders for Contracts 2025/26, 2026/27 & 2027/28 Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development seeking approval to accept tenders for mainstream school transport contracts.	p
<p>The reports are available publicly on the Council's website and the minute of the meeting will be submitted to the next standing meeting of the Inverclyde Council. The agenda for the meeting of the Inverclyde Council will be available publicly on the Council's website.</p> <p>Please note: this meeting may recorded or live-streamed via YouTube and the Council's internet site, where it will be capable of repeated viewing. At the start of the meeting the Provost/Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded or live-streamed.</p> <p>You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during any recording or live-streaming will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy, including, but not limited to, for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available via the Council's internet site or You Tube.</p> <p>If you are participating in the meeting, you acknowledge that you may be filmed and that any information pertaining to you contained in the recording or live-stream of the meeting will be used for webcasting or training purposes and for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available to the public.</p> <p>In making this use of your information the Council is processing data which is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. If you are asked to speak at the meeting then your submission to the committee will be captured as part of the recording or live-stream.</p> <p>If you have any queries regarding this and, in particular, if you believe that use and/or storage of any particular information would cause, or be likely to cause, substantial damage or distress to any individual, please contact the Information Governance team at dataprotection@inverclyde.gov.uk.</p>		

Enquiries to – **Diane Sweeney**– Tel 01475 712147

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Interim Chief Financial Officer and Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	FIN/29/25/AE/IC
Contact Officer:	Iain Cameron	Contact No:	01475 712832
Subject:	2024/25 Communities Revenue Budget Update		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the projected position of the 2024/25 Communities Revenue Budget.
- 1.3 The total Communities Revenue Budget for 2024/25, excluding Earmarked Reserves, is currently £5.762m. The latest projection is an underspend of £51,000 (0.9%), a decrease in projected spend of £59,000 since Period 9 Committee. The projected underspend excludes £166,000 of additional costs for Inverclyde Leisure utilities, as these will be funded from earmarked reserves for 2024/25, as previously reported.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note that the Committee's Revenue Budget is currently projected to underspend in 2024/25 by £51,000 (0.9%).

Angela Edmiston
Interim Chief Financial Officer

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities &
Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the current position of the 2024/25 Communities Revenue Budget and to highlight the main variances contributing to the projected underspend of £51,000.
- 3.2 The current Communities Revenue Budget for 2024/25 is £5.762m which is an increase of £102,000 from the Approved Budget. Appendix 1 shows the breakdown of this budget across divisions.

3.3 2024/25 Projected Outturn (£51,000 underspend 0.9%)

- (a) The main projected variance contributing to the net underspend is an over recovery of School Lets Income of £50,000, as reported to the last Committee.
- (b) Committee should be aware that there is a projected overspend of £166,000 within Inverclyde Leisure utilities budgets (electricity and gas). The overspend will be funded from earmarked reserves this financial year, in line with the treatment of utilities overspends for Council properties. The expectation is that these costs will reduce significantly in 2025/26.
- (c) There has been a reduction in employee costs of £47,000 since last Committee, mainly due to a reallocation of £32,000 of Janitors' costs from Community Halls to Facilities Management, which falls within the Education part of the Committee. Employee costs are now projected to outturn £6,000 under budget.

3.4 Earmarked Reserves

Appendix 4 gives an update on the Committee's operational earmarked reserve. Spend to date on this reserve is nil, which is in line with projected spend. The sole earmarked reserve this financial year relates to Community Grants and there will be no spend until 2025/26, at which time there will be a saving on the core budget, for which the reserve will act as substitute funding for a period of three years. This saving was agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process.

3.5 Virements

There are no virements this Committee cycle.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that Committee note the current projected underspend for 2024/25 of £51,000.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

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					

5.3 Legal/Risk

There are no issues to highlight in this report.

5.4 Human Resources

There are no specific human resources implications arising from this report.

5.5 Strategic

There are no specific strategic implications arising from this report.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The paper has been jointly prepared by the Interim Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 There are no background papers for this report.

Communities Budget Movement - 2024/25

Service	Approved Budget	Inflation £000	Virement £000	Movements		Revised Budget 2024/25 £000
	2024/25 £000			Supplementary Budgets £000	Transferred to EMR £000	
Libraries & Museum	1,892	63	10			1,965
Sport & Leisure	2,088		(40)			2,048
Community Safety	446	19				465
Community Halls	953	10	25			988
Community Grants Fund	281		15			296
Totals	<u>5,660</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,762</u>

<u>Movement Details</u>	<u>£000</u>
<u>External Resources</u>	
<u>Inflation</u>	
Pay Award	92
	<u>92</u>
<u>Virement</u>	
Libraries Resources budget from Education	10
	<u>10</u>
<u>Supplementary Budget</u>	
	<u>0</u>
	<u>102</u>

COMMUNITIES**REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT****CURRENT POSITION**

2023/24 Actual £000	Subjective Heading	Approved Budget 2024/25 £000	Revised Budget 2024/25 £000	Projected Out-turn 2024/25 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/(Under)
2,163	Employee Costs	1,909	2,045	2,039	(6)	(0.29%)
2,149	Property Costs	2,268	2,268	2,262	(6)	(0.26%)
942	Supplies & Services	616	620	625	5	0.81%
7	Transport Costs	3	3	3	0	-
73	Administration Costs	75	75	71	(4)	(5.35%)
1,060	Other Expenditure	1,070	1,113	1,118	5	0.45%
(542)	Income	(281)	(362)	(407)	(45)	12.41%
5,852	TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	5,660	5,762	5,711	(51)	(0.89%)
0	Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0	
5,852	TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING EARMARKED RESERVES	5,660	5,762	5,711	(51)	(0.89%)

2023/24 Actual £000	Objective Heading	Approved Budget 2024/25 £000	Revised Budget 2024/25 £000	Projected Out-turn 2024/25 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/(Under)
2,068	Libraries & Museum	1,892	1,965	1,970	5	0.26%
2,002	Sports & Leisure	2,048	2,048	2,053	5	0.24%
478	Community Safety	446	465	468	3	0.65%
960	Community Halls	978	988	923	(65)	(6.58%)
344	Community Grants Fund	296	296	297	1	0.34%
5,852	TOTAL COMMUNITIES	5,660	5,762	5,711	(51)	(0.88%)
0	Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0	
5,852	TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING EARMARKED RESERVES	5,660	5,762	5,711	(51)	(0.88%)

COMMUNITIES

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

MATERIAL VARIANCES

[illegible]

EARMARKED RESERVES POSITION STATEMENT

COMMITTEE: Communities

<u>Project</u>	<u>Lead Officer/ Responsible Manager</u>	<u>Total Funding 2024/25</u> <u>£000</u>	<u>Phased Budget 28-Feb-25 2024/25</u> <u>£000</u>	<u>Actual 28-Feb-25 2024/25</u> <u>£000</u>	<u>Projected Spend 2024/25</u> <u>£000</u>	<u>Amount to be Earmarked for 2025/26 & Beyond</u> <u>£000</u>	<u>Lead Officer Update</u>
Community Grants	Tony McEwan	75	0	0	0	75	Funding £25k per annum reduction in Community Grants fund from 2025/26 for 3 years.
Total		75	0	0	0	75	

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Interim Chief Financial Officer	Report No:	EDUCOM/41/25/HS
Contact Officer:	Hugh Scott Service Manager Inclusive Communities	Contact No:	01475 715459
Subject:	Communities Capital Programme Progress and Asset Related Items		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to consider performance reporting for the Communities part of the Education & Communities Committee and provide an update in respect of the status of the projects forming the Communities Capital Programme and Asset related items.
- 1.3 This report advises the Committee of the progress of the projects within the Communities Capital Programme and those external grants funded projects where the Council holds all or part of the grant funding for projects being progressed through partner organisations. The report also provides an update on other Council Community Asset related activity.
- 1.4 The Communities capital budget is £3.587m with total projected spend on budget. The Committee is projecting to spend £1.457m in 2024/25 with advancement of £0.553m (61.17%) being reported. Appendix 1 details the capital programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the current position and the progress on the specific projects of the 2024/28 Capital Programme.

Angela Edmiston
Interim Chief Financial Officer

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director Education,
Communities and Organisational
Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 This report shows the current position of the approved Communities Capital programme reflecting the allocation of resources approved by Inverclyde Council on 6 March 2025.
- 3.2 The report also covers progress of external partner projects where the Council holds all or part of the funding through successful bids as part of the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund process.

2024/28 Current Capital Position

- 3.3 The Communities capital budget is £3.587m. The budget for 2024/25 is £0.904m, with spend to date of £1.443m equating to 159.62% of the approved budget (99.04% of the revised projection). The current projection is £3.587m which means total projected spend is on budget.
- 3.4 The Committee is projecting to spend £1.457m in 2024/25 with £0.553m (61.17%) advancement in connection with the increased allocations for the Parklea Branching Out and King George VI Community Hub projects as previously reported. Appendix 1 details the capital programme.

Communities Capital Projects

3.5 Leisure Pitches Asset Management Plan / Lifecycle Fund:

The lifecycle works continue to be progressed based on the asset plan agreed at the September 2020 Education & Communities Committee which is scheduled for review linked to the refresh of the various strands of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy. The lifecycle management of the leisure pitches over the 2024/28 period will predominantly involve periodic surface rejuvenation and regular review of the carpet condition against lifecycle plan anticipated life. Following the report to the January 2024 Committee on the Broomhill pitch and the increased use as part of the Leisure pitch estate, the replacement of the pitch carpet is being programmed for progression in summer 2025.

The project to upgrade artificial pitch floodlighting to LED across the school and leisure estate was substantially completed by the end of March 2025.

3.6 Community Hub King George VI:

The project has been funded predominantly through the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) with the objective of sympathetically restoring an important heritage building for community use, including introduction of a series of low carbon energy saving design solutions in alignment with the Council's net-zero strategy and associated action plan. Additional funding was allocated as previously reported with the final account negotiations ongoing with the main contractor. Snagging and minor works including the installation of loose furniture and equipment are nearing completion. An official opening ceremony of the Port Glasgow Community Hub by Provost Drew McKenzie and supported by the Minister for Employment and Investment Tom Arthur is scheduled for the 6th May 2025.

3.7 Boglestone Community Centre – Childcare Early Adopter Project:

The Scottish Government has awarded a grant of up to £0.5 million to support the development of a community-based childcare centre that will benefit most vulnerable families. This initiative is part of the broader Early Adopter Project, which will run from November 2024 to March 2026. The scope of work within the Centre has been developed and agreed in conjunction with Property Services and the Client Service. The main contract work was substantially completed prior to the end of March with the full £500K Scottish Government allocation expended. Additional works funded from the Environment & Regeneration Core Property Capital allocation are being taken forward to address boiler and main plant room upgrades with the balance of external works anticipated to be completed by mid-May.

Communities External Partner Projects

3.8 Bank Street Community Hall:

Inverclyde Council, collaborating with the Bank Street Community Hub (32nd Scouts), achieved success with their Stage 2 application to the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) in January 2025. We have now received confirmation of full funding approval from the Scottish Government RCGF Board. Council officers are currently working closely with the Bank Street Committee to develop robust plans and legal agreements to meet the offer's timelines. Officers will present relevant information to the committee in the future

Update on Asset Transfer Working Group

- 3.9 Appendix 2 provides a list of current assets transfer applications which are being progressed through the work of the Asset Transfer Working Group.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Committee are asked to note the progress on projects including the updates from the Asset Transfer Working Group and note that relevant reports will be brought back for Committee consideration as and when required.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal/Risk	x	
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		x
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		x
Environmental & Sustainability		x
Data Protection		x

5.2 Finance

One off Costs

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

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

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

5.3 Legal/Risk

There are no known Legal implications contained within this report.

5.4 Human Resources

There are no known Human Resources implications contained within this report.

5.5 Strategic

None.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 This report has been prepared following consultation with the Head of Physical Assets and Finance Services.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

COMMUNITIES CAPITAL REPORT

Appendix 1

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION & COMMUNITIES

[illegible]

The table below provides a list of current assets transfer applications which are being progressed through the work of the Asset Transfer Working Group. A separate update report on Asset Transfers was submitted to the March 24 Committee:

Name of Asset	Asset Type – Land/Land and Building	Application Type Informal / Formal	Tenure Lease / Management Agreement / Ownership	Status
Wellington Allotments	Land	Informal	Proposed Lease	The group's progress is currently on hold until they achieve SCIO status. They have amended their constitution to meet the necessary requirements, but they are also collaborating with Council officers to address outstanding maintenance issues related to the asset.
KGV Bowling Club	Bowling pavilion and greens	Informal	Proposed Lease	Both parties have engaged in discussions regarding the establishment of a formal lease. The group has agreed to proceed with the lease; however, a range of maintenance issues, both internal and external, must be resolved before the process can move forward. In the meantime, Council officers will offer support in securing funding to address these concerns.
Larkfield Waste ground (Banff Rd / Fife Drive) Larkfield Guerilla Gardens	Land	Informal- ongoing support is being provided by CLD in relation to governance.	Proposed Lease	The licence to occupy was issued on 19/11/24 and has now been signed and returned. The group is currently working to rebuild its membership following the seasonal break to assess the feasibility of committing to a long-term lease. In the meantime, Council officers will provide support in the group's development and community engagement efforts.
Guides at Kilmacolm	Land	Informal	Proposed Long Term lease/asset transfer	The expression of interest form has been received, and the group is now focusing on developing their business plan and finalising their governance structure. Feedback from the guides is awaited to determine the next steps. For a full asset transfer will require the establishment of a SCIO, and the group is still working on achieving clarity regarding their governance arrangements.

Broomhill Way shop unit/ Broomhill Beats	Shop/property	Informal – initial conversations are taking place.	Proposed Lease	The expression of interest form was received on 5/12/24, and officers met with the group on 24th January 2025 to explore available options. However, the group has not responded to follow-up communications from Council officers regarding next steps. As a result, the matter is currently on hold.
Inverclyde Veterans Network	Building	Informal – initial conversations are taking place.	Proposed Lease	The newly established Veterans group has submitted an expression of interest in securing a suitable venue for a veterans hub. On April 3rd, Council officers met with the group and scheduled a follow-up meeting on April 10th to visit an asset on 14A King Street, Port Glasgow. While the group is eager to take out a long-term lease for the premises, the possibility of a temporary licence to occupy will be explored to facilitate quicker access to the asset as an interim arrangement
Coppermine Community Hub	Building	Asset Transfer	Full Asset Transfer	The group has submitted all necessary paperwork, which has been reviewed by officers. Following a meeting between Council officers and representatives of the group, it was agreed that an informal asset transfer would proceed, enabling the group to take ownership of the asset. This process will be conducted rigorously, with future papers being submitted to CMT and the relevant committees.
Upper Larkfield Tenants Hall (Larkfield Housing Association)	Building	Asset Transfer	Long term Lease or Full Asset Transfer	On 25/4/25, Council officers met with LHA for initial discussions regarding the Upper Larkfield Tenants Hall. The conversation was positive, with officers offering guidance on the available options for ownership or lease. They also provided advice on the necessary governance arrangements to ensure the asset falls under the framework of community ownership

West Glen Rd, Kilmacolm Kilmacolm Eco Group	Land	Licence to occupy	Licence to occupy	Progress is being made to formalise the licence to occupy, allowing the Kilmacolm Eco Group to use and access the land on West Glen, Kilmacolm Road. The licence is expected to be in place by the end of May 2025.
Wellington Park Bowling Cub	Land	Lease	Long term Lease	The bowling club has agreed to enter into a formal lease, with the expectation that it will be finalized by the end of the year. In the meantime, Council officers will provide support to help the club access funding opportunities.
Riverside Club (formally old mans club)	Land	Lease	Long term lease/purchase	Council officers have been working with the group to facilitate the transition to a formal lease or ownership of the land on which the building stands. However, due to the absence of ownership records, the group is currently unable to secure external capital funding.

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/34/25/TM
Contact Officer:	Tony McEwan Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources	Contact No:	01475 712828
Subject:	Communities Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to update the Education and Communities Committee with developments in relation to the Communities part of the Committee.

1.3 Updates have been provided on the following areas:

1. Libraries as community spaces;
2. Staff development (libraries);
3. Children and young people (libraries);
4. Adult services (libraries)
5. The Watt Institution developments;
6. Inverclyde Music Service;
7. Early Adopter Community;
8. Fairer Futures Partnership;
9. Young Person Substance Use Work;
10. Place Standard Tool;
11. Community Conversations;
12. Invergrow;
13. Tesco Partnership with Youth Services; and
14. Update on CLD review staffing

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee notes the updates provided in this report.

Ruth Binks

Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 Updates

3.1 Libraries as Community Spaces

Between March and June 2025 Inverclyde Libraries are hosting a series of 12 pop-up energy advice sessions in five branch libraries. These sessions are provided by Wattwise Inverclyde, a new project by Inverclyde Community Development Trust that aims to help residents of Inverclyde with energy advice and advocacy.

As the 80th Anniversary of VE day approaches on 8th May, libraries are hosting drop-in sessions for residents to come along and share family stories linked to the end of the Second World War. Staff will be on hand to assist with recording memories and photographing any associated memorabilia. Stories shared will be used as part of the commemoration services planned in local churches.

In support of Inverclyde Libraries' commitment to promoting sustainability, Scottish Water visited Kilmacolm Library on 4th April and met with some of the children from Kilmacolm nursery to speak to them about the top-up tap situated outside the library. The nursery children headed outside to fill up their Inverclyde Libraries water bottles from the tap and received some goodies from Scottish Water.

In April libraries promoted World Autism Acceptance Month, highlighting the Au-Some weekly quiet times currently scheduled in Inverclyde Libraries, during which noise levels are reduced and sensory resources for adults and children with autism or additional support needs are made available. The service is also Makaton Aware, supporting the Makaton communication programme that combines speech, signs and symbols to ensure that everyone living with learning or communication difficulties has the tools and resources they need to understand and be understood.

In partnership with HSCP MacMillan Advice services, cancer-related drop-ins will be offered in Gourock Library on Tuesday afternoons from 13th May until 12th August. These drop-ins will provide financial and welfare advice for those living with cancer and their families, alongside other relevant information. Although the initial focus of these sessions will be prostate cancer, there is potential to widen provision to encompass other forms of cancer.

3.2 Staff Development - Libraries

Versus Arthritis delivered awareness raising sessions to branch library staff during March, enabling them to better support customers in a health literacy context through an improved understanding of arthritis and its impact on people's lives. This increased awareness will contribute directly to the library service's provision of reliable and current health information. .

3.3 Children and Young People – Libraries

'Reading for empowerment' bibliotherapy sessions took place in all secondary school libraries for International Women's Day. Training on contemporary children's literature was delivered to primary school teaching colleagues in All Saints, St Mary's and Newark Primaries as part of Reading Schools accreditation.

An illustration competition was held in partnership with the Beacon Arts Centre to win a family ticket to *Angelica Sprocket's Pockets*, launched on World Book Day. Author Jake Hope visited South West and Inverkip community gardens to read his book *Lola Loves Walkies*. Author Victoria Williamson visited St Columba's High to speak to all S1 pupils about her book *Hag Stone*. Gourock Library celebrated *Isadora Moon Day* with a craft session.

A full Easter holiday schedule saw free activities across all public library branches, including crafternoons, digital stop-motion, zine making and silent disco. Port Glasgow Library held a Jack and the Beanstalk 'grow your own beanstalk' seed-planting event using seeds donated to the seed library by Inverclyde Climate Action Network (ICAN). As part of the PG250 Celebrations, Dungeons and Dragons workshops are taking place at Port Glasgow Library and Newark Caste, celebrating the history of the town through creative storytelling.

Magic Torch Comics launched the Multiverse Academy graphic novel, created by young people in Inverclyde over the course of a year, in Greenock Central Library. Magic Torch is currently working on three other funded projects: Story Works podcast audio drama over 10 weeks in Greenock Central Library, Chippy McNish comic over 10 weeks in St Stephen's High School and Port Glasgow Library, old cinemas of Inverclyde comic over 10 weeks in Port Glasgow High School.

A representative from the Library Service Development team appeared on BBC Radio 4's Today Programme on 9th April to promote children using their local library during the school holidays.

3.4 **Adult Services Libraries**

Open Book outreach sessions are now being delivered by the Service Development Team on a monthly basis to Crown Care and Muirshiel Adult Daycare Centre. Open Book provides the opportunity for reminiscence, memory-sharing, and encourages socialisation and participation.

World Book Night took place on 23rd April and Inverclyde Libraries delivered free Quick Read books to local partners and give away to library users. Quick reads are written for adults in an accessible and easy to read style which can help increase reading skills and confidence in reading.

Fourteen creative sessions were delivered as part of Inverclyde Libraries' recent Green Libraries Fund project, exploring themes linked to the climate crisis and biodiversity. Outputs from these sessions included creative writing, paintings, and cyanotypes. These will now be collated into a Drying Green Herbarium which will preserve a snapshot of the garden for future generations.

3.5 **The Watt Institution**

The Watt Institution's Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) funded project, 'Re-animating the Past', has been extended until the end of May 2025 to allow additional workshops to be delivered with school groups, adult support groups, and community groups, variously exploring the natural world around us with reference to the Watt's historic collections. This extension reflects the success of the project to date. In addition, a new display has been developed within the Watt Institution's gallery space looking at extinction level events, both natural and those potentially driven by human activity. A film documenting the project and highlighting its outcomes accompanies the display.

The Watt Institution successfully secured £975 from Museums Galleries Scotland to have professional photography undertaken of the improved museum galleries. These photographs will be used for promotional purposes going forward.

3.6 **Inverclyde Music Service**

Inverclyde Schools newly formed Pipe Band entered their first competition, participating in The Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championship. This is a national competition which provided a hugely positive introduction to competitive playing for the young people involved. Although Inverclyde did not place in the competition, their participation is reflective of the investment in

pipes and drums tuition over recent years, with funding received/secured until summer 2026 from both the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust and the Beatrice Foundation.

The Junior Wind Orchestra demonstrated notable progression at the Scottish Concert Band Festival National Finals at Perth Concert Hall in March. Having been awarded a Silver Plus at last year's national competition, this year they further impressed the judges and received a Gold award.

The Inverclyde heat for the Scottish Young Musician of the Year was held at Inverclyde Academy in March. 20 young musicians performed, with the winner announced as Emily Hathaway from Port Glasgow High School playing the marimba. Emily will compete in the national final at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in May 2025.

In March 2025, Clydevue Academy hosted The Royal Marine Band of Scotland, which provided a day of mentoring to the Senior Wind Orchestra. Members of the orchestra in attendance participated in a series of workshops, before having the opportunity to perform alongside these highly accomplished professional musicians in a short concert for invited guests.

Inverclyde Council's Creative Scotland funded YMI (Youth Music Initiative) programme continues to deliver for all Primary 5 pupils across the authority area. Funding available has also enabled delivery of bespoke music programmes in Garvel and Craigmarloch schools. In addition, the YMI Coordinator is working with six schools to secure bronze 'We Make Music' awards - We Make Music Schools is a scheme that recognises and celebrates the rich variety of music-making activity taking place in primary and ASN schools across Scotland. An application to Creative Scotland to continue YMI provision in Inverclyde has been submitted for 2025/26.

A successful IMS Spring Concert took place on Thursday 27 March, showcasing the musical talents of Inverclyde's young people. The music service is currently teaching 1,540 young people across all disciplines with many performing on the night.

3.7 Early Adopter community 2025/2026

One further year of funding has been approved by the Scottish Government to continue the development of affordable out-of-school childcare in Port Glasgow until March 2026. The after-school service will continue to be delivered by Before and After School Kare (BASK). Parents are now being supported to pay for the service if they are eligible for Universal Credit childcare support or other social security benefits aimed at low-income families.

Support to apply for eligible social security has been provided since January 2025 by a multidisciplinary team, including a family wellbeing worker, community co-design facilitators, advice support workers, and employability workers, in partnership with the DWP. This approach has helped to build trusting relationships with parents, making them more comfortable discussing their household income and seeking support to improve their family's outcomes. The after-school service continues to accommodate up to 35 children per day.

3.8 Fairer Futures Partnership 2025/2026

Funding to continue the development of the Fairer Futures Partnership programme has been approved. The main objectives of the programme are to enhance partnership working and identify solutions and systems which improve access, efficiency, and outcomes for local communities.

The programme will deliver a place-based, person-centred service from the B'Hub within Boglestone Community Centre, placing service users at the heart of its design and delivery. Data will be used to identify community needs and monitor progress, empowering people with

opportunities, choice, and voice within their community. Activities currently being delivered include community engagement, skills development, health and wellbeing initiatives, learning, food support, and financial advice.

The programme has been active since January 2025, with successful engagement events such as Connect drop-in sessions, Easter holiday family time, Family Fun Nights, and Afternoon Tea @ the B'Hub. Trusting relationships are being built within the community and across partner organisations.

In addition to both programmes, Inverclyde Council has successfully secured a capital grant of £500,000 to refurbish the squash courts at the Boglestone Community Centre. This space will be transformed into a dedicated childcare centre for after-school and holiday care in Port Glasgow, named The B'Hive. The new facility is expected to be operational by Summer 2025, supporting the continued delivery of out-of-school childcare in the area.

3.9 Young Person Substance Use

The Young Persons Substance Use Team successfully delivered the S4–S6 substance use education programme across all six secondary schools in Inverclyde supporting approximately 700 pupils in four lessons covering key topics such as alcohol, drugs, vaping, smoking, and risky behaviours.

In January 2025, the team commenced the delivery of lessons for S1–S3 pupils, and they are currently completing the final block of this programme. To date, around 1,100 S1–S3 pupils have received the four core lessons, with this number expected to increase as delivery continues through to June.

This year, the curriculum was revised to provide tailored lesson content for each individual year group, in contrast to last year's broader approach, which combined lessons across S1–S3 and S4–S6. This more targeted approach aims to ensure age-appropriate and relevant messaging for each stage of secondary education.

3.10 Update developing a community safety lens for the Place Standard Tool - Inverclyde Pilot Site

The Inverclyde pilot of the Place Standard Tool, focusing on community safety, successfully took place in March 2025 within the designated Greenock East neighbourhood area. The event, held at Cappielow stadium, was very well attended, with representation from community members, Ward Councillors, and a range of key partners including HSCP, River Clyde Homes, Police Scotland, Your Voice, and CVS. This broad participation underscored the shared commitment to understanding and addressing community safety within our local context. The event was covered by local media in the Greenock Telegraph which can be viewed through the attached link: [Pilot reveals strong sense of community in east end | Greenock Telegraph](#)

Leading up to the pilot event, significant community engagement activities were undertaken by the Inclusive Communities Service. This included:

- door-to-door leafleting: 1040 leaflets were delivered in targeted areas within the east end to raise awareness and encourage participation; and
- drop-in surgeries: 8 informal drop-in sessions were conducted at various community groups, providing opportunities for residents to learn more about the project and express their interest in participating.

The valuable insights and feedback gathered during the pilot event will now be collated and analysed to contribute to the development of the community safety lens for the Place Standard Tool. This learning will also build local capacity within the Council and HSCP in utilising the Place Standard Tool as part of a place-based approach to health improvement. A further update on the outcomes and next steps will be provided upon completion of the analysis.

3.11 **Community Conversations**

Between October 2024 and February 2025, on behalf of the Alliance board, Inclusive communities organised six community conversation weeks, encouraging residents to contribute insights that help shape local priorities and decisions. Feedback was gathered through the community choices platform, focusing on four key themes from the six locality action plans: Your Community, Affordable Out-of-School Childcare, Community Safety, and Learning in the Community.

More than 400 feedback notes were recorded, with contributions from over 120 community groups across Inverclyde and approximately 1,076 community members. Residents participated individually or collectively, fostering engagement and collaborative decision-making. By actively involving the community, Inverclyde Community Choices strengthens local, the feedback will inform future projects, funding opportunities, and policy development to benefit Inverclyde.

An example of the feedback can be found using the following links:

[Port Glasgow Community Conversation](#)
[Greenock East and Central Community Conversation](#)
[Greenock South and South West](#)
[Inverkip and Wemyss Bay](#)
[Greenock West and Gourrock](#)
[Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village](#)

3.12 **Invergrow**

Through UK Government funding, Inverclyde Council secured support for the Invergrow project from 2023 to 2025. This initiative has played a crucial role in strengthening the Inverclyde Food Network and driving forward key actions outlined in the Inverclyde Food Growing Strategy.

In its first funding window in February 2024, Invergrow focused on supporting community growing spaces, receiving 14 applications. Eleven projects were successfully granted funding totalling £31,000, aligning with the priorities of the Food Growing Strategy. As a result, approximately 695 individuals participated in Invergrow activities, benefiting from its positive impact on local engagement and sustainable food-growing efforts.

Continuing into its second year, the project further strengthened community groups by allocating £27,000 to 11 initiatives in March 2025. This funding aimed to bolster volunteer programs, ensuring they had the necessary resources to sustain and expand their efforts in food-growing and community-led sustainability.

3.13 **Tesco Partnership with Youth Services**

A collaborative pilot project has been established between detached youth work services and Tesco Greenock to address issues of anti-social behaviour involving young people within the store. This initiative arose from weekly reports of such behaviour. Commencing Friday evenings from the beginning of May, detached youth workers will engage with young people on-site, offering information about detached winter activities and Youth Zone opportunities, and inviting them to a drop-in youth club in the store café. As part of this partnership, Tesco will provide

snacks, and youth work staff will deliver activities focused on challenging attitudes towards anti-social behaviour and fostering positive interactions with Tesco employees.

3.14 **Temporary staffing arrangements within Inclusive Communities**

Since committee approved the review of Community Learning and Development, several senior posts within the new Inclusive Communities Service have become vacant. These posts form part of the new structure within the service and in order to maintain continuity of service while offering succession planning opportunities for existing staff, a temporary staffing structure is now in place to allow the recommendations from the review to be implemented. This structure is being met from existing resources and has no impact on the substantive structure agreed by committee.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal/Risk		x
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		x
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		x
Environmental & Sustainability		x
Data Protection		x

4.1 **Finance**

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					

4.2 **Legal/Risk**

N/A

4.3 **Human Resources**

N/A

4.4 **Strategic**

All updated provided in this report align to the priorities of the Council Plan and Partnership Plan.

4.5 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

Equalities

- (a) This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

Fairer Scotland Duty

- (b) 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 – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

Children and Young People

- (c) Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

4.6 Environmental/Sustainability

Summarise any environmental / climate change impacts which relate to this report.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
x	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

4.7 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.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 N/A

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 N/A

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/39/25/TM
Contact Officer	Hugh Scott Service Manager, Inclusive Communities	Contact Number:	01475 715450
Subject:	Inverclyde Multiply Project		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to inform the Education and Communities Committee of the achievements made during the Multiply project until its completion on 31 March 2025.

1.3 Through funding previously known as UK Levelling Up Funding, Inverclyde Council successfully secured financial support from the UK Government to enhance numeracy confidence and accreditation for adults aged 19+ in the region. £270,000 was allocated from this funding to CLD to deliver this programme in Inverclyde which was used to appoint two full-time development workers, one full-time development worker assistant, and one part-time senior development worker. This investment helped ensure accessible and tailored numeracy learning opportunities for residents across Inverclyde.

1.4 The Multiply: Make Numbers Count initiative ran from July 2023 to 31 March 2025. This report provides an overview of the project, its key achievements and outlining the legacy for continuing to support numeracy learning beyond its completion.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee:

- notes the impact of the Multiply project; and
- notes the project end date of 31 March 2025.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 Multiply funding in Inverclyde was part of the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, designed to enhance numeracy skills among adults. The initiative, Multiply: Make Numbers Count, offered targeted training and personalised support for individuals aged 19 and over who had not previously achieved a Level 2/SCQF Level 5 or higher maths qualification. The programme aimed to boost learners' confidence, improve employability prospects, and equip them with practical numeracy skills for everyday life.
- 3.2 The Multiply: Make Numbers Count began in July 2023 and ended on 31 March 2025, and focused on:
- courses aimed at prisoners, those recently released from prison or on temporary licence;
 - providing new intensive and flexible courses targeted at people without Level 5 maths in Scotland, leading to an equivalent qualification; and
 - providing activities, courses or provision developed in partnership with community organisations.
- 3.3 The initiative aimed to accomplish the following outcomes:
- Increase adult participation in numeracy programmes, ensuring accessible learning opportunities for those seeking to improve their skills;
 - Support adults in achieving recognised maths qualifications, helping to enhance employability and confidence in numeracy;
 - Cultivate Community Champions, empowering individuals to advocate for and promote numeracy learning within their local areas; and
 - Recruit, train, and develop numeracy volunteers, equipping them with the necessary skills to support learners and strengthen community engagement.
- 3.4 Delivered by experienced literacies staff at Inclusive Communities—formerly known as Community Learning and Development—Inverclyde offered a diverse range of tailored learning opportunities aimed at enhancing numeracy skills.

Learning Opportunities included:

- Personalised 1-to-1 Support: individualised sessions to meet the specific learning needs of each participant; and
- Bespoke Learning Programmes designed in collaboration with key community partners to ensure accessibility and relevance.

These initiatives aimed to break down barriers to learning, empowering individuals to develop confidence and skills for everyday life, employment, and further education.

More information and case studies can be found using the following link:

<https://sway.cloud.microsoft/KgCedZLnEwUJBULQ?ref=Link>

4.0 KEY SUCCESSES

- 4.1 The Multiply initiative in Inverclyde achieved significant milestones in improving adult numeracy and fostering community engagement. Through dedicated staff and strong partnerships, the programme had a positive impact, empowering learners with essential skills for both daily life and employment.

4.2 Key Successes of the Multiply Programme in Inverclyde include:

- **Educational Support for the Justice System:** A partnership with Fife College enabled weekly learning sessions at Gateside Prison, offering contextualised numeracy support to help individuals prepare for life beyond incarceration. 21 learners accessed support with 10 achievement SQA accreditation;
- **Widespread Community Impact:** Over the course of the project, 254 learners received targeted numeracy support, strengthening confidence and independence in managing finances, employment, and daily tasks, with 136 achieving SQA accreditation;
- **Inclusive Language Learning:** To support both native Scots speakers and ESOL learners, practical cooking sessions were introduced, integrating numeracy and language development through engaging, hands-on activities;
- **Volunteer Tutor Training:** A total of 8 individuals participated in Volunteer Tutor training, with seven successfully progressing to provide direct support to adult numeracy learners, enhancing the reach and effectiveness of the programme;
- **National Recognition:** A learner and staff member actively participated in the Multiply project launch, which included a national press release and photo shoot, showcasing Inverclyde's commitment to improving numeracy skills; and
- **Development of Bespoke Learning Materials:** A variety of tailored learning resources were co-created with partner organisations, including Parklea Branching Out, Morton in the Community, and Jericho House, ensuring courses were embedded with accreditation to support employability and life skills development.

5.0 MULTIPLY LEGACY

5.1 Even though the multiply project in Inverclyde was focused on improving numeracy it created a network of support, education, and empowerment for learners engaged in the project. By fostering collaboration between local organisations, colleges, and volunteer tutors, the initiative left a meaningful impact in ensuring that numeracy learning remains accessible, relevant, and engaging.

5.2 Learners who participated in the Multiply project and wished to continue developing their numeracy skills were provided with the opportunity to access ongoing support through the existing Adult Literacies provision.

To ensure that learners could maintain their progress and further improve their numeracy confidence, they were offered access to a variety of structured learning opportunities under the Adult Literacies programme, which focuses on providing flexible and tailored support.

5.3 Staff members who were funded through the Multiply project have either returned to their substantive roles within Inverclyde Council or successfully transitioned into new positions within the local authority, ensuring their expertise and experience continues to benefit the community.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal/Risk		x
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		x
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		x
Environmental & Sustainability		x
Data Protection		x

5.2 Finance

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					

5.3 Legal/Risk

None

5.4 Human Resources

None

5.5 Strategic

None

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(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 – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

6.0 Environmental/Sustainability

Summarise any environmental / climate change impacts which relate to this report.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
x	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

7.0 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.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

8.0 CONSULTATION

8.1 N/A

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 N/A

APPENDIX 1

ESOL COURSES AND QUALIFICATIONS UNDER THE NEW MODEL				
ESOL Course Level	Level Descriptor of ESOL Course	Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework Level	Qualifications embedded within ESOL course	Learning offer under the New Model
B1 Level Intensive 6-8hrs per week 44 weeks per year	Independent User	4	SQA Core Skills Level 4	1 cohort at Port Glasgow Town Hall 1 cohort at Greenock Mid Kirk
A2 Level Intensive 6-8hrs per week 44 weeks per year	Basic User	3	SQA Core Skills Level 3	2 cohorts at Greenock Mid Kirk
A1 Level Intensive 6-8hrs per week 44 weeks per year	Basic User	2	SQA Core Skills Level 2	1 cohort at Greenock Mid Kirk
Pre-A1 Literacies Level 2hrs per week 44 weeks per year	Pre-basic user	1	National 2 ESOL For everyday life	1 cohort at Greenock I-Zone <i>Please note this cohort is made up of learners from the above A1 course as well as learners from weekly sessions who need this support</i>
Weekly Session 2hrs per week 44 weeks per year	Mixed level	2-4 mixed level	SQA Core Skills 2-4	1 cohort at Branchton Centre 1 cohort at 7 ½ John Wood St Centre
ESOL ICT Session 2hrs per week 38 weeks per year	Mixed level	2-4 mixed level	SQA Information and Communication Technology	1 cohort at Central Library

Notes:

Intensive courses are curriculum led and can accommodate up to 20 learners per ESOL course

Weekly sessions are for mixed level ESOL learners and are limited to 8 per course as we utilise an individual learning approach

For more information on the ESOL levels please visit <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/43/25/SR
Contact Officer:	Sarah Christie Cultural Services Manager	Contact No:	01475 712828
Subject:	Watt Institution Collections Care and Conservation Policy		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☒ For Decision ☐ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to present to Committee for approval the Watt Institution's updated Collections Care and Conservation Policy.
- 1.3 This policy overtakes the previous McLean Museum Collections Care and Conservation policy, updated to reflect the overarching Watt Institution statement of purpose, and better reflect the operational priorities of the Watt Institution. The policy is essential for the purpose of Museum Accreditation and forms part of a suite of policies and associated procedures which support accountable collections management.
- 1.4 The policy supports Council officers with responsibility for collections management in a museum setting when making decisions that shape the historic collections held in trust by the Council. It provides a set of principles that guide care and conservation of these collections.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is recommended to
- note the contents of this report; and
 - approve the Collections Care and Conservation Policy in Appendix 1

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Watt Institution comprises the McLean Museum and Art Gallery; the James Watt Library; and Inverclyde Archives. It is the main museum in the Inverclyde area and houses Inverclyde Council's municipal collections. These collections extend to museum objects; historic books; and archival materials.
- 3.2 The McLean Museum – as part of the Watt Institution – holds Accredited Museum status. As part of the Accreditation process, the museum is required to have in place a Collections Care and Conservation policy to support the accountable management of the historic collections held in trust for the people of Inverclyde.
- 3.3 The Collections Care and Conservation policy currently in place for the McLean Museum is subject to five-year review. This updated Collections Care and Conservation policy supersedes the previous 2022 policy. It sets a framework for the preservation of the collections and buildings in the care of the Council; preventative and remedial conservation of collections; and the safe use of and access to collections, within the limits of existing resources.
- 3.4 Approval of the Watt Institution Collections Care and Conservation policy is required in support of the McLean Museum and Art Gallery's Accredited Museum status. The policy – attached as Appendix 1 – reflects sector best practice guidance, including SPECTRUM (the UK collection management standard).
- 3.5 Accredited Museum status recognises achievement of professional standards and supports the Watt Institution to access external funding to the benefit of the McLean Museum and Art Gallery and associated collections.
- 3.6 The Collections Care and Conservation policy includes an acknowledgement of work ongoing by the Watt Institution to address collections care and conservation priorities going forward, with particular reference to the Natural Sciences collection – a key founding element of the Watt's wider historic collections.
- 3.7 The policy outlines guiding principles across people, buildings and collections to ensure the safety and long-term survival of the historic collections held in trust by the Council. This includes training requirements; regular inspections of buildings and premises; and key areas of focus to inform current and future planning.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that this updated policy better reflects the current operation of the Watt Institution as a single heritage site encompassing the McLean Museum and Art Gallery; the James Watt Library; and Inverclyde Archives.
- 4.2 It is proposed that Committee approve the renamed Watt Institution Collections Care and Conservation policy, which better reflects the operational needs of the Watt Institution. The format of this policy document has also been updated to reflect the Council's recently revised standard policy template.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Legal/Risk

Should approval not be granted, there is a risk that the McLean Museum and Art Gallery may lose its Accredited Museum status, which carries the following associated risks:

- a direct negative financial impact on the delivery of museum services due to exclusion from external funding streams (specifically Museums Galleries Scotland; and National Lottery Heritage Fund).
- potential for reputational damage to Inverclyde Council

5.3 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(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 – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

N/A

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
X	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 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.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 This policy has been prepared in discussion with colleagues at the Watt Institution; it meets the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Scheme and utilises peer-reviewed resources available via the Collections Trust to ensure its content meets nationally agreed standards of good practice.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 [SPECTRUM – the UK Collection Management Standard](#)

Organisational Development, Human Resources and Performance

Collections Care and Conservation Policy: Watt Institution

Version No 2.0

Produced by:

Inverclyde Council
Municipal Buildings
GREENOCK
PA15 1LX

2025

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This document can be made available in other languages, large print, and audio format upon request.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Responsibility		
Policy Title	Corporate Group	Service
Collections Care and Conservation Policy	CCER	Cultural Services

Change History		
Version	Date	Comments
2.0	6/05/25	Policy amended to updated policy template. Statement of Purpose amended to reference the Watt Institution complex, encompassing the McLean Museum and Art Gallery; James Watt Library; and Inverclyde Archives.

Distribution
Education & Communities Committee; Director of Education, Communities and OD; Head of Service Communities, Culture and Education Resources; Cultural Services Manager; Watt Institution Team Leader; Coordinator; and officers.

Policy Review		
Updating Frequency	Next Review Date	Responsible Officer
5 years	January 2027	Cultural Services Manager

Policy Review and Approval			
Name	Action	Date	Communication

CONTENTS

Document control		
		Page
1.0	Introduction	4
1.1	Executive summary	
1.2	Background	
1.3	Strategic context	
1.4	Links to legislation	
1.5	Aim	
2.0	Scope	2
3.0	Policy Content	
3.1	Intent and principles	5
3.2	History of the collections	7
3.3	An overview of current collections	8
3.4	Themes and priorities for future collecting	9
3.5	Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal	10
3.6	Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items	11
3.7	Collecting policies of other organisations	12
3.8	Acquisition	12
3.9	Human remains	13
3.10	Biological and geological material	13
3.11	Archaeological material	13
3.12	Exceptions	13
3.13	Spoliation	14
3.14	The repatriation and restitution of objects and human remains	14
3.15	Disposal procedures	14
3.16	Disposal by exchange	15
4.0	Roles and Responsibilities	16
4.1	Chief Executive	
4.2	Directors	
4.3	Heads of Service	
4.4	Service Managers	
4.5	Officers	
5.0	Implementation	16
5.1	Training	

5.2	Communication of the policy	
6.0	Risk	17
6.1	Legislative risk	
6.2	Wider risk	
7.0	Equalities	17
7.1	Consultation and Engagement	
7.2	Equality Impact Assessment	

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Collections Care and Conservation policy outlines the general principles which underpin the care, conservation and preservation of the historic collections held in trust by Inverclyde Council.

The policy is written in accordance with the Watt Institution's statement of purpose, and should be read alongside the Watt Institution Collections Development Policy.

All Watt Institution staff and volunteers are asked to read and abide by this policy.

In line with the organisational planning cycle, associated collections care and conservation actions will form part of the Cultural Services Improvement Plan, on an annually reviewed basis.

The McLean Museum, as part of the Watt Institution, holds Accredited Museum Status. Accreditation is the UK sector standard for museums and galleries, and is administered in Scotland by Museum Galleries Scotland (MGS) (the sector body for museums).

As part of the Accreditation process, the museum is required to have in place a Collections Care and Conservation policy. The Collections Care and Conservation policy is typically subject to a five year review, in line with the Accreditation cycle. This policy – updated in line with the Council's standard policy template – supersedes the Collections Care and Conservation policy 2022.

Key changes since the last policy review include:

- an update of the policy document in line with Inverclyde Council's standard policy template
- an update of the McLean Museum statement of purpose to the Watt Institution statement of purpose, encompassing the McLean Museum and Art Gallery; James Watt Library; and Inverclyde Archives.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The previous Collections Care and Conservation policy was approved by Committee in 2022 and was included in the McLean Museum and Art Gallery's most recent Accreditation submission. This version has been updated to bring the policy in line with the Council's standard policy template.

The Collections Care and Conservation policy takes cognisance of sector standards, and sets a framework for the:

- preservation of the buildings and collections in our care;
- preventative and remedial conservation of our collections; and
- safe use of and access to our collections, within the limits of our resources.

A written Collections Care and Conservation policy provides curatorial guidance, in conjunction with the Collections Development policy; Emergency Preparedness Plan; and any other plans developed that affect the collections and museum buildings.

1.3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The museum seeks to improve the care and conditions of all our collections in accordance with the appropriate sector standards; for example [Benchmarks in Collections Care](#).

The safety and preservation of the collection will be considered from the outset of any plans to alter the displays or storage, to modify the buildings or to allow access to any part of the collections.

As activity to audit and document collections is undertaken, this information will be made accessible to the public, as appropriate. Information will be shared through digital platforms, display information and interpretation, and/or programmed events, in order to communicate how we look after our collections for the public benefit.

1.4 AIM

This policy aims to provide a context for the ongoing care and conservation of collection objects across the Watt Institution.

1 SCOPE

This policy sets a framework for the:

- preservation of the buildings and collections in our care;
- preventative and remedial conservation of our collections; and
- safe use of and access to our collections, within the limits of our resources

This policy supports Council officers with responsibility for collections management in a museum or archive setting when making decisions about the care and conservation of historic collections held in trust by the Council. It provides a set of principles that guide collections care and conservation across the museum service.

A Collections Care and Conservation policy is essential for the purpose of Museum Accreditation, and forms part of a suite of policies and associated procedures that support accountable collections management.

2 POLICY CONTENT

3.1 Statement of Purpose

The Watt Institution's statement of purpose is:

The Watt Institution – encompassing the McLean Museum and Art Gallery; James Watt Library; and Inverclyde Archives – exists to enhance and enrich the learning, leisure and cultural experiences of the people who live, work and visit in Inverclyde.

3.2 People

- 3.2.1 Ensuring our collections are cared for is the responsibility of everyone who works in or visits the Watt Institution. Any concerns regarding the care of collections should be reported in writing to the Watt Institution Coordinator.
- 3.2.2 Staff and volunteers who – in the course of their daily work – have to handle collections will all receive appropriate training. No untrained personnel are allowed to handle artefacts from the Watt's collections.
- 3.2.3 Researchers or other visitors working with collections will be briefed on how to handle the artefacts they are working with, and will be supervised at all times.
- 3.2.4 Only professionally Accredited Conservators listed on the Conservation Register will be employed to advise or work on the collections.

No item in the collection will be modified or altered until advice has been obtained from a suitably qualified and Accredited Conservator, and then only following written confirmation of the work to be undertaken and the rationale behind it.

The conservator undertaking such work must provide the museum with full written documentation of all works undertaken as well as pictorial evidence of pre, during and post works, in line with SPECTRUM standards.

The museum will keep detailed records of all treatments carried out on all artefacts, including the name and contact details of the person or company.

3.3 Buildings

- 3.3.1 The museum recognises that a programme of regular professional maintenance is fundamental to the long term preservation of both our buildings and collections. To support this we will work in partnership with Inverclyde Council's Property Services team to ensure we keep our buildings in a condition appropriate to their use.
- 3.3.2 Our collections are stored and / or displayed in the following buildings. The body responsible for the upkeep of the buildings is listed.

Building	Used for	Owner	Upkeep carried out by
Watt Institution*	McLean Museum & Art Gallery, Watt Library & Inverclyde Archives	Inverclyde Council	Inverclyde Council
Municipal Buildings*	Council Headquarters	Inverclyde Council	Inverclyde Council
Kingston Unit	Store	Inverclyde Council	Inverclyde Council
Muirshiel Regional Park –	Regional Park Visitor Centre	Inverclyde Council	Inverclyde Council

Greenock Cut Centre			
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*Grade A listed buildings

- 3.3.3 Between 2017 and 2020 the Watt Institution was closed and underwent a major programme of building conservation. The Council's Property Services team ensure that contracts are in place to ensure all statutory requirements around building safety and security are met in line with regularity requirements.
- 3.3.4 Regular inspections of all buildings are undertaken on a rolling basis, and issues are raised and actioned as they are identified. All works are overseen by the Council's Property Services team.

3.4 Collections

- 3.4.1 Watt Institution officers are aware of the myriad potential risks to the historic collections held by the Council, including – for example – environmental or security factors, poor handling, inappropriate storage and/or display, incorrect use of materials and methods, etc. Consequently there is a need to regularly, physically check on and record the condition of the collections.
- 3.4.2 Key areas to be considered when ensuring the safety and long-term survival of the historic collections held in trust are overtaken by associated plans, as relevant, and include:
- an awareness of vulnerable objects, be they in store or on display, and required mitigations;
 - identifying threats to collection objects, and required mitigations;
 - regularly checking the condition of buildings and documenting and reporting issues/potential issues;
 - undertaking an agreed and planned regular programme of building maintenance;
 - inspecting and cleaning the museum on a daily basis;
 - ensuring high standards of housekeeping;
 - ensuring artefacts on open display are regularly cleaned;
 - ensuring the collection is condition checked on a regular basis and the results and any resultant actions authorised and noted;
 - ensuring accurate collections care and conservation records are kept and updated;
 - undertaking regular environmental monitoring including temperature, relative humidity, light and dust and acting on the results as the situation requires
 - environmental control and improving the environment;
 - regular training for colleagues involved in working with the collections;
 - the development of an Integrated Pest Management Strategy, ensuring buildings and collections are regularly monitored for pests and mitigation put in place;
 - all equipment is maintained and the appropriate records kept;
 - appropriate storage materials and methods are used;
 - appropriate display materials and methods are used;
 - appropriate resources in place to ensure the care of collections; and

- appropriate professional advice is sought as situation demands before undertaking work on collection objects or buildings.

3.4.3 The collection does not contain any historical working items that require regular maintenance.

3.4.4 The Watt Institution holds a historic and diverse natural sciences collection. One of the Watt's largest collections, its origins lie in the founding of the museum increasing its significance to the venue. As fashions in displays and collections changed it has, bar a few large specimens, long been removed from display and dispersed across storage sites. However, the untapped potential of this collection as a learning resource encompassing contemporary issues around conservation and the climate crisis is recognized.

To begin to release this potential museum officers have engaged with external experts to seek advice on condition, safe handling, transportation and storage of these collections. How advice received is actioned will inform future service development plans. This work also feeds into the National Museums of Scotland's 'Natural Science Collections Across Scotland' project to increase access to, and knowledge of, natural sciences collections.

3.5 Review

Compliance with this policy and progress in implementing Collections Care and Conservation actions will be assessed as part of the Council's annual planning process as well as in addressing matters outlined in our Service Improvement Plan. The policy will be due for review in January 2027, in line with the museum Accreditation cycle.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 ELECTED MEMBERS

Elected Members should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the governing body in obligations relating to the care and conservation of historic collections.

4.2 CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chief Executive should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the governing body in obligations relating to the care and conservation of historic collections.

4.3 DIRECTORS

Directors should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the governing body in obligations relating to the care and conservation of historic collections.

4.4 HEADS OF SERVICE

Heads of Service should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the governing body in obligations relating to the care and conservation of historic collections.

4.5. SERVICE MANAGERS

The Service Manager has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this Collections Care and Conservation Policy.

4.6 OFFICERS

Officers should be aware of the requirements of this policy and meet these in operational service delivery.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 TRAINING

Specific training on the content of this policy is delivered as required.

5.2 COMMUNICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy will be available publically via the Council website.

6 RISK

6.1 LEGISLATIVE RISK

N/A.

6.2 WIDER RISKS

Without this policy the McLean Museum and Art Gallery, as part of the wider Watt Institution, would fail to meet the Museum Accreditation Standard. This in turn could expose the Council to wider financial and reputational risks.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

This policy meets the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Scheme and utilises peer-reviewed resources available via the Collections Trust to ensure its content meets nationally agreed standards of good practice.

This policy will be further reviewed as per the policy review schedule specified.

7.2 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their Protected Characteristics.

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Interim Chief Financial Officer and Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	FIN/30/25/AE/IC
Contact Officer:	Iain Cameron	Contact No:	01475 712832
Subject:	2024/25 Education Revenue Budget Update		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the projected position of the 2024/25 Education Revenue Budget.

1.3 The total Education Revenue Budget for 2024/25, excluding Earmarked Reserves, is currently £115.3m. The latest projection is an overspend of £120,000 (0.1%). This is an increase in expenditure of £136,000 since last Committee. The major projected variances are as follows:

- (a) An underspend in Employee Costs of £214,000, mainly within Teachers. This is £206,000 more expenditure than was reported at last Committee.
- (b) An overspend of £299,000 for Early Years Partner Providers, an increase of £59,000 since the last Committee.
- (c) An overspend in Catering provisions of £269,000, an increase of £45,000 since last Committee, partially offset by an over recovery in School Meals Income of £138,000, an increase of £50,000 since last Committee. Part of this over recovery is one-off in nature.
- (d) An overspend in Transport Costs of £219,000, an increase in expenditure of £24,000 since last Committee.
- (e) An underspend of £90,000 for Free School Meals payments during school holidays due to uptake being lower than budgeted.
- (f) An over recovery in Income from Other Local Authorities for ASN Placements of £100,000.
- (g) A projected underspend on the PPP Unitary Charge payment of £144,000 mainly due to insurance rebates. This is a further reduction in spend of £104,000 since last Committee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes that the Education part of the Committee's Revenue Budget is currently projected to overspend in 2024/25 by £120,000 which is partially offset by an underspend of £51,000 for the Communities part of the Committee.

Angela Edmiston
Interim Chief Financial Officer

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the current position of the 2024/25 Education Revenue Budget and to highlight the main variances contributing to the £120,000 projected overspend.
- 3.2 The current Education Revenue Budget for 2024/25 is £115.3m, which is an increase of £4.597m from the Approved Budget, largely due to additional funding for Probationary Teachers, the Teachers' superannuation rate increase and pay inflation. Appendix 1 provides more details of the budget movement.
- 3.3 **2024/25 Projected Outturn (£120,000 overspend 0.1%)**

The main projected variances contributing to the £120,000 overspend are explained in more detail below.

- (a) Employee costs are projected to underspend by £214,000. This is mainly due to:
- i. An underspend of £192,000 for Teachers. The underspend is mostly due to a number of vacant posts from August 2024. These are unallocated teachers and were kept vacant pending the budget process. Teacher expenditure has increased by £221,000 since last report due to increased supply costs.
 - ii. An overspend of £43,000 for Non Teacher staff within Primary and Secondary schools, due to not making the Turnover Savings target.
 - iii. An overspend of £27,000 for Active Schools Employees due to non-achievement of turnover savings target, offset by additional income, noted below.
 - iv. An overspend of £299,000 for ASN Non Teacher employees due to not achieving the turnover savings target.
 - v. An underspend in Early Years employees of £227,000, mainly due to a number of posts which will not be filled this financial year as a result of the mix between local authority and private provider provision. This is a reduction in spend of £22,000 since last Committee due to additional turnover savings.
 - vi. A net underspend of £86,000 for Facilities Management employees, made up of Cleaning £51,000 overspend, Janitors £67,000 overspend and Catering £204,000 underspend.
 - vii. An underspend of £142,000 within CLD due to the over achievement of Turnover Savings target. This position will not repeat in future years as a number of posts have been deleted as part of the CLD review.
 - viii. An overspend of £43,000 for Education HQ employees due to not making the Turnover target.
- (b) A projected underspend in Water Charges across the Committee totalling £51,000.
- (c) A projected underspend in the PPP Unitary Charge payment of £144,000 which is a reduction in expenditure of £104,000 since last Committee and relates to additional insurance rebates.
- (d) A projected overspend of £110,000 for Education Cleaning contract and £64,000 for Janitors, mainly due to increased employee costs within Facilities Management.
- (e) A projected overspend of £97,000 for Education Catering contract due to a net increase in Catering costs within Facilities Management. An underspend in employee costs is more than offset by overspends, mainly in Provisions.
- (f) A projected overspend in Catering Provisions of £269,000. This pressure is partially addressed for 2025/26 by additional funding for P6/7 Universal Free School Meals from the Scottish Government.

- (g) A projected overspend of £58,000 for external contract cleaners used within Facilities Management for short term sickness cover. This is £40,000 more spend than was previously reported.
- (h) Overspends in Transportation costs of £219,000, mainly due to overspends of £20,000 for Pupil Vocational Travel, £32,000 for Pupil Consortium Travel, £64,000 for Gaelic Transport, £26,000 for School Buses and £55,000 for Internal Transport. Overall, there has been an increase of £24,000 since last Committee mainly due to an increase in Internal Transport spend.
- (i) A projected overspend on ASN Resources of £30,000, as reported to the last Committee. The Corporate Director is continuing to review the main factors contributing to this overspend with the intention of reducing spend in future years.
- (j) A projected underspend of £90,000 for Free School Meals holiday payments due to the uptake being lower than budgeted for.
- (k) An overspend in Early Years Partner Provider payments of £299,000. This is an increase of £59,000 since last Committee and is due to a higher than budgeted number of placements in private nurseries. There is an underspend of £249,000 in Early Years employee costs in 2024/25, which partially offsets this. Committee has already agreed a number of actions to address this for 2025/26.
- (l) A projected underspend of £25,000 for School Clothing Grants due to uptake being lower than the budgeted amount.
- (m) A projected over recovery of ASN Income from Other Local Authorities of £100,000, as reported to last Committee. This over recovery partially offsets the projected overspend in ASN Employee Costs and Resources.
- (n) A projected over recovery of £138,000 for School Meal Income due to uptake of meals being higher than budgeted. The projection includes a £74,000 one-off Scottish Government grant to fund the write-off of historic bad debts within Primary.
- (o) A projected net over recovery of £251,000 in Facilities Management Income, Cleaning £110,000, Catering £77,000 and Janitors £64,000, which predominantly offsets increased spend above.
- (p) Additional funding for Active Schools of £25,000 which offsets an overspend in employee costs.
- (q) A projected over recovery of £23,000 for Early Year's Wraparound Income.

3.4 Earmarked Reserves

Appendix 4 gives an update on the operational Earmarked Reserves, ie excluding strategic funding models. Spend to date on these operational Earmarked Reserves is 100% of phased spend and 91.5% of the projected expenditure for 2024/25.

3.5 Virements

There are no virements this Committee cycle.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that Committee note the current projected overspend for 2024/25 of £120,000 and note that this is partially offset by an underspend of £51,000 for the Communities part of the Committee.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

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					

5.3 Legal/Risk

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

5.4 Human Resources

There are no specific human resources implications arising from this report.

5.5 Strategic

There are no specific strategic implications arising from this report.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The paper has been jointly prepared by the Interim Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Director Education, Communities, and Organisational Development.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 There are no background papers for this report.

Education Budget Movement - 2024/25

	Approved Budget		Movements		Revised Budget	
	2024/25	Inflation	Virement	Supplementary Budgets	Transferred to EMR	2024/25
Service	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Corporate Director	155	6				161
Education	92,311	2,277	187	2,053	(715)	96,113
Inclusive Education	18,146	538	113	134		18,931
Facilities Management	112	332	(328)			116
Totals	110,724	3,153	(28)	2,187	(715)	115,321

Movement Detail

£000

External Resources

Probationer Teacher Funding
Teachers Superannuation

1,009
1,178

2,187

Virements

Procurement Officer Funding
School Libraries to Communities

(18)
(10)

(28)

Inflation

Partner Providers
Catering Provisions
Teachers Pay Award
Non Teachers Pay Award

20
100
1,596
1,437

3,153

5,312

EDUCATION**REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT****CURRENT POSITION**

2023/24 Actual £000	Subjective Heading	Approved Budget 2024/25 £000	Revised Budget 2024/25 £000	Projected Out-turn 2024/25 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/ (Under)
56,007	Employee Costs - Teachers	53,661	60,212	60,020	(192)	(0.32%)
33,928	Employee Costs - Non Teachers	29,033	32,222	32,200	(22)	(0.07%)
22,479	Property Costs	23,167	23,373	23,368	(5)	(0.02%)
7,539	Supplies & Services	6,895	7,538	7,967	429	5.69%
2,933	Transport Costs	2,337	2,365	2,584	219	9.26%
752	Administration Costs	672	668	647	(21)	(3.15%)
7,044	Other Expenditure	5,043	5,818	6,038	220	3.78%
(24,289)	Income	(10,084)	(16,160)	(16,668)	(508)	3.14%
106,393	TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	110,724	116,036	116,156	120	0.10%
0	Earmarked Reserves	0	(415)	(415)	0	
0	DMR	0	(300)	(300)	0	
106,393	TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING EARMARKED	110,724	115,321	115,441	120	0.10%

2023/24 Actual £000	Objective Heading	Approved Budget 2024/25 £000	Revised Budget 2024/25 £000	Projected Out-turn 2024/25 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/ (Under)
186	Corporate Director	155	161	169	8	4.98%
75,073	Education	80,080	84,597	84,398	(199)	(0.24%)
127	Facilities Management	112	116	155	39	33.48%
11,846	School Estate Management Plan	12,231	12,231	12,088	(143)	(1.17%)
87,046	TOTAL EDUCATION SERVICES	92,423	96,944	96,641	(303)	(0.31%)
14,274	ASN	13,311	13,971	14,612	641	4.59%
2,503	Community Learning & Development	2,742	2,809	2,558	(251)	(8.94%)
2,384	Other Inclusive Education	2,093	2,151	2,176	25	1.16%
19,161	TOTAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	18,146	18,931	19,346	415	2.19%
106,393	TOTAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE	110,724	116,036	116,156	120	0.10%
0	Earmarked Reserves	0	(415)	(415)	0	
0	DMR	0	(300)	(300)	0	
106,393	TOTAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE EXCLUDING EARMARKED RESERVES	110,724	115,321	115,441	120	0.10%

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

[illegible]

EARMARKED RESERVES POSITION STATEMENT
COMMITTEE: EDUCATION

Project	Lead Officer/ Responsible Manager	c/f Funding 2023/24 £000	New Funding 2024/25 £000	Write Back to Gen Reserves	Total Funding 2024/25 £000	Phased Budget 28-Feb-25 2024/25 £000	Actual 28-Feb-25 2024/25 £000	Projected Spend 2024/25 £000	Amount to be Earmarked for 2025/26 & Beyond £000	Lead Officer Update
Beacon Arts	Tony McEwan	60			60	0	0	0	60	Contingency not allocated at this time
New to Scotland Funding	Michael Roach	175	203		378	161	161	176	202	Funding EAL Teachers up to June 2025. New funding of £203k received from HSCP in 2024/25 with approximately £148k uncommitted at this time.
Probationer Teacher Smoothing Reserve	Michael Roach	0	415		415	0	0	0	415	As part of the 2025/26 budget process £200k added to Probationer Teachers' income target, based on surplus income in the previous four years. This reserve has been created from 2024/25 excess funding to smooth out future years' grant levels, if required.
Total		235	618	0	853	161	161	176	677	

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks, Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/31/25/MR
Contact Officer:	Ruth Binks	Contact No:	01475 712146
Subject:	Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 - Annual Refresh and Performance Summary 2024/25		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☒ For Decision ☐ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is present the Committee with the refreshed Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan. The Plan contains new, or revised, improvement actions for reporting year 2025/26 that require approval.
- 1.3 The Committee received a comprehensive report, providing an update on the progress made in delivering the Committee Plan 2023/26, at its last meeting on 18 March 2025. For completeness, this report includes a summary of the overall progress that was achieved in delivering the Committee Plan, as at the end of year two (2024/25).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- Note the progress that has been made in delivering the Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan during 2024/25.
 - Approve the refreshed Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan, to be implemented in 2025/26.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director,
Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans 2023/26 (referred to as Committee Plans) are a key component of the Council’s refreshed strategic planning and performance management framework. The Committee Plan enables scrutiny of:
- Strategic activity within the Committee remit; and
 - How the Committee is helping to deliver the Council Plan outcomes
- 3.2 The Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 was approved on 9 May 2023. Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan has also been approved by the Environment and Regeneration Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee.
- 3.3 Now entering the final year of its three-year term, the Committee Plan has been reviewed and refreshed to ensure that actions that continue to be priorities for the Directorate carry forward to the next planning year; actions that have been delivered are closed off and new opportunities, challenges and responsibilities are captured.
- 3.4 **EDUCATION AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE PLAN 2023/26: YEAR END PERFORMANCE SUMMARY**
- 3.5 The Committee Plan 2023/26 contains 15 high level actions, each underpinned by a number of sub-actions.
- 3.6 This Committee has previously considered two performance reports in relation to the delivery of the Education and Communities Committee Plan in year two, the most recent of which was presented at the last meeting of the Committee on 18 March 2025. Details of the status of each action, i.e. complete, on track or slippage, along with a performance narrative was provided within that report. The latest KPI performance data was also provided.
- 3.7 A summary of the status of the 15 high level actions at the end of 2024/25 is provided below for the attention of the Committee.

Status at end March 2025	Fully Complete	On track / ongoing	Slippage
	4	7	4

Actions that are now fully complete i.e. all associated sub-actions were delivered by the end of year two are as follows:

- The establishment of secondary Gaelic Education provision in Inverclyde.
- Developments to support an increase in the uptake of free school meals in secondary establishments.
- Carry out Service Reviews in accordance with the Councils change programme.
- Increase visitor numbers across Watt Institution exhibitions, events and activities.

Ongoing

The following actions were scheduled for delivery beyond 2024/25. As these are ongoing, each has been updated and rolled forward into the refreshed Committee Plan.

- Targeted interventions will be put in place to reduce the poverty related attainment gap and support equity in education.
- The development of enhanced pathways for Senior Phase pupils.
- Enhance Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision.
- Implementation of the Early Adopter Affordable (EAC) Childcare Programme.
- The implementation of the CLD Strategy 2024/27 has been integrated within a new wider action on supporting the work of the Inverclyde Alliance 'Thriving Communities' thematic group.
- The delivery of the Education Improvement Plan.
- Lead the Council's approach to asset transfer.

Slippage

Actions where completion by the original due date was not achieved in 2024/25 are:

- The review of the PSE curriculum, which is part of the wider action to support health and wellbeing in schools, will continue into the new academic year.
- Inverclyde Libraries use of data to inform Health and Wellbeing programming and development decisions. Understanding of uptake and use of resources and participation in activities and events will continue to shape programming for 2025/26.
- The implementation of approved approaches to the gathering and evaluation of performance in relation of CLD services will be taken forward as part of a new action focusing on the transition to the Inclusive Communities Service.
- The refresh of the Inverclyde Heritage Strategy Action Plan will continue into 2025/26 as part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund supported 'Connecting Inverclyde Heritage Project'.

These actions have been carried forward into year three, with new deadlines set.

3.8 KPI performance

The most recent performance data for all the Committee Plan KPIs is provided within the refreshed Plan. The Committee is asked to note that as the school academic year is ongoing, full year data is not yet available for some KPIs.

3.9 Measures where the year-end performance target was achieved are:

- The literacy attainment gap for P1,P4 and P7 combined (LGBF).
- The school attendance rate (per 100 looked after pupils) (LGBF).
- The percentage of primary school pupils present taking school meals (P1-P7).
- The number of young people participating in accredited schemes (Duke of Edinburgh)
- The number of active borrowers at Inverclyde libraries (in person and electronic).

3.10 Performance for a number of measures fell below target but remained within a 5% tolerance level (amber status). These are:

- Percentage of P1,P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE level in literacy (LGBF).
- Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils achieving expected CFE level in numeracy (LGBF).
- Numeracy attainment gap (P1, P4 and P7 combined) (LGBF).
- Proportion of funded early years provision which is graded good or better (LGBF).
- School attendance rate (per 100 pupils) (LGBF).
- The percentage of young people participating in active schools (LGBF) n.b this data is at the end of term two and it is expected that the target will be achieved by the end of the academic year.
- The proportion of school pupils entering positive destinations (LGBF).
- The percentage of 16–19-year-olds participating in learning, training or work (LGBF).

3.11 A number of KPIs have a red status, i.e. performance in the year was 5% or more below target:

- The percentage of adults satisfied with libraries (LGBF).
- The percentage of adults satisfied with museum (LGBF).
- The percentage of adults satisfied with leisure (LGBF).
- The percentage adults satisfied with local schools (LGBF).
- The percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (LGBF).
- The percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (LGBF).
- The percentage of pupils from 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (LGBF).
- The percentage of pupils from 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (LGBF).
- Overall average total tariff score (LGBF).
- Average total tariff score in SIMD quintile 1 (LGBF).
- The percentage of secondary school pupils present taking school meals (free or paid for).
- Number of adult learners supported by CLD achieving core skills qualifications.
- Total number of in person visits for library purposes.
- Total number of in person visits to the Watt Institution.

It should be noted that the red status for the LGBF measures relates to performance against a target which has been set by the authority. Whilst the local target may not have been achieved, in many instances Inverclyde outperformed the Scottish and Family Group average. More information is provided in the KPI scorecard.

3.12 EDUCATION AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE PLAN ANNUAL REFRESH

3.13 The Committee Plans are subject to annual review to ensure that the improvement actions remain relevant and reflect any emerging challenges or legislation that will impact on the Directorate during the remaining term of the Plan.

3.14 Appendix 1 contains an action tracker to ensure that the Committee has full oversight of the changes that have been made to the refreshed action plan. The refreshed Education and Communities Committee Plan is attached as Appendix 2.

3.15 The focus of the Committee Plan continues to be on the areas of strategic importance that support the achievement of Council Plan 2023/28 outcomes. All actions and delivery timescales have been updated to reflect the current position as the Plan enters its final year. Performance in key areas will continue to be monitored and reported to the Committee.

3.16 In particular, the attention of the Committee is drawn to the inclusion of four new actions within the Plan, to be implemented in 2025/26:

- Manage the transition to Inclusive Communities following the review of the CLD Service carried out in 2024.
- Support the delivery of the Inverclyde Alliance 'Thriving Communities' thematic group action plan.
- Undertake a review of the Watt Institution's Audience Development Plan, to improve accessibility, increase visitor numbers, and inform programming.
- The evaluation of Inverclyde Libraries Service via the refreshed 'How Good is our Public Library Service' framework.

3.17 The Committee Plan Risk Register has also been reviewed and is included within the refreshed Committee Plan. Updates against the areas of highest risk will continue to be provided on a six-monthly basis.

3.18 The refreshed Plan includes details of Council policies that fall within the remit of this Committee and the date of the next planned review.

3.19 Progress in the delivery of the Committee Plan will continue to be reported to every second meeting of this Committee. The Committee will also continue to receive a number of annual reports on a range of thematic work related to its remit.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 The Committee is asked to note the progress that has been achieved in delivering the Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 in its second year.

4.2 The Committee is asked to approve the refreshed Committee Plan, which will be implemented in year three (2025/26).

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

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					

5.3 Legal/Risk

There are no legal implications associated with this report, whilst the key Committee risks are highlighted within the full Committee Plan 2023/26.

5.4 Human Resources

There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

5.5 Strategic

The Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 directly supports the Council Plan 2023/28 and is aligned to the delivery of the Council Plan outcomes.









6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 None.









7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.









Appendix 1: Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Action Tracker

Ref	Action 2024/25	Overall status 31/03/25	Original key deliverables	Original Due Date	Revised due date	Annual refresh 2025/26: Key points
CMTE/ EDC001 Poverty related attainment gap	Targeted interventions will be put in place to reduce the poverty related attainment gap and support equity in education.	 Complete	Implementation of the Scottish Attainment Challenge refresh (year 3), including ongoing assessment and tracking development work.	30-Jun-2025	Complete	Complete. New action added focusing on the final year of the Attainment Challenge.
		 Ongoing	Refresh and deliver the Scottish Attainment Challenge Plan (year 4).	30-Jun-2026	No change	This action has been continued in the refreshed plan.
		 Ongoing	Continue to track progress towards agreed CORE and CORE+ Stretch Aims.	Ongoing	No change	This action has been continued in the refreshed plan.
CMTE/ EDC002 Senior Phase Pathways year 3	Enhance pathways for Senior Phase pupils through the implementation of the Senior Phase Action Plan (year 3).	 Complete	Carry out a consultation on the number of qualifications that can be taken in S5.	30-Jun-2025	Complete	Complete. New action added focusing on the implementation of the recommendations of the Senior Phase consultation.
		 Complete	Fully implement revised Leaver's guidance in 2024/25.	30-Jun-2025	Complete	This action has been removed from the action plan.
		 Ongoing	Continue to improve the offer for our young people who are most at risk of missing out, with a particular focus on pathways in construction, engineering, access courses for Higher Education and opportunities to move into employment from school.	30-Jun-2025	30-Jun-2026	This action has been updated and rolled forward in the refreshed plan.
CMTE/ EDC003 ASN Provision	Enhance Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision.	 Ongoing	Continue to review and develop capacity of specialist ASN provision.	30-Jun-2025	30-Jun-2026	This action has been continued in the refreshed plan. It also includes a new action to review ASN holiday provision as well as childcare provision.
		 Complete	Continue to develop the virtual school model to meet the needs of looked after children.	30-Jun-2025	Complete	This action has been removed from the action plan.









Appendix 1: Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Action Tracker

Ref	Action 2024/25	Overall status 31/03/25	Original key deliverables	Original Due Date	Revised due date	Annual refresh 2025/26: Key points
CMTE/ EDC004 Health and Wellbeing in Schools	Increase the support for Health and Wellbeing in Schools.	 Ongoing	Link with partners and school leaders to refocus on the substance misuse strategy.	30-Jun-2025	30-Jun-2025	This is an ongoing action.
		 Slippage	Initiate a review of the PSE Curriculum.	30-Jun-2025	30-Jun-2026	There has been slippage in this action, new delivery timescale set.
		 Ongoing	Continue to roll out the Attendance Strategy, with a particular focus on ensuring highly effective planning for pupils with less than 20% attendance.	30-Jun-2025	30-Jun-2026	This will continue into the new academic year and focus on the implementation of the new Attendance Strategy.
CMTE/ EDC005 Collective Force for Health & Wellbeing	Promote the libraries service as part of the Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing.	 Ongoing	Promote Inverclyde Libraries as a source of trusted health and wellbeing information, to help support individuals to make informed choices about their health.	31-Mar-2025	31-Mar-2026	This is an ongoing action which continues into 2025/26.
		 Ongoing	Progress Inverclyde Libraries Service as a Pathfinder for Dementia Services.	31-Mar-2025	31-Mar-2026	This is an ongoing action and has been widened to include reference to health and wellbeing services.
		 Slippage	Engage with data to inform Health and Wellbeing programming and development decisions.	31-Aug-2024	31-Mar-2026	This is an ongoing action and has been widened to include an evaluation of impact.
CMTE/ EDC006 Affordable Childcare Programme	Implement Phase 2 of the Early Adopter Affordable (EAC) Childcare Programme.	 Ongoing	Continue to implement a person-centred programme offering parents on a low income affordable out-of-school childcare in Port Glasgow.	31-Mar-2025	31-Mar-2026	This is an ongoing action which has been updated to include reference to the Fairer Futures Programme.
CMTE/ EDC007 Review of CLD	Review of the Community Learning and Development Service as part of the Council's Delivering	 Complete	Undertake a workforce review to ensure consistent staffing across all CLD disciplines.	31-Mar-2025	Complete	This action is complete and has been removed from the action plan. A new action on the transition to the new Inclusive






Appendix 1: Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Action Tracker

Ref	Action 2024/25	Overall status 31/03/25	Original key deliverables	Original Due Date	Revised due date	Annual refresh 2025/26: Key points
	Differently Programme and workstreams.	 Complete	Implement the recommendations of the Education Scotland inspection, 2024.	31-Mar-2025	Complete	Communities service model has been created. Complete. This has been removed from the action plan.
		 Slippage	Implement approved approaches to the gathering and evaluation of performance data in relation to CLD Services.	31-Mar-2025	31-Mar-2026	Slippage previously reported to Committee. This is an ongoing action which will continue in 2025/26 as part of the new action on Inclusive Communities.
		 Complete	Proposed savings and efficiencies will require to be identified and reported to the Committee.	31-Mar-2025	Complete	Complete. This has been removed from the action plan.
CMTE/ EDC008 Gaelic GME Secondary Provision	Provision for secondary Gaelic Education in Inverclyde will be established.	 Complete	Development of Gaelic GME secondary provision and the implementation of year 1	30-Jun-2025	-	Complete. This has been removed from the action plan.
CMTE/ EDC009 Heritage Assets	Launch the National Heritage Lottery Heritage Fund supported 'Connecting Inverclyde Heritage Project' to progress the delivery of the Inverclyde Heritage Strategy.	 Complete	Appointment of a Connecting Inverclyde Heritage co-ordinator.	31-Mar-2025	Complete	Complete. This action has been removed from the action plan.
		 Slippage	Refresh of the Inverclyde Heritage Strategy Action Plan.	31-Mar-2025	31-Mar-2027	This action has a new due date. A number of other sub-actions associated with the Heritage Strategy have also been developed for 2025/26.
CMTE/ EDC010 CLD Strategic Plan	Development and delivery of a three-year CLD Strategic Plan for 2024/27.	 Complete	With partners, develop a new CLD Strategy 2024/27.	30-Sep-2024	Complete	Complete. This action has been removed from the action plan.
		 Ongoing	Implementation of the Strategy, with annual reporting to the Alliance Board.	30-Sep-2027	No change	This action has been revised to reflect the role of the service in supporting the work of


Appendix 1: Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Action Tracker

Ref	Action 2024/25	Overall status 31/03/25	Original key deliverables	Original Due Date	Revised due date	Annual refresh 2025/26: Key points
						the Inverclyde Alliance Thriving Communities thematic group.
CMTE/ EDC011 Asset Transfer	Continue to lead on the Council's approach to community asset transfer.	 Ongoing	Improve access to information in relation to community asset transfer.	31-Mar-2025	31-Mar-2026	This is an ongoing action which will continue in 2025/26.
CMTE/ EDC012 Continuous Improvement in Education Services	Implement the Education Improvement Plan to deliver continuous improvement in Education Services.	 Ongoing	Further develop the strategy for Play Pedagogy beyond Primary 2.	30-Jun-2025	30-Jun-2026	This is an ongoing action which has been developed further to incorporate the revised Literacy and Numeracy strategies.
		 Complete	Continue to roll out the Literacy Strategy, with a focus on highly effective teaching of listening, talking and writing.	30-Jun-2025	Complete	Complete. The focus on improving literacy and numeracy will continue as part of the work around pedagogy.
		 Ongoing	Carry out a review of the approach to curriculum design across S1-S3 of the BGE.	30-Jun-2025	30-Jun-2026	This is an ongoing action and updated for 2025/26.
		 Complete	Continue to develop the work of the STEM Project Lead in supporting schools to develop their STEM curriculum and focus on sustainability.	30-Jun-2025	Complete	Complete. This has been removed from the action plan.
		 Ongoing	Begin the process to review the current Digital Strategy, including the ongoing plan to refresh devices in education establishments.	30-Jun-2025	30-Jun-2026	This is an ongoing action that will continue in the new academic year.
CMTE/ EDC013 School meal uptake	Increase in the uptake of school meals in secondary establishments.	 Complete	Ongoing implementation of the Action Plan that was developed following the review of the school meal service.	31-Mar-2025	Complete	Complete, with final report due in April 2025. A new action has developed focusing on the implementation of the agreed recommendations.
		 Complete	Develop proposals for the potential next ICT phase to meet customer needs,	31-Mar-2025	Complete	Complete. This has been removed from the action plan.

Appendix 1: Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Action Tracker

Ref	Action 2024/25	Overall status 31/03/25	Original key deliverables	Original Due Date	Revised due date	Annual refresh 2025/26: Key points
			improve the dining experience and reduce waste.			
CMTE/ EDC014 Service Reviews	Undertake Service Reviews in accordance with the Council's Change Programme.	 Complete	Undertake a service review of the Community Grants Fund through a range of desktop exercises, consultation with stakeholders and elected member workshops.	31-Dec-2024	Complete	Complete. This action has been removed from the action plan.
		 Complete	Undertake a service review of the School Crossing Patrol sites through a range of desktop exercises, consultation with stakeholders and elected member workshops.	31-Dec-2024	Complete	Complete. This action has been removed from the action plan.
		 Complete	Undertake a service review of the Home Link Service through a range of desktop exercises, consultation with stakeholders and elected member workshops.	31-Dec-2024	Complete	Complete. This action has been removed from the action plan.
		<i>On hold</i>	Undertake a service review of the Breakfast Club provision through a range of desktop exercises, consultation with stakeholders and elected member workshops.	31-Dec-2024	-	This has been put on hold due to competing priorities and the initiation of a Test of Change through the Early Adopted Childcare funding.
CMTE/ EDC015 Watt Institution	Increase visitor numbers across Watt Institution exhibitions, events and activities.	 Complete	Increase use of the museum, archive and local history collections at the Watt Institution as a research and learning resource.	31-Mar-2025	Complete	Complete. This action has been removed from the action plan, however a new action relating to the Watt Institution's Audience Development Plan developed.
		 Complete	Develop digital audiences through use of social media platforms.	31-Mar-2025	Complete	Complete. This action has been removed from the action plan.

Appendix 1: Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25 Action Tracker

Ref	Action 2024/25	Overall status 31/03/25	Original key deliverables	Original Due Date	Revised due date	Annual refresh 2025/26: Key points
		 Complete	Deliver a five-year exhibition and associated audience development plan for the Watt Institution.	31-Mar-2025	Complete	Complete. This action has been removed from the action plan.
		 Complete	Work with colleagues in CLD to identify opportunities to use museum and heritage resources to support adult learning, skills development and New Scots programming.	31-Mar-2025	Complete	Complete. This action has been removed from the action plan.

Education and Communities

COMMITTEE DELIVERY AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023/26

ANNUAL REFRESH 2025/26

Education and Communities Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26

In April 2023, Inverclyde Council committed to the delivery of a new, ambitious Council Plan 2023/28. The Council Plan established a number of priorities for the Council.

Theme 1: PEOPLE

- Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education;
- Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced;
- People are supported to improve their health and wellbeing;
- More people will be in employment, with fair pay and conditions; and
- Our most vulnerable families and residents are safeguarded and supported.

Theme 2: PLACE

- Our communities are thriving, growing and sustainable
- Our strategic housing function is robust;
- Our economy and skills base are developed;
- We have a sufficient supply of business premises; and
- Our natural environment is protected.

Theme 3: PERFORMANCE

- High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money; and
- Our employees are supported and developed.

Annual Refresh 2024/25

This Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 was developed following an assessment of how the Directorate could support the delivery of Council Plan priorities and the achievement of Best Value. Now entering the second year of its three-year term, the Plan has been reviewed and refreshed to ensure that actions that continue to be priorities for the Directorate carry forward to the next planning year; actions that have been delivered are closed off and new opportunities, challenges and responsibilities are captured.

Directorate Overview

This Plan encompasses a diverse range of services that work together and in partnership with other organisations to deliver better outcomes for the residents of Inverclyde. The key functions of the Directorate include:

Education Services	Early Years, Primary Education, Secondary Education, Curriculum for Excellence, continuous improvement, GIRFEC, Additional Support Needs, educational psychology, child protection (Looked After Children) Services, Attainment Challenge
Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	Facilities management, libraries, museums & archives, arts, culture and music, educational transport and support services, Active schools & sports development, adult learning and literacies, youth work, community capacity building, community safety and resilience, child poverty, community empowerment, asset transfer and locality planning

The Delivery and Improvement Plan shows how the Directorate will help to deliver the Council Plan priorities through the implementation of the following workstreams:

Delivery and Improvement Plan

PEOPLE

What will be delivered?		How will this be delivered?	Due Date	What difference will it make?	Alignment to the Council Plan
1.	<u>Poverty related attainment gap</u> Targeted interventions will be in place to reduce the poverty related attainment gap and support equity in education.	Implementation of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (final year) Refresh and deliver the Scottish Attainment Challenge plan (final year) Continue to track progress towards agreed Local Authority CORE and CORE+ Stretch Aims. Lead Officer: Head of Education Services	30/06/26 30/06/26 Ongoing	Educational outcomes for children living in our most deprived communities are improved.	Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education. Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced
2.	<u>Senior Phase Pathways</u> Pathways for Senior Phase pupils will be enhanced.	Implementation of the recommendations of the Senior Phase consultation. Continue to improve the offer for our young people who are most at risk of missing out (ASN, CEYP and pupils from SIMD1), with a particular focus on pathways in construction, engineering, access courses for Higher Education and opportunities to move into employment from school. Lead Officer: Head of Education Services	30/06/26 30/06/26	Young people have access to a broader range of progression pathways and a wider range of qualifications Gap between the positive destination of all pupils and those who are ASN, CEYP and pupils from SIMD1 is closing	Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education.

What will be delivered?		How will this be delivered?	Due Date	What difference will it make?	Alignment to the Council Plan
3.	<u>ASN Provision</u> Enhance Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision.	Continue to review and develop the capacity of ASN provision. This includes the review of related service areas, such as transport. Continue to review ASN holiday provision as well as childcare provision. Lead Officer: Head of Education Services	30/06/26	The ASN specialist primary provision capacity will be increased accordingly to best meet pupils' needs Families with young children who have additional support needs feel better supported during the holiday period.	Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education.
4.	<u>Health and Wellbeing in Schools</u> Increased support for Health and Wellbeing in schools.	Link with partners and school leaders to refocus on the substance misuse strategy. Initiate a review of the PSE Curriculum. Implementation of the new Attendance Strategy, with a particular focus on ensuring highly effective planning for pupils with less than 20% attendance. Lead Officer: Head of Education Services	30/06/25 30/06/26 30/06/26	All secondary schools have resources/ materials to support pupils and are using these. PSE curriculum improvements are identified and actioned. Action is clear regarding life skills package and resources for Senior Phase pupils. Attendance is improving for all pupils, particularly for key groups i.e. ASN, CEYP, pupils in SIMD 1&2 and those with low attendance.	Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education.
5.	<u>Health Literacy in Libraries</u> Ensure appropriate resources in libraries to support people to self-manage, maintain and improve their health and wellbeing.	Work with partners in health and social care and the third sector, under the Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing initiative, to provide up-to-date health information that empowers people to be leaders in their own health and wellbeing.	31/03/26	Information on health care is easily accessible to the public and available within their community.	People are supported to improve their health and wellbeing.

What will be delivered?		How will this be delivered?	Due Date	What difference will it make?	Alignment to the Council Plan
		Branch libraries are promoted as a source of trusted health and wellbeing information, to help support individuals to make informed choices about their health.	31/03/26	Service delivery is tailored to meet the needs of our most vulnerable residents	
		Continued support of the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Realistic Medicine initiative (following a successful pilot), by facilitating access to the Realistic Medicine app and resources through branch libraries.	31/03/26		
		Progress Inverclyde Libraries Service as a Pathfinder for health and wellbeing services.	31/03/26		
		Engage with data to inform Health and Wellbeing programming and development decisions and evaluate impact. Lead Officer: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	31/03/26		
6.	<u>Affordable childcare and Fairer Futures Programme</u> Implement Phase 2 of the Early Adopter Affordable Childcare Programme.	Continue to implement a person-centred programme offering parents on a low income affordable out of school childcare in Port Glasgow.	31/03/26	Financial pressures associated with childcare are reduced and working parents are supported.	Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced

What will be delivered?		How will this be delivered?	Due Date	What difference will it make?	Alignment to the Council Plan
		Lead Officer: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources			
7.	<u>Transition to Inclusive Communities (New)</u> Implementation of the recommendations from the Community Learning and Development review, carried out in 2024.	Following the review of the CLD Service, continue the transition from CLD to Inclusive Communities. Implement improved approaches to the gathering and evaluation of performance data in relation to CLD services. Lead Officer: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	31/03/26 31/03/26	The service structure reflects the changing nature of need and service delivery. Efficiencies are achieved and resources are better aligned to the needs of communities.	Our most vulnerable families and residents are safeguarded and supported.

PLACE

What will be delivered?		How will this be delivered?	Due Date	What difference will it make?	Alignment to the Council Plan
8.	<u>Inverclyde Heritage Strategy</u> Deliver the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) supported 'Connecting Inverclyde Heritage Project'	Undertake a programme of community engagement activities to identify key heritage narratives across Inverclyde. Pilot partnership activity to encourage participation in heritage-based events and activities across Inverclyde. Refresh the Inverclyde Heritage Strategy Action Plan. Lead Officer: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	31/12/25 30/03/26 31/03/27	Support the wider local agenda to increase tourism and visitor numbers to the area. Inverclyde's culture and heritage is preserved.	Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable
9.	<u>Thriving Communities (NEW)</u> Support the delivery of the Inverclyde Alliance Thriving Communities thematic group action plan.	Lead on the delivery of key partnership strategies and workstreams including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Learning and Development Strategic Plan 2024/27. • Active Inverclyde Strategy. • Locality Planning. Lead Officer: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	31/03/26	Partnership working helps to deliver improved outcomes for the residents of Inverclyde.	Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable

What will be delivered?		How will this be delivered?	Due Date	What difference will it make?	Alignment to the Council Plan
10.	<u>Asset transfer</u> Continue to lead the Council's approach to community asset transfer	Continue to improve access to information in relation to community asset transfer to encourage groups to consider asset transfer Lead Officer: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	30/03/26	Community empowerment is supported via community asset ownership and management	Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable

PERFORMANCE

What will be delivered?		How will this be delivered?	Due Date	What difference will it make?	Alignment to the Council Plan
11.	<p><u>Continuous improvement in Education Services</u></p> <p>Continuous improvement in the Education Service will be delivered via the implementation of an Education Improvement Plan</p>	<p>Continue to roll out the Literacy and revised Numeracy Strategies with a focus on highly effective pedagogy.</p> <p>Introduce a Curriculum Development Governance Group to oversee various development including the ongoing review of the approach to curriculum design across S1-3 of the BGE, linking our work to the national Curriculum Improvement Cycle.</p> <p>Introduce a revised Establishment Improvement Framework to ensure a proportionate approach to the quality assurance of the quality of education in each establishment, as well as support and promote self-evaluation and improvement.</p> <p>Review the current Digital Strategy, including the ongoing plan to refresh devices in education establishments.</p> <p>Lead Officer: Head of Education Services</p>	<p>30/06/26</p> <p>30/06/26</p> <p>30/06/25</p> <p>30/06/26</p>	<p>The needs of children and young people at key developmental stages are better met.</p> <p>Improvement in attainment in BGE listening, talking and writing from June 24 data – linked stretch aims being met.</p> <p>Continuous improvement is supported.</p> <p>Refreshed Digital Strategy 2025/30 supports improvements in learning.</p>	High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money
12.	<p><u>School meal provision</u></p> <p>Implement the agreed recommendations of the external review of the school catering service</p>	<p>Any significant changes to the delivery of the school meal service to be agreed by the Education and Communities Committee.</p>	31/03/26	<p>Increased uptake in school meals.</p> <p>Greater value for money is being achieved.</p>	High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money

What will be delivered?		How will this be delivered?	Due Date	What difference will it make?	Alignment to the Council Plan
		Lead Officer: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources			
13.	<u>Watt Institution (NEW)</u> Undertake a review of the Watt Institution's Audience Development Plan, to improve accessibility, increase visitor numbers, and inform programming.	Via consultation with professional networks and key stakeholders; through review of current visitor evaluations; and with reference to established sector guidance. Submit application to the Scottish Council on Archives for Archive Accreditation. Lead Officer: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	31/03/26 31/03/26	Increase in visitor numbers (physical and virtual) Adult learners and New Scots have a greater range of learning experiences	High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money
14.	<u>Inverclyde Libraries (NEW)</u> Evaluation of Inverclyde Libraries service via the refreshed How Good is Our Public Library Service (HGIOPLS) quality framework.	Collate evidence in line with the established HGIOPLS Quality Indicators and submit for peer evaluation. There are three Quality Indicators – these will be approached one-by-one on a rolling basis over the next two years. Lead Officer: Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	31/03/27	Continuous improvement in the library services is delivered.	High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money

Education and Communities Annual Report Schedule

The following reports will be submitted to Committee on an annual basis.

- Children's Services Plan
- Education Standards and Quality Report
- Education Services Improvement Plan
- Annual report on Attainment Challenge
- Community Learning and Development Annual Report
- Regional Improvement Collaborative Plan
- Active Schools
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Inverclyde Leisure Annual Report
- Education Authority Equality Mainstreaming Report 2023 and Progress on Education Equality Outcomes Improvement Plan 2021/25 (every two years)

Education and Communities: Policy & Strategy Review Register 2024/26

2024

Name of Policy / Strategy	Lead Officer	Service Area	Status	Date of next planned review
Attendance Strategy 2024/26	Depute Principal Educational Psychologist	Education	Reported 05.11.24	November 2026
Community Grants Fund	Service Manager – CLD	Communities	Reported 21.05.24	When changes to the grants criteria are proposed by Elected Members
Promoting Positive Relationships	Principal Educational Psychologist	Education	Awaiting publication of national guidance	
Community Learning and Development Strategy	Service Manager - CLD	Communities	Reported 07.11.24	November 2027
Watt Institution Collection Development Policy	Cultural Services Manager	Cultural Services	Reported 21.01.25	May 2030
Inverclyde Archives and Watt Library Collecting Policy	Cultural Services Manager	Cultural Services	Amalgamated within the Watt Institution Collection Development Policy, reported 21.01.25	This will no longer reported separately but will be reviewed as part of an amalgamated policy noted above.
Early Learning Centres - Admissions	Education Manager	Education	Reported 05.11.24	November 2027
School Transport Policy	Head of Culture, Communities & Educational Resources	Educational Resources	Reported 21.01.25	January 2029

Name of Policy / Strategy	Lead Officer	Service Area	Status	Date of next planned review
Bereavement and loss guidance	Principal Educational Psychologist	Education	Reported 18.03.25	March 2030
Protecting Children and Supporting their Wellbeing (Education Services – Child Protection Guidelines)	Head of Education	Education	Reported 18.03.25	March 2026

2025

Name of Policy / Strategy	Lead Officer	Service Area	Status	Date of next planned review
Bereavement and loss guidance	Principal Educational Psychologist	Education	Reported 18.03.25	March 2030
Protecting Children and Supporting their Wellbeing (Education Services – Child Protection Guidelines)	Head of Education	Education	Reported 18.03.25	March 2026
Anti-Bullying Policy	Principal Educational Psychologist	Education	Reported 20.05.25	March 2029
Collections care and conservation policy	Cultural Services Manager	Cultural Services	Due March 2025	
Additional Support for Learning Policy	Education Manager	Education	Due June 2025	
Documentation Policy	Cultural Services Manager	Cultural Services	Due 2025	






2026








Name of Policy / Strategy	Lead Officer	Service Area	Date of next planned review
Schools Financial Scheme of Delegation	Head of Education	Education	March 2026
Community Safety & Resilience Strategy (Alliance)	Service Manager – CLD	Communities	June 2026
Violence against Women and Girls Strategy (Alliance)	Service Manager – CLD	Communities	June 2026
Review of Parental Involvement Strategy	Education Manager	Education	2026








Education and Communities Key Performance Indicators







The Directorate will monitor the performance of these key performance indicators over the lifetime of the Plan. Depending on the data source, new performance data will be provided to the Committee within the performance reports as it becomes available. In the case of national data, this is likely to be annually, however service performance data will be presented to the Committee more frequently.









The latest performance data for reporting year 2024/25 is provided below where data is available. Where it is not yet available, the 'latest status' icon relates to performance against target achieved in most recent year.


Key Performance Measures	Performance				Latest status	Target 2025/26	Comment	Frequency of reporting
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25				
% of adults satisfied with libraries (LGBF)	2018/21 76.5%	2019/22 74.3%	2020/23 70%	2021/24 67.7%		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2024 target = 73% Scottish average: 67% Family group average: 61.6%	Annual
% of adults satisfied with museum (LGBF)	2018/21 59.6%	2019/22 59.7%	2020/23 63%	2021/24 61.7%		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2024 target = 65% Scotland - 69.3% Family group - 58%	Annual
% of adults satisfied with leisure (LGBF)	2018/21 78.7%	2019/22 77%	2020/23 75.7%	2021/24 73%		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2024 target = 77% Scotland - 67% Family group - 61.7%	Annual
% adults satisfied with local schools (LGBF)	2018/21 78.7%	2019/22 76.7%	2020/23 73.7%	2021/24 67.7%		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2024 target = 75% Scotland - 70.7% Family group - 70.1%	Annual
% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (LGBF)	69%	67%	64%	Due April 2026		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2023/24 target = 71% Scotland = 67% Family group = 64%	Annual




Key Performance Measures	Performance				Latest status	Target 2025/26	Comment	Frequency of reporting
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25				
% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (LGBF)	40%	35%	34%	Due April 2026		Meet or exceed Scottish average	Data lag in the reporting of this data. 2023/24 target = 40% Scotland - 39% Family group - 34%	Annual
% of pupils from 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (LGBF)	58%	58%	52%	Due April 2026		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2023/24 target = 61% Scotland – 50% Family group – 50%	Annual
% of pupils from 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6 (LGBF)	26%	22%	20%	Due April 2026		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2023/24 target = 27% Scotland – 23% Family group – 22%	Annual
Overall average total tariff score (LGBF)	1022	861	862	Due Nov 2025		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2023/24 target = 950 Scottish average: 917 Family group average: 829	Annual
Average total tariff score in SIMD quintile 1 (LGBF)	810	690	682	Due Nov 2025		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2023/24 target = 750 Scottish average: 658 Family group average: 660	Annual
Percentage of P1,P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE level in literacy	73.7%	76.4%	76.5%	Due Dec 2025		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2023/24 target = 77% Scottish average: 74% Family group average: 73%	Annual
Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils achieving expected CFE level in numeracy	80.2%	83.3%	81.7%	Due Dec 2025		Meet or exceed	2023/24 target = 83.5% Scottish average – 80.3% Family group average: 78.9%	Annual

Key Performance Measures	Performance				Latest status	Target 2025/26	Comment	Frequency of reporting
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25				
						Scottish average		
Literacy attainment gap (P1, P4 and P7 combined) (LGBF)	20.6%	24.9%	19%	Due Dec 2025		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2023/24 stretch target between 19% - 17.5% 2023/24 Scottish average: 20.2% Family group average: 17.1%	Annual
Numeracy attainment gap (P1, P4 and P7 combined) (LGBF)	17.3%	16.3%	15.8%	Due Dec 2025		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2023/24 stretch target between 15.5% - 14% 2023/24 Scottish average: 17.4% Family group average: 15%	Annual
Proportion of funded early years provision which is graded good or better (LGBF)	83.3%	93.5%	96.6%	Due Oct 2025		100%	2023/24 target = 100% Scottish average: 89.8% Family group average: 91.6%	Annual
School attendance rate (per 100 pupils) (LGBF)	-	90.3%	90.6%	Due Dec 2025		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2023/24 target = 92% Scottish average: 90.3% Family group average: 89.4%	Moved from Biennial to Annual in 2023/24.
School attendance rate (per 100 looked after pupils) (LGBF)	-	82.2%	-	Due Sept 2025		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2022/23 target was to meet or exceed family group average. Scottish average: 84.4% Family group average: 81.5%	Biennial
Exclusion rate (per 1,000 pupils) (LGBF)	-	15.7	-	Due Jan 2026			2022/23: Scotland: 16.6 Family Group: 17.9	Biennial

Key Performance Measures	Performance				Latest status	Target 2025/26	Comment	Frequency of reporting
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25				
							This is a 'data only' KPI. Numbers are monitored, but due to the nature of the KPI, numbers can fluctuate year to year.	
Exclusion rate (per 1,000 looked after pupils) (LGBF)	-	77.9	-	Due Jan 2026			2022/23 Biennial SG data Scottish average: 96.9 Family group average: 100.2 This is a data only KPI. Numbers are monitored, but due to the nature of the KPI, numbers can fluctuate year to year.	Biennial
% of primary school pupils present taking school meals P1 – P7	Survey not carried out	2022 61.4%	2023 70.9%	2024 73.3%		75%	2024 target = 70% This data is sourced from the Schools Healthy Living Survey. Scotland 2024= 63.9%	Annual
% of secondary school pupils present taking school meals (free or paid for)	Survey not carried out	2022 55.8%	2023 44.2%	2024 39.3%		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2024 target = 60% This data is sourced from the Schools Healthy Living Survey. Scotland 2024 = 42.1%.	Annual
Number of organisations involved in the community asset transfer process	8	4	7	6			This is a data only KPI. Whilst numbers are monitored, due to the nature of the KPI, numbers can fluctuate year to year.	Annual

Key Performance Measures	Performance				Latest status	Target 2025/26	Comment	Frequency of reporting
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25				
Number of young people participating in accredited schemes - Duke of Edinburgh	250	300	372	440		350	2024/25 target = 250	Annual
% of young people participating in active schools	48%	51%	42%	50%*		51%	2024/25 target = 51% Data is being verified and relates to school terms 1& 2. Year-end data is likely to be higher.	Annual
Proportion of school pupils entering positive destinations (LGBF)	2021 95.4%	2022 94%	2023 96.4%	2024 95.4%		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2024/25 target = 97.5% Scotland - 95.7% Family group - 95.6%	Annual
% of 16–19-year-olds participating in learning, training or work (LGBF)	2021 93.3%	2022 93.8%	2023 92.6%	2024 93.5%		Meet or exceed Scottish average	2024 target = 95% Scotland - 92.7% Family group - 92.3%	Annual
Number of adult learners supported by CLD achieving core skills qualifications	149	126	143	79*		50	2024/25 target = 150 * year total may increase to 84, portfolio verification for small number still being carried out.	Quarterly
Library Service Active Borrowers (in person and electronic)	4,265	5,266	5,464	6,342		6,400	2024/25 target = 6,055	Quarterly
Total number of in person visits for library purposes	83,860	172,649	184,329	185,819		198,500	2024/25 target = 198,500	Quarterly
Number of in person visits to the Watt Institution	6,440	13,960	16,761	18,199		19,200	2024/25 target = 19,200	Quarterly

PI Status	
	Performance is adrift of target by 5% or more

PI Status	
	Performance is below target, but is within a set tolerance level (between 0%-5%)
	Performance is at target level or higher
	Performance is being monitored but no target has been set (data only PI)

Education and Communities Risk Management

Risk management is an integral part of corporate governance and sound management. The effective identification, assessment and management of risk is key to helping Inverclyde Council be successful in delivering its objectives, whilst protecting the interests of their stakeholders.

The highest risks to the Committee were reviewed in April 2025 and are presented below:

Risk Title	Risk Owner	Risk Description	Potential Causes	Potential Consequences	Impact	L'hood	Risk Score	Current mitigation	Future mitigation
Significant budgetary pressures	Director of Education, Communities and Organisational development	There is a risk that the service will not have enough funds to deliver statutory and core services, meet the demands of rising needs and contain inflationary pressures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased demand for services e.g. ASN Changing need and demographics for Early years places Inability to control costs linked to inflationary pressures Ringfencing of specific funding does not take into account the holistic needs of the service Potential closure of services that are valued by the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service is unable to meet statutory requirements for young people Areas of the service are not able to meet demand from other parts of the service e.g. cleaning, supply cover Risk of authority being taken to ASN tribunal Competing priorities for existing staff Increased dissatisfaction with Council services and reputational risk to the Council 	4	4	16	Budget exercise	ASN Transport review
								Inflation contingency	ASN provision review
								Monthly budget monitoring	Catering review
								Committee reporting on project progress against key milestones	
								Work procurement to ensure Best Value	
								Prioritisation of spend and monitoring of cover budgets	
								Monitoring of teacher numbers	
								Ongoing reviews of services	
								The Committee considers savings proposals to manage the budget	

Risk Title	Risk Owner	Risk Description	Potential Causes	Potential Consequences	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score	Current mitigation	Future mitigation
Inability of the service to provide for increasingly complex or growing ASN needs	Director of Education, Communities and Organisational development	There is an increasing risk that service provision cannot support and achieve the outcomes for young people with ASN due to the increase in complexity of needs and numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inability to identify at an early stage the young people with complex needs who will need ASN support i.e. pre engagement with the service at 3 yrs old Unexpected or unpredicted increase in the number of young people requiring ASN Lack of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and PSAs Central services do not have the capacity to support the growing level of need e.g. ICOS / EAL etc Competing reactionary priorities (e.g. tribunals) which divert resources away from prioritising ASN / supportive and preventative measures Capacity in mainstream schools to provide universal or targeted support due to increased costs of staff or need to divert support staff to ASN provision Pressure to meet statutory obligations versus availability of resources Lack of training opportunities for teachers and PSAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on allocation of staffing - including skills and training as well as increased staffing costs Reduction in PSAs available to support in mainstream settings as more are needed for ASN provision Financial impact due to increasing costs for educational and transport provision Capacity stretch within ASN and mainstream schools to meet the increased need Where needs are not met this can lead to the disengagement and non attendance of pupils, as well as dysregulation and resultant critical incidents Reputational impact reflecting the level of support including increase in ASN tribunals and potential claims if lost 	4	4	16	<p>Ongoing training for staff and increased support from centre e.g. increase in PPB training and number of trainers</p> <p>Regular monitoring of provision including the fortnightly Authority Screening Group (ASG) as well as the ongoing monthly ASN monitoring forum</p> <p>Use of the delivering differently approach to develop the use of existing ASN provision and develop new approaches</p> <p>Networking as part of Regional Improvement Collaborative and linking via ADES to benchmark our practice</p> <p>Ongoing review of ASN provision which includes annual forecasts based on the work of the ASNMF as well as option appraisals when required</p>	<p>Possible increase to central team with ASN development officer role to enhance capacity of current team</p> <p>Review CLPL calendar for 2025/26 and beyond to ensure training is meeting needs - staff questionnaire going out April 25</p> <p>Review placements for S1 earlier than the Oct of P7 i.e. Summer term P6 to give greater lead in time for planning</p>

Risk Title	Risk Owner	Risk Description	Potential Causes	Potential Consequences	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score	Current mitigation	Future mitigation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in support provided from partners due to decreasing budget allocation e.g. Strategic Equity funding reducing over time = reduction in support available from Barnardo's Budget constraints for provision of specialist equipment both in terms of cost of equipment and increased demand for it. 						
Difficulty to attract & retain staff	Director of Education, Communities and Organisational development	The risk is that there is a failure to ensure there is an appropriate resourced and resilient workforce in place to meet future organisational needs to effectively execute the Committee Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of appropriately trained personnel applying for posts Temporary budgets can make it difficult to appoint permanent staff Competition for workforce with other authorities Increased workload 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single points of dependency or failure within workforce Capacity stretch on existing workforce Disengagement, morale issues with existing workforce Impact on quality or continuity of service delivery Missed regulatory or reporting deadlines Lack of capacity to develop or improve a new idea / project Reputational impact Needs of communities are not being met 	3	4	12	Inhouse leadership programmes Mentoring programmes Annual positive Conversations with staff to identify aspirations and training needs Service reviews to identify single points of failure Staff development Succession plans Workforce plan People and Organisational Development Strategy	

Risk Title	Risk Owner	Risk Description	Potential Causes	Potential Consequences	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score	Current mitigation	Future mitigation
Strategic Planning Risk	Director of Education, Communities and Organisational development	There is a risk that outcomes and targets are not achieved due to national reform or changing policy direction, changing Alliance partner strategic direction or reduced Alliance partner resources. For example this could be in relation to the Children's Service Plan, LAC outcomes, Arts/Cultural and Heritage, Community Learning and Development 3 Year plan Child Poverty, Participatory Budgeting and anti-poverty initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National reforms Changing policy direction Changing Alliance partner strategic direction Reduced Alliance partner resources Short term funded projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council is not meeting local needs as well as intended Core needs of communities are not being met Workforce overload Short term funding linked to additional planning results in competing priorities and core services to communities being affected 	4	3	12	Partnership Plan	
								Use of the delivering differently approach	
								Alliance with Memorandum of Understanding	
								Working with the Scottish Government	
								Regular reports and updates to Committee	
								Ongoing work with ADES / COLSA to outline impact on local government	
								Review of progress	
Failure of major supplier or partner	Partnerships	The risk is that external factors outwith the control of the Council impact on the Council's ability to deliver services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor selection process Poor quality or small pool of suppliers / partner Services provided are ceased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on quality and/or resilience of service delivery Financial impact to source new or more expensive options Reputational impact 	3	3	9	Tender process	
								Major partnership board presence	
								Regular reporting	
								Financial governance reviews	
								Contract Strategy	

Legend



(Red) Requires Active Management

High impact/high likelihood: risk requires active management to manage down and maintain exposure at an acceptable level.



(Amber) Contingency Plans

A robust contingency plan may suffice together with early warning mechanisms to detect any deviation from plan.



(Yellow) Good Housekeeping

May require some risk mitigation to reduce likelihood if this can be done cost effectively, but good housekeeping to ensure the impact remains low should be adequate. Reassess frequently to ensure conditions remain the same.



(Green) Review Periodically

Risks are unlikely to require mitigating actions but status should be reviewed frequently to ensure conditions have not changed.

Monitoring and Reporting

Inverclyde Council is committed to ensuring that accountability, transparency and openness is embedded throughout the organisation and in our public performance reporting.

Progress on the delivery of this Plan is monitored using the Council's performance management system, Pentana, which monitors Actions, KPIs and Risks. Progress reports will continue to be presented to every second Committee meeting for scrutiny and published on the Council's website.

These reports and a range of other performance information is published here:

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/performance>

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/38/25/MR
Contact Officer:	Michael Roach Head of Education	Contact No:	01475 712891
Subject:	Education Services Standards and Quality Report April 2024 – April 2025		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☒ For Decision ☐ For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to present to the Education and Communities Committee for consideration and approval, the Education Services Standards and Quality Report for April 2024 to April 2025.

1.3 Councils are required under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 to publish an annual report on progress towards meeting both national priorities and local improvement objectives.

1.4 Inverclyde Council's Education Services Standards and Quality Report – April 2024 to April 2025 is appended to this report. The Standards and Quality Report aims to provide a focused summary of educational progress and a flavour of the work delivered by our schools during this time period. This information has been drawn from a number of sources including School Improvement Plans and Standards and Quality Reports, Education Scotland inspection reports / follow through visits, Care Inspectorate reports, the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Corporate Directorate Improvement Plan and the quality assurance process, including the analysis of performance data. Importantly, the report identifies key areas of strength as well as where Inverclyde Education Services can improve further. These next steps will then form the Improvement Plan for April 2025 – April 2026, detailing how these will be taken forward.

1.5 Whilst this report fulfils our legislative requirements, it is also indicative of Education Services' commitment to self-evaluation, continuing improvement and public performance reporting. The Education Service is fully committed to providing a high-quality service which will enable all young people to achieve their full potential. As the full report is quite lengthy, stakeholders have asked for an abridged version of key messages. This will be produced in due course.

1.6 For greater detail on the performance of any individual establishment, Elected Members should refer to the school's own Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan. These are published on an annual basis on each establishment's website by the end of September.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee approves the content and the publication of the Education Standards and Quality Report April 2024 – April 2025.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 Previously, authorities were required under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 to publish an annual report on progress towards meeting both national priorities and local improvement objectives. Statutory guidance under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 as amended by Section 4 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 imposed new duties on authorities with effect from August 2017. The new duties focus on the following main issues:

- Pupils experiencing inequalities of outcome.
- The National Improvement Framework (NIF).
- Planning and Reporting.

The new duties for planning commenced on 1 August 2017 with an expectation that reports on progress are produced as soon as possible after 31 August 2018.

3.2 The Standards and Quality Report identifies progress made over the last year against authority priorities and the NIF. It contains the findings from our ongoing self-evaluation, including successes and identified next steps for improvement. The Education Services Improvement Plan will then show how Inverclyde Education Services will pursue continuous improvement in key areas over the coming year. Because the Standards and Quality Report is a comprehensive in-depth document, a summary containing key messages will be produced.

4.0 Highlights and key messages

- 4.1
- The work of the Education Service in relation to its approaches to consultation with Pupils, Parent Councils and Professional Bodies was cited as good practice in the Education Scotland National Thematic report on support for school improvement.
 - The percentage of our early years settings achieving good or better gradings at external inspection remains amongst the highest in Scotland, being ranked as the highest by the LGBF in 2024.
 - At P1, 4 & 7 Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) combined we have outperformed national data since the pandemic and have continue to exceed pre-pandemic data in 2023/24.
 - In 2023/24 leavers from Inverclyde in SIMD bands 1 – 8 achieved, on average, 100 more tariff points than the national average. Inverclyde consistently outperforms the national average for pupils in SIMD 1-2 and has done over the past 5 years.
 - In 2023/24, 50% of our S4 cohort achieved 5 or more level 5 qualifications, this was an increase of 3% from 2022/23.
 - In 2023/24, 23% of our S5 cohort achieved 5 or more level 6 qualifications, this was an increase of 3% from 2022/23.
 - On average 3% more of our leavers achieve level 4 literacy and numeracy than the national figure, and 5% more achieve level 5 over past 3 years.
 - In October 2024 our Initial School Leavers Destination (ISLDR) figure was 95.4%, our second highest ever figure.
 - In 2024/25 the percentage of 16-19 years old participating in education, employment or training, increased to 93.5% giving us our second highest ever percentage of this measure.
 - Our Junior Wind Orchestra received a Silver Plus award, and the Senior Wind Orchestra received a Gold Plus award at the 2024 Scottish Concert Band Festival.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		N
Legal/Risk		N
Human Resources		N
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		N
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty and Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		N
Environmental & Sustainability		N
Data Protection		N

5.2 Finance

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					

5.3 Legal/Risk

N/a

5.4 Human Resources

N/a

5.5 Strategic

N/a

5.6 Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
N	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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA 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 – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty.

5.7 Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.8 Environmental/Sustainability

Summarise any environmental / climate change impacts which relate to this report.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
N	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.9 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.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/a

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 See appended standards and quality report.

Inverclyde
council



Education Services Standards and Quality Report April 2024 – April 2025



Contents

Section	Page
Foreword	1
Vision and context	2
Key achievements	8
Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy	9
Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged	20
Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing	34
Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people	38
Getting it Right for Every Child	42
Improving outcomes of care experienced children, young people	47
Glossary of terms	50

Foreword

Welcome to our Standards and Quality Report for the period April 2024 – April 2025.

This report provides the people of Inverclyde with the performance information needed to understand how well Inverclyde Council is improving education across the authority. The report links to the key drivers of the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and also to the Education Services Improvement Plan which clearly states how Inverclyde Council intends to drive forward further improvements over the coming year.

It is vital that we continue to work in partnership to ensure that the standards and quality which are at the heart of an effective education service are maintained and continue to improve in Inverclyde. We are delighted that these partnerships remain strong and would like to thank all of those who have tirelessly supported our young people to achieve the incredible achievements contained in this report.

Inverclyde Council is committed to delivering a high-quality education provision in learning environments fit for learning and teaching in the 21st century. Environments that nurture ambition and aspirations, improve attainment and achievement, and create and widen opportunities for all children and young people to achieve their full potential. Throughout this Standards and Quality Report you will see examples of how this commitment has been demonstrated.

Whilst you will read about our many successes and improving trends in attainment and achievements, this report also outlines some of our key priorities for the coming year. We will continue to put children, families and communities at the centre of our plans, activities and improvements, and build on our strengths and achievements. By doing this we will demonstrate our ongoing commitment to getting it right for every child, citizen and community.

Links to glossaries of education terminology that will support the reading of this document can be found at:

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/my-school/education-glossary/>

[List of Acronyms used in Scottish Education FINAL Jan 25.pdf](#)

A full glossary of terms used can be found at the end of the document.

Vision and Context

Vision - Success for all - Getting it right for every child, citizen and community.

The 2023/28 Council Plan sets out the vision for the Council as a whole and the ways in which we hope to improve the lives of, and deliver better outcomes for, the people of Inverclyde. In striving to deliver this strategic plan, and by working with our Inverclyde Alliance partners, we will aim to achieve the vision of: "Success for all - Getting it right for every child, citizen and community".

At its heart, the Council Plan 2023/28 aims to ensure that Inverclyde Council is a dynamic service provider, able to respond to the needs of all our communities and one that plays its part actively as part of public life, locally and nationally.

The Council Plan 2023/28 aligns to and supports the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33, ensuring that partners work together to create conditions that promote success for all and addresses inequalities.

The Inverclyde Commitment is "Success for All – Getting It Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community". We are very aware that life opportunities vary across our population and there are significant challenges in relation to deprivation and inequality. We want to achieve success for all, with everyone in our communities being able to easily access high quality Council services.

Education services context

There are six mainstream secondary schools in Inverclyde, 20 primary schools (ten with nursery classes), one Nursery school and 10 Early Learning and Childcare Centres. In addition to this, Craigmarnock School and Lomond View Academy support pupils with additional support needs (ASN) or those who are unable to sustain a placement in a mainstream school. We also have two ASN provisions to support pupils with language and communication, based at All Saints Primary and Notre Dame High School. Our Virtual School for Care Experienced Young people has been fully functional since August 2022 and is now incorporated alongside the Corporate Parenting team as part of the overall offer from Lomond View Academy, with the Virtual Head teacher being the head of both. We have a provision and outreach service for deaf pupils called Garvel, based across Moorfoot Primary and Clydeview Academy. A statutory consultation has concluded approving the establishment of a new ASN provision at Clydeview Academy, due to open in August 2025.

A number of other services also support pupils with ASN. These include: Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service (ICOS), English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Bilingualism Service (based at Whinhill Primary) and the Visual Impairment and Habilitation Service (based at Craigmarnock).

As of October 2024, there were 4992 primary school pupils and 4463 secondary school pupils. There are also 221 pupils in ASN schools and 1194 children in Local Authority Early Years settings.

Wellbeing Outcomes

We have a number of wellbeing outcomes (SHANARRI) that we wish to achieve for our children and young people. These are:

- ❖ **Safe:** Our children will be kept safe.
- ❖ **Healthy:** Our children will have the best possible physical and mental health.
- ❖ **Achieving:** Achievement will be raised for all.
- ❖ **Nurtured:** Our children will have a nurturing environment in which to learn.
- ❖ **Active:** Our children will have the opportunity to take part in activities and experiences which contribute to a healthy life, growth and development.
- ❖ **Respected and Responsible:** Our children will feel respected and listened to, share responsibilities and be involved in decisions that affect them.
- ❖ **Included:** Our children will be supported to overcome social, educational, health, employment and economic inequalities and feel valued as part of the community.

Inverclyde has benefited from significant investment as part of the ongoing regeneration of the area. The now completed £200 million schools' estates programme, has delivered new and refurbished schools which are amongst the best in the country, for all pupils in Inverclyde. Our schools are not only helping to develop a strong sense of community but have been built with innovation and sustainability at the forefront of design.

In 2015 we started the very exciting work to decrease the attainment gap linked to deprivation through the Attainment Challenge. The Attainment Challenge is a programme which initially targeted primary schools in seven local authorities with the highest percentage of deprivation. The initial bid to support P1 classes in six primary schools in Inverclyde during the academic year 2015/16 was built upon the premise of start small and think big.

During the academic year 2024/25, Attainment Challenge Strategic Equity Funding (SEF) directly supported all primary stages in 12 schools which serve the most deprived areas in Inverclyde and S1-S3 in all of our secondary schools. The evidence-based learning undertaken through the Attainment Challenge was rolled out to every school in Inverclyde and has enabled the authority to provide a framework to support schools to deliver their Improvement Plans. All schools across Scotland are allocated Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) according to the level of children attending the school who are in receipt of free school meals. Further information on the impact of PEF is contained in the last section of this report. The Strategic Equity Funding the authority receives is reducing over the next three years and in 2025/26 we will receive approximately £590,000; this being less than we received in 2024/25 i.e. £718,000. Whilst the PEF and SEF funding was due to cease in June 2026, we have been informed that this will extend until June 2027. Funding for the final year has yet to be confirmed.

About the Standards and Quality report

This report sets out the progress made towards outcomes set out in our own service plan for 2024/25 and focuses on the impact we have had.

How have we gathered the evidence for the Standard and Quality report?

- School's Standards and Quality reports and annual school improvement plans
- Annual meetings with schools e.g. attainment meeting
- Our own internal peer review programme
- Evaluations of the work of the Attainment Challenge
- Questionnaires
- Education Scotland Inspections of schools and national thematic inspections
- Care Inspectorate Scotland inspections.

Inspection Activity

During 2024/25 we saw the ongoing scrutiny from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate inspections. Below is an overview of the outcomes of these:

Education Scotland inspections

During 2024/25 to date, the authority had four inspections carried out, however at the time of publication of this document, we await the final publication of the outcomes of these:

Establishment	School QI 1.3	School QI 2.3	School QI 3.1	School QI 3.2	Nursery Class QI 1.3	Nursery Class QI 2.3	Nursery Class QI 3.1	Nursery Class QI 3.2
St Francis Primary School and Nursery Class September 2024 Short inspection model		Satisfactory		Satisfactory		Good		Good
Wellington Children's Centre (PVI) February 2025 Full inspection model	Good	Good	Good	Good				
St Mary's Primary School April 2025 Full inspection model	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC				

Education Scotland National Thematic inspections

During 2024-25 the Education Service was visited by HMIE as part of a national thematic inspection into how it supports school improvement.

Inverkip Primary School and Nursery Class will be visited in May 2025 as part of a national thematic inspection into the teaching of literacy.

Care Inspectorate inspections

Establishment	How good is our care, play and learning?	How good is our setting	How good is our leadership	How good is our staff team?
Madeira Nursery (PVI) (August 24)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Kilmacolm Nursery Class (September 24)	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good
Blairmore Early Learning Centre (September 24)	Adequate	Adequate	Good	Adequate
Newark Nursery School (October 24)	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good
Gibshill Children's Centre (November 24)	Good	Good	Good	Good
Wellington Children's Centre – Greenock (PVI)	Good	Adequate	Adequate	Good

Link to the Children's Services Plan 2022 – 2025

We have linked the next step sections of this report to the four priority themes of the next Children's Services Plan 2022 – 2025. These are:

Priority Theme 1:

To utilise our learning from the Addressing Neglect and Enhancing Wellbeing work stream to further embedded GIRFEC in Inverclyde to improve outcomes for children and their families by developing a strong professional base for identifying, understanding and responding to need at the earliest opportunity, with clear, agreed, high quality multi agency approaches throughout a child's experience.

Priority Theme 2:

Mental health is everyone's business, and it affects all aspects of a child and young person's development. The promotion of a whole community approach to understanding mental health, wellbeing and the impact of trauma is essential.

Priority Theme 3:

To reduce the inequalities of health and educational outcomes linked to deprivation.

Priority Theme 4:

To further improve outcomes, including attainment, for care experienced children, young people and their families by developing a culture of ambition based on strong relationships that recognise the range of difficulties experienced by children and families and provide the scaffolding to protect safe, loving and respectful relationships.

Key Achievements

- The work of the Education Service in relation to its approaches to consultation with Pupils, Parent Councils and Professional Bodies was cited as good practice in the Education Scotland National Thematic report on support for school improvement.
- The percentage of our early years settings achieving good or better gradings at external inspection remains amongst the highest in Scotland, being ranked as the highest by the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) in 2024.
- Almost all establishments have achieved at least the bronze Rights Respecting Schools Award, with increasing numbers achieving silver (50%) and gold (35%).
- Our Junior Wind Orchestra received a Silver Plus award, and the Senior Wind Orchestra received a Gold Plus award at the 2024 Scottish Concert Band Festival.
- As of June 2025, Inverclyde will be one of only three local authorities in Scotland to have all of its mainstream secondary schools on the SCQF Ambassador award scheme, with almost all having already achieved bronze level.
- In April 2025 Kilmacolm Primary School achieved a full Education Scotland STEM Nation Award.
- At P1, 4 & 7 Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) combined we have outperformed national data since the pandemic and have continue to exceed pre-pandemic data in 2023/24.
- In 2023/24 leavers from Inverclyde in SIMD bands 1 – 8 achieved, on average, 100more tariff points than the national average. Inverclyde consistently outperforms the national average for pupils in SIMD 1-2 and has done over the past 5 years.
- In 2023/24, 50% of our S4 cohort achieved 5 or more level 5 qualifications, this was an increase of 3% from 2022/23.
- In 2023/24, 23% of our S5 cohort achieved 5 or more level 6 qualifications, this was an increase of 3% from 2022/23.
- On average 3% more of our leavers achieve level 4 literacy and numeracy than the national figure, and 5% more achieve level 5 over past 3 years.
- In October 2024 our Initial School Leavers Destination (ISLDR) figure was 95.4%, our second highest ever figure.
- In 2023/24 the percentage of 16-19 years old participating in education, employment or training, increased to 93.5%. This is an increase of 1% from last year and was our second highest ever percentage of this measure.

A: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

A1 Carry out an evaluation of the peer review programme, with external support, to identify improvements needed for the second 3 year cycle starting in August 2025.

A2 Engage with emerging approaches to Education Service self-evaluation in partnership with ADES and Education Scotland, including work within family group quads.

A3 Deliver support and training for self-evaluation, including the implementation of a preparing for inspection resource.

A4 Create a strategic resource to support establishments with curriculum making and design, including a working group to advise on tracking the curriculum beyond numeracy and literacy, as well as pupils' wider achievements.

A5 Carry out a review of the approach to curriculum design across S1-3 of the BGE as well as a review / consultation on increasing the flexibility of timetabling courses for S4 to allow more personalisation of learner pathways.

A1 The Education Service, in partnership with Education Scotland and a peer colleague from another Local Authority, carried out a review of the Peer Review model in February 2025. As well as this, Education Scotland looked at the Peer Review model during their visit to Inverclyde in October 2024 as part of the National Thematic into how Local Authority Education Services support school improvement.

Overall, during both processes, there was overwhelming support for the Peer Review process and all that it has brought to the improvements in outcomes for establishments, in the widest sense.

In "session 2022/23, Inverclyde Council introduced 'Peer Review' as a new process to support self-evaluation for school improvement. The three-year cycle is an intensive review of school provision which involves headteachers, depute headteachers and local authority officers. This approach is helpful in self-evaluation and improvement planning. School leaders are highly appreciative of the impact of undertaking reviews or being reviewed. The reviews support a detailed analysis and evaluation of their performance against a range of How good is our school? 4th edition (HGIOS4) quality indicators (QIs). This supports the rigour and robustness of their self-evaluation processes.

There is also evidence that staff undertaking reviews bring more effective practice and improvements back to their own schools. Schools can request a more detailed peer review of specific QIs as part of the second or third year of their 'Peer Review' cycle. These have supported specific changes to support learners, for example in actions around wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Early indications are that there has been a low uptake of this more detailed follow-up 'Peer Review' approach.

Quotes from Education Scotland report from visit during National Thematic inspection

What has been identified is the need to review the overall Framework for Improvement document, which has been in place since 2022/23, in light of both the recommendations of the overall National Thematic report, as well as the work done below in relation to A3 below. There may not need to be the same frequency of formal Peer Review for all establishments going forwards, as more peer related approaches to ongoing quality assurance work is built into the framework, and establishments maintain high levels of performance.

The outcomes of the Peer Reviews continue to be validated by formal scrutiny from both Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate. The table below seeks to outline the overall performance of Inverclyde Education establishments vs the national picture. What this demonstrates is that the overall performance of Inverclyde's education establishments is significantly better than the national picture when it comes to evaluations against the 4 key Quality indicator (QIs) of good or better.

QI evaluations – good or better

Quality Indicators from HGIOS 4	1.3	2.3	3.1	3.2
Early Years (Inverclyde)	97%	97%	97%	97%
Early Years (National Avg)	64%	65%	78%	68%
Primary (Inverclyde)	96%	96%	92%	92%
Primary (National Avg)	65%	65%	72%	64%
Secondary (Inverclyde)	100%	100%	83%	100%
Secondary (National Avg)	59%	59%	61%	63%

**Inverclyde data based on all establishment Standards and Quality Reports (SQR) 23/24, Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland inspections 2017-24 and all Peer Review validations 2022 to date.*

**National Avg is all Education Scotland inspection outcomes 2017 – 24.*

A2 Over the last few months the service has embarked on work in partnership with three other local authority Education Services, also known as a QUAD, which is a new approach that has been established by the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), in partnership with Education Scotland. The outcome of some initial work to share an overall summary of each Education Service's evaluation against a new framework called "How good

is our education authority? has been the establishment of a working group to continue to share practice between the four authorities, the focus being on improvement frameworks. This will provide our service with the chance to compare and benchmark our evolving framework with others, as well as share practice and consider different approaches.

- A3** During session 2024/25 a series of one-day courses focussing on each of the key QIs from HQIOS4 used during inspection has been delivered to support school leaders to take a deeper dive into each QI and begin to collate a summary of their self-evaluation evidence against each. During the first of these days, the newly devised support for inspection pack was also launched.

During each session a keynote was delivered both by experienced leaders from our own schools as well as those from other authorities, particularly where excellence has been achieved and validated through external inspection.

These sessions have been highly evaluated by those who took part, and we have seen the impact of them in subsequent presentations and leaders' approaches to peer reviews and inspections. A "Preparing for inspection" pack has been collated and launched to leaders. Again, this has been well received with leaders reporting that this has been invaluable when preparing for inspection. As in A1, we maintain a very strong performance picture at external inspection over time.

- A4** Curriculum work has been ongoing during 2024/25, however a strategic resource has not been produced due to the need to ensure alignment with our approach to the ongoing national cycle of curriculum review that is under way, as well as a wide range of resource that has been published in relation to this. Instead, it has been decided that a new Curriculum Oversight Board will be established 2025/26 to ensure that there is clear strategic oversight of the range of curriculum development work, which is ongoing, both at establishment and increasingly at cluster level.

In relation to the tracking of wider achievements we have engaged with the development of the "My profile" toolkit. This is being developed by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) in partnership with Education Scotland. The profiling tool will allow young people to upload and showcase their achievements, skills, qualifications and awards, hobbies, learning and more. These can be tagged against appropriate metaskills. As the system is developed young people will be able to link to their school and allow the school to track progress and use this as part of learner conversation and for transition planning. Currently, in Inverclyde, Head Teachers have been shown a demonstration of the system and the plans for the future. Currently the majority of schools in Inverclyde use Gen+, which includes a profiling tool and so no school has begun to use the SDS My Profile Tool. The West Partnership are also exploring using "My Profile" as part of the possible development of the Scottish Diploma of Achievement and the Education Officer team are part of the discussions around this.

- A5** Initial work is underway to review the approach to curriculum design across S1-3 of the BGE. Six senior secondary leaders have completed the Education Scotland Curriculum Innovation course and a further three are beginning this over the 2025/26 session. This is enabling our clusters to develop curriculum transition between the sectors. During the February 2025 INSET, approximately 70 Principal Teacher Curriculum from secondary and special schools attended a session with Education Services and Education Scotland to begin to discuss what the BGE in secondary should look like in the future and gather what would be needed to support staff to innovate the curriculum. As a result of this session, schools have identified

staff who will undertake small tests of change over the session 2025/26, with planning for projects beginning in the summer term of 2024/25.

A consultation was undertaken during the period October – December 2024, to ask stakeholders on their views of the timetabling of courses in the senior phase. The consultation highlighted that almost all stakeholders agreed that a more flexible approach to timetabling was needed to meet the needs of learners. This included allowing learners to select up to seven courses in S4 to allow a wider range of courses to be selected. At the same time, there would be flexibility to allow learners in S4-6 to undertake work based and vocational learning that would mean that the number of courses selected to study in school could be reduced to accommodate this. The changes to the timetable structure for senior phase will be implemented in session 2025/26.

A6 Continue to roll out the Literacy Strategy, with a focus on the highly effective teaching of listening, talking and writing.

A7 Revise the existing numeracy strategy in line with national developments inc the outcome of the national thematic inspection.

A8 Further develop Inverclyde's strategy for play pedagogy beyond P2.

A9 Continue to develop the data strategy by:

- Implementing the Early years dashboard
- Implementing the S1-3 BGE and Senior Phase trackers

A6 Very good progress continues to be made regarding the roll out of the Inverclyde Literacy Strategy and Framework. The Listening and Talking aspect of the Literacy Framework was completed and launched in term 4 of session 2023/24 to Senior Leaders in Early Years establishments. The final aspect of the Literacy Framework, focusing on the teaching of Writing, was completed early in session 2024/25 and launched at the October 2024 in-service day to 450 early years practitioners. Very positive feedback was received indicating that the practitioners valued the resource and looked forward to interacting with it to improve their practice. The completed Literacy Framework was presented to Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and also the Parent Council Chairs in term 1 of session 2024/25.

Strategic Pedagogical Leads (SPLs) facilitated the setup of Inverclyde's Literacy Network following on from the launch of the completed Literacy Framework. Representatives from almost all primary schools and all secondary English Principal Teachers were provided with the opportunity to get together to share ideas, seek support and advice around implementing the Literacy Framework effectively, share best practice and keep on top of current research to provide feed-back to colleagues within their school, ensuring a consistent approach across the authority. The Literacy Network has been very well received, and it is hoped that it continues to be a sustainable model.

To ensure the Literacy Framework remained a key focus for delivering high quality learning, teaching and assessment, further Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) events were arranged to reach the maximum number of practitioners.

Literacy Roadshows were organised across all six cluster areas, where staff were invited to attend and participate in quality CLPL, supporting practitioners to engage with the Literacy Framework, leading to a better understanding of how to teach literacy across all the organisers. Feedback from the attendees was very positive, commenting on the clarity of presentation, the usefulness of the information shared and that they would use it as CLPL to improve their own pedagogy and the pedagogy of their colleagues.

Further CLPL opportunities were also planned for individual establishments as well as an event targeted at Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) which saw 124 PSAs attend.

The Literacy Framework has built in sustainability. Posters with QR codes linked directly to the Literacy Framework are in every classroom and high quality CLPL is available for staff to access at any time via the Pedagogy and Support for Equity (PASE) Blog.

Since launching the framework, the ACEL Reading data improved by 1% from June 2023 (82.8%) to June 2024 (83.8%), with quintile one Reading increased by 3.7% from June 2023 (75.4%) to June 2024 (79.1%). ACEL quintile one Writing increased by 3.6% from June 2023 (69.1%) to June 2024 (72.7%)

- A7** The Strategic Numeracy and Maths group have continued to meet regularly across the session to lead a review of the strategy. There was engagement from Education Officers, early years, primary and secondary colleagues in the consultation process where staff came together for two face-to-face meetings to update of the aims of the strategy and the support offer, and to feedback on what was presently working and what could improve.

Advice and feedback were also sought from Education Scotland, Attainment Challenge team, Community Learning and Development, STEM Development Officer and Play Associates. Their input supported further improvements to the Strategy. Time was also dedicated to aligning the refreshed strategy with national developments and research from National Response to Improving Mathematics (NRIM), the National Thematic review, Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC).

The strategy is now in its final refreshed form and will be launched in May 2025. To support engagement classroom/ playroom QR posters have been created to provide practitioners with a direct link to the strategy and a recorded presentation has been prepared to aid a wider roll out to all staff within establishments across Inverclyde.

The numeracy CLPL offer continues to support the aim of achieving excellence and equity in all our educational establishments.

Officers and practitioners continued to attend National Numeracy and Maths networks, applying learning to support local networks such as Champions, Transitions and Principal Teachers.

The Principal Teacher secondary network has been reestablished to facilitate closer working between middle leaders where practice is shared, and local and national updates are discussed.

Our network of Numeracy and Maths Champions has continued to grow and develop attracting colleagues from across all sectors. We worked together to support practitioners to achieve the aims and improvement outcomes of our Numeracy strategy and provided a sustainable and consistent approach to ensuring improvements in numeracy and maths. Champions shared that the network:

- Enhanced professional dialogue by Providing practical advice and information, enabling active engagement in discussions and sharing of best practices with colleagues across the authority.
- Developed knowledge of new strategies by facilitating the exchange of innovative approaches for supporting numeracy and maths development, leading to the adoption of techniques like numberless word problems and slow reveal graphs.
- Aided personal growth as ongoing dialogue and exposure to new concepts further developed Champions professionally and enhanced their pedagogy.

The service contributed to the West Partnership Numeracy and Maths Conference, sharing our work around P7 to S1 transitions. We saw our highest ever sign up from Inverclyde practitioners with 30 committing to engage with the professional learning offer. The majority of participants who completed an evaluation shared that the information provided was useful and that the sessions would impact on their practice.

A8 A central focus this year has been the sustained engagement with practitioners through a structured series of '*Improving Our Play*' sessions, aimed at embedding play pedagogy into daily practice and extending its application beyond P2. These sessions encompassed key themes such as theory of play, the creation and enhancement of high-quality learning environments, assessment and planning methodologies, and the sharing of effective practice. These sessions successfully fostered a culture of collegiate collaboration and professional dialogue across a range of settings.

The sessions were well attended by practitioners at various stages, and participant feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Staff have consistently reported that the sessions have been valuable in enhancing their understanding and implementation of play-based approaches.

The development and dissemination of supporting resources have continued, with a growing resource available through the PACE website. This centralised platform provides practitioners with easy access to a comprehensive suite of materials, which staff have indicated is beneficial for refining and sustaining their play-based practice.

Play Associates (Head teachers with lead responsibility for play across the authority) and Education Officers have maintained ongoing support for Heads of Establishments, with guidance provided as required. In addition, the continued use of a self-evaluation framework has proven to be an effective tool in supporting reflective practice and strategic planning in relation to play.

While considerable progress has been made, further work is required to ensure a consistent and coherent approach to play pedagogy across all establishments. The reinstatement of the Play Strategy Group will be instrumental in achieving this goal. It will provide strategic direction, support the planning and monitoring of progress, and help ensure greater consistency in the implementation of play-based approaches across all settings.

A9 Good progress continues to be made in further developing the data strategy in line with the needs of both the educational establishments and the local authority. The Attainment Challenge Project Lead and the newly appointed Data Lead discussed ways to improve the strategy. Following on from these discussions, adaptations to how data is inputted, presented, stored and shared with colleagues resulted in an improved offer.

Data input has moved from a mainly manual process to an automated process improving the accuracy of the data and becoming more time efficient. Data storage has also improved ensuring data files are cleansed and safe from corruption.

To support establishments in the accuracy of teacher professional judgments around pupil progress, an improved cleansing process has resulted in attainment data being more reliable. This has led to improved confidence in the accuracy of the data we present.

To support the implementation of the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Dashboard, an Early Level Tracking Tool was introduced across all ELC establishments in August 2025. This tool provides a consistent and structured approach for tracking the development and learning of children aged 3 to 5. Children's progress is recorded through Learning Journals, enabling staff to identify areas where individual children require continued support.

To support implementation, comprehensive training was delivered to all Early Years senior leadership teams. Additionally, ongoing support has been embedded through the monthly Deputes Forum, which has served as a platform for professional dialogue, troubleshooting, and sharing implementation strategies. This regular engagement has been instrumental in embedding the tool effectively across settings.

A key component of this work has also been the intentional development of the ELC environment to better support high-quality planning for children's development and learning. An open event hosted at Larkfield ELC in February 2025 exemplified this focus. The event, which was well attended, fostered a culture of collaboration and the sharing of good practice across establishments.

While we have been unable to progress further with the ELC dashboard due to external delays, we have made significant progress in ensuring a consistent approach to tracking is in place across all establishments. To further support transitions and continuity in planning, a newly developed transition record will be introduced in May 2025. This document aligns with the tracking tool and will provide robust data across all Inverclyde ELC settings. It is anticipated that this data will not only evidence progress but also inform future iterations of the tracking tool and planning processes.

Although the development of the ELC dashboard has been delayed, consistent recording on Learning Journals and on the transition record, represents a critical step forward. It will provide a comprehensive overview of children's progress across the Early Level and support more informed transition discussions between ELC and P1 staff. This information will feed into self-evaluation and planning processes at both establishment and authority levels.

An evaluation was conducted to assess the use and impact of the Early Level Tracking Tool across ELC establishments. Key findings included:

- all respondents reported using the tracking tool regularly (daily, weekly, or monthly).
- majority felt confident or very confident using the tool and almost all felt confident using Learning Journals and using the tracking tool in their planning processes.
- majority felt it had positively impacted how children's progress is monitored and reported changes in how they plan for children's learning as a result.
- majority felt more confident discussing children's development with parents and also reported parents better understood their child's developmental journey.

Building on current progress, the next phase will focus on the development of planning and tracking tools tailored to the needs of younger children and those with ASN. These tools will further strengthen the delivery of targeted, responsive support and help ensure all children's developmental needs are met effectively.

In addition, further work is required to strengthen parental engagement. Supporting parents to better understand and be actively involved in their child's learning journey remains a key priority. Enhancing communication and providing accessible information will be central to fostering meaningful home to nursery partnerships.

The data generated from these new tools will also inform wider ELC service planning, contributing to more inclusive and strategic decision making across the sector.

Good progress has been made with secondary establishments using of the BGE and Senior Phase dashboards increasing senior managers confidence in using the toolkit to interrogate their data.

Some progress has been made in agreeing tracking periods to gather attainment data in the BGE and Senior Phase, however further work is required to improve this process. The Data Lead met with senior managers of secondary establishments to identify current issues, particularly around the inclusion of awards, achievements and tariff points. Enhancements of the BGE tracker were agreed following this meeting and will be worked on to improve the tracking process for session 2025/26.

A10 Begin the process to review the current Digital Strategy, including the ongoing plan to refresh devices in education establishments.

A11 Develop a framework for training staff to ensure that all have a minimum digital skills level, with the ability to advance this further and further support this by re-establishing the Digital Champions Network.

A10 The current digital strategy will end in June 2026. Work has begun, in partnership with IT Services, to establish the future infrastructure in Education Establishments to deliver an updated strategy for the next five years. Underpinning the new digital strategy will be a move to Windows 11 and the complete roll out of the new Education Microsoft 365 tenancy. An action plan for these key infrastructure improvements will be in place in August 2025, with completion by June 2026 to enable the new digital strategy to be implemented. Over the 2024/25 session over 500 devices were upgraded. Bandwidth was increased in all establishments to improve connectivity allowed staff and pupils to make better use of digital tools to integrate into learning and teaching.

A11 The Digital Champions network has met three times over the course of 2024/25 and identified key areas where support will be best targeted – this includes use of Microsoft tools, use of Promethean ActivPanels and applications that will support all learners to access the curriculum. One-page leaflets have highlighted available applications, how they can be used and training that staff can access. A training framework has been developed and will be launched in August 2026 to support new staff to the local authority and provide a pathway for staff who wish to further develop their use of IT to support learning and teaching.

Raise Aspirations in Science Education project (RAiSE)

Inverclyde has been involved in the RAiSE (Raising Aspirations in Science Education) programme with Education Scotland since August 2023, with the project set to conclude in June 2025. The initiative aims to enhance STEM education across the region. Over the 2024/25 session a number of activities have taken place and key highlights are detailed below.

All 20 primary schools, libraries, and community organisations received class kits of Makedo and Sphero Indi, supported by comprehensive professional learning sessions. A community STEM Club was also established in collaboration with Morton in The Community.

A robust professional learning programme was delivered, offering monthly sessions to build staff capacity for engaging STEM lessons. Positive feedback from the 2024 P7-S1 STEM Transition led to the planning of a similar programme for 2025, connecting learners with industry experts.

Planning for the 2025 Inverclyde STEM Festival is underway, incorporating feedback to include more community and youth groups. The festival aims to inspire creativity and hands-on learning across schools and the community. The first STEM Festival was held in June 2024.

Strong partnerships were established with secondary schools, West College Scotland, University of the West of Scotland, STEM Ambassadors, and local businesses. These collaborations facilitated STEM transition events, workshops, and the Inverclyde STEM Festival, providing learners with real-life, contextualised learning opportunities linked to STEM careers. The coordinated approach to STEM education has raised the profile of STEM subjects and careers in schools and the community.

Education Scotland STEM Nation Award

We were delighted to learn in April 2025 that Kilmacolm Primary School in Inverclyde Council had achieved a full STEM Nation Award.

The sciences, technologies, engineering and mathematics (STEM) Nation Award celebrates, promotes and builds on effective practice in STEM education across Scotland. The Government strategy sets out a vision of Scotland as a world-leading STEM nation with a highly-educated and skilled population equipped with the STEM skills, knowledge and capability required to adapt and thrive in a rapidly-changing world.

In order to achieve the full STEM Nation Award settings must gather and submit evidence demonstrating Leadership in STEM, STEM family and community learning, employability and STEM partnership working, STEM curriculum and learner pathways, and equity and equality in STEM. After achieving all five elements, settings upload their STEM action plan for review by Education Scotland and a discussion is then held to explore this in more depth.

Kilmacolm Primary School was praised for their strategic approach to STEM development which focussed on providing leadership opportunities for pupils, families and practitioners in an effort to raise STEM capital across the community. Staff at Kilmacolm Primary School have worked collaboratively within the setting, across the local authority and with a number of partners to undertake professional learning, share good practice and develop a range of enriching STEM experiences for learners and their families.

Kilmacolm Primary School continue to engage families in STEM learning through STEM workshops, Science Week activities and STEM home learning. Pupils are empowered to lead family learning events which are well attended by families.

Inverclyde Music Service

The Inverclyde schools' Instrumental Music Service (IMS) and Inverclyde's Youth Music Initiative (YMI) sit within Inverclyde Council's wider Cultural Services team. IMS Instructors work peripatetically across the schools' estate, providing musical tuition at primary and secondary level. The IMS is a real strength in Inverclyde with many successes on both the local and national stage. The service continues to grow – during the 2023/24 school year 1,488 pupils received lessons through the IMS. In addition, almost 400 young people participated in bands, orchestras and choirs coordinated by IMS Instructors, representing growth from the previous year.

Over the course of the year, the service delivered a series of highly successful concerts, including a sell-out Christmas Concert and the Annual Spring Gala Concert at Greenock Town Hall. These concerts each showcased a wide range of ensembles. In March, both the Junior and Senior String Orchestra pupils took part in the Lyle Kirk Church concert, performing for an appreciative audience.

Pupils from the music service also achieved strong results at the annual Inverclyde Music Festival, with participation by IMS learners at its highest level compared to previous years. At the 2024 Scottish Concert Band Festival the Junior Wind Orchestra received a Silver Plus award, while the Senior Wind Orchestra received a Gold Plus award at the same event.

Inverclyde's young musicians participated in the Young Scottish Musician of the Year competition for the 3rd year, with 20 entrants to the local heat. With a high standard of play from all participants, competition was tough for progression to the National Final. Ultimately, an S6 pupil from St Stephen's High School went on to represent Inverclyde at the finals playing the flute. The finals were held at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, where he is now a student.

A growing offer through the IMS is pipes and drums tuition. During 23/24 the piping group grew in numbers, with additional financial support received from the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust and the Beatrice Foundation. Steady progression of learners from chanter to pipes, and drum pads to drums, is laying a solid foundation for the continued formation of Inverclyde Schools Pipe Band.

Through the Creative Scotland-funded YMI project, music making opportunities were offered to all P5 pupils in the authority area, encouraging participation and building confidence. The YMI team also supported external activities and events, including the annual Galoshans Festival in Greenock.

Cumulatively, these accomplishments reflect the continued development and impact of the IMS as a key component of Inverclyde's cultural and educational offering.

Next steps: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

- A1** Implement a revised version of the Establishment Improvement Framework from August 2025, taking into account feedback and recommendations from the National Thematic inspection and work from the QUAD.

- A2** Embed the numeracy strategy across all settings and continue to grow our numeracy and maths support networks in order to provide consistency of approach and opportunities to share practice leading to improvements in learning and teaching and learner achievements.
- A3** Continue to promote the Literacy Framework and the PASE Blog, as well as carrying out an evaluation of the framework's impact since its launch.
- A4** Continue to improve and ensure the data strategy's sustainability by reviewing and identify possible alternative tools.
- A5** Continue to evolve and review authority tracking systems in place for both the BGE and Senior Phase.
- A6** Establish the Curriculum Oversight Board including membership, terms of reference and related work plan.
- A7** Re-introduce the Strategic Play Pedagogy group and evaluate the overall progress to date and identify next steps to further develop and embed active approaches to pedagogy.
- A8** Complete the review of the Digital Strategy ensuring a revised version is in place for implementation from August 2026

B: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged

B1 Implement the SEF Plan for sessions 24/25 – 25/26: [Education Services in Inverclyde - Inverclyde Council](#)

B2 Continue to track progress towards agreed Local Authority CORE and CORE+ Stretch Aims by supporting and challenging establishments to raise attainment, reduce the poverty related attainment gap, through analysis of data, improved professional judgements, target setting and improved learning and teaching, particularly for key equity groups.

B3 To review the referral process for access to the Family Support Worker service (Bernardo's) to ensure timely interventions that meet children and family's needs.

B4 Continue to work with partners on the development of the Early Interventions programme and the Intensive Family Support Hub as funded through the WFWF (Whole Family Wellbeing Fund)

B1 Good progress has been made implementing the SEF Plan for the current session. An initial review of the Logic Model led to a more targeted plan with many previous outcomes already embedded.

A key change in moving towards a sustainable model was the move from Coaching and Modelling Officers (CMOs) to Strategic Pedagogical Leads (SPLs). This shift in focus has been effective in supporting establishments deliver their own coaching and modelling approach and also in delivering in-house quality CLPL using the Pedagogy and Support for equity (PASE) Framework.

SEF monthly meetings provide opportunities for establishments to engage in collaborative activities focusing on the progress towards stretch aims, raising attainment, particularly of quintile one children, and the effective use of the PEF to support improved outcomes for children and families impacted by poverty. Head Teachers have commented that this space for professional dialogue around equity is very valuable and provides opportunities for them to evaluate the impact of interventions.

The Project Lead effectively uses collated data to track the progress of most of the stretch aims allowing for this information to be shared with senior leaders. Further work is required to ensure that all stretch aims have effective tracking processes in place resulting in closing the poverty related attainment gap.

The Project Lead works closely with Education Officers in analysing and interrogating establishment attainment data providing opportunities for targeted support and challenge meetings to take place. This has led to a deeper understanding of the establishment context and the processes and interventions used to support improvements in attainment.

The CLD attainment programme was effectively implemented to support S1-3 pupils in gaining broader pathways towards accreditation, awards and achievements.

The Scottish Attainment Challenge funding was due to end in March 2026, however recent information from the Scottish Government has indicated that a further year will be added, meaning that it will end in its current form in March 2027. Although funding will continue for another year, no information has been supplied regarding the amount of funding being granted to the local authority.

To enable a smooth exit from the fund, initial exit plans have been amended to take account this additional funding. Through stakeholder engagement and data interrogation, evidence will continue to direct the pathway through to the end of the programme. The key aim of the exit strategy is to ensure that we continue to plan to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap as stated in the *“Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress (March 2022).”*

The fund reducing year on year has resulted in a reduction in the capacity we have to target interventions to tackle the poverty related attainment gap. As such strategic planning to build a sustainable model continues to be the key approach.

- B2** Good progress has been made in tracking progress towards most of the agreed Local Authority Core and Core PLUS stretch aims. Ongoing work is taking place to improve tracking regarding BGE and Senior Phase progress toward the agreed stretch aims. The Project Lead and Data Lead continue to work closely with the Attainment Advisor, senior managers, all Head Teachers and partners to improve tracking systems that provide information on progress towards stretch aim.

Progress towards most stretch aims is being tracked at the agreed tracking periods throughout the session and updates provided at monthly Attainment Challenge Head Teachers Meetings and termly Governance meetings. Inverclyde’s Attainment Advisor also reports bi-annually to Education Scotland on progress made towards each stretch aim.

- B3** See A9.

- B4** An Early Intervention Hub has been established in parentship between staff from Education Services in line with the aims and objectives of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF). The Hub provides access to systemic family practice as well as Filial Family and Play Therapy. The WFWF also focuses on systemic changes as a result of which a significant amount of groundwork has been undertaken at a multi-agency level looking at the generation of a pilot Community Joint Support Team approach in session 2025-26. This will provide access to multi-agency support in respect of assessment and planning to meet need at the early intervention level.

Next steps: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged
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- B1** Implement the SEF Plan for sessions 25/26 and create a plan for session 2026/27: [Education Services in Inverclyde - Inverclyde Council](#). As part of this agree an exit strategy from the attainment challenge programme with a focus on sustainability from June 2027.
- B2** Continue to track progress towards agreed Local Authority CORE and CORE+ Stretch Aims supported by full implementation of the BGE and Senior Phase Trackers.
- B3** Work with partners to evolve a revised family support offer and clear referral system, aligning the early intervention model from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF), the

Family Link Workers as part of the Lomond View Academy offer and the reduced capacity of the Family Support service from within the Attainment Challenge.

B4 Carry out a review of the Parental Engagement Strategy by June 2026.

Evaluation of attainment in Inverclyde

Curriculum for Excellence reported levels

The ACEL return collects data from all publicly funded schools and gathers information for all pupils in P1, P4, P7 and S3. The return measures national performance in aspects of literacy (i.e. reading, writing, listening and talking) and numeracy, and reports on the percentage of pupils who have achieved the expected level, based on teacher professional judgements relevant to their stage.

This table shows Inverclyde and national averages as of June 2024. Overall Inverclyde only lies below the national average in literacy & numeracy at P7. Otherwise, the Inverclyde performance matches or exceeds the national average.

Attainment across the BGE (June 2024)

	P1		P4		P7		P1,4,7 combined		S3	
Inverclyde	Inv	Nat	Inv	Nat	Inv	Nat	Inv	Nat	Inv	Nat
Reading	86	81	83	79	83	81	84	80	92	90
Writing	82	79	78	74	74	76	78	76	91	90
Listening & talking	91	87	92	87	90	88	91	87	92	91
Literacy	81	77	77	71	72	74	76	74	90	88
Numeracy	86	85	82	78	77	78	82	80	91	90

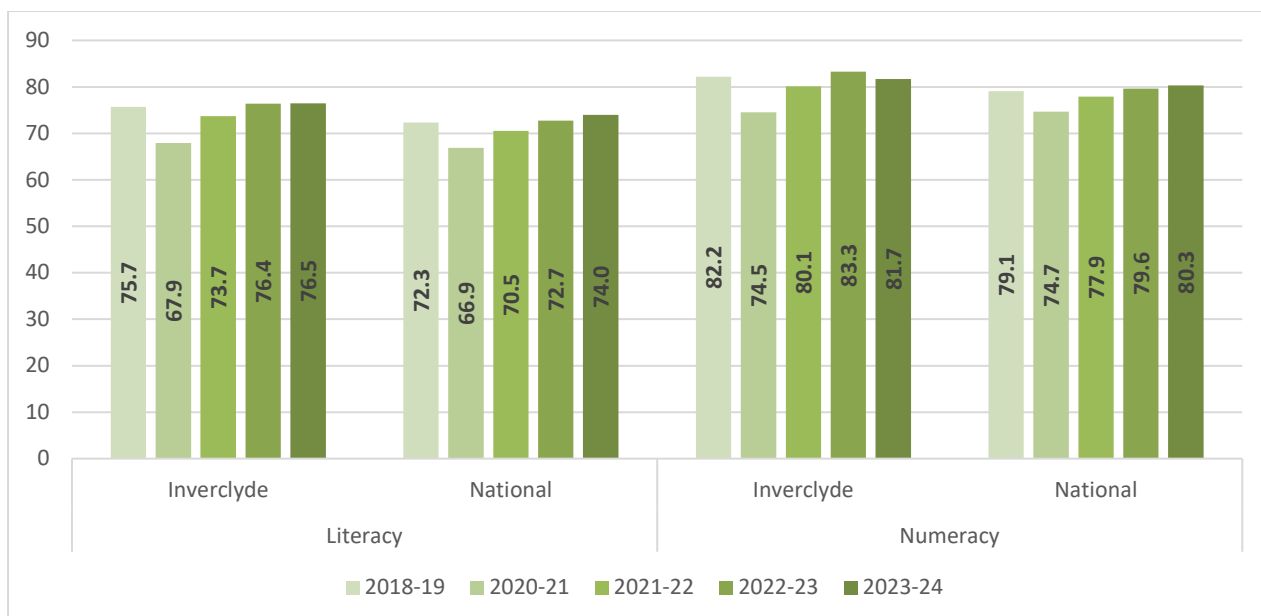
Source: Scottish Government, 2024

[Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\) Levels 2023-24 - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/achievement-of-curriculum-for-excellence-cfe-levels-2023-24/pages/2.aspx)

Below is a comparison of Literacy & Numeracy performance between Inverclyde and National across the years 2018-19 to 2023-24.

- Inverclyde consistently outperforms national averages in both literacy and numeracy.
- Numeracy scores remain higher than literacy across the years for both Inverclyde and national.
- 2020-21 shows a drop, likely due to external factors such as the pandemic, but performance recovers in subsequent years.
- Inverclyde sees stronger growth in literacy and numeracy post-2020-21, staying ahead of national trends.

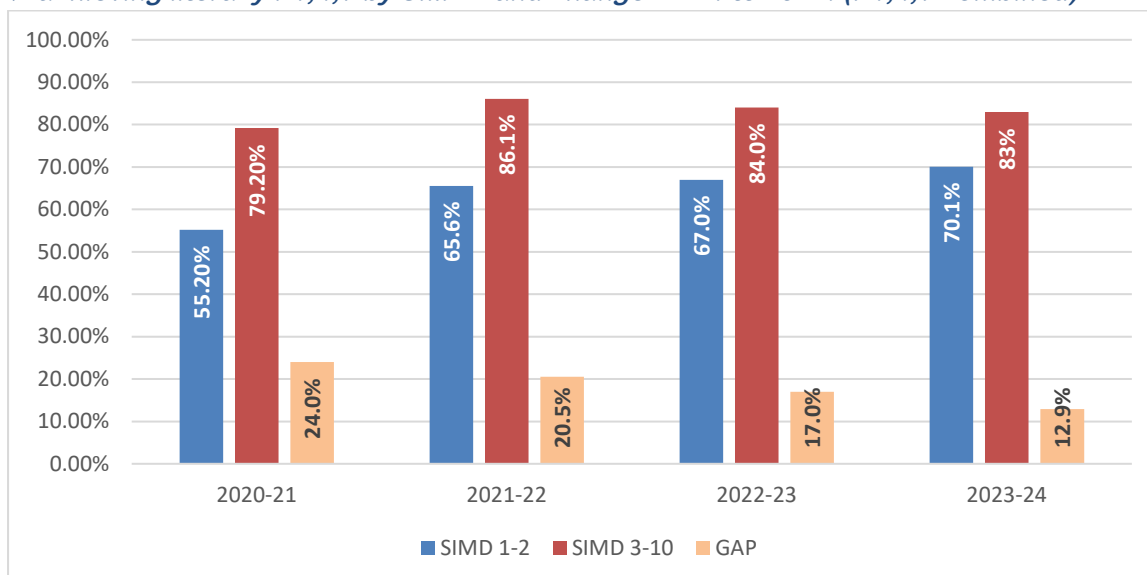
Percentage of learners achieving expected levels in literacy and numeracy in P1, P4, and P7 combined



Source: Scottish Government, 2024 (Supporting documents - Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Levels 2023-24 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot))

In measuring the poverty-related attainment gap, the comparison nationally is drawn between SIMD deciles 1-2 and deciles 9-10. However, Inverclyde have a very small percentage of the school population living in quintile 5 (deciles 9-10), and therefore locally the measure often used is between deciles 1-2 and deciles 3-10. The chart below shows the proportion of P1, P4 and P7 pupils who achieved the expected levels in literacy overall and numeracy for pupils in SIMD 1-2 compared to SIMD 3-10.

% achieving literacy P1,4,7 by SIMD Band change 20-21 to 23-24 (P1,4,7 combined)



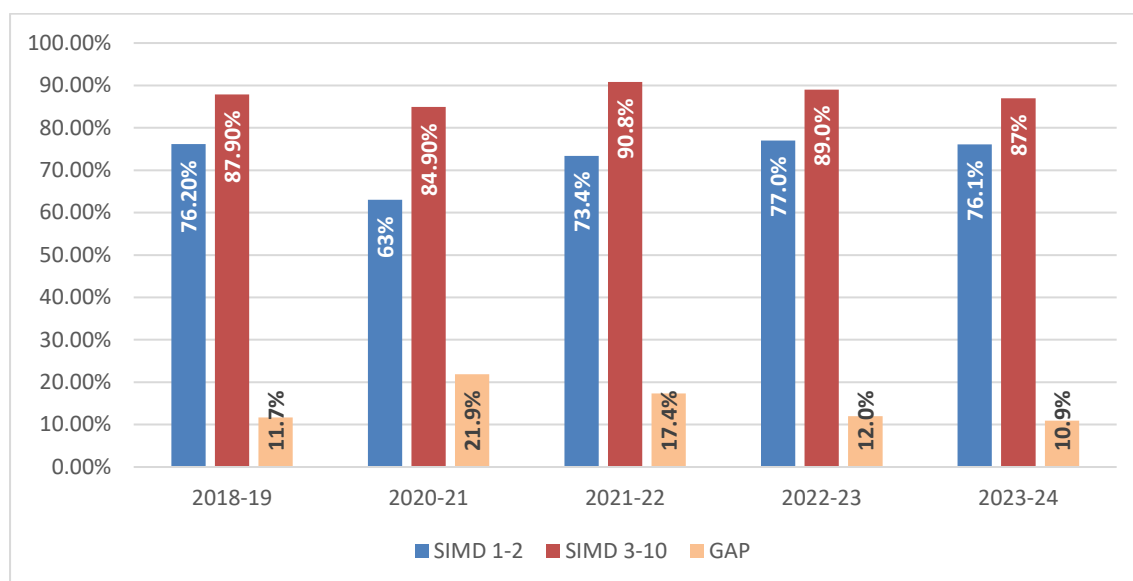
The chart above compares literacy achievement in SIMD 1-2 (most deprived areas) and SIMD 3-10 (least deprived areas) from 2020-21 to 2023-24, highlighting the attainment gap.

Literacy achievement in SIMD 1-2 has steadily increased from 55.2% in 2020-21 to 70.1% in 2023-24. As you can see the Gap is closing year on year, with the most recent year being lower than before the pandemic.

The chart below shows numeracy achievement between SIMD 1-2 (most deprived areas) and SIMD 3-10 (least deprived areas) over five years (2018-19 to 2023-24), highlighting the attainment gap.

Numeracy in 202-21 saw a significant drop (63%) compared to 2018-19 (76.2%), however the percentage steadily improved over the following years, reaching 76.1% in 2023-24, close to pre pandemic levels. The attainment gap has reached its lowest in five years.

% achieving numeracy P1,4,7 by SIMD Band change 20-21 to 23-24 (P1,4,7 combined)



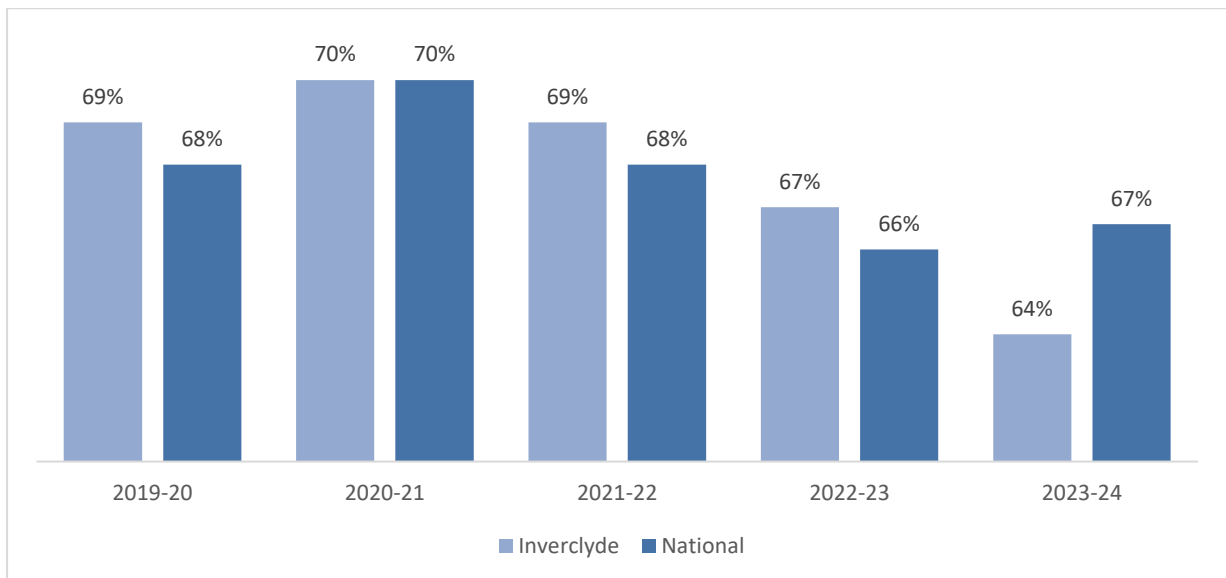
Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF): Awards at SCQF level 5 and 6

The LGBF is a high-level benchmarking tool designed to support senior management teams and elected members to ask questions about key council services. The LGBF helps councils compare their performance against a suite of efficiency, output and outcome indicators that cover all areas of local government activity.

The following charts are a sample from the LGBF suite of indicators which relate to the achievement of awards at SCQF level 5 and 6 for senior phase pupils.

Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at Level 5

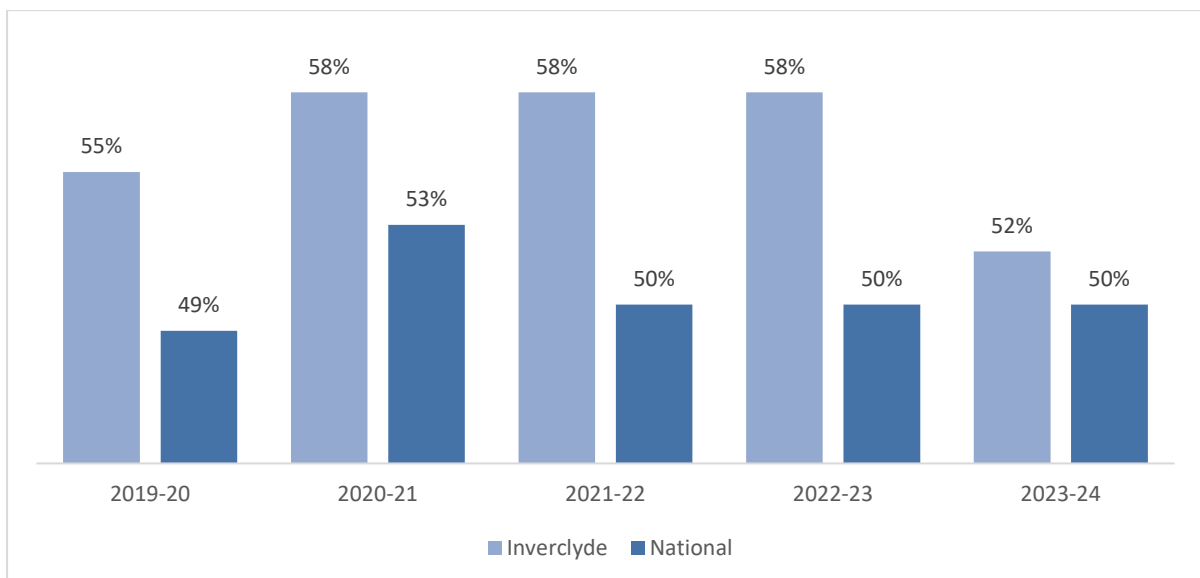
Inverclyde consistently tracked close to the national average from 2019-20 to 2022-23, but in 2023-24, Inverclyde saw a sharper decline to 64%, while the national rate remained steady at 67%, widening the gap.



Source: Improvement Service, 2024 ([Benchmarking](#) | [Benchmarking \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](#))

Percentage of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5

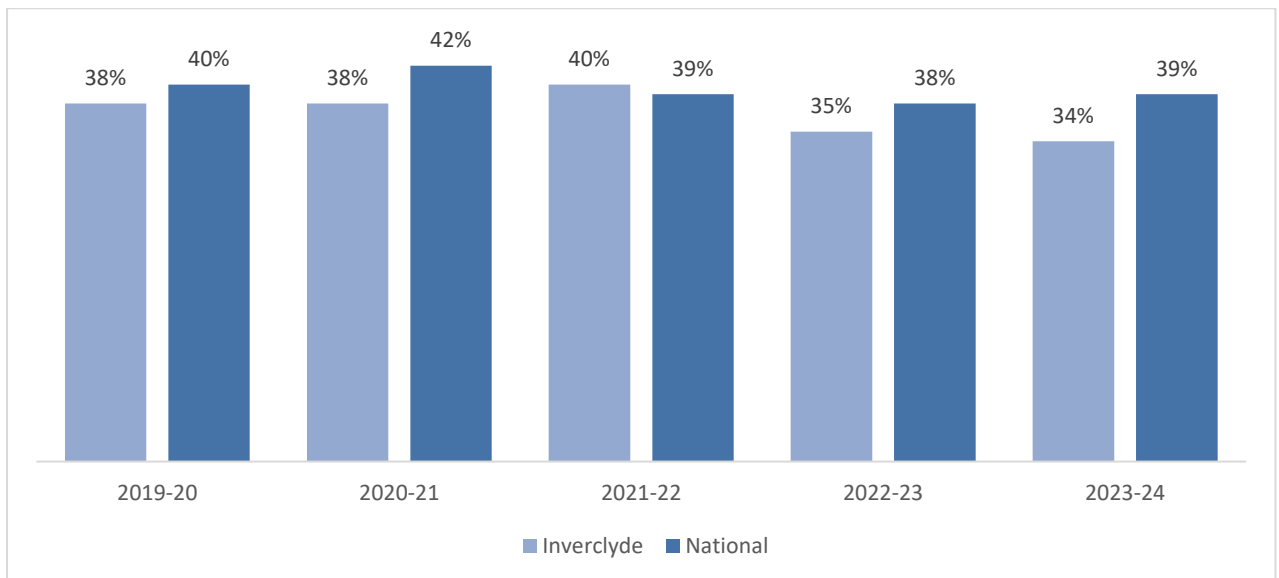
Inverclyde outperformed the national average from 2019-20 to 2022-23, peaking at 58%, before dropping to 52% in 2023-24 — now just slightly above the stable national rate of 50%.



Source: Improvement Service, 2024 ([Benchmarking](#) | [Benchmarking \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](#))

Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at Level 6

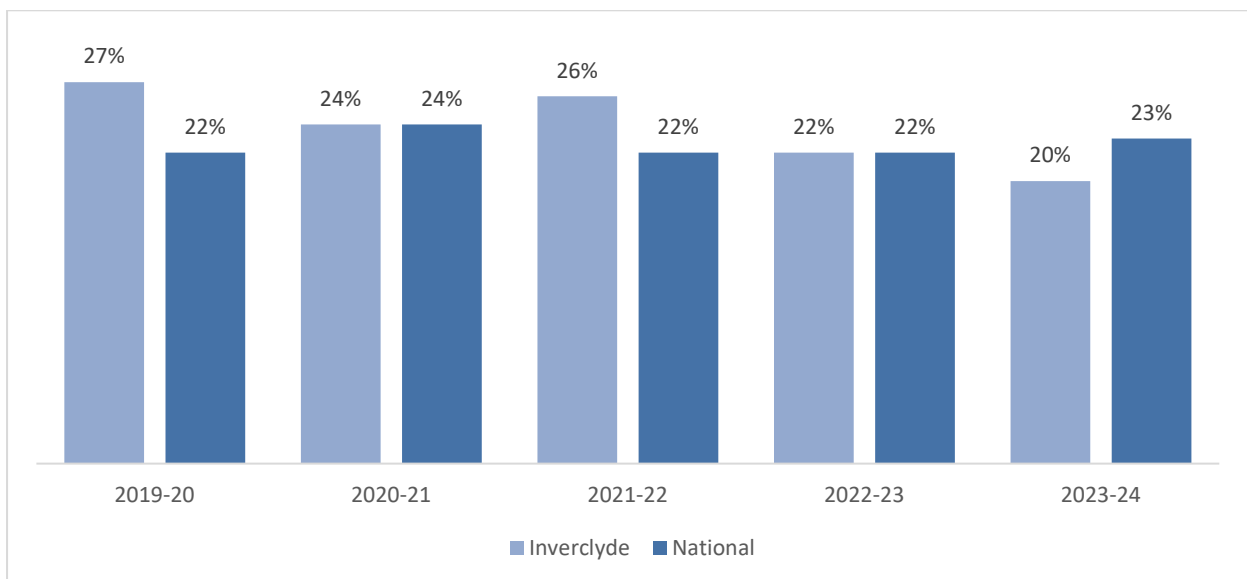
Inverclyde tracked closely with the national average from 2019-20 to 2021-22, but in the last two years, a gap has emerged, with national performance holding steady while Inverclyde declined to 34% in 2023-24.



Source: Improvement Service, 2024 ([Benchmarking](#) | [Benchmarking \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](#))

Percentage of pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6

Inverclyde performed above the national average from 2019-20 to 2021-22, but has since seen a decline, falling below the national figure in 2023-24 for the first time in five years.



Source: Improvement Service, 2024 ([Benchmarking](#) | [Benchmarking \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](#))

INSIGHT Comparison Leavers Data

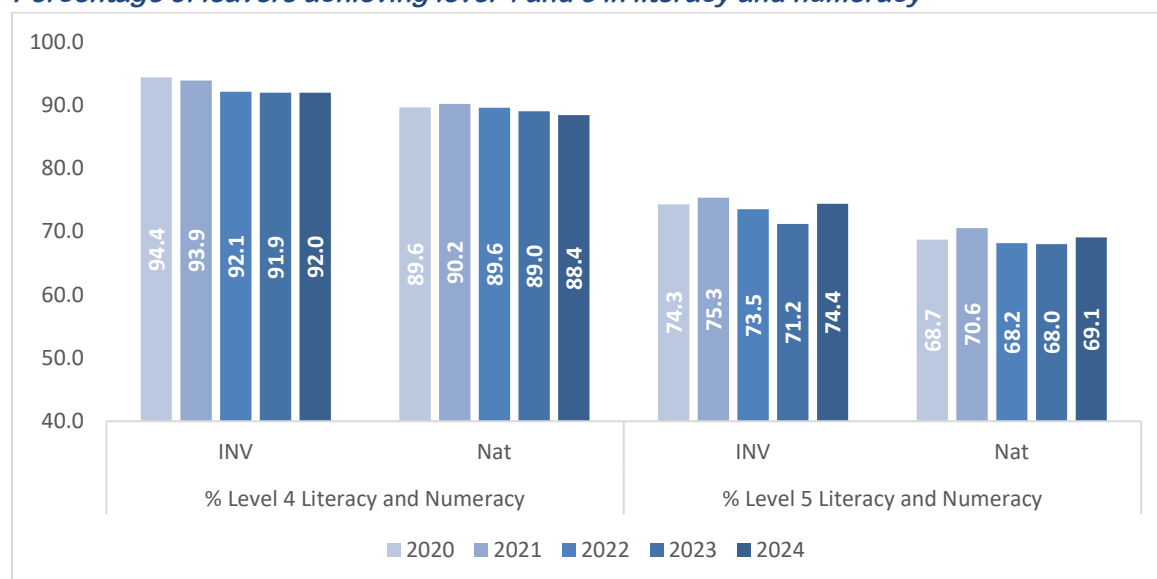
National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy & Numeracy

This chart shows the overall performance in literacy and numeracy for all pupils in the leaver cohorts between 2019/20 and 2023/24. Overall, in literacy and numeracy, at SCQF level 4 Inverclyde improved its performance, whilst the national figure is still on a downward trend. Level 5 in Inverclyde consistently performs better than the National average.

- Inverclyde maintains a steady advantage over national figures at both Level 4 and Level 5.
- Despite minor fluctuations, Inverclyde has remained above the national average every year.

Inverclyde has consistently been above the national average in each of the past six years.

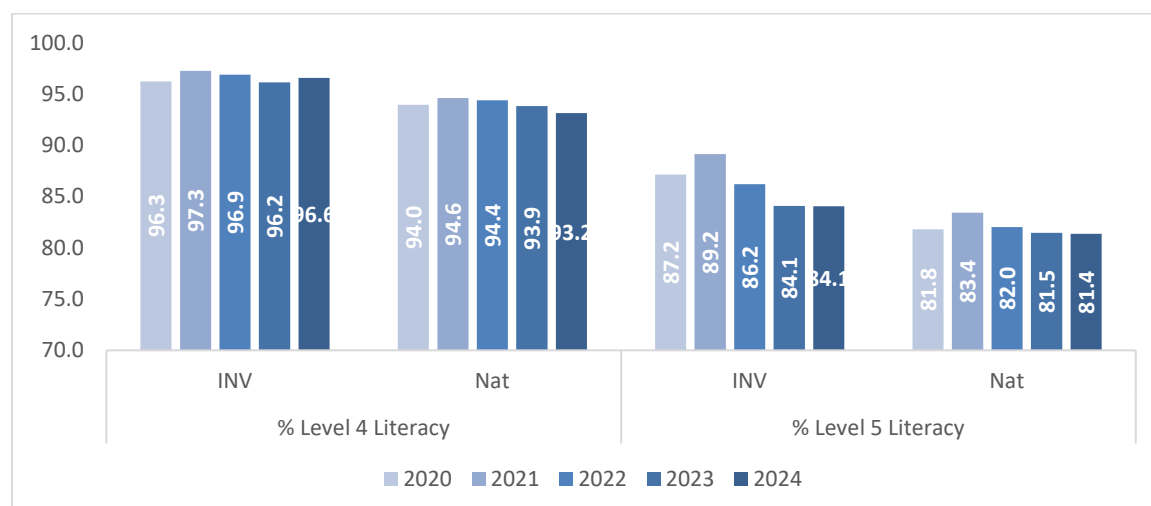
Percentage of leavers achieving level 4 and 5 in literacy and numeracy



Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy)

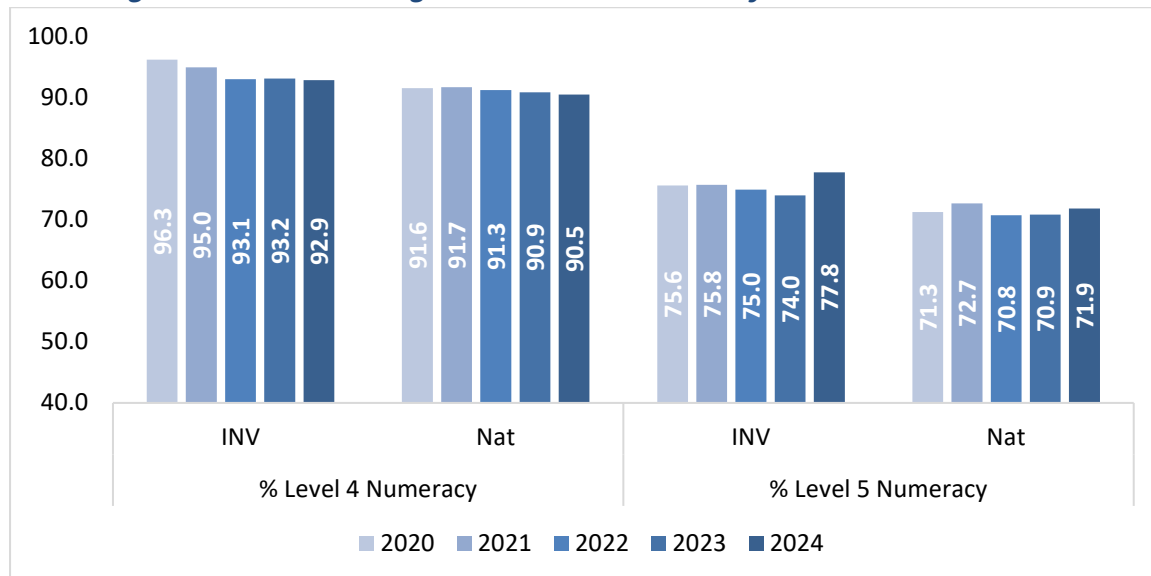
Viewing literacy and numeracy separately shows the same trend of consistently being above the national average.

Percentage of leavers achieving level 4 and 5 in literacy



Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy)

Percentage of leavers achieving level 4 and 5 in Numeracy

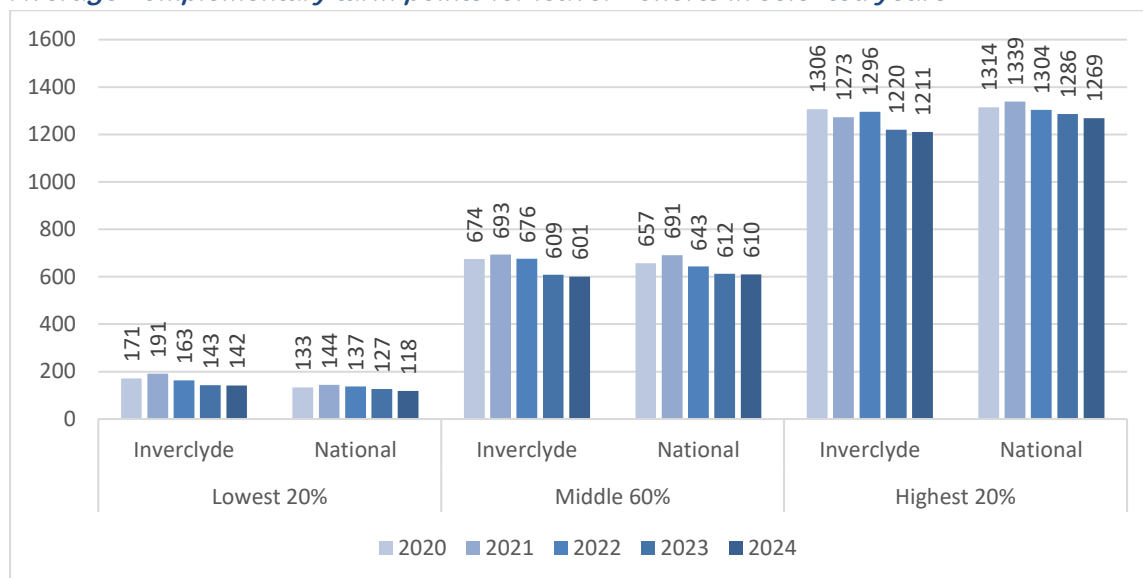


Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Literacy and Numeracy)

National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment for All

This graph shows the complementary tariff scores of leavers divided into the lowest, middle and highest percentage of attainment cohorts. The lowest attaining 20% are consistently above the national average. The middle 60% the national figure is slightly above Inverclyde for the last two years. The highest 20% Inverclyde have been below the national average in all but one of the last 5 years.

Average complementary tariff points for leaver cohorts in selected years



Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Improving Attainment for All)

National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation

This national measure looks at the average total tariff score of school leavers by SIMD. The SIMD enables schools to map their performance against the social context in which they operate. The table below shows the total tariff scores of leavers against their deprivation area for 2023/24. SIMD 1 being the most deprived and SIMD 10 being the least.

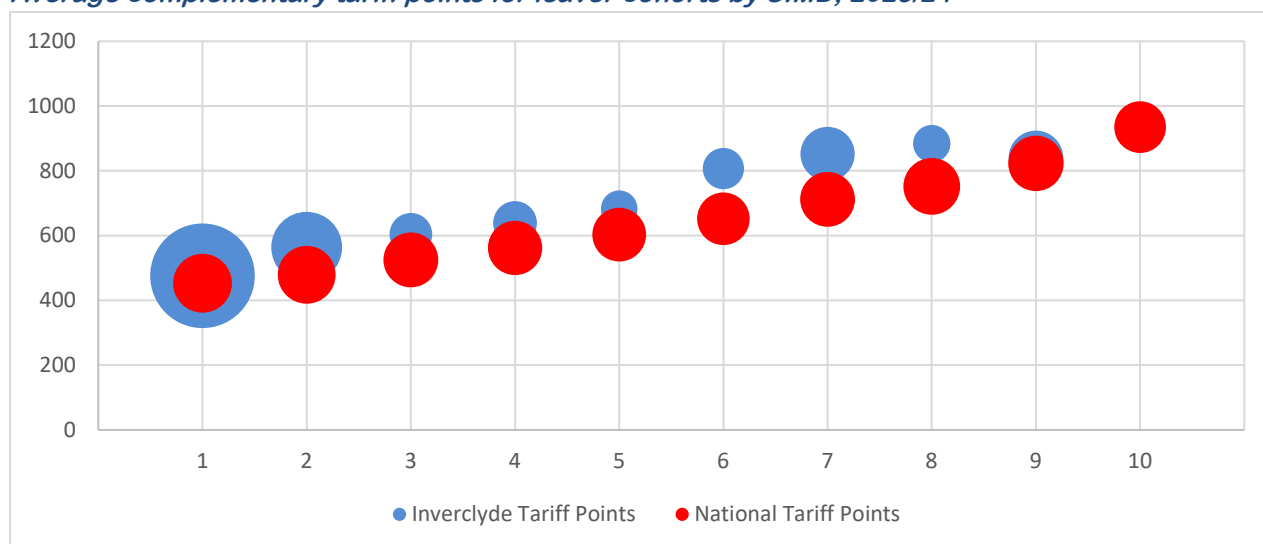
Inverclyde consistently outperforms the national average in tariff points across all 9 of the 10 SIMD deciles. Inverclyde's student population is more heavily concentrated in lower SIMD deciles than the national average, but students in these groups achieve higher tariff points than their national counterparts.

Average complementary tariff points for leaver cohorts by SIMD, 2022/23

SIMD Decile		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Inverclyde	Average Tariff Points	476	564	604	639	683	807	852	884	840	886
	% of cohort	36.0%	16.5%	6.0%	6.3%	4.4%	5.6%	9.7%	4.6%	9.8%	1.2%
National	Average Tariff Points	453	479	525	562	603	652	712	752	823	935
	cohort	11.4%	11.0%	9.9%	9.7%	9.5%	9.1%	9.9%	10.6%	10.1%	8.8%

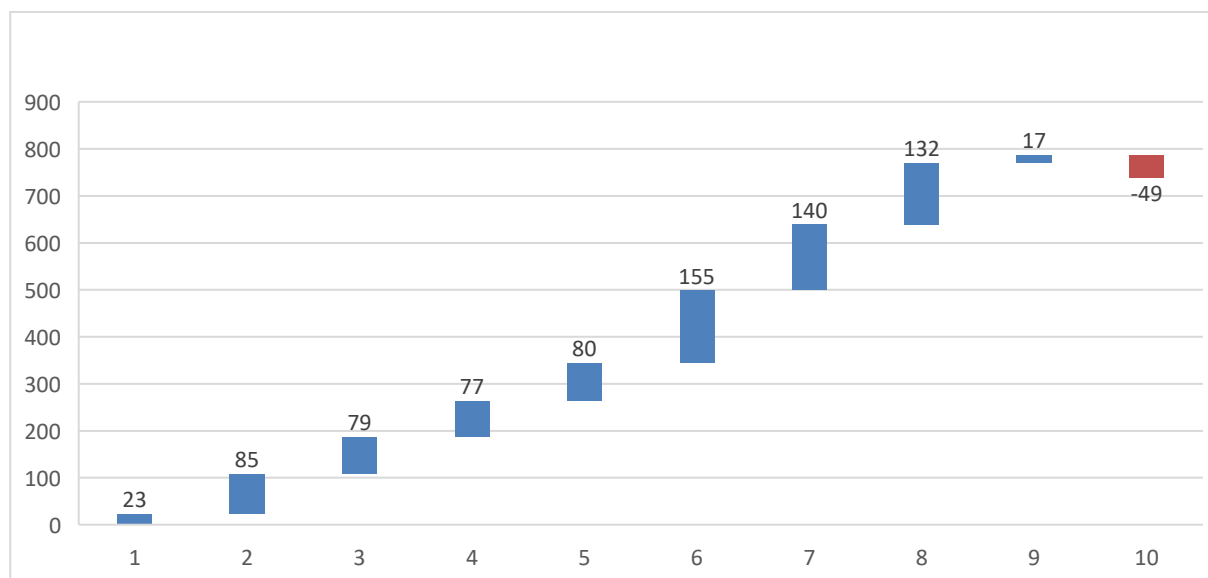
In the chart below the size of the bubble is proportionate to the percentage of individuals in each SIMD decile. It shows that performance in SIMD 6 and 8 was significantly greater than the national establishment. The next chart shows the point gap between Inverclyde and the national average.

Average complementary tariff points for leaver cohorts by SIMD, 2023/24



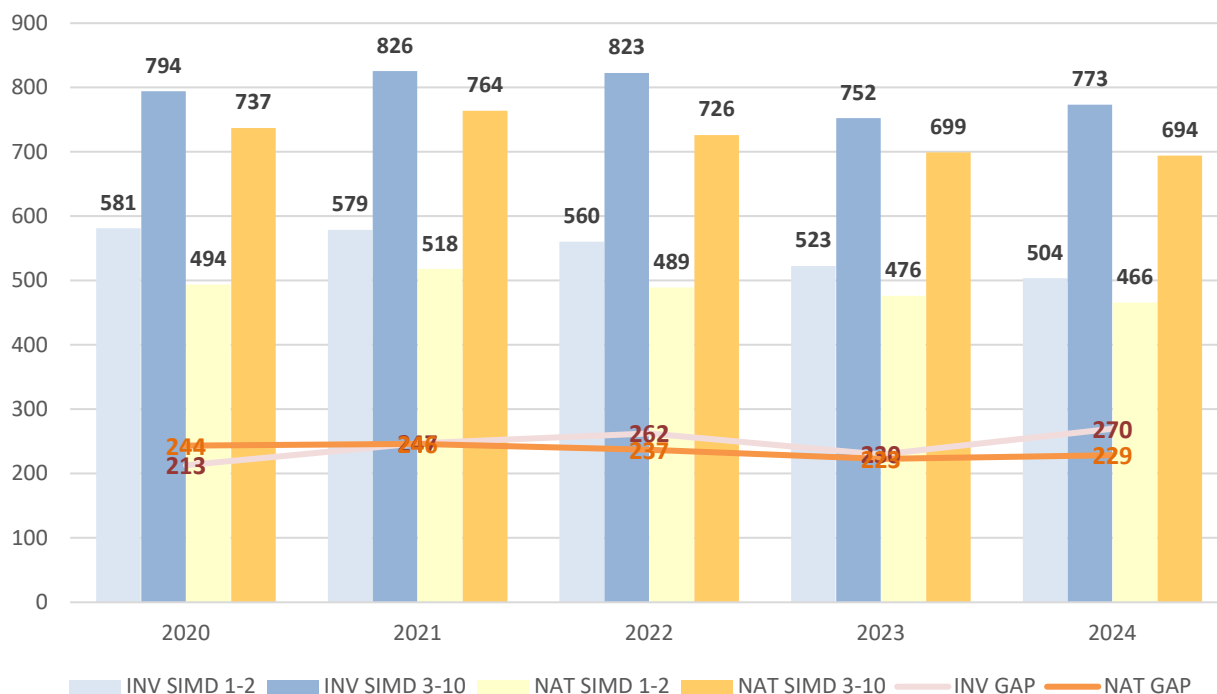
Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation)

Average complementary tariff point gap between Inverclyde and national at each SIMD decile



The charts below groups SIMD pupils into two bands of deciles, 1-2 and 3-10, to allow the measurement of the SIMD attainment gap. Inverclyde's SIMD 1-2 group has declined from 581 in 2020 to 504 in 2024. The national SIMD 1-2 group has also declined from 494 in 2020 to 466 in 2024. Both Inverclyde and National scores are decreasing, but Inverclyde remains consistently higher than the national average.

Attainment gap by average complementary tariff points by SIMD local banding, 2019/20 to 2023/24



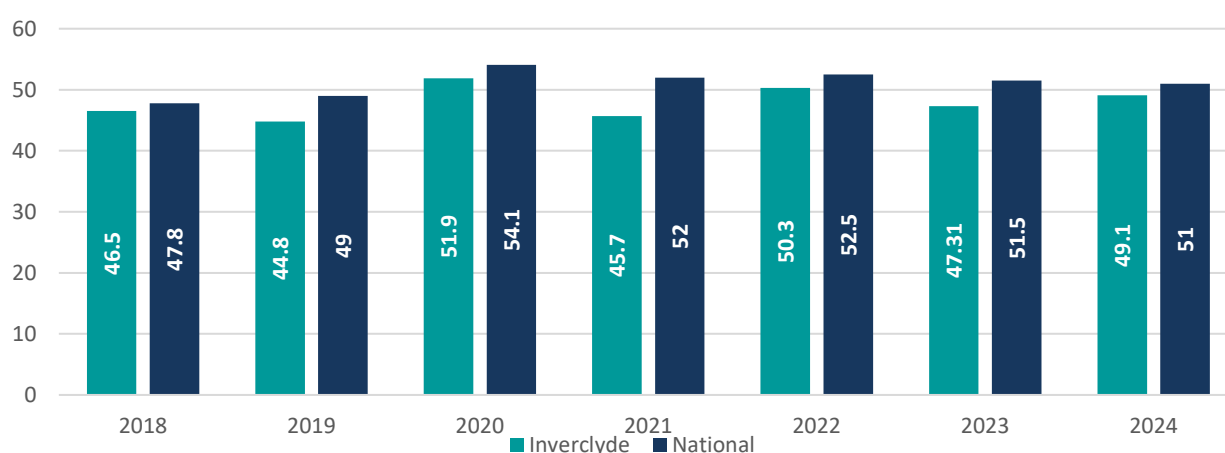
Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT:National Benchmarking Measure: Attainment versus Deprivation)

Breadth and Depth: All Candidates

The charts below show our performance at in key measures in the percentage of pupils gaining awards at SQA national at SCQF levels 5, 6 and 7. Data from 2020 through to 2022 cannot be used for direct comparison with previous years to show improved performance due to the different awarding model that were used over this period.

The national performance has been consistently higher than Inverclyde across all years. National performance peaked in 2020 (54.1%) and has since shown a gradual decline to 51% in 2024. Inverclyde's performance has fluctuated more than the national trend. It peaked in 2020 at 51.9%, then declined significantly in 2021 (45.7%) before recovering to 49.1% in 2024.

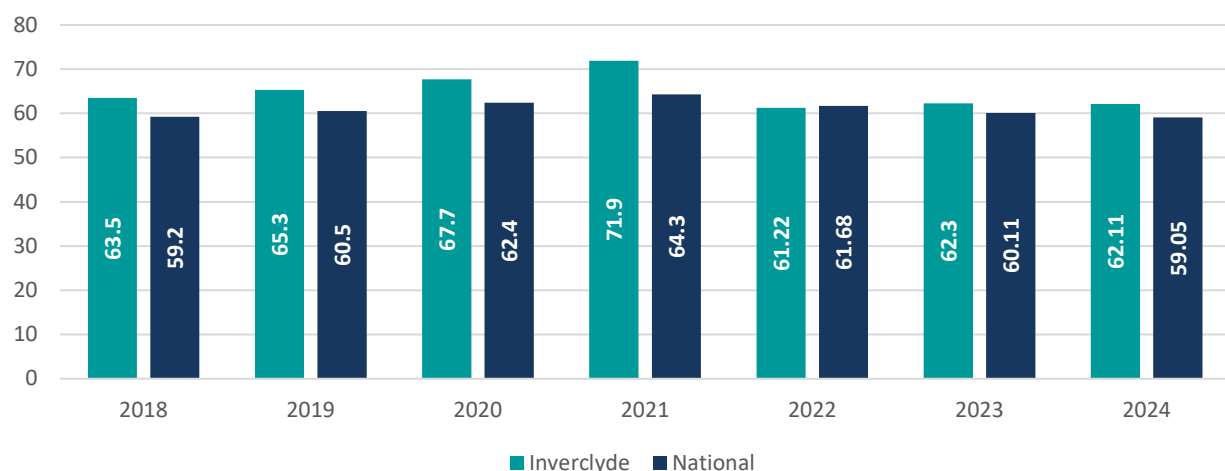
% of pupils achieving 5+ Awards at National 5 level (grade A-D) by end S4, 2017/18 to 2023/24



Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT::Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)

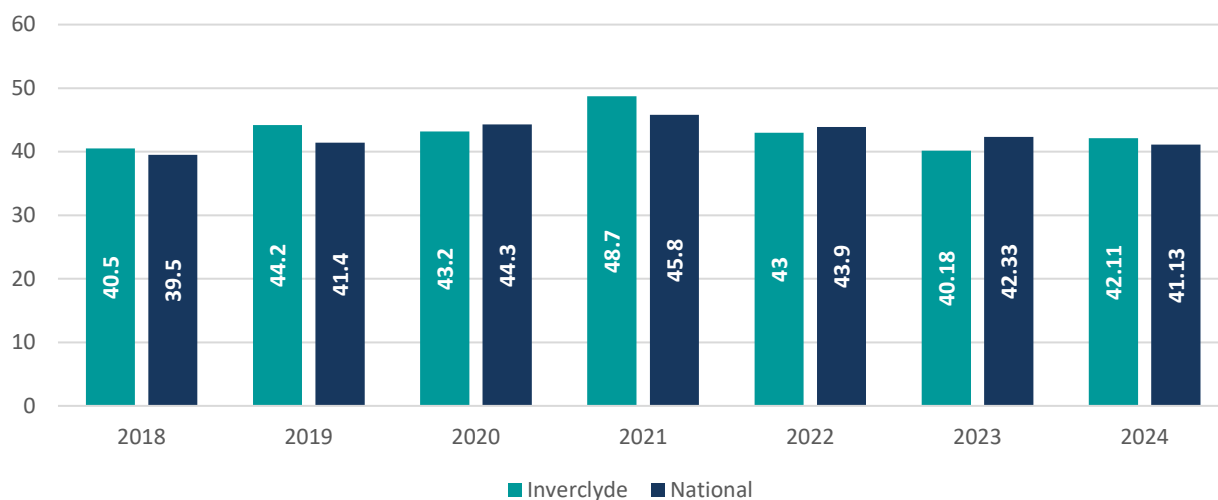
At SQA Higher level Inverclyde performed Inverclyde had a consistent 4-5 percentage point lead over the national average from 2018-2020. Inverclyde's drop from 71.9% (2021) to 61.22% (2022) brought its performance closer to the national average. By 2024, the gap is only 3 percentage points (62.11% vs 59.05%) This suggests a levelling-out of performance differences, potentially due to post-pandemic recovery challenges.

Percentage of pupils achieving 1+ awards at Higher level (grade A-D) by end S5, 2017/18 to 2023/24



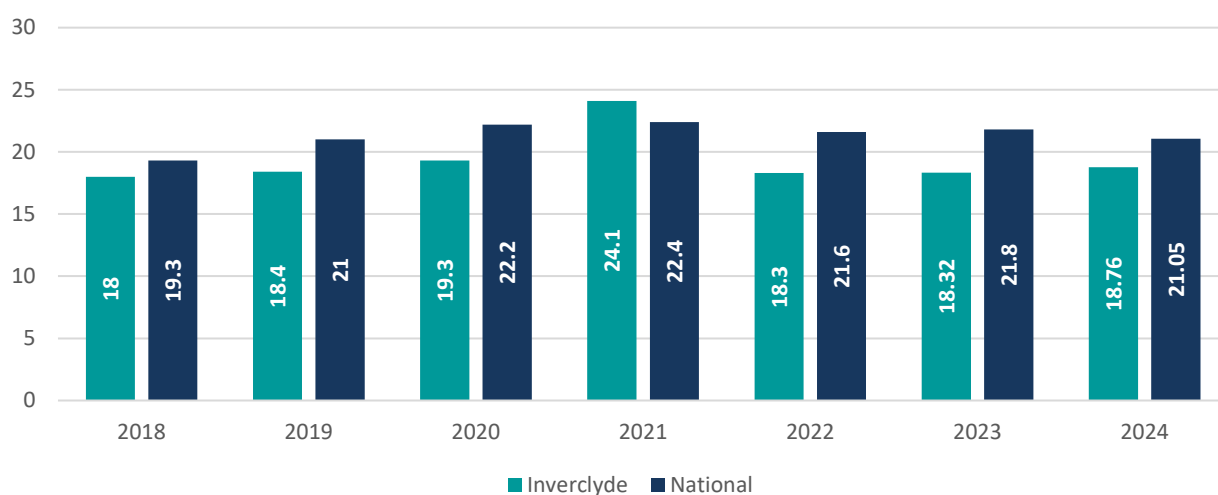
Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT: Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)

Percentage of pupils achieving 3+ awards at SQA Higher level (grade A-D) by end S5, 2017/18 to 2023/24



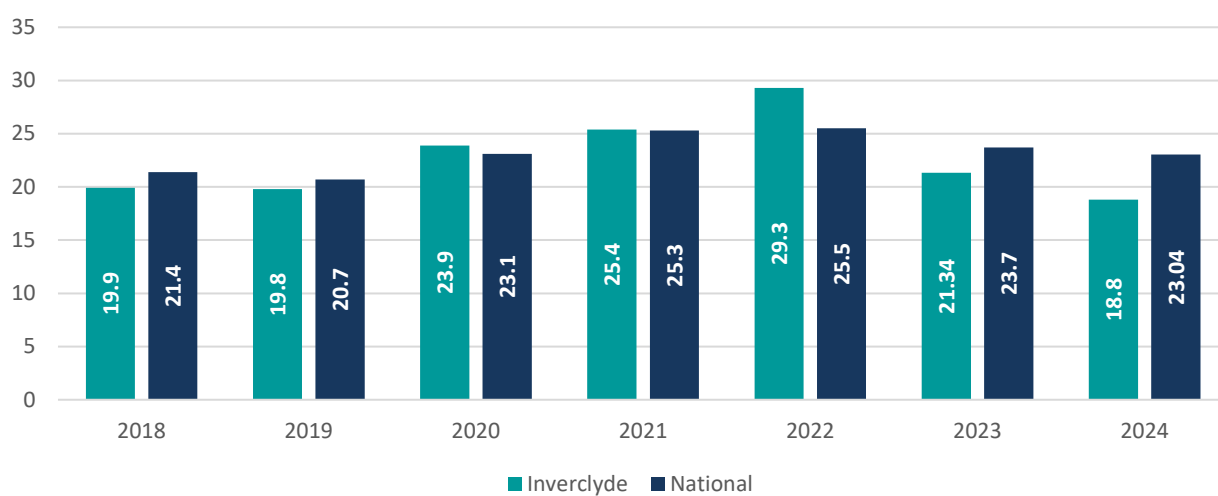
Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT: Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)

Percentage of pupils achieving 5+ awards at Higher level (grade A-D) by end S5, 2017/18 to 2023/24



Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT: Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)

Percentage of pupils achieving awards at Advanced Higher level (grade A-D) by end S6, 2017/18 to 2023/24



Source: Insight, 2024 (INSIGHT: Breadth and Depth: All Candidates)

C: Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing

C1 Continue to roll out the attendance strategy with a particular focus on ensuring highly effective planning for pupils with less than 20% attendance.

C2 Link with partners and school leaders to refocus on the substance misuse strategy with a particular focus on vaping, including support for pupils to cease.

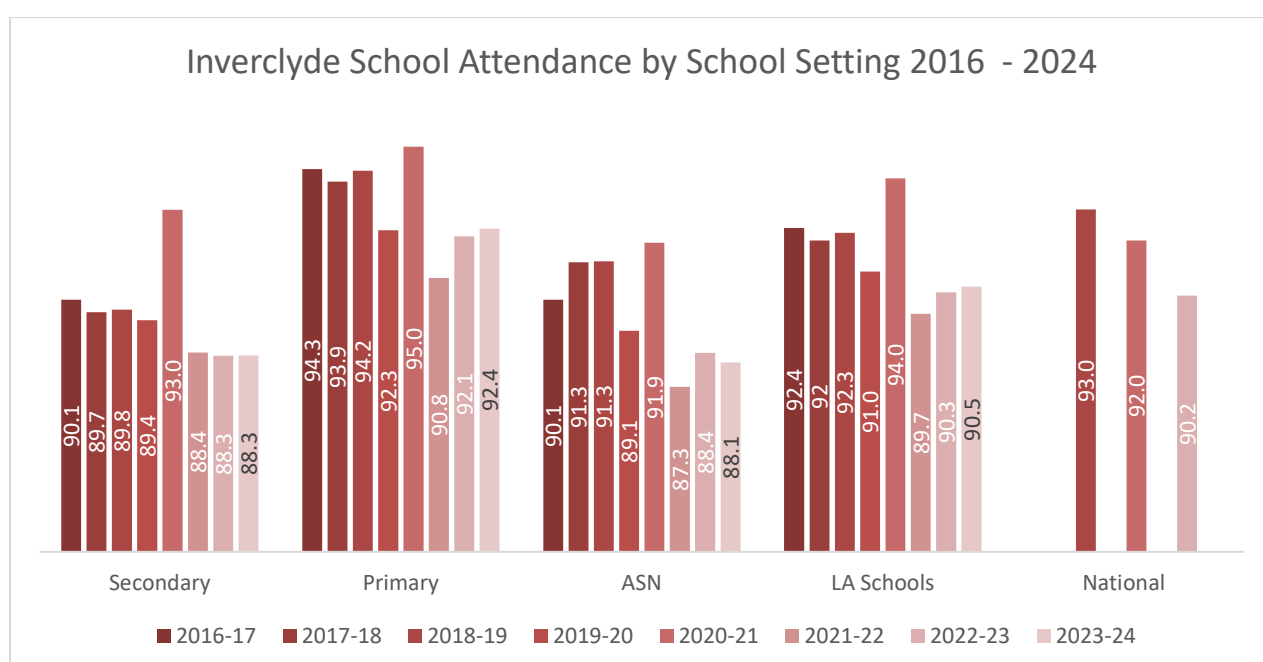
C3 Review approaches to and guidance around the assessment and tracking of health and wellbeing 3 – 18.

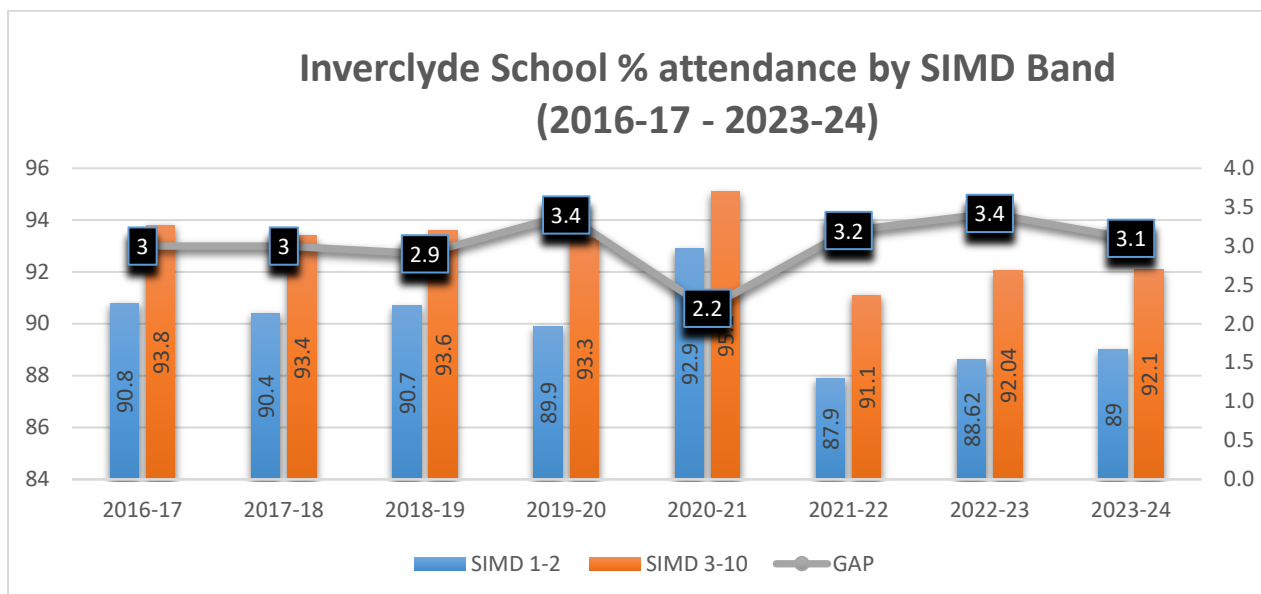
C4 Review the PSE curriculum 3-18 with a focus on progression and the development of a life skills approach, particularly for senior phase pupils in supporting their preparation for leaving school e.g. personal budgeting.

C5 Carry out tri-annual review of the Anti-Bullying policy in collaboration with Respect Me, re-launching the revised policy in November 2024, incorporating feedback from the HWB survey, further focus groups and Clyde Conversations.

C6 Ensure that all establishments are clear on the current reporting arrangements for 2024/25.

C1 Overall in 2023/24 attendance has improved again on 2022/23 figures. This continues to be most evident in primary. There was a slight dip in ASN establishments, with secondary attendance continuing to plateau. Attendance figures since the pandemic have yet to recover and return to where they were pre 2019. We remain above the national average overall.





The gap in attendance between pupils in SIMD 1-2 and 3-10 opened back post pandemic. However, in 2023-24 the gap showed evidence of beginning to close again and was only 0.2% higher than it had been at its lowest point pre-pandemic.

Very good progress has been made in the roll out of the attendance strategy ensuring it aligns with recent announcements from the Scottish Government and Education Scotland.

The creation of Inverclyde's Attendance Policy links directly to the initial actions from the Inverclyde attendance strategy and is key in supporting establishments create their own attendance policy, which is relevant to their context. The Attendance Policy is a highly valuable framework designed to ensure a clear and consistent approach to supporting establishments in their efforts to improve pupil attendance. The focus on fostering 'pull' factors to attract pupils back to schools highlights a proactive and forward-thinking approach.

Building on a solid foundation of success, the service has been actively developing practice to maximise attendance, reduce absence, and strengthen pupil engagement in learning. The Attendance Policy focuses on equity, collaboration, and excellence in education. Its strategic vision positions it as a vital tool in advancing the well-being of pupils.

Increased tracking and analysis of both authority and establishment attendance data, which is shared with Head Teachers every 2 weeks, ensures that senior leaders have the most up-to-date information allowing them to make informed decisions.

The appointment of a Strategic Attendance Lead, due to take up post in the summer term of 2024/25, will support us to continue to deliver the strategy, work across the children's service partnership as well as support establishment in maximising attendance and supporting absence through developing their own attendance policies.

- C2** Education Officers and Personal and Social Education (PSE) leads have worked closely with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Health Improvement Officer to keep abreast of current national developments around vaping and support to cease. This includes updates on the vaping lessons that will be available nationally and the planning and delivery of Vaping Roadshows, funded by the alcohol and drugs Partnership, in all secondary schools.

The Young Person's Substance Officers continue to deliver a robust substance use programme to all secondary schools, with on-going review and refresh to address the ever-changing needs that our young people face. The majority of young people in our secondary schools state that they now have a good knowledge about alcohol and drugs. The majority also have an understanding of risky behaviours and how to reduce risk. A minority of young people state that they have a good understanding about vaping.

- C3** Three secondary schools and one ASN provision are currently piloting the Be Well Survey. The focus this year is on analysing individual pupil data to identify need and set targets. The schools have reported that already this is flagging up areas where further action is required to ensure wellbeing needs are being met.

On taking a snap-shot of pupils in the pilot schools it can be seen that most young people feel safe in school and the majority have a key adult in the school that they can speak to. A minority of young people state that they enjoy coming to school and also a minority take part in extra-curricular clubs and activities.

- C4** We have had an on-going focus on the PSE curriculum, with PSE leads sharing timetables, planners and resources. We have worked in partnership with CLD to produce an online resource bank to support the delivery of PSE, linking to lessons, wellbeing supports and local partners.

CLPL has been offered to all staff in the authority on Financial Education. An Education Officer has attended the CLPL for secondary education and Financial Schools Scotland have given Inverclyde access to a number of Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL) lessons that can be used in both primary and secondary. There are a number of lessons that could be delivered across all levels of the BGE.

- C5** The refreshed Anti-Bullying policy has been drafted and will proceed to Committee in May 2025. The refreshed policy is aligned to the document Respect for All (2024), which is the core guidance provided to local authorities by the Scottish Government related to the creation of policies in this area of work. Following Committee, the policy is scheduled for launch in August 2025 and will be supported by an offer of training for schools.

- C6** The system within SEEMiS that is used to record incidents of bullying or racial incidents has been highlighted with Heads and training webinars offered by SEEMiS have been available for staff to participate in. As a result, we have seen an increase in the number of cases reported on the bullying and equalities system. Training will continue to be offered by SEEMiS on an ongoing basis. Guidance is also included in our Anti Bullying policy on the requirement to record. Incidents are monitored as part of the termly risk register that is compiled.

Next steps: Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing

- C1** Continue to roll out the attendance strategy as outlined above in C1, ensuring all establishments have their own attendance policies in place during 2025/26 and maintain an ongoing focus on ensuring highly effective planning for pupils with less than 20% attendance.
- C2** Publish and implement the revised Inverclyde Anti-bullying policy in May 2025, and provide support and CLPL for establishments to implement and revise their own in line with it.

- C3** Review the Inverclyde Promoting Positive Relationships and in doing so support all establishments to review their Promoting Positive Relationships policy in line with the Scottish Government action plan relating to behaviour.
- C4** Continue to work with HSCP to further develop knowledge and understanding of the dangers of vaping for our young people in secondary schools by developing learning materials and a further training offer relating to vaping.
- C5** Collate data from individual schools' Health and Wellbeing (HWB) surveys to produce a data set for the authority in order to support HWB planning. Work in partnership with East Renfrewshire Council to compare data sets / identify commonalities and work together on development needs.
- C6** Further develop approaches to Financial Education by working with targeted schools to develop tests of change in partnership with Scotland's Financial Schools through a bespoke CLPL offer for middle leaders and teachers.

D: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people

D1 Link to Curriculum review work in A4, i.e. carry out a review of the approach to curriculum design across S1-3 of the BGE as well as a review / consultation on the number of qualifications that can be taken in S5.

D2 Fully implement the Leaver's guidance in 2024/25.

D3 Fully implement the Leaver's transition guidance for pupils with ASN in 2024/25.

D1 See A4/5.

D2 Inverclyde's Leavers Guidance was updated and launched in June 2024 in order to further support learners in the senior phase. Working in collaboration with our partners in SDS, HSCP and Employability and Regeneration, roles and responsibilities are now clearly defined. A timeline and quality calendar has been developed which will support establishments to provide the appropriate guidance to senior phase learners as they begin the transition into a positive and sustained post school destination.

As part of the process, a timeline for the Education Officer (Senior Phase) to regularly meet with partners including Employability and Regeneration and SDS Leads has been introduced. This has supported the tracking of data and facilitates the identification, planning and implementation of interventions that support young people in Inverclyde who are furthest from achieving a positive and sustained destination. This has been successful and has supported the delivery of our second highest ever Initial School Leaver Destination Figures in October 2024 of 95.4%. In addition, regular meetings have taken place, as per the quality calendar, with SDS Leads in Inverclyde to identify young people who require a targeted approach. Principal Teachers of Pupil Support were involved in using their existing positive relationships to make contact with young people who were disengaged and not in a positive or sustained destination post school. This contributed to having no 'unknown' young people i.e. young people who are not in employment, education or training that SDS have lost contact with school leavers in 2024.

All secondary schools now track their leavers using the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) system. The Education Officer (Senior Phase) has targeted support meetings alongside SDS and, if appropriate, Employability and Regeneration staff, with establishments who have concerns about learners not achieving a positive and sustained destination. This support for establishments was central to improving communication between partner agencies involved in the transition process. It was a vital component in creating an offer for every young person in Inverclyde. Some specific examples included placing three young people in employment, 10 young people on to online college courses and young people into further education college courses.

Initial leavers have been at their highest ever levels in the last two years (although a slight drop this year from 96.4% to 95.4%) and the APM has demonstrated an increase from 92.6% to 93.5%.

D3 Education Services continue to support our young people with ASN to achieve a positive post school destination. Targeted support is provided to our learners who attend Craigmarloch School and Lomond View Academy, as well as identified pupils in our mainstream secondary schools. Education, HSCP and NHS staff meet five times per year

for targeted learners to discuss progress and to ensure that the parents and carers of our most vulnerable learners feel supported during the process. Last year, 23 young people made the transition from school into a positive post school destination that was appropriate for their particular needs.

Education Services are waiting on the resource evaluation of our colleagues in HSCP, who are leading on the guidance launch, to ensure that they can adequately staff and resource the promised service level contained in the ASN Leavers Guidance.

D4 Commit to ensuring that every young person will receive an offer for October 2024 that has a maximum chance of being sustained.

D5 In order to achieve this, continue to work alongside our partners to continue to improve the offer for our young people who are most at risk of missing out (ASN, CEYP) and pupils from SIMD1), with a particular focus on pathways in construction, engineering, access courses for Higher Education and opportunities to move into employment from school.

D6 Continue to support an increase in the number of schools who have SCQF.

D4 Education services have been working alongside colleagues in regeneration and employability to further develop the Inverclyde Offer.

The APM, which is a measure of 16-19 year olds who are in employment, education or training has remained consistent. The June 2024 figure increased from 92.6% to 93.5%, placing Inverclyde above the national average of 92.5%.

Education Service continues to work alongside partners to develop an offer for all learners that has the best chance of being sustained post school. The Street League Training programme remains popular amongst school leavers who are finding it challenging to achieve a positive destination post school. Approximately 11 young people were enrolled in October on the level two, 12 week programme. Young people then have the opportunity to move on to another positive destination or, if that particular individual is not ready for the workplace or further education they can be entered on the level three Street League programme. Young people not only benefit from the Street League Programme, but SDS post school team have a close relationship with some of our most at risk young people and, if required, can provide coaching and pastoral support should it be required.

At a strategic level, senior Education staff now meet regularly with senior staff from Regeneration. This has facilitated discussions around the Inverclyde offer to school leavers. Whilst at an early stage, more focus is now being given to what local authority partners, such as the Trust, can do to provide our school leavers with opportunities to move into a positive destination in areas that our young people have indicated as their intended destination. An example of this for next year is the proposed offer of 10 places based around building skills in the construction industry.

D5 Education staff have worked closely with the Inverclyde Community Benefits team, commercial and education partners to develop pathways into positive and sustained destinations in the fields of construction and engineering and to develop the employability skills of 'at risk' groups.

Babcock/West College Scotland

This widening access course, supported by Babcock Engineering, was offered in partnership with West College Scotland and Inverclyde Council. Establishments supported young people to apply for this course with 12 young people successfully achieving a place. As this is a widening access project, all young people had to be from SIMD1-3, have an ASN or be care experienced. Further, these young people did not have qualifications that would enable them to enter further education to study for the course they intended to study. At the end of the course, young people had a guaranteed interview for a Modern Apprenticeship with Babcock Engineering. Of the 12 young people who started the course, 10 achieved the National Certificate in Engineering Services award. In addition, 10 of these young people were successful in their interview and secured a Modern Apprenticeship with the organisation that will start in August 2025.

The cohort of 12 young people for 2025/26 has been selected after an application and sift session between West College Scotland, Inverclyde Council and Babcock Engineering. During this sift session, each partner ensured the offer was equitable with cognisance given to SIMD, ASN and care experienced data. An information event will be held in the college in May 2025 to inform parents, carers and young people about the opportunity, tour college facilities and to ask any questions that they have about the project.

Ogilvie Construction

This project, in collaboration with the community benefits team, aims to support young people who are at risk of not achieving a positive destination in their intended sector of industry within construction. Schools nominated young people for the project which is ongoing at present and is attended by 10 young people across most secondary establishments in Inverclyde. The intervention will give young people experience of construction, they will gain a level five working experience award as well as a level six First Aid Award. The project will culminate in the group building an outdoor classroom at Craigmarloch school.

Community Benefits

Closer working relationships with the procurement project officer has facilitated availability of more work experience placements with Inverclyde. Alba Engineering, Balfour Beattie, The Hillhouse Group and Ironside Farrar have all offered work experience placements for young people across the Inverclyde area as part of their obligations under the terms of the community benefits agreement. This will be taken forward in 2025/26 by the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Co-ordinators who are identifying the most suitable candidates for each experience.

- D6** All secondary establishments are now on the SCQF Ambassador journey. The SCQF Ambassador Award aims to fully embed the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) by broadening learning pathways and offering a much wider range of qualifications to all learners. Schools are awarded SCQF Ambassador status of Gold, Silver or Bronze based on their level of engagement and integration of SCQF Principles. St Columba's High School achieved Gold status in 2023 after achieving their bronze award in 2020. Inverclyde Academy achieved their bronze award and have been advised to work towards Gold status due to the high standard of their Bronze application. Clydeview Academy achieved their silver award in December 2024 and are now working towards the Gold award. Notre Dame High School achieved their Bronze Award in January 2025. St Stephen's High School achieved their Bronze

award in February 2025 with Port Glasgow High School beginning their journey towards Bronze in June 2025.

As of June 2025, Inverclyde will be one of only three local authorities in Scotland to have all of its mainstream secondary schools on the SCQF Ambassador award scheme.

Next steps: Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people
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- D1** Continue to review and develop the post school offer in partnership with colleagues in the Environment and Regeneration team.
- D2** Work alongside colleagues in HSCP to implement the ASN leavers guidance in full by June 2026
- D3** All establishments to continue to develop their journey on the SCQF ambassador programme.
- D4** Continue to develop opportunities for more work based learning and qualifications leading to employment and continued business links and partnerships

E: Getting it Right for Every Child

E1 Continue to ensure that practice and provision of all establishments is trauma informed.

E2 Implement the attendance strategy as in C1 with a focus on effective planning for pupils who have less than 20% attendance.

E3 Implement the revised Child protection audit process alongside the work of the newly formed Child protection subgroup.

E4 Continue to review and develop capacity of specialist ASN provision. Include a focus on early ASN screening pre 3yr old.

E5 Continue to support ASN Leaders through CLPL with the assessment processes relating to identifying the needs of ASN pupils.

E6 Ongoing roll out of PPB training for targeted schools, as well as offering a rolling programme of training to support all practitioners around de-escalation techniques.

E7 Continue to support establishments with their approaches to developing an inclusive curriculum with a focus on anti-racist education, with a focus on curriculum mapping where anti-racist education and the wider equalities agenda is being delivered.

E8 Fully implement the missing person policy through the CPC alongside a review of communication and protocols linked to community based anti-social behaviour to ensure pupil safety and appropriate response and support.

E1 All education establishments in Inverclyde have endorsed the roll out of the National Trauma Transformation Programme (NTTP) through placement of the NTTP in their Improvement Plans. This will continue next session. Establishments have been taking up a post training offer of workshops based on the five Principles of Trauma to examine implementation of trauma informed and responsive approaches in their establishments. This will continue into 2025-26 and be augmented by refreshed leadership training in this area.

E2 See C1.

E3 In May 2024 a new Child Protection audit tool was developed by the Child Protection Committee Education Subgroup (CPC) in partnership with Education Scotland. This was then shared with establishment leaders for further feedback and trialled with one school initially.

During 2024/25 members of the CPC subgroup have then led on using the audit tool with a selection of establishments as part of a cycle of validated audits to be carried out; each establishment will complete the audit on an annual basis but have a triannual validation carried out by CPC members. Feedback from Heads has been very positive with the audit tool supporting leaders to ensure that their practice is in line with the Education Service Child Protection guidelines, as well as the ICPC and national policies and practice.

E4 Due to the increase in the number of pupils requiring specialist provision identified towards the end of session 2023/24, a needs analysis was carried out between June 2024 and October 2024, in order to identify needs for specialist provision across Inverclyde for August

2025. This identified the need for expansion of some of our existing provision, as well as the creation of a new secondary ASN base at Clydeview Academy. This was taken to statutory consultation and approved by committee in April 2025.

During session 2023/24 the service had already expanded the support for Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs with the Lomond View Academy expansion and the introduction of the primary aged provision called NEST. This next stage of the additional support needs expansion supports pupils who need the support of specialist provision to access education relating to communication and complex needs.

We have managed to appropriately place all identified pupils within specialist settings within Inverclyde for August 2025 and we will continue to review and expand as necessary to meet those needs whilst remaining true to the Scottish Governments presumption to mainstream policies.

The service is working with HSCP to develop a pre-3 forum to support communication between health and education to allow us to identify needs as early as possible to facilitate the planning of specialist provision in the coming years. We have also added an early years representative to the Authority Screening Group to discuss pupils identified at early years admission as having additional support needs. This has allowed us to identify pupils earlier and engage with appropriate contextualised assessments to ensure pupils are placed in the correct environment. Since this has been implemented, we have supported three pupils to have an appropriate transition to the correct placement ensuring a smoother start to a family's educational journey.

- E5** This session ASN Leads have had training in assessment of needs at both a single and multi-agency GIRFEC level. This has involved input from partners in Social Work as well as staff from across Education Services. There has also been a focus on equalities, as this is a key element of How Good is Our School? Quality Indicator 3.1.
- E6** Promoting Positive Behaviour (PPB) continues to be important to the support of pupils and staff across all education facilities. We have increased the trainer numbers, with 10 trainers able to support educational establishments across the authority.

Data produced by the Authority Screening Group referencing critical incident and health & safety reports, as well as request for assistance forms, identified five schools to receive targeted support from the PPB team in session 2024/25. This session 110 staff have been trained in a combination of theory and practical courses; this is to support de-escalation, prevent the need for physical intervention and to ensure that when there is a need for physical intervention, correct safety protocols are followed.

We continue to see an increasing trend in critical incident and health and safety reporting. We are confident this is occurring as a direct result of appropriate training and awareness. Staff are more confident in the use of de-escalation strategies with staff within specialist provision sharing an increased confidence in reporting procedures and how to access them.

- E7** Education Officers and Inverclyde practitioners continued to contribute to national networks and policy in relation to equalities, ensuring that local views fed into national policy and supports and that authority networks were accessing the most up to date materials and information.

All establishments continued to have the development of anti-racist education as a priority on their improvement plans for session 2024-25.

The Equalities Co-ordinator Network, introduced in 2023/24, continued to aim to:

- Reinforce our commitment to equalities consistently across all settings and further develop a more inclusive curriculum.
- Ensure we are acting to meet our legislative duties, as outlined in The Equality Act 2010 and General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) Standards for Equality and Diversity.
- Facilitate support for staff directly involved in delivering the Equality Outcomes.
- Offer an opportunity to showcase good practice and improvements that relate directly to one or more of the Protected Characteristics.
- Engage with staff, pupils and families on equalities issues.

Every establishment in Inverclyde continued to have an Equalities Coordinator, with the majority attending network meetings regularly. This session the network worked to further develop practitioner knowledge and confidence but also shifted focus to support and drive forward change within the curriculum. Over 80% of Coordinators report having made moderate to high progress on developing staff knowledge and understanding of race and racism.

Co-ordinators have had opportunities to share what is working well for them within their settings and engage with partners such as Education Scotland and West of Scotland Development Education Centre (WOSDEC) to further develop curriculum content.

We have shared self-evaluation materials, some which support engagement in strategic whole establishment planning and some which guide practitioner planning for learning and teaching. 80% of co-ordinators reported having made moderate to high progress on reviewing policies, curriculum, resources and procedures, up from 38% last year.

The Inverclyde Support Guide has been updated and continue to reference and support engagement with high quality materials and resources. All coordinators have access to this guide.

In partnership with WOSDEC early, second and third level practitioners were provided with CLPL opportunities to build confidence in exploring Anti-racist Education (ARE), engage with the new national Anti-Racist Education resource and collectively consider next steps. Following the WOSDEC sessions, 100% of participants rated confidence in using the ARE resource, likelihood of using it and sharing learning on the resources as high, with most selecting the highest rating on the scale. This is exemplified by feedback from one participant: *"This is fabulous, and the resources will be a real help for educators to lead on this with their children."*

The number of practitioners across Inverclyde who have now completed the national Building Racial Literacy programme continues to grow with 14 having completed the training, 19 completing over this academic session and Inverclyde participating in every cohort of the programme since its launch. The programme seeks to ensure that our educators here in Inverclyde are racially literate and not 'race evasive' and promote anti-racism as a baseline professional value, empowering them to identify and implement anti-racist behaviours and processes in their everyday practice. BRL is named as a key professional learning programme by co-ordinators with some establishments having multiple members of staff trained.

This network also acted as a support for any practitioner who had attended the national Building Racial Literacy (BRL) training. We now have five BRL alumni practitioners who have completed the Leading Anti-Racist Professional Learning (LEARPL) training and three mentors. The training promoted anti-racism as a baseline professional value, empowering practitioners to identify and implement anti-racist behaviours and processes in their everyday practice. Our mentors made use of the LEARPL learning materials to deliver authority wide professional learning to two cohorts of practitioners. Training participants fed back strong appreciation for the informative content, practical resources, and the supportive, non-judgmental approach to learning. The feedback also emphasised the enhanced knowledge gained, as well as opportunities for continued learning through links to further resources.

Equalities Co-ordinators have reported that the primary activities within establishments have been staff engaging in professional learning on race and racism (100% report making progress with 57% rating moderate to complete), reviewing resources and policy using self-evaluation tools, developing pupil-led Anti-racist or Equalities groups, and parental and community engagement. This, in turn, has increased staff confidence and capacity to have racially literate discussions with pupils, decolonising the curriculum, teaching on global citizenship and celebrating diversity. The impact on outcomes for pupils is greater knowledge and understanding of race and racism, with 71% of Coordinators reporting moderate to high progress in this area, nearly doubled from 37% of Coordinators reporting these levels of progress last year. In one class, pre and post-learning scores rose from 4.5% to 95.5% in understanding race, and from 31.8% to 100% in understanding racism, showing the potential power of learning inputs achievable once racial literacy is well embedded.

- E8** The Missing person policy has now been implemented across the authority. During this implementation stage links with HSCP Social work department have increased. Senior Social Workers have delivered awareness training to ASN leaders and heads of establishment to review protocols and expectation when liaising between services. Since the introduction of this policy missing reports have decreased significantly.

Education staff are also sharing practice and improving communication links with local area social work teams and children's houses with visits from the Education Officer for inclusion and the Virtual Head Teacher (VHT). It is hoped that this will continue to improve the positive relationship between services to ensure the correct support for families within Inverclyde.

Next steps: Getting it right for every child

- E1** Develop an ASN strategy to address provision needs from August 2026 onwards, including a focus on training needs for staff, support for families of pupils with ASN as well as ongoing review and development of holiday support and provision for pupils with ASN.
- E2** Continue focus on early ASN screening for all pre-three year old and develop the early years ASN panel.
- E3** Support the establishment of the secondary additional support needs provision at Clydevview Academy.
- E4** Review Included Engaged and Involved 3, in relation to our existing Promoting Positive Relationships (PPR) policy including a focus on implementation of restraint reduction procedures.
- E5** Continue to support Equalities Co-ordinators to embed racial literacy and wider equalities outcomes. Support establishments to create and implement their own equalities policies.
- E6** Continue to support the Signs of Safety training roll out from the HSCP by committing to support Senior Leaders to engage in an initial training programme during 2025/26.

F: Improving outcomes of care experienced children, young

- F1** Review the use of all care experience children and young person funding by improving the current offer from the education support workers and employing a mental health support worker to target those that need it identified through the fund.
- F2** Update Data Spreadsheet and dashboard to support Virtual Head Teacher and Education Officer with responsibility for ASN to ensure improved tracking and monitoring of all CEYP.
- F3** Continue to utilise the role of the Virtual head in leading aspects of the Children's Services plan and linking with colleagues in children services and social work, to further enhance working relationships and consistency of practice.
- F4** Continue with focused work around the attendance to care experienced young people but move towards a collegiate approach and a creation of a tiered response involving social worker colleagues and our wider third sector partners.

- F1** Good progress has been made in providing additional supports to children and young people via the Care-Experienced Attainment fund. The majority of those assisted were living either at home or with extended family members. We saw an increase in applications to promote participation in groups; activities that would promote their health; wellbeing and help them feel included. This was felt to be positive following on from the pandemic and its impact.

Children and young people were assisted with access to IT equipment and accessories along with some tutoring which helped to ensure they were fully linked in, and their learning promoted.

There was an increase in older young people benefiting from the fund and looking to increase their opportunities post school in relation to college courses and improve their skills through areas such as driving.

Through the project work we have been able to target care-experienced young people who are at risk of non-attendance and support them on the pathways to initial and sustained destinations. Data has indicated that 48% of care-experienced young people in Inverclyde struggle to maintain a positive destination post school and as such this targeted intervention will hopefully increase positive outcomes for young people. Two Education Support Workers were employed to work under the supervision of the VHT to positively impact the outcomes for targeted young people.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to progress the mental health intervention due to staff changes and a delay in the decision-making process. This will be discussed as we progress with the fund for next session.

- F2** The use of data continues to be embedded into monthly tracking and monitoring of pupil progress within the virtual school. The spreadsheet gives clear data on the key indicators

of progress, including attainment, attendance, and exclusions. These are critical in identifying patterns, addressing barriers, and ensuring that each learner receives the support they need to succeed. This system allows us to track attendance to ensure consistent engagement in learning, identifying any emerging concerns quickly and working collaboratively with partners and schools to implement interventions where appropriate, such as local authority support or third sector intervention. It also allows us to record and reflect on exclusion data, to understand underlying causes, implement restorative strategies, and prevent recurrence. The tracking this year led to a working group being set up with secondary colleagues to analyse the data we held across the authority, allowing us to explore patterns and discuss prevention approaches within our schools. The bi-annual school meetings support the interrogation of this data and allows triangulation within these areas as schools provide a clearer picture of each learner's journey.

There has been some slippage with the development of the dashboard for the virtual school, however, it is hoped that by the end of the summer term 2024/25 that there will be a working virtual school dashboard that will allow for easier attainment data to be tracked. Currently, attainment progress is discussed directly with schools through the virtual school meetings and schools are aware of the stretch aims and targets within attainment for our care experienced cohort. We are able to discuss taking meaningful action based on the data for this cohort. This includes care experienced learners being supported through tailored interventions and curriculum adaptations, when necessary, always aiming to access attainment at the highest level. The dashboard will allow for a deeper analysis of the attainment journey for our care experienced learners and support the development of early intervention strategies linked to patterns and trends.

- F3** Within the children's service plan there is progress within the development of a children and families engagement plan to reflect where we are and where we are going in terms of our ability across the authority to reflect the views of our children, young people and families. This has included discussion with all partners supporting our families and has led to the formulation of what we offer across Inverclyde for our most vulnerable children, young people and families. We are now using this information to contribute to improved service delivery for these families.

The continuation of the VHT role to work in partnership with colleagues within social work has allowed for more joint working to take place across this year. We have had multiple sessions with ASN leads within schools and service managers from social work to explore how to improve our joint working, in particular with reference to the Request for Assistance (RfA) process, Inter-Agency Referral Discussion (IRD) process and Child Protection processes. There is also the opportunity for joint training to take place across the two services in relation to signs of safety in the future. We are currently providing colleagues within HSCP with an input specifically related to education, to upskill their knowledge and understanding of the thresholds, interventions and actions education will take when supporting a child or young person who is care experienced/at risk/who they have concerns about. This input is focused on attendance, exclusion, accessing support, communication with families, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) etc.

This year the VHT has represented education across multi agency groups focused on children's hearings, The Promise and child protection data. These have led to multi-agency events taking place to assist with enhancing working relationships. This has included an event for panel members, social workers and school leaders to come together to discuss

their experiences of the children's hearing system and to work collegiately to map out improvements that could be made, it also gave everyone the opportunity to increase awareness and understanding of the parameters each service works within.

The VHT has also spoken at training events within HSCP this year and the practitioner's forum and have used these platforms to discuss the virtual school, education and how to improve relationships.

The child protection data group has led to good practice from education being shared with social work, police, children first and Barnardos. This is something we will now be adopting as a group to assist us in telling the stories that sit behind the data we hold for our children, young people and families going through child protection processes.

- F4** Working with secondary schools for the previous two sessions on attendance projects specific to care experienced learners, allowed us to share learning and interventions that had impact; however, it was important to take the learning from this and imbed it into the wider attendance strategy being launched across the authority. The learning from this as well as the multi-agency group formed to discuss approaches has informed the new strategy. A tiered response has been developed within the strategy to advise establishments of where appropriate and expected support should be accessed. This will support a reduction in the number of RfAs not being acted upon through social work and will assist with clarity of interventions being exhausted before a child, young person and family are referred to SCRA.

Next steps: Improving outcomes of care experienced children, young people and their families

- F1** Utilise the CEYP data dashboard to support and enhance moderation and benchmarking as well as further support and challenge schools, as well as identify and sharing of good practice where attainment trends are positive.
- F2** Continue multi agency working to further enhance the strategic planning and implementation of the care experienced attainment fund.
- F3** Continue to develop multi-agency opportunities to improve outcomes for our care experienced learners, including identifying training needs and developing systems to support effective communication.
- F4** Work with the strategic attendance lead to continue to analyse data and implement appropriate interventions to support positive attendance for care experienced learners, including the use of authority wide support.

Glossary of Terms

Abbreviation	In full
ACEL	Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels
ASL	Additional Support for Learning
ASG	Authority Screen Group
ASN	Additional Support Needs
ASNMF	Additional Support Needs Monitoring Forum
BGE	Broad General Education
BRL	Building racial literacy
BYOD	Bring Your Own Device
CEYP	Care Experienced Young People
CLB	Communication and Language Base
CLD	Community Learning and Development
CLPL	Career Long Professional Learning
CMO	Coaching and Modelling Officer
DYW	Developing the Young Workforce
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EY	Early Years
GIRFEC	Getting it Right for Every Child
HMIe	Her Majesty's Inspectors of education
HSCP	Health and Social Care Partnership
HT	Headteachers
HWB	Health and Wellbeing
ICOS	Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service
JST	Joint Support Teams
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LA	Local Authority
MCMC	More Choices More Chances
MVP	Mentors in Violence Prevention
NIF	National Improvement Framework
PEF	Pupil Equity Fund
PRD	Professional Review and Development
PSA	Pupil Support Assistant
PSE	Personal and Social Education
QIM	Quality Improvement Manager
SAC	Scottish Attainment Challenge
SDS	Skills Development Scotland
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SMT	Senior Management Team
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SQR	Standards and Quality Report
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
VHT	Virtual School Head Teacher

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/37/25/MR
Contact Officer:	Michael Roach Head of Education	Contact No:	01475 712891
Subject:	Education Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to ask members of the Education and Communities Committee to note updates relating to the Education Service both in terms of local development as well as national policy development.

1.3 The report includes update on:

- Care Inspectorate inspection outcomes
- Education Reform
- Independent Review of Qualifications and assessment
- Joint Action Plan on Relationships and Behaviour – Annual Progress Report
- Update on teacher numbers position
- Gaelic Medium Education

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to:

- note the content of the update report

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 Care Inspectorate inspection outcomes

There have been no inspections carried out and published since the March 2025 committee.

3.2 Education reform

There is no substantive update relating to the reform agenda beyond that shared with the committee in March 2025.

3.3 Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment

There is no substantive update relating to the reform agenda beyond that shared with the committee in March 2025.

3.4 Joint Action Plan on Relationships and Behaviour – Annual Progress Report

The annual report on the Joint Action Plan on Relationships and Behaviour has been published: [Schools - improving relationships and behaviour: progress report 2025 - gov.scot](#) This report highlights the progress made in the first phase of the three-phase plan to address the concerns raised in the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research published in 2023: [Behaviour in Scottish schools: research report 2023 - gov.scot](#).

- 3.5 The Joint Action Plan ([Relationships and behaviour in schools: national action plan 2024 to 2027 - gov.scot](#)) has also been informed by other surveys and evidence provided through the Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in schools (SAGRABIS - [Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools \(SAGRABIS\) - gov.scot](#)).

- 3.6 During Phase 1 of the action plan, progress has been made against all 20 actions. This includes the publication of new guidance for schools on preventing and responding to gender-based violence ([Preventing and responding to gender based violence: a whole school framework - gov.scot](#)), updated guidance on mobile phones in schools ([Mobile phones: guidance for Scotland's schools - gov.scot](#)), and refreshed anti-bullying guidance ([Anti-bullying guidance for adults working with children and young people - gov.scot](#)).

- 3.7 Other support for schools includes enhanced evidence gathered, and commentary made, about relationships and behaviour as part of the inspection process and promoting resources and professional learning available to staff and schools on relationships and behaviour in schools.

- 3.8 Phase 2 of implementation of the Joint Action Plan runs from 1 April 2025 until 31 March 2026. A further Annual Progress Report will be published at that end of that period. Priorities for phase 2 include the publication of guidance on risk assessments, work on recording and monitoring, new guidance on preventing and responding to racism and racist incidents and updating our national attendance and exclusions guidance.

3.9 The use of Consequences in Schools

The Joint Action Plan includes a commitment to confirm the use of consequences in schools, in direct response to the perceived lack of consequences in current positive approaches to relationships and behaviour expressed by primary and secondary staff through BISSR 2023 ([Behaviour in Scottish schools: research report 2023 - gov.scot](#)).

- 3.10 The use of consequences in responding to concerns about inappropriate behaviour in schools, in the context of schools' own relationships and behaviour policies, is entirely appropriate. Section 6 of Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: provides national guidance on approaches to Prevention, Early Intervention and Staged Intervention.

3.11 Further specific guidance on the use of consequences in schools is currently in development, through the work of SAGRABIS. This updated national guidance will be available before the end of this academic year.

3.12 **Relationships and Behaviour Policies – Schools and Education Authorities**

In light of the publication of the progress report, and the forthcoming guidance highlighted above, the Scottish Government has asked that Education Authorities and establishments begin to refresh and update our own relationships and behaviour policies. This will support clarity of understanding of establishments' high expectations of pupils, reflects the culture and ethos of the establishment, and provides confidence to pupils, school staff, parents and carers on both what is expected, and the appropriate intervention that will follow when these are not met.

3.13 The publication of the revised guidance alongside the ask of the Scottish Government as above will then enable the Education Service to review and update its own Promoting Positive Relationships policy and subsequently support establishments to do the same early in the new academic year. The review of the Promoting Positive Relationships policy remains outstanding pending receipt of this updated guidance.

3.14 It will be important for establishments to engage with their whole learning community – staff, children and young people, and parents/carers – on these policies and therefore we will ensure that this is a main priority for the Education Service's Improvement plan for 2025/26 and subsequently ensure that all establishments begin work to update their policies in line with this unless they have already done so. The Education Service's review of its Promoting Positive Relationships policy will include engagement with key stakeholders.

3.15 **Gaelic Medium Education (GME)**

We are pleased to confirm that a teacher has been appointed for the secondary GME provision at Inverclyde Academy. We are still in the process of recruiting for a teacher for the provision at Whinhill Primary School. There is no doubt the recruitment has and continues to be a challenge.

4.0 **PROPOSALS**

4.1 N/A.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

N/A.

Annual recurring costs (savings)

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

5.3 Legal/Risk

N/A.

5.4 Human Resources

N/A.

5.5 Strategic

N/A.

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
N	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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

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

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
N	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 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.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A.

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/42/25/RB
Contact Officer:	Ruth Binks	Contact No:	
Subject:	ASN Summer Provision		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☒ For Decision ☐ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The budget process allocated £600K one off reserve to additional ASN provision.
- 1.3 Officers have undertaken work to expend the summer provision for the summer of 2025 and this is outlined in section 4.2 of this report. This expansion will form a test of change to inform a longer-term strategic approach to out of school support for ASN.
- 1.4 A consultation will take place with families, and this will inform a wider holistic collation of the totality of the offer in Inverclyde for families with young people with Additional Support Needs. The review will take into account offers from HSCP, the third sector, community services as well as education.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to approve the actions proposed in section 4.2 of this report.
- 2.2 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to note that further reports will be brought back to the committee as required.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 The budget process allocated £600K one off reserve to additional ASN provision. This was to provide additional provision for young people with Additional Support Needs, particularly out of school hours. Families have raised concerns in recent months about provision for care, respite and activities for young people out with school hours, specifically during the summer holiday period. Families have shared the need for more respite and support through the ASN holiday provision due to the significant challenges they face in supporting their children over the longer holiday periods.
- 3.2 A complaint was upheld about the allocation process for the Out of School Holiday Childcare provision held at Craigmarloch and as a result a consultation was undertaken and a paper taken to the March Education and Communities committee to revise the allocation process. Although the survey was only aimed at childcare, it became apparent that parents needed different things from services. Some wanting childcare to enable employment, some wanting respite and others simply wanting activities for their children to be able to access.
- 3.3 Over the past years the ASN holiday club offered in addition to the summer “Play4All” Out of school care, has been oversubscribed. This to date has resulted in every child being offered at least some guaranteed provision during the summer holiday period but this could be limited to only one day. The service is registered as a care service because of the complex needs of those attending and the duration of the offer, which is for the full day. There can be no direct correlation between the ASN summer club and the other playschemes because playschemes are not registered with the Care Commission, do not provide transport, are provided on a morning and afternoon session basis and are not considered to provide childcare. Playschemes have no booking system, whereas plans need to be in place for ASN provision requiring a booking system to be in place. Playschemes are aimed at primary school ages only whereas the ASN holiday club takes all children of school age.
- 3.4 Last year during the summer of 2024 following feedback from parents, “Stay and Play” sessions were introduced specifically for young people with ASN and their families. Feedback on this was positive on the whole and parents welcomed the opportunities it gave. However, some parents were unable to access this and felt it didn’t meet their needs. The booking system was particularly difficult because of a high nonattendance rate for those who had prebooked places.
- 3.5 The money allocated to ASN provision has allowed officers to explore expanding the holiday services. In addition to planning for the summer of 2025, a longer term, holistic view of ASN provision will also be taken forward. This will involve working with HSCP to offer a suite of packages to meet the needs of families. This work will take time to take forward, so this paper proposes a test of change to test additional provision over the summer of 2025.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The following table identifies the proposed actions being put in place for the summer of 2025 as a test of change. This of course depends on availability of suitably qualified staff and the registration of services. Officers have been working at pace on this and given the short timescales are currently working through processes to put different provisions in place. It has become clear that given the complexity of the undertaking, a resource is required to undertake a strategic review as well as linking with third sector providers and families. As yet some of the costs are unknown.

4.2	Proposed Action	Costs are approximate
	Appoint an officer to lead on the ASN support and holiday provision and to undertake a strategic review of the totality of service offered in Inverclyde. It is proposed that this takes place at Quality Improvement Manager Level but the cost would be for an Education Officer backfill to be put in place for up to 18 months.	£152K
	Commission listening events to hear the views of families with young people who have ASN	£6K
	Endeavour to provide additional holiday service through the third sector. This will depend on appropriate registrations being in place if needed and also their ability to recruit staff	£6K
	Following feedback, explore the possibilities to adapt the stay and play sessions to introduce a soft play activity and introduce a small booking fee which can be exchanged for a coffee	Not yet known
	Work with IL to allocate additional workers to some mainstream playschemes to provide support for those who may have previously struggled to attend. This will depend on recruitment of suitable staff.	Not yet known
	Carry out recruitment for suitably qualified staff. This allows the service to fully maximise the spaces it can offer through the existing ASN holiday provision.	Not yet known
	The changes to the priority of the allocation of places for the Play4All Out of School and Holiday care service (which is a paid for childcare service) will be implemented, thus allowing more families to access the service during the summer. Additional staffing hours for the service will be recruited to enhance the resilience of the offer during holidays.	£5K
	Improve the application process for ASN summer support by working with ICT to provide applications online.	£2K

It should be noted that the fair allocation of places for new provisions is difficult to undertake because this will be a pilot and as yet, the take up of different services will not be known. Officers, will of course, endeavour to be as fair as possible and evaluations of the allocation process will take place.

- 4.3 In the longer term, Education and HSCP services will work together to identify holistic offers for families to best suit their needs. This work will be informed by a collation of the current offer as well as the outcome of the listening events and will take into account provision throughout the year as well as the holiday period.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial	X	
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources	X	
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing	X	
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Education	ASN	2025/27	£600k	N/A	£600k earmarked reserve approved March 2025 budget process. Proposals in report to be contained in available reserve.

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

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

5.3 Legal/Risk

N/A

5.4 Human Resources

The provision of any additional provision relies on the ability to attract suitably qualified staff.

5.5 Strategic

The aims of this report match the outcomes of the Council Plan.

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
X	NO – This report introduces a test of change rather than a new policy. An EQIA will be introduced once further information is known.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

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

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO – Assessed as not being needed as this is a test of change.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
X	NO – As above.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
X	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 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.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 This paper has taken into account result of the consultation undertaken with parents and carers of those attending Play4All Out of School and holiday care.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 N/A

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/44/25/YG
Contact Officer:	Yvonne Gallacher Quality Improvement Manager	Contact No:	01475 712812
Subject:	Increase of Sustainable Rate for Early Learning and Childcare Funded Providers		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☒ For Decision ☐ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The Purpose of this report is to provide an update on a further review of the sustainable rate paid to Funded Providers for the provision of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and ask members of the Education and Communities Committee to agree the payment of a new rate, backdated to 1st April 2025.
- 1.3 In line with the National Guidance, Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard for Funded ELC Providers in December 2018 (updated in December 2023), local authorities are required to set an hourly rate that is paid to funded providers in the private and voluntary sectors, including childminders, to deliver the funded entitlement. This rate should be sustainable and reflect national policy priorities, including funding to enable payment of the Real Living Wage to all childcare workers delivering the funded entitlement.
- 1.4 In November 2024, Education and Communities Committee approved an increase in the sustainable rate to £6.32 per hour. This paper proposes an increase in that rate to £6.56 per hour. The Scottish Government's Programme for Government, published in February 2025, set out a commitment to deliver funding to enable childcare workers delivering the statutory entitlement in Funded Providers to be paid at least new real Living Wage rate of £12.60 per hour from April 2025. Local authorities were provided with £9.7 million additional funding to support the delivery of this commitment, with an expectation that the rate be lifted by at least 3.75%.
- 1.5 In addition to the sustainable rate, the meal rate continues to be paid at £0.50 an hour, up to a maximum of £3.00 per day, providers also receive a payment of £0.582p per session as part of the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme. This scheme is administered by the Council on behalf of the Scottish Government and provides additional support to providers for the provision of serving milk, or milk alternative, and a healthy snack for each child attending.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Education and Communities Committee are asked to:

- Approve an increase in the hourly rate paid to all Early Years Funded Providers, including Childminders, from the current rate of £6.32 per child per hour to £6.56 per child per hour;
- Agree to backdate the new rate to the 1st April 2025; and
- Agree the rate will be implemented for all eligible children, aged two to five years who are accessing ELC within a funded provider setting.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities &
Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 Under section 47(1) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Education Section 48 of the 2014 Act provides the statutory entitlement as 1140 hours of funded ELC in line with the school year, which starts in August.
- 3.2 The Scottish Government and COSLA published, National Guidance; Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard for Funded ELC Providers in December 2018.
- 3.3 The National Standard sets out the principles and practice for early year's providers seeking to enter into partnership status with a local authority. The standard also sets out the need for a locally determined sustainable rate for all funded providers.
- 3.4 Scottish Government conducted an exercise on sustainable rates in 2016 and this was repeated for the West Partnership in 2019. In February 2022, a further review was commissioned by the West Partnership through Ipsos Mori. The purpose of this review was to produce up to date estimates of the actual cost to providers of providing an hour of ELC, in order to inform planning, modelling and discussions about rate setting. The results of this survey were published in May 2022.
- 3.5 The final survey was signed off following consultation with COSLA, ADES and Directors of Finance representatives, scripted by Ipsos Mori's specialist scripting team and tested by the research team to ensure that all routing worked correctly.
- 3.6 The Ipsos Mori report provided local authorities with specific technical data when they had returns of more than ten. Unfortunately, as Inverclyde has only eight funded providers, localised data was not available. Data from across the West partnership was shared with the eight partner authorities and informed the sustainable rate set by the Council for 2023/24.
- 3.7 Throughout 2023, a joint review of the sustainable rate setting process was undertaken by COSLA and the Scottish Government, published in December 2023. This review was informed through evidence gathered from a range of different stakeholders, including local government, professional associations and the private, voluntary and independent sectors. Through the review, concerns around the ongoing funding, affordability of provision and availability of staff within the private, voluntary and independent sectors continued to emerge.
- 3.8 The Scottish Government's Programme for Government, published guidance in February 2025, setting out a commitment to deliver funding to enable childcare workers delivering the statutory entitlement in Funded Providers to be paid at least £12.60 per hour from April 2025. This position was confirmed in the Scottish Government's budget, confirming that local authorities were to be provided with £9.7 million of additional funding in 2025/26 to support the delivery of this commitment.
- 3.9 Local Authorities are expected to make progress towards reflecting the changes outlined during 2025-26, ahead of embedding the rate setting process from 2026-27. Currently as recommended in the guidance, Inverclyde Council pay childminders a sustainable rate in line with other providers and a separate rate for the free meal commitment which provides clarity and transparency for funded providers.

- 3.10 The guidance also encourages consideration of an increased rate for 2-year-olds which considers the different staffing ratio requirements for this age group.

Currently, there are fewer than ten children in this category across eight funded providers in Inverclyde Council. The Council will continue to monitor this position over the coming year. An update on Sustainable Rates Guidance is expected to be published in early 2026. This information will be used to consider a revised sustainable rate for two-year-olds using the new methodology for the rate setting process, for future years.

- 3.11 Given the commitment that staff in Funded Provider settings and Childminders will receive £12.60 per hour from 1 April 2025, it is necessary to introduce an increase during the academic year to the sustainable rate.
- 3.12 Through national agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA, it has been determined that all local authorities should apply a minimum uplift of 3.75% applied to staffing costs on their existing 2024/25 rate, effective from 1 April 2025. This level of uplift (3.75%) has been calculated to reflect the increase in the average staff cost element of the sustainable rate required to enable payment of the increased real Living Wage. This reflects staffing costs accounting for, on average, 75% of the sustainable rate.
- 3.13 The national agreement requires that the remainder of the sustainable rate, covering non-staffing costs (estimated to account for, on average, 25% of the sustainable rate) will be set in-line with the requirements of this guidance. The overall rates set must also be affordable for local authorities in terms of the budgets available.
- 3.14 The proposal to increase the sustainable rate paid to funded providers will result in additional costs being incurred for the provision of the statutory entitlement for 2025/26 financial year. Scottish Government have allocated additional funding of £135,000 to implement this increase for 2025/26. It can be difficult to predict exact usage of partner providers from year to year because of parental choice and any changes of partnership but the Scottish Government funding will cover the additional increased rate, based on current projections.
- 3.15 As the increase is linked to the commitment to pay staff £12.60 per hour, Funded Providers will continue to receive £3 per meal for any eligible child in accordance with the 1140 hours of ELC entitlement and in addition to the hourly rate. They will also continue to be paid £0.582 for each child, per session as part of the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme.
- 3.16 In addition to the sustainable rate, funded providers within Inverclyde continue to have access to a wide range of additional high-quality supports, including access to professional learning, access to a teacher, support from the department's Educational Psychology Service, Early Years Development Officers and support from the Quality Improvement Manager. The department continues to work alongside providers to ensure access to the most appropriate support is available.
- 3.17 As part of the Council's commitment to provide high quality ELC, payment of an increased sustainable rate will ensure funded providers can continue to pay employees the Scottish Living Wage.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Education Services are proposing a rate of £6.56 per hour for each eligible funded child aged two to five years. It is proposed that the rate will be backdated to 1st April 2025. In supporting the continued review of the sustainable rate, the Scottish Government have advised that they are committed to updating the data collection process annually.

- 4.2 The figure represents an uplift of £0.24 per hour per funded child on the current £6.32 hourly rate which has been in place since April 2024.
- 4.3 The cost associated with the uplift in the sustainable rate will be contained within the funding received from the Scottish Government in 2025/26.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial	•	
Legal/Risk	•	
Human Resources		•
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	•	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		•
Environmental & Sustainability		•
Data Protection		•

5.2 Finance

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
Early Years	Partner Provider Payments	01/04/2025	£135k	N/A	Increased cost due to new rate will be contained within the additional SG funding of £135k.

5.3 Legal/Risk

Under Funding Follows the Child, local authorities are required to set an hourly rate that is paid to funded providers in the private and voluntary sectors, including childminders, to deliver the funded element. This rate should be sustainable and reflect the national policy priorities, including funding to enable the payment of the Real Living Wage to all childcare workers delivering the funded element.

Funded provider contracts will be required to be updated to reflect the new rate.

5.4 Human Resources

N/A.

5.5 Strategic

The rate must also be sustainable for the local authority in terms of the budgets available. The Scottish Government guidance on setting a sustainable rate states the rate paid to partners to deliver funded ELC should not have a detrimental effect on the local authority's ability to continue to pay the service long term. It also highlights the wider package of 'in kind benefits' as outlined in Section 3.16, which are separate to the sustainable rate and are available to the funded provider as part of the contract with the authority.

5.6 Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

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

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

5.7 Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.8 Environmental/Sustainability

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
x	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.9 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.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 This rate has been informed by the IPSOS/Mori survey undertaken and officers have been in dialogue with local partner providers about the methodology used to set the rate.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Guidance for setting sustainable rates for the delivery of funded early learning and childcare (ELC) in 2025-26
- 7.2 Funding Follows the Child and the National Standard for Early Learning and Childcare Providers: Operating Guidance (www.gov.scot)

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/32/25/MR
Contact Officer:	Michael Roach Head of Education	Contact No:	01475 712891
Subject:	Education Scotland – National Thematic Inspection: Local Authority Approaches to Supporting School Improvement		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to update members on the publication of an Education Scotland National Thematic report on Local authority approaches to supporting school improvement: [Local authority approaches to supporting school improvement | National thematic inspections | HM Chief Inspector reports and guidance | Inspection and review | Education Scotland](#). This also includes the report produced on the Education Service in Inverclyde which contributed to the overall findings of the national report (appendix 1).
- 1.3 The national thematic report was published on the 12 March 2025 and summarises the findings of the approaches being taken across all 32 authorities in relation to school improvement. It highlights areas and approaches that are working well, examples of good practice and 7 key recommendations for improvement at a national level.
- 1.4 The report on the Education Service in Inverclyde (appendix 1) is a very positive one and suggests some areas for consideration for improvement which are being responded to and built into the Education Service Improvement Plan for 2025/26.
- 1.5 Work is also underway with 3 other local authority Education Services as part of an approach to support the sharing of practice across Scotland via QUADs, an initiative set up by the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and Education Scotland. This work will support our evolving work to building on our successes in supporting the improvement of all of our education establishments. A new framework called “How good is our education authority? Is attached as Appendix 2.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to:

- note the content of both the National Thematic report and the report on the Education Service in Inverclyde.
- note that a further report will be brought to a future committee regarding the Improvement Framework for education establishments in Inverclyde.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 In June 2024, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education announced a national thematic inspection of local authorities in Scotland. The focus of this thematic inspection was how local authorities support schools to improve. The inspection process sought to provide an opportunity to reflect on strengths, challenges, and opportunities for ensuring high-quality education for all learners.
- 3.2 This inspection process allowed HM Inspectors to explore current priorities for improving school performance across all 32 local authorities in Scotland. There was a focus on learning what is working well and hearing about challenges that local authorities encounter and improvements that need to be addressed to ensure effectiveness across Scotland.
- 3.3 Through the national thematic, HM Inspectors gathered evidence on the following themes:
- How local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through implementing effective improvement planning and standards and quality reporting
 - How local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through self-evaluation and quality assurance
 - How local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through professional learning
 - How local authorities deliver universal support and challenge for all schools, and targeted support for specific schools to improve the quality of education.
- 3.4 In October 2024 a team of HMI Inspectors, alongside an Associate Assessor who works for a local authority central team, visited Inverclyde. Their visit included a pre-visit questionnaire for all Heads of Establishment as well as the Quality Improvement team. A range of evidence and documentation about the work of the Education Service was submitted, including a summary of self-evaluation against the 4 themes outlined above.
- 3.5 During the visit the team met with the Corporate Director and Head of Education for an initial discussion around the themes above. This was then followed up with a series of meetings to allow the team to engage with key stakeholders including:
- Heads of Establishment
 - Central team officers
 - Teachers
 - Elected Members
 - Unions Reps
 - Parent Council Chairs
- 3.6 Verbal feedback was provided to the Head of Education at the end of the visit with a subsequent report on the visit to Inverclyde provided in February 2025 (Appendix 1). The full National Thematic report was published on 12 March 2025: [Local authority approaches to supporting school improvement | National thematic inspections | HM Chief Inspector reports and guidance | Inspection and review | Education Scotland](#).

4.0 Findings and recommendations

- 4.1 The National report identified numerous strengths across the four themes outlined in 3.3. these are summarised briefly below.

4.2 How local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through implementing effective improvement planning and standards and quality reporting

4.3 Local authorities generally offer strong guidance, support, and collaboration in school improvement processes. However, some areas require more clarity and consistency, especially in aligning priorities and strengthening stakeholder engagement.

4.4 Under this theme the Inverclyde Education Service was cited as a model of good practice in relation to its work engaging with learners and professional associations. The service has been asked to engage in future national webinars to further shared this practice.

4.5 The report stated: *(Inverclyde) Education Service senior leaders meet regularly with focus groups of learners from across the local authority. As a result, there are clear examples of improvements to learners' experiences that are informed and driven by children and young people. These include learners' roles in shaping approaches to building racial literacy in schools. Local authority leaders also have a strong working relationship with teachers' professional associations. Professional associations worked with the authority to improve incident recording and reporting. These improvements mean that more effective actions can be taken to monitor and deal with incidents. These constructive relationships are supporting the local authority and its schools to move forward with change and improvements effectively.*

4.6 Supporting improvement through self-evaluation and quality assurance

While most local authorities are progressing towards stronger, data-driven systems for evaluating and improving school performance, some areas still need to focus on consistency and building capacity, particularly in secondary schools. Collaborative approaches and robust self-evaluation are essential for sustained improvement across all schools.

4.7 Supporting schools to improve the quality of education through professional learning (CLPL)

Most local authorities have programmes for professional learning in place and these are based on national practice models and linked to priorities across schools and sectors, increasingly linked to analysis of data. In a few authorities this approach is at an early stage and the rationale for the professional learning offer and the decision-making process that informs it are not yet fully understood by school leaders and staff in a few local authorities. More work needs to be done to ensure that both participation and the impact of the CLPL offer is being tracked.

4.8 Delivering universal and targeted support to improve the quality of education

All local authorities have a framework in place to support improvement in schools. In most local authorities, improvement frameworks are clear, well-established and embedded in practice. All local authorities provide a tiered approach to support and challenge, recognising the need for universal, targeted, and intensive categories of support for schools, as necessary. The set of criteria used by central officers to determine the level of support for each school is generally well defined in almost all local authorities and is reviewed annually.

4.9 National Recommendations

The national report also made 7 Recommendations as detailed below:

- Ensure that all schools receive high-quality, consistent support through robust universal provision. This should reduce variability within and across local authorities and secure equitable outcomes for learners.
- For schools requiring targeted support, implement robust action planning, monitoring and accountability. This is essential to ensure that necessary improvements for learners are secured at pace.
- Prioritise leadership development for middle leaders, particularly in secondary schools, where improvement outcomes are less consistent, with a focus on the principles of self-evaluation for self-improvement.
- Establish a national professional learning programme for local authority central officers. This will help to build capacity and professional knowledge in school improvement and effective support and challenge practices.
- Develop flexible models of support that address the specific needs of rural, remote, and island schools.
- Embed local authority collaborative approaches to foster collective accountability for school improvement, ensuring these are consistently grounded in robust self-evaluation, and lead to accurate understanding of individual and collective improvement priorities.
- Improve the strategic use of data at both local authority and school levels. This includes developing staff capacity to interpret data effectively and use data-driven insights to inform self-evaluation, improvement planning, and resource allocation.

4.10 We await a further update as to how these recommendations will be taken forward. We welcome the recognition of the need for a national professional learning programme for local authority central officers.

4.11 Report on the Education Service in Inverclyde

The report on the visit to Inverclyde (Appendix 1) provides a helpful and very positive narrative on the Education Service's approaches to supporting school improvement across the 4 themes in 3.3.

4.12 There are numerous strengths noted against each of the 4 themes with some areas for consideration woven throughout. The overall findings are a verification of the service's summary of self-evaluation and as such no significant issues or surprises were raised.

4.13 The report reflects the effectiveness of the service's approach in all four themes with particular note made of the knowledge of the central team in relation to all establishments and how to support and ensure improvement, the data rich context of the service and how this is being used to drive improvements, the approaches being taken that are leading to overall improvements in performance at external inspection and the innovative approaches being taken and cited as good practice in relation to stakeholder engaged as noted in 4.5.

4.14 Actions to be taken

In response to both the national and local reports the Education Service will address the key areas for consideration within the 2025/26 service improvement plan.

4.15 Within the current service improvement plan a review was undertaken of the peer review model and from this, alongside the service's report, a working group of Heads and Officers is currently reviewing the Improvement Framework for Education Establishments and is revising the offer and approach being taken in line with the advice shared by the Education Scotland team.

- 4.16 Further work is being undertaken in partnership with 3 other local authority Education Services, also known as a QUAD, which is a new approach that has been established by ADES, in partnership with Education Scotland. The outcome of some initial work to share both an overall summary of each Education Service's evaluation against a new framework called "How good is our education authority? (Appendix 2), has been the establishment of a working group to continue to share practice between the 4 authorities, the focus being on improvement frameworks. This will provide our service with the chance to compare and benchmark our evolving framework with others, as well as share practice and consider different approaches.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

N/A.

Annual recurring costs (savings)

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

5.3 Legal/Risk

N/A.

5.4 Human Resources

N/A.

5.5 Strategic

N/A.

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
N	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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

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

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
N	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 **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.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 N/A.

7.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 N/A.

National Thematic Inspection: Local authority approaches to supporting school improvement

Summarised Findings

Local Authority	Inverclyde Council
Lead HM Inspector	Graeme Brown

In October 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Inverclyde Council. During our visit, we talked to senior leaders, local authority officers, parents/carers, headteachers, teachers, representatives from professional associations and elected members.

Purpose and themes

The purpose of the visit was to gather evidence about how Inverclyde Council supports school improvement, with a focus on how they support schools to improve the quality of education through:

- the implementation of effective improvement planning and standards and quality reporting
- self- evaluation and quality assurance
- professional learning
- universal and targeted support and challenge

Context of the local authority

Inverclyde Council is a mixture of urban areas, accessible small towns and accessible rural. The overall population of the local authority is declining slightly. Between 2001 and 2022, the local authority's population aged 0-15 saw a percentage decrease of 26.5%. This is a greater decrease than the national figure of 8.1% for the same age group.

Forty-eight percent of children and young people in primary and secondary schools live within deciles 1-2 of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

Approximately 31% of children in primary schools and 42% of young people in secondary schools have been assessed as requiring additional support with their learning.

Attendance in 2022/2023 was 90.3 %. The national average is 90.2%.

In 2023/2024 in Inverclyde Council, children and young people are educated across 20 primary schools, six secondary schools, two specialist schools and four supported learning centres within mainstream schools. One school provides Gàidhlig (Gaelic) Medium Education.

The Education Service is led by a Corporate Director and a Head of Education. They manage a central team of education officers, who have responsibility for sectoral and cluster management of schools and establishments.

Theme 1 - How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through implementing effective improvement planning and standards and quality reporting?

- *How clear and effective are the local authority's arrangements and advice to schools on self-evaluation, improvement planning and standards and quality reporting?*
- *How does the local authority ensure that schools' self-evaluation is accurate, rigorous and robust, based on reliable and comprehensive data and information?*
- *In what ways does the local authority promote collaboration with all stakeholders, especially learners, as essential to effective self-evaluation and identification of priorities?*
- *What is the role of central teams in providing critical feedback to school leaders on the quality/robustness of their self-evaluation and school improvement planning processes?*
- *To what extent does the local authority use the data from individual school or cluster improvement plans and standards and quality reports, to direct their officers' work?*

Leaders in Inverclyde Council's Education Services ensure that their work is underpinned by a clear and well-understood strategy to build a sustainable culture of self-evaluation and improvement among school leaders. Authority leaders have communicated well the importance of ensuring school leaders are appropriately skilled. Their aim is for school leaders to confidently undertake processes and decisions around self-evaluation and improvement actions individually and collegiately with peers. This strategy is successfully helping to build a more effective and evaluative workforce of school leaders. The Head of Education has a particularly strong focus on engagement and provides strategic support and challenge to school leaders. He is supported in this by education officers, who engage with school leaders through the year.

Inverclyde Council provides appropriate advice to schools to support their self-evaluation, improvement planning and standards and quality reporting. Support includes useful templates for these processes and effective "manageable and meaningful" professional learning activities to support leaders in planning. Local authority officers value highly the views of headteachers. As a result, templates and timelines have been amended to reflect the views of headteachers and have been streamlined to make them more practical and effective. Helpfully, the Curriculum Improvement Cycle Guidance supports headteachers with a clear outline of how they should use a range of data to inform their self-evaluation and associated processes. School leaders are supported further by an Establishment Improvement Framework. The Framework makes explicit the principles underlying school improvement and supplies a calendar overview of the session. The Framework has a role as a planning aide-memoire for headteachers while planning. Despite this guidance, there remains inconsistency among headteachers' understanding of some of the support and approaches to school improvement in the authority. Secondary headteachers have a strong shared understanding of expectations, vision and the use of evaluation for improvement across the authority. This understanding is less consistently strong or shared across some primary school clusters.

Throughout the session, local authority officers engage regularly with school leaders. This has enabled officers to build a clear knowledge of the authority's schools, which supports informed engagement with school self-evaluations. A very comprehensive and effective use of a wide range of data supports these engagements. The effective use of data is embedded in Inverclyde's approach to supporting schools in planning. This helps support improved outcomes for learners. The authority has a strong commitment to using data to help school staff pinpoint specific actions or groups of learners. For example, school leaders are supported well in considering how their own data informs decisions around Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) spending. The authority's ability to respond to specific development areas with bespoke support and plans has also helped to improve experiences for learners. For example, this approach has supported the development of play pedagogy for children.

Authority officers engage in robust scrutiny and discussion of school improvement plans and self-evaluations. School leaders benefit from clear, written feedback in response to their plans and evaluations. Positively, the local authority is proactive and does not wait for external validation such as HM Inspectors' visits to intervene, challenge and re-evaluate school performance. Authority leaders use their own data and knowledge about schools to robustly challenge schools. For example, when a school's self-evaluation has remained apparently static for some time.

Different stakeholders are involved in self-evaluation and improvement planning. The views of headteachers are respected and listened to. The authority's development of broad general education (BGE) and senior phase datasets and dashboards has been shaped and driven by headteachers to ensure that data can be used effectively and practically. This is supporting more targeted planning and action. The use of precise datasets has helped school leaders to improve attendance within identified schools.

Headteacher empowerment to drive improvement for learners is clearly evident. Secondary headteachers have convened a senior phase working group. The group has already strategically enabled closer connections within subject working groups to support improvements in classrooms. The senior phase working group, and its use of datasets, has allowed school leaders to reconsider approaches to curriculum design and propose changes to curriculum models. These close and effective working relationships have been made possible by careful strategic planning of collegiate work. The orchestration of a strong team ethos by authority leaders also drives effective collaboration, communication and work. There is evidence of a less consistent approach to strategy in some clusters. The local authority should continue with plans to highlight and share effective practice in cluster working, which is already leading to growing collaboration within clusters.

There is a clear and well-understood expectation among school leaders that the voice of learners contributes to self-evaluation and improvement planning. Authority officers consider the place of learner voice in their evaluations of school plans. Authority leaders meet regularly with focus groups of learners from across the authority. As a result of this shared expectation, there are clear examples of improvements to learners' experiences that are being informed and driven by children and young people. These include learners' roles in shaping council approaches to building racial literacy in schools.

Authority leaders have also built constructive relationships with other stakeholders. Parent Councils have a well-structured working relationship with authority leaders. As a result, they benefit from a strong understanding of education authority processes in Inverclyde. Authority leaders also have a strong working relationship with teachers' professional associations. Professional associations worked with the authority to improve incident recording and reporting. These improvements mean more effective actions can be taken to monitor and deal with incidents. These constructive relationships are supporting the authority and its schools to move forward with change and improvements more effectively.

Authority staff consider school improvement planning and self-evaluation and how these contribute to the Service Improvement Plan. There is scope for this process to be made more explicit for school leaders. This would allow them to more readily see how overall messages and expectations feed into each other and link up. Authority officers' strong understanding of schools and their staff has led to strategic actions which further support a more sustainable and effective school leadership workforce. For example, knowledge and experience gaps were highlighted among principal teachers leading ASN services and provisions in the improvement planning process, as well as elements of additional support needs responsibilities. As a result, a support network was established, which has been particularly helpful for staff in primary schools. As a result, they now benefit from further training and collaboration to support them in these roles. There may be capacity for education officers to engage further in strategic planning and evaluation, supporting articulation between authority and school improvement work. This may further improve the strengths of the local authority in driving forward improvement in schools.

Theme 2: How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through self-evaluation and quality assurance?

- *What methods does the local authority use to evaluate school performance (review the quality of education) for example, gathering evidence from stakeholders, review/validated self-evaluation visits, attainment analysis)? How effective are these methods? How often does this take place?*
- *To what extent do officers carry out regular and rigorous evaluation of the quality of school provision? How is this work quality assured?*

- *How does the local authority evaluate the quality of learning, teaching and assessment?*
- *How clear and effective is the advice and support for schools on approaches to self-evaluation and their quality assurance? How effectively does the local authority moderate this at strategic and school levels?*
- *How does the local authority identify and share effective practice through quality assurance? Is this making a difference across the authority?*

Local authority staff have a very strong knowledge and understanding of their schools. This supports authority leaders to plan, support and undertake self-evaluations and quality assurance which help their schools improve the quality of education and outcomes for learners.

The authority's strong commitment to the use of data is supporting their understanding of their schools. BGE and senior phase datasets and dashboards cover extensive information about establishments and learners, including socio-economic and attendance data. Authority and school staff have successfully used this information to target specific groups or areas for improvement. These include specific cohorts of learners or specific curriculum areas or subjects. The use of highly individualised data is helping staff to improve outcomes for learners. However, not all school leaders are equally confident about using this data effectively.

Authority officers engage regularly with their linked schools. The planned frequency of their cycle of visits varies depending on a school's specific needs and involves reviewing and discussing data. The Head of Education also frequently engages with schools directly. He meets termly with authority officers and associate assessors to reflect on progress across the service. These regular meetings are helping to ensure that authority officers have a strong understanding of school contexts and progress and how this links with service improvement priorities. A calendar supports the engagement of authority staff with schools. To further improve the effectiveness of these calendared support and challenge engagements, authority officers should consider linking more explicitly their actions to clear strategic visions and shared expectations.

In session 2022/23, Inverclyde Council introduced 'Peer Review' as a new process to support self-evaluation for school improvement. The three-year cycle is an intensive review of school provision which involves headteachers, depute headteachers and local authority officers. This approach is helpful in self-evaluation and improvement planning. School leaders are highly appreciative of the impact of undertaking reviews or being reviewed. The reviews support a detailed analysis and evaluation of their performance against a range of How good is our school? 4th edition (HGIOS4) quality indicators (QIs). This supports the rigour and robustness of their self-evaluation processes. There is also evidence that staff undertaking reviews bring more effective practice and improvements back to their own schools.

Schools can request a more detailed peer review of specific QIs as part of the second or third year of their 'Peer Review' cycle. These have supported specific changes to support learners, for example in actions around wellbeing, equality and inclusion. Early indications are that there has been a low uptake of this more detailed follow-up 'Peer Review' approach. The authority intends to review the Peer Review process during session 2024/25. As part of this review, it may be helpful to consider how authority officers may support a greater number of schools to engage in more detailed 'Peer Reviews' of specific QIs.

Authority officers should consider how schools may benefit from different forms of supporting aspects of self-evaluation in years when a school is not going through a Peer Review. Greater engagement in classroom visits and learning observations during officer visits may support a more focused and informed ongoing emphasis on improving the quality of learning, teaching and assessment.

Overall, this thorough approach at different levels allows authority leaders to have a strong overview of their schools and consider how interventions and planning can support improvement. As a result, there has been a successful ongoing improvement in self-evaluations and HM Inspectors' evaluations of the authority's schools in recent years. Local authority leaders should continue to analyse and evaluate different measures of improvement, such as senior phase attainment.

Local authority staff review and moderate each other's link school data and improvement plans regularly. This helps to improve the effectiveness and support officers can give their own link schools by ensuring they have a more detailed knowledge of the actions of other schools in the authority. The sharing and moderation process also reflects a wider culture of transparency. For example, all schools' attendance information is shared weekly among all headteachers to promote a culture of working together to identify effective practice and promote collegiality. In promoting a collegiate culture, there are other ways in which staff from different establishments can work together. For example, the senior phase working group of senior and middle leaders is now effectively using dataset information to more precisely coordinate work with different subject networks. Officers work with school leaders to identify exemplars of effective practice and share these as part of best practice booklets across the authority. This sharing of effective practice has also helped inform the development of local authority improvement resources such as the literacy strategy.

Theme 3: How do local authorities support schools to improve the quality of education through professional learning?

- *What professional learning does the local authority currently provide to support school improvement?*
- *What is the impact of this on developing the skills and knowledge of school leaders and staff on school improvement?*
- *What support systems (e.g., mentoring, networks of practice, peer support groups, cluster support) are available for school leaders and staff? How are these approaches improving school performance and outcomes for learners?*
- *To what extent do senior leaders have opportunities to support improvement beyond their own establishment? What difference is this making?*
- *How effectively does the local authority utilise Associate Assessors (if applicable) to support school improvement across establishments.*
- *Does the local authority's professional learning strategy draw on support from national organisations?*

The local authority provides an annual overview of professional learning opportunities to support school improvement. This is linked to national and local priorities within the Education Services Improvement Plan. This offer supports well the development and learning of school staff to improve outcomes for children and young people. The Educational Psychology Service enhances the offer further by using research informed practice to provide a very clear universal and targeted approach to professional learning. Their work on trauma informed practice has improved culture, practice and structures in schools. This is having a positive impact on teacher confidence and creating inclusive classrooms.

The local authority highlights priorities from the Service Improvement Plan which schools must implement, for example, the Literacy Framework and strategies around building racial literacy. Headteachers and teachers also have the autonomy to choose bespoke professional learning opportunities from the annual plan in line with school and personal priorities. Authority officers are looking to develop a more comprehensive system to consider the timing of the offer in line with timelines for school self-evaluation and reporting. Key areas for improvement from standards and quality reports, peer reviews and inspection reports will be extracted. It is planned these will be more comprehensively included as part of the central professional learning offer.

Development of an interactive Literacy Framework toolkit over the last two years has captured learning from the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) and evolving research around effective teaching of core literacy skills. This has supported professional learning opportunities at whole staff level, through to individual teacher level. The Literacy Strategy contains a suite of resources and pathways which has resulted in more consistency in delivery across schools. This has supported increased confidence and knowledge among school staff of skills progression. Officers who provide coaching and modelling in literacy, numeracy and health and well-being have been able to build the capacity of staff to allow greater focus on raising attainment and achievement.

There are challenges because of the lack of permanency for newly qualified teachers. This has led to some inconsistencies in the level of teacher skills. This session, the local authority has

appointed three strategic pedagogical leads from early years, primary and secondary. These leads are further supporting school improvement through a universal and targeted approach. This has the potential to support a wider range of high quality and bespoke professional learning to improve support and experiences for learners.

The local authority's professional learning strategy draws on support from national organisations. Both authority officers and headteachers are members of a variety of networks including West Partnership, Association of Directors in Scotland, and Education Scotland. Increased collaboration and looking outwards are creating a more consistent approach to developing highly effective practice in line with national standards.

The Leadership Strategy Framework has been designed to support leadership development and networking at all levels. This includes a headteacher induction programme, supported access to national programmes, a coaching offer, and leadership networks. Middle leaders have been supported in how to have challenging conversations with staff.

The local authority has recently formalised a three-year review process for child protection and health and safety. School leaders have received intensive training from authority staff on high quality systems and processes to ensure children and young people are safe and supported to learn.

The local authority values the role of the Associate Assessor in supporting school improvement across establishments. They have recently increased their numbers of Associate Assessors and now plan to deliver focussed learning on the key quality indicators. This may support further robustness of self-evaluation, in line with national expectations and developing strong school improvement.

The local authority has a strong commitment to ensuring Scottish Equity Funding builds capacity in school teams. Authority leaders intend that this approach will support the continued development of sustainable models of professional learning to support teacher development.

Theme 4: How do local authorities deliver universal support and challenge for all schools, and/or targeted support for specific schools to improve the quality of education?

- *What is the universal offer of support and challenge for all schools?*
- *How does the local authority use the data from individual school or cluster improvement plans and standards and quality reports, to provide targeted support?*
- *What measures are used to identify the need for targeted support?*
- *Is there targeted support for specific schools? What might that look like? (examples?) What action is taken if a review of a school concludes that a school is not performing satisfactorily and requires targeted support?*
- *What support systems (for example: mentoring, networks of practice, peer support groups) are available for school leaders and staff?*
- *What is the role of central staff in facilitating/contributing to collaborative approaches, which improve school performance and outcomes for learners?*

Inverclyde Council provides universal, targeted and intensive support to schools across the local authority. In doing so, they provide an appropriate and proportionate approach towards ensuring a balance of support and challenge to all schools. Overall, school leaders have a clear understanding of the purpose and criteria for universal, targeted and intensive supports provided by the local authority. Senior leaders and other authority officers use a range of relevant data and information effectively to support their decision making about levels of support required to schools. The local authority's approach to universal, targeted and intensive support is leading to positive outcomes for learners. This is reflected in positive inspection outcomes for its schools, including a high number of schools receiving 'good' and 'very good' evaluations.

The local authority universal offer for all schools, including those that require targeted or intensive support, provides;

- a calendar of quality assurance visits and returns,
- support for each cluster from an education office,
- a service level agreement with psychological services,
- peer review visits (validated self-evaluation visits) on a three-year cycle. This is currently year three of the first round of peer reviews,
- annual feedback on standards and quality reporting and school improvement planning,
- preparation for inspection support,
- local authority developed support materials, for example, the literacy framework,
- local authority career long professional learning programme, including an annual calendar of events,
- termly heads of establishment meetings and an annual conference,
- the local authority leadership pathway and professional learning programme. All pathways provide leaders with mentoring and coaching support across all educational establishments. Pathways for staff in schools are;
 - Pathway 1 for class teachers / early years teachers.
 - Pathway 2 for principal teachers / class teachers.
 - Pathway 3 for depute headteachers / principal teachers.
 - Pathway 4 for headteachers.

The local authority undertakes an agreed universal programme of quality assurance and monitoring across the academic year. Within the central team, authority officers and the Head of Education meet twice per term to monitor and track relevant data and information. This frequent and detailed use of data is a key strength. Senior leaders and other authority officers use the monthly Additional Support Needs Monitoring Forum and fortnightly Associated Schools Groups to identify areas for improvement or of concern in relation to meeting the needs of children and young people. These meetings and use of data and information helps them assess how well schools are performing and the level of support required.

A risk matrix categorises all schools within the categories of universal, targeted and intensive. It has very useful high-level information and data linking to a number of performance indicators. This includes;

- information and school evaluations from standards and quality reports and outcomes of inspection,
- referrals made for additional support for learning,
- intelligence from authority officers' visits to schools,
- attainment data, attendance and exclusion information,
- data about bullying and recorded incidents within schools.

As a result, senior leaders have a robust understanding of school performance. As the use of the risk matrix becomes more established over time, the local authority will be better placed to identify schools that have a similar profile year after year.

Authority officers continue to have a universal approach to engaging regularly and frequently with all schools across the academic year. They have developed a structured and clear annual calendar. This is located on the Education Establishment Improvement Framework which is refreshed and shared by August each year. The calendar provides school leaders with an overview of the purpose of each meeting. However, school leaders do not all have the same awareness of the Framework and calendar. Authority officers should continue to raise the profile of the Framework so that all school leaders have equal awareness of expectations, supports and purpose of engagement with authority officers.

As part of the universal approach to supporting schools, authority officers provide useful engagement through an annual attainment and achievement meeting and termly meetings to discuss and share data gathered by authority officers. They use the local authority internally developed data dashboard and refer to the risk matrix. Authority officers use these meetings with school leaders effectively to identify early concerns or areas for support and improvement. Local

authority data and information clearly shows that this is supporting schools to sustain positive experiences and outcomes for children and young people.

Senior leaders and authority officers identify accurately what is preventing a school to improve overall performance and outcomes for children and young people. Positively, the local authority is proactive in seeking out schools that are not providing a sufficiently high-quality education to children and young people. They take prompt action to improve the quality of education. They continue to provide support until there is sufficient evidence to say the school is at least graded as 'good' using the HGIOS4 scale. As a result, schools that have evaluated themselves as 'weak' or 'satisfactory' receive timeous support.

Authority officers and senior leaders identify schools that require targeted support through a range of data and form an evidenced-based view of need. Targeted support aims to intervene timeously with schools, responding to issues or concerns identified. Targeted support also focuses on specific aspects of an establishment's work. For example, improving school capacity in meeting additional support needs, attainment in subject areas, schools' implementation of guidance and policy or response to school self-evaluations.

Local authority intensive support is identified through a range of information. It is identified through; a school's self-evaluation, outcomes of HMI inspection, peer review and authority officer intelligence. One of the main features of criteria used is whether the school is graded as lower than 'good' using the six-point scale from HGIOS4. This model is used where there is a need to secure rapid improvement. Intensive support provides;

- an action plan, with clear outcomes to ensure rapid progress is made,
- areas for improvement or incorporated into school improvement plans,
- a governance process to track the progress and impact, chaired by the Head of Education,
- monitoring every four to six weeks.

HOW GOOD IS OUR EDUCATION AUTHORITY?

A framework for self-evaluation of
local education authorities



A · D · E · S

Contents

ADES President's Foreword	3
Introduction and Rationale.....	4
Quality Indicators	6

ADES President's Foreword

I am delighted to offer a foreword to this document which represents a joint piece of work between Education Scotland and ADES. For three years now ADES and Education Scotland have worked together on Collaborative Improvement visits involving all 32 local authority education services in Scotland. The purpose of the visits has been to support improvement across the country and also to develop stronger networks of support and challenge between services. However, having completed the first round of visits, ADES took the view that we needed a more structured and consistent approach to self-evaluation. A small group then worked on refreshing a version of Quality Management In Education 2 which was published by HMIE in 2006. The document produced is based upon QMIE2 and ADES gratefully acknowledges the support of Education Scotland to use it as the basis of this refreshed self-evaluation framework.

I am very grateful to all those in ADES and Education Scotland who have led this piece of work. I hope this document and the accompanying document in this framework are used as intended to support self-evaluation for improvement across all local authorities. Our intention is to take professional responsibility in a context of mutual accountability rather than be driven by purely external accountability. One of our strengths in a relatively small education system like Scotland is our ability to work collaboratively, building networks of support and professional dialogue leading to better outcomes for our children and young people.

Sheena Devlin

August 2024

Introduction and Rationale

Improvement in the Scottish education system is rooted in robust self-evaluation, an approach which has become embedded in education over a number of years if not decades. The *How Good Is Our..?* series of publications has helped to drive forward improvement, but it has also underlined the need for establishments and services to take responsibility for their own improvement. Improvement isn't somebody else's responsibility and it isn't possible to 'inspect' improvement into a school or system. Establishments, services and local authorities need to take responsibility for improvement as well as progress towards ensuring greater consistency of standards across the establishment and local authority. There is also a need for external and objective system presence in establishments and local authorities to moderate their self-evaluation. At times the horizons of an establishment, service or local authority can become narrow and so we all benefit from external presence.

ADES has worked with Education Scotland to support system presence and externality in local authorities through Collaborative Improvement. Collaborative Improvement is an approach to mutual support and challenge of local authorities where the local authority invites an external team to work collaboratively on an area to be explored which leads to identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Collaborative Improvement is voluntary, led by the local authority itself who also choose the area of focus and publish a report at the end of the visit. The intention of Collaborative Improvement is to avoid trying to drive improvement through an accountability agenda and replace it with shared accountability as outlined by David Godfrey (2020) who states that

School systems should set up external evaluations in ways in which internal evaluation is optimised and vice-versa. ...external evaluation can lead to game-playing and internal evaluation can be subject to 'self-delusion' (Godfrey, 2020, p.12).

The chapter in Godfrey's edited work on school peer review helpfully highlights the importance of improvement being based upon a mutually reinforcing system of internal and external evaluation.

A system of peer led review of local authorities which also involves the national agency is consistent with strengthening the middle as described in the 2015 OECD report on Scottish education. Fullan and Quinn (2018) outline four components of whole system change which are: focusing direction; collaborative cultures; securing accountability; and deepening learning. Collaborative Improvement has been a key part of progressing on the journey towards creating a collaborative culture across Scotland to improve clarity around direction, secure mutually agreed professional accountability and ultimately deepen learning. However, as we progress towards the completion of all 32 local authority Collaborative Improvement visits, ADES believes that the next step is an agreed, updated framework for self-evaluation and a coherent approach to local authority self-evaluation across all 32 local authorities.

The *How Good Is Our...?* approach has stood the test of time but needs constantly updated. The publication *Quality Management in Education 2* requires to be updated to take account of legal and policy changes, however the basic EFQM structure and approach are still useful and valid. The current document is proposed as an instrument for local authorities, based on a familiar approach, to carry out robust self-evaluation. The main difference between the current approach and inspection is that self-evaluation is carried out for improvement rather than for accountability.

Denis Shirley talks of a lost decade in education where a 'prescriptive imperative' reigned.

Under this imperative, educators' judgement was diminished and the hierarchical and administrative control of educators was intensified. This was the opposite of a professionalisation agenda... How we move from prescription to professionalism is the third new imperative of educational change (Shirley, 2017, p.14).

While Shirley was mainly referring to the approach taken in England and the United States, he underlines the view that improvement cannot be driven by external accountability in a performative system where descriptors of quality become the definition of quality (Biesta, 2015). The intention in the current proposals is for the system to take greater responsibility for improvement, leading to greater consistency across the country. A child's or young person's chances of success in education should not be dependent on where they live in Scotland. ADES believes that we are accountable to the children, young people and families we serve who deserve a consistently high standard of education wherever they live in Scotland.

Quality Indicators

The following sections contains two quality indicators, the first relating to leadership and the second relating to improving outcomes. Consistent with HGIOS?4, the QIs set out features of highly effective practice and reflective questions as a guide to self-evaluation. The questions are not exhaustive and the features are only features. As with HGIOS?4, these are not to be considered as a checklist, but a guide.

Following QI2 on outcomes is an indicative list of measures which may be considered useful as part of the self-evaluation process. Once again, these are only an indication and there may be measures relevant to a local authority's own improvement plan which are context specific. The measures are not prescriptive or exhaustive but serve as a broad guide and to ensure a degree of consistency.

Quality Indicator 1: Leadership, Direction & Continuous Improvement

This indicator relates to the strategic leadership of the education authority, fulfilment of statutory duties, how the authority works internally and with partners to create a shared vision, a sense of purpose and direction focused on continuous improvement. It considers the extent to which visions, values and aims are shared and developed in partnership with stakeholders. It focuses on planning for improvement and change and how well the authority builds capacity for leadership and improvement alongside the education authority's success in delivering and improving the quality of its services. The features of highly effective practice below are intended as illustrations only and not as a set criterion.

Themes:

1. Vision, values and aims.
2. Strategic deployment of resources.
3. Fulfilment of Statutory Duties
4. Leading and delivering sustained improvement and change.
5. Effective leadership at all levels.

Features of highly effective practice:

Challenge Questions

1.1 Vision, values and aims

- Our vision, values and aims are ambitious and challenging and promote positive attitudes to social justice, equality and diversity. They are in line with national and local priorities and are clearly communicated and understood by our partners and stakeholders.
- The empowering nature of our organisation supports staff and other stakeholders to actively contribute to and act on the vision, values and aims. Our vision, values and aims are regularly revisited and reinforced resulting in a strong sense of purpose.

- How effectively have we established a shared vision for the Education Authority that is owned and understood by all stakeholders?
- How well do we understand our local context and reflect its unique needs in our strategic planning?
- How well do we use our vision, values and aims when making decisions about future improvement priorities?
- How effective are our processes for involving all stakeholders in the ongoing review of our vision, aims and values?

1.2 Strategic deployment of resources

- Senior leaders make transparent and evidence-based decisions on the allocation of resources. We provide strong leadership in targeting resources at agreed priorities.
- We have in place a very clear strategic planning framework that takes account of finances, asset management and human resources that articulate well with service planning and Community Planning cycles.

- How effective and efficient are our approaches to financial management?
- What procedures do we employ to ensure transparency and equity in the use of our financial resources?
- How effectively do we allocate resources to sustain improvement priorities?
- How do we ensure that resources are allocated to meet local and national priorities?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective systems are in place to consult with staff and stakeholders. Risks are identified through regular and thorough evaluations and risk audits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well are our buildings and grounds being used to deliver learning experiences and to support learner, staff and community wellbeing? • How effectively do we monitor the use and impact of available resources on improvement priorities? • How rigorous are our auditing processes to enable us to effectively plan, monitor and manage our resources?
<p>1.3 Fulfilment of Statutory Duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We comply with statutory requirements. Senior leaders and elected members have high levels of understanding of key legislation and policies across the spectrum of education and learning provision. • Our children, young people and adult learners, staff, volunteers and all other stakeholders both feel and are safe whilst engaging in learning opportunities provided by us either solely, or in partnership with others. • Our elected members, staff and volunteers comply with our clear, appropriate and up-to-date child protection, safeguarding and health and safety policies and procedures. • We work effectively with other services and partners to respond to any child protection, safeguarding or safety issue. • We actively promote equality and fairness and challenge all forms of discrimination. We promote social justice and seek to reduce educational disadvantage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the performance and outcome data demonstrate we are effectively discharging our duty of Best Value and continuous improvement in relation to education? • How well do we ensure high levels of understanding of key legislation and policies across education services? • How effectively do we work with other services to respond to child protection and safeguarding issues? • To what extent do we ensure equality and fairness is actively promoted across the service?
<p>1.4 Leading and delivering sustained improvement and change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our planning for improvement and change is highly effective as is our capacity for improvement. We place the learning, care and development needs of all children, young people and adult learners at the forefront of our work. • We support all children, young people and adult learners to be safe, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent can we evidence a clear strategy for the delivery of educational services? • To what extent have we embedded support and challenge as a means of securing continuous improvement? • How effectively do we use data to plan for continuous improvement? • What strategies do we use to guide the strategic direction and pace of change? Is this carefully planned to

<p>healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included. We use appropriate frameworks and indicators as a sound basis for self-evaluation and planning for improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information from performance data and stakeholders' views are used to set appropriate priorities and targets for improvement. These targets are included in service and improvement plans and result in appropriate action. <p>1.5 Effective leadership at all levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected members, strategic managers and senior leaders nurture, create and maintain a positive improvement culture where staff at all levels feel confident to initiate and take forward well-informed changes. • We use up-to-date data and intelligence to inform strategic decision making. We effectively guide and manage an ambitious strategic direction and set a realistic pace of change. • Strategic managers demonstrate a clear commitment to encourage leadership and empowerment of change at all levels, particularly at a middle level. • Our staff are encouraged to take on leadership roles, building on individual's skills and talents. 	<p>ensure sufficient time for embedding improvements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective is our guidance to EYC and schools on self-evaluation, improvement planning and standard and quality reporting? • How effective are our methods for evaluating our services and establishments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do our governance arrangements promote a culture of sustained improvement? • How effectively have we developed a culture in which all staff share a collective responsibility to improve outcomes for children and young people? • How well have we ensured a strong capacity for improvement across our service? • How well do we create collaborative conditions for staff to learn with and from others through peer collaborative learning? • To what extent do leaders proactively establish strong links with establishments, stakeholders, partners and other council services to lead joint improvement activities?
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Quality Indicator 2: Improving Outcomes for All

This indicator focuses on the impact of the education authority on achieving the best possible outcomes for all children, young people and adult learners, including those with additional support needs. This is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and in all settings, through the authority's ability to demonstrate children, young people and adult learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes and through progress towards meeting local targets across a range of appropriate measures. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. Factors associated with specific impact on children, young people, staff, families and communities is also a key consideration. The features of highly effective practice below are intended as illustrations only and not as a set criterion.

Themes:

1. Improvement in outcomes for children, young people and adult learners.
2. Quality of Education - Impact on children, families and communities.
3. Quality of Education – Impact of professional learning on staff
4. Use of performance data to improve outcomes for children, young people and adult learners.

Features of highly effective practice:

2.1 Improvement in outcomes for children, young people and adult learners

- Across all services and establishments, we have improved attainment, achievement and positive destinations for children, young people and adult learners continuously over time. We have collaborated with partners and have maintained consistently high outcomes for all children, young people and adult learners.
- These outcomes are measured across a range of indicators, including literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and positive and sustained destinations. We have raised the attainment of all our children, young people and adult learners and in particular our most disadvantaged children and young people. We have evidence that we are closing the poverty related attainment gap. We are effective in ensuring young people and adult learners maintain or move on to

Challenge Questions

- How effective are our approaches to raising attainment and achievement?
- How well can we demonstrate improved attainment for groups and individuals facing barriers to learning?
- To what extent are we closing the poverty related attainment gap?
- To what extent have we succeeded in securing positive destinations for our leavers?
- How well do we compare with other similar authorities and our virtual comparator across a range of measures?
- To what extent are we achieving our targets we have set for ourselves, including stretch aims?
- To what extent are our levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy improving over time?
- How are we able to evidence that the health and well-being skills of our learners are improving over time?

<p>positive destinations adding value to the local and national economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our outcomes compare well against a range of appropriate benchmarks and comparators including in literacy, numeracy, the senior phase and health and wellbeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do we use tracking and monitoring information from across the authority to measure progress over time and identify areas for improvement? • How well do we recognise and value the personal achievements of all learners?
<p>2.2 Quality of Education - Impact on children, families and communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, our children, young people and adult learners are successful, confident, exercise responsibility and contribute to the life of their community and as global citizens. • We have effective systems in place to promote equity of educational success for all our children, young people and adult learners. Our self-evaluation and external evaluations provide evidence of the extent to which we have maintained high educational standards or have improved over time. • Our staff and partners effectively use data, analysis and intelligence gathering to inform their understanding of community and individual family's needs and to ensure appropriate timely interventions. We make very effective use of national and international research and best practice to improve our children's learning and about the kind of experiences that will best prepare them for their future lives. • Our staff and partners are confident in delivering new approaches to learning and teaching that impact positively on learners. We work closely with parents, partners and other agencies to help minimise the effect of poverty on our children, young people and adult learners. We have effective school and authority systems in place to promote and monitor the success and achievement of all our children and young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have we successfully established an inclusive learning culture? How do we know? • How do we know that the education provision is contributing to learner's success across the 4 capacities? • How do we know that our learning, teaching and assessment is of the highest quality? • How well do we ensure that the curriculum is designed to develop and promote equality and diversity and eliminate discrimination? • What steps have we put in place to ensure that all children and young people have access to high-quality learning across all curriculum areas and through outdoor and digital learning? • How effectively have we incorporated children's rights in to our work? How well are children consulted and engaged about their learning? • How well are we capturing the impact of children and young people's achievements on our community? • How well do we engage with families and communities and how do we involve them in decision-making around education? • How effective are we in evaluating the impact of our work on families and communities? • To what extent can we state that families are satisfied with the quality of education? • How effective are our arrangements to respond to stakeholders concerns and suggestions? • How well has the LA engaged with parents/families to support

2.3 Quality of Education – Impact of professional learning on staff

- Our model of professional learning is understood and used by all staff. Our staff have ownership of their own professional learning and are empowered to engage in self-directed learning. Individually and collectively, we plan and evaluate our professional learning directly on the quality of impact on learning. We can evidence the impact our professional learning has had on our work and the progress, achievement and attainment of children, young people and adult learners over time.
- Our staff are supported through professional learning to deliver high-quality services, including learning and teaching which improve the life chances of children, young people and adult learners. They work in partnership to deliver well-targeted initiatives that improving attainment and achievement of the most disadvantaged children, young people and adult learners and enhance their health and well-being.

2.4 Use of performance data to improve outcomes for children, young people and adult learners

- We have robust systems to track and monitor the progress of children, young people and adult learners across our services and establishments. We analyse this information to determine our impact and to ensure we intervene effectively to support the continuous progress of children, young people and adult learners across our authority.
- We make appropriate progress towards meeting local targets for education (including stretch aims),

improvements in learning, raising attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap?

- How well do all staff understand their responsibility in ensuring sustained improvement?
- How well are our approaches to professional learning understood and used by all staff?
- To what extent do we critically engage with research, policy sources and developments in learning and teaching?
- How well do all staff know and understand the key tools to be used in self-evaluation activities including the General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) Standards and other QI frameworks?
- How well do we provide opportunities for all staff to be involved in and lead aspects of service improvement?
- How effective are our approaches to collegiate learning? Are we using an appropriate range of approaches which enable us to learn with and from each other?
- Can we evidence the impact of our professional learning approaches on improved outcomes for learners?
- How effective are LA approaches to evaluate the impact of the professional learning offer in relation to improving outcomes for all learners?
- To what extent is our approach to self-evaluation rigorous and robust?
- To what extent is decision making underpinned by effective data analysis?
- How effectively do we use data to intervene effectively to ensure improved outcomes?
- How well do we know that the steps we have taken have improved outcomes for children?

<p>health and wellbeing and Best Value within education. We use a range of appropriate tools, including professional judgement to evaluate how well our children and young people attain and to plan our next steps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have effective moderation and data gathering processes across our services and establishments to ensure data for improvement is robust and provides accurate information for us to evaluate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do elected members use performance data to support and challenge improvement? • How effectively are we building capacity and sustainability into initiatives? • How effective are our strategies and processes for evaluating our service?
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Improving Outcomes for All: Core Indicators

Early Years

1. Attendance
2. Care Inspectorate and HMI inspection outcomes

Broad General Education

3. Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CfE levels in literacy
4. Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CfE levels in numeracy
5. Percentage of S3 achieving third level in literacy
6. Percentage of S3 achieving third level in numeracy

Senior Phase

7. Percentage of leavers achieving Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5
8. Percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more at SCQF Level 4
9. Percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more at SCQF Level 5
10. Percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more at SCQF Level 6

Leaver Destinations

11. Percentage of leavers entering positive destinations – Initial and follow-up destinations
12. Participation rate for 16-19 year olds

Other

13. School attendance rates – Primary, Secondary and Special
14. School exclusion rates – Primary, Secondary and Special
15. Achievement – Locally based measures that reflect the purpose of Curriculum for Excellence
16. Health and Wellbeing – Locally based measures
17. Inspection results for Local Authority establishments and trends in proportion of inspection QIs rated good or better
18. Improvements arising from LA strategies and plans, reviews including Best Value and ADES Collaborative Improvement

Note - Local Authorities should consider:

- Trends – Over time, a trend being 3-5 years
- Comparison with national trends
- Comparison with relevant benchmarks, family groups or virtual comparators
- Progress in meeting local targets including stretch aims
- Data relating to performance of particular groups of learners and provide progress in raising attainment of key equity groups e.g. ASN, Poverty, Care Experienced, Ethnicity, EAL, Gender

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/35/25/MR
Contact Officer:	Michael Roach Head of Education	Contact No:	01475 712891
Subject:	Additional Support for Learning Policy		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to ask members of the Education and Communities Committee to note the Education Service's Additional Support for Learning policy.
- 1.3 This policy was created in October 2021 and is being refreshed in line with policy review timescales. The policy acts as an umbrella that binds together practice guidance in a number of areas that are cited in policy and its attached appendices.
- 1.4 Due the scale of change impacting the ASL agenda, nationally and locally, this policy is updated on an ongoing basis. However, the core legislation underpinning practice in this area remains the same; namely the Education (Scotland) Additional Support for Learning) Act, 2004 (updated 2009) and supporting Statutory Guidance (2017).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to:
- note the policy.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 In 2004 the then Scottish Executive created seminal legislation related to the support needs of children and young people. The ASL legislation changed the definition of need from Special Educational Needs to Additional Support for Learning needs. The latter is defined as a pupil having a barrier to learning, whereas the former defined need based on a narrower understanding.
- 3.2 Over time the Scottish Government and local authorities have worked together to augment activity in this area through their policy agenda in a number of areas (e.g. bereavement, relationships, social communication, English as an Additional Language).

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 This iteration of the Additional Support for Learning policy brings forward some changes from the previous version. These changes are noted in full in Appendix 2 within the policy itself. To signpost these further please see key changes below:
- The policy is aligned to Included, (Included Engaged and Involved, Part 3), which references the issues of seclusion and restraint in schools. Inverclyde has a robust approach to physical intervention, aligned to Included Engaged and Involved Part 3 through its adoption of the Clyde Valley Training Partnership training model – Promoting Positive Behaviour. As per the Education Service Standards and Quality Report for April 24 – April 25, this will be further reviewed in 2025/26.
 - The new policy also references UNCRC incorporation into Scots' Law as well as the new Anti-Bullying policy.
 - Furthermore, it provides updated guidance regarding referrals to the Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service, Corporate Parenting Team and Lomond View Academy.
 - The policy also introduces the Inverclyde Dyscalculia Pathway for the first time. This follows advice provided by Education Scotland.
 - Finally, appendix 2 within the policy references key policy and guidance documents that have either been introduced or evolved since the first version of policy.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing	X	
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

N/A.

Annual recurring costs (savings)

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

5.3 Legal/Risk

N/A.

5.4 Human Resources

N/A.

5.5 Strategic

N/A.

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

X	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required, a copy of which will be made available on the Council's website: https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/equality-impact-assessments
	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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

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

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
N	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 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.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A.

**Additional Support for Learning (ASL) Policy
(May 2025)**

Inverclyde Council is an Equal Opportunities employer

This document can be made available in other languages, large print, and audio format upon request.

Document control

Document responsibility		
Policy title	Corporate group	Service
Additional Support for Learning (ASL) Policy	Education, Communities and Organisational Development.	Education

Change history		
Version	Date	Comments
2	25/04/25	Aspects of this policy are updated on a regular basis to reflect local and national developments. This is the umbrella policy that covers a number of other policies and practice guidelines.

Distribution
All education establishments
All Parent Councils
All pupils

Policy review		
Updating frequency	Next review due	Responsible Officer
3 yearly cycle	May 2028	Head of Education

Policy review and approval			
Name	Action	Date	Communication

Contents

Document control	
1.0	Introduction <p>Inverclyde Council has a long history of embracing inclusive practices in its education establishments. This policy outlines the legislative and national policy drivers that underpin this practice. It also provides an executive framework to enable users of the policy to understand both ‘why?’ and ‘how?’ ASL legislation is applied within the local authority.</p>
1.1	Executive Summary <p>This is the second iteration of Inverclyde’s Additional Support for Learning policy and replaces the original version that was launched in October 2021. Both versions of the policy are anchored in the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2004, revised 2009). This policy commits Inverclyde Council to meeting the legislative requirements of this Act and demonstrates how this will take place by examining the key processes and support systems within the local authority to support children and young people with additional support needs. It also contains a number of related appendices. Given the scope of this policy, it is updated on a regular basis as new guidance and policy emerges from the Scottish Government.</p>
1.2	Background <p>The then Scottish Executive launched the Education (Scotland) (Additional Support for Learning) Act in 2004 thus replacing prior legislation namely the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. This prior legislation referred to children and young people as having ‘Special Educational Needs,’ which involved a narrow definition of need. ASL on the other hand brought forward the term <i>additional support needs</i>, which is defined as a child or young person having any barrier to learning. Guidance published subsequent to legislation sought to exemplify additional support needs.</p> <p>This is outlined below:</p> <p><i>Children may need extra help with their education for a wide variety of reasons. A child’s education could* be affected by issues resulting from:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Social, emotional or behavioural needs.</i> • <i>Having missed a lot of education for a variety of reasons.</i> • <i>Having a health condition.</i> • <i>Home based factors.</i> • <i>Bullying.</i> • <i>Being particularly gifted.</i> • <i>Having a sensory need.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Having a communication need.</i> • <i>Having a physical impairment.</i> • <i>Their role a young carer or parent.</i> • <i>The experience of multiple moves of home environment.</i> • <i>Having English as an additional language.</i> • <i>Being looked after.</i> <p><i>* This is not an exhaustive list</i></p> <p>Considering the extensive list cited here, Inverclyde Council has created policies and guidance in areas such as positive relationships, dyslexia and dyscalculia, bereavement change and loss, anti-bullying, Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), trauma informed practice and assessment and planning. It has also evolved its support structures and resources to adapt to the changing picture of need within the local authority.</p>	
1.3	<p>Strategic Context</p> <p>Inverclyde has 9559 of pupils in its education establishments with 38.5% currently considered to have an additional support need. To meet this need Inverclyde Council has evolved the GIRFEC Pathway to develop practice at Universal, Enhanced Universal, Collaborative and Enhanced Collaborative levels. This is explored further in Section 3 of this Policy. This policy sets out the processes and systems that Inverclyde Council has established over time to meet is legislative requirements as well as to ensure best practice.</p>	
1.4	<p>Links to Legislation</p> <p>The Inverclyde Additional Support for Learning Policy sets out the vision for meeting the additional support needs of the pupil population that is in line with legislation, policy and practice. As such it draws its philosophy and approaches from the following policy and legislative drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and its amended version (2009). • Additional Support for Learning Statutory Guidance (2017). • The Standards in Scotland Schools Act (2000). • The Children and Young People Scotland Act (2014). • Included, Engaged and Involved (Part 1, 2 & 3) (2007, 2017 & 2024). • Better Behaviour Better Learning Better Relationships (2017). • Behaviour in Scotland's Schools Report (2016). • UNCRC Incorporation. • Respect for All (2024). • Inverclyde GIRFEC Pathways (2015). • Inverclyde Positive Relationships Policy (updated 2019). • General Teaching Council for Scotland Professional Standards (2021). 	

1.5	Aim or Statement of intent or Policy Statement Inverclyde Education Services are fully committed to the implementation of the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004 and its amended version (2009). This policy outlines Inverclyde's processes and procedures for both parents, children and young people and practitioners.	
1.6	Links to Corporate Groups This policy is situated with Education Services in Inverclyde Council, which sits under the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Directorate.	
1.7	Terms of Reference As this policy is based on legislation and national guidance, it is expected that all education establishments in Inverclyde will match their practice to it as appropriate.	
2.0	Scope	
2.1	This policy applies to all education establishments in Inverclyde Council.	
3.0	Policy content Inverclyde is committed to meeting all additional support needs and to the presumption of mainstream education as set out in legislation. As such, it supports approaches to inclusion (the process by which education establishments adapt their approaches to the needs of their pupil population) over integration (the process by which pupils with additional support needs have to adapt to their education context). The expectation, therefore, is that almost all children and young people who have additional support for learning needs will attend their local mainstream education establishment. Furthermore, staff in these establishments will have inclusive mindsets, which are underpinned by an array of complementary policies, strategies and processes. Education staff having an inclusive mindset is not an aspiration, but an expectation as cited in the General Teaching Council for Scotland Professional Standards (2021). Staff in Inverclyde's education establishments are further supported in these endeavours by a range of local authority organisations. Information about these policies, strategies, processes and organisations is contained in consequent sections of this document. Inverclyde Council also complies with legal expectations around the placement of children and young people into nonmainstream settings. This section of the ASL Policy sets out expectations regarding practice in Inverclyde's education establishments as established through national legislation and practice. Furthermore, it provides information in respect to the policies, guidelines, procedures, and support available to enable educational establishments to realise these national expectations.	

3.1 [Positive Relationships Policy \(PRP\)](#) (2024) (Appendix 2.2)

The PRP is a key document through which Inverclyde meets the legal and policy demands of Scottish education in relation to inclusion. It provides a comprehensive set of expectations in respect of promoting and supporting relationships in our education establishments that is updated on a regular basis to ensure that it is contemporary. Figure 1 displays the chronology of thinking in this arena over time from corporal punishment as a way to control through to discipline and behaviour management and now focusing on relationships.

Where are we going in Scottish education?



Figure 1 - Compassionate Connected Communities, Education Scotland, 2018

The PRP has three Aspects as well as a series of appendices:

- Preventative Approaches
- Partnership Approaches &
- Responsive Approaches

Aspect 1: Preventative Approaches

Key to ensuring a positive ethos in education establishments is the understanding that children and young people receive an education, driven by progressive pedagogical approaches, that is appropriate to their needs. Therefore, pedagogy is referenced throughout the PRP Policy. Adding to this, the policy recommends the use of nurturing, restorative and solution-oriented approaches. All three of these approaches are strength based, outcome focused and linked to improvements in the culture and ethos in education establishments for all. The policy also promotes the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in Scottish education through supporting pupil participation in the decision-making process. All of these paradigms are aimed at facilitation inclusive education in line with the demands of Scottish education.

Aspect 2: Partnership Approaches (Appendix 3.9)

The seminal approach to partnership working in Inverclyde centres on the GIRFEC Pathways. In 2015 Inverclyde Council adopted the [GIRFEC Pathways model](#) as a replacement for staged intervention. All education establishments have different Universal Pathways reflecting their individual circumstances, however, it is the aim of the GIRFEC Pathways approach for establishments to be continuously build their Universal provision through the establishment improvement approach.

Universal Pathway

The Universal Pathway encompasses the CfE entitlement of personal support for all pupils. The promotion of Wellbeing is embedded in the culture and ethos of the establishment and is evident in its policies, systems and practice. The Universal Service is the generic ways in which establishment staff meet the wide continuum of wellbeing needs of children through the normal day-to-day running of the school. It is a dynamic, evolving provision, responsive to strategic improvement and inevitable changes in resources. Children at this level should be recorded as 0 on SEEMIS staged intervention.

	<div> <h3>Enhanced Universal Pathway</h3> </div> <div> <p>The Enhanced Universal Pathway is followed when a child is assessed as needing something different from, or significantly more of, what is normally provided within the Universal Service. When the unmet needs of a child are deemed, in the judgement of the Named Person, to be impacting on their wellbeing outcomes, a single agency wellbeing assessment may be initiated to analyse those unmet needs. If this assessment informs the development of a single agency led plan, outcomes and interventions are agreed within the scope of the Enhanced Service. Children at this level should be recorded as 1 on SEEMIS staged intervention.</p> </div> <div> <h3>Collaborative Pathway</h3> </div> <div> <p>The Collaborative Pathway is followed when a child is assessed with needs that cannot be met by the Single Agency Led Plan alone. When the unmet needs of a child are deemed, in the judgement of the Named Person, to be impacting on their wellbeing outcomes, a My World Triangle Assessment may be initiated to analyse those unmet needs. If this assessment informs the development of a multi-agency plan, outcomes and interventions requiring the collaboration of more than one service are agreed. The most appropriate Lead Professional is identified to oversee this plan. Children at this level should be recorded as 2 on SEEMIS staged intervention.</p> </div> <div> <h3>Enhanced Collaborative Pathway</h3> </div> <div> <p>The Enhanced Collaborative Pathway is followed when a Statutory Child's Plan is required to ensure the outcomes are met as a result of the interventions which are delivered. Children at this level should be recorded as 3 on SEEMIS staged intervention.</p> </div> <div> <h3>Aspect 3: Responsive Approaches</h3> </div> <div> <p>This section offers enhanced assessment advice and processes that can be used to assess and plan for meeting additional support needs. It also highlights legal advice around exclusion from education. Furthermore, there is guidance on physical intervention and seclusion that aligns our approaches to the recommendations derived from Included, Engaged and Involved (Part 1, 2 & 3) (2007, 2017, 2024). Lastly there is guidance on flexible timetables.</p> </div> <div> <h3>3.2 Processes, approaches and policies.</h3> </div> <div> <p>Inverclyde has several key processes, policies, guidance documents and support systems in place that support education establishments to meet the needs of its pupils. These are outlined and expanded on below.</p> </div>
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3.2 (a) [Additional Support Needs Forum](#) (Appendix 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4)



The ASN Forum is a multiagency group that meets to consider well-being assessments that are submitted by education establishments across the local authority. The Forum will make recommendations about meeting needs to the Head of Education.

In certain circumstances members of the ASN Forum may request an enhanced assessment from a member of staff outside of the referring education establishment in order to provide a fuller picture of need. This is called a [Contextualised Assessment](#) and there are guidelines available to support establishments through the process (Appendix 2.5).

The ASN Forum will:

- Access additional support if required including moving and handling training, specific equipment, adaptations/modifications, additional ASN Assistant support allocation
- Recommend access to specialist provision within Inverclyde if this is considered to be in a child's best interests,

3.2 (b) [Authority Screening Group \(ASG\)](#) (Appendix 3.1, 3.12, 3.2 & 3.4)

The ASG will manage referrals from education establishments for peripatetic support services, flexi schooling, monitor flexible timetables, review low attendance and be the first port of call for Critical Incidents and Accident Form. the ASG will take place every second week (where possible) with a Request for Assistance (RfA) approach providing the paperwork access route. Education RfAs will be hosted in a central folder that will have security access processes – as with the current ASN Forum arrangements. This will aim to minimise paperwork, whilst maximising appropriate access to support services.

3.2 (c) [Flexible Timetables to improve outcomes for children and young people](#) (Appendix 3.12)

Inverclyde has adopted the flexible timetable approach outlined in the document 'Included, Engaged, and Involved' Scottish Government, 2017. The local authority has clear guidelines regarding the negotiation, monitoring and recording of such ways of working. Governance in respect of this process rests with the Additional Support Needs (ASN) Forum.

3.2 (d) [Coordinated Support Plans](#) (Appendix 3.14 & 3.35)

	<p>Coordinated Support Plans (CSPs) were created as part of the ASL Act (2004). They are the only legal planning document in Scottish education. There are strict criteria governing qualification for a CSP and there is a legal framework that supports the overarching process including the meeting of timeframes. Their rationale is set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSP is an action plan for those children and young people who need significant additional support with their education from a number of agencies • It should be monitored regularly and reviewed annually • It is intended to support professionals to work together to help children and young people achieve educational targets • It is intended to ensure that this support is coordinated in an appropriate manner. <p>The ASL Act was updated in 2009 with a statement that ‘all looked after children and young people are presumed to have additional support needs.’ As a result of this it is expected that all educational establishments in Inverclyde will assess every looked after pupil against the four criteria for a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP) on an annual basis.</p> <p>3.2 (e) Joint Support Teams (JSTs) (Appendix 2.3)</p> <p>JSTs are multi agency and disciplinary groups that are attached to all educational establishments in Inverclyde. The Inverclyde Joint Support Team (JST) model builds on existing good practice in the local authority, which emphasises that outcomes for children and young people who have additional support needs are best met when all agencies collaborate in this venture. In Inverclyde we have excellent levels of partnership working that align with best practice within the Getting it Right for Every Child agenda. JSTs are held on a monthly basis with coordination responsibility resting with the educational establishment.</p> <p>It is expected that each JST will monitor those pupils most at risk and undertake this function in a solution-oriented manner. In order to allow for high quality discussion, therefore, it is anticipated that a limited number of pupils will be discussed. It is also expected that the journey of a limited number of pupils will be continually tracked using this approach and that the impact of each JST will be reported annually within the establishment Standards and Quality Reporting cycle. The role of JSTs is currently under review and this section of the policy will evolve over time.</p> <p>3.2 (f) ASN Leaders (Appendix 3.5) (Teams Link)</p> <p>The ASN Leaders group was formed in November 2019 in order to provide education establishments with high quality training, practice updates and networking opportunities. The group meets twice each term and has representation from all education establishments in the local authority.</p>
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	<p>A variety of issues are covered within the ASN Leaders agenda. There is an ongoing focus on using this as a forum for briefing leaders on key developments, including this policy as well as briefings from partners including services such as the Inverclyde Wellbeing Service (Action for Children).</p> <p>3.2 (g) Anti bullying policy (2025) (Appendix 2.1)</p> <p>The Inverclyde Anti-Bullying policy draws from the Document Respect for All (2024) which was produced by the Scottish Government supported national anti-bullying organisation <i>Respect me</i>. The policy lays out expectations for all and processes. It makes a commitment from an Inverclyde perspective to tackle prejudice-based bullying. It was created as a collaboration with pupils, parents and education staff.</p> <p>3.2 (h) Bereavement, Change and Loss policy (2025) (Appendix 2.6)</p> <p>This policy is designed to ensure that the needs of children, young people, staff and the wider school community, who have experienced bereavement, change and loss are identified. Within caring educational environments Inverclyde' staff will work together in partnership to support children and young people, their families and staff through periods of loss and change. The policy looks at the basic tenets of theories underpinning bereavement, change and loss and the impact on children and young people. It also and offers practical advice for practitioners.</p> <p>3.2 (i) National Trauma Transformation Programme</p> <p>Inverclyde Council has committed itself to becoming a trauma informed and responsive organisation. As part of this drive all education establishments had Trauma Informed Practice on their Improvement Plans since August 2023. This is supported by an implementation plan that is led by Inverclyde Educational Psychology Service.</p> <p>3.2 (j) Dispute Resolution</p> <p>Inverclyde Council makes provision for conflict resolution in those circumstances where a parent or carer disagrees with aspects of decision making in respect of their child or young person in terms of the ASL Act (2004/2009). The local authority can make use of mediation services to attempt to resolve dispute situations.</p> <p>3.2 (k) Transitions (Appendix 3.11)</p> <p>In accordance with guidance contained within the ASL Act, Inverclyde expects transition planning for its pupils to be robust and set within legal timeframes. For those pupils with additional support needs transitioning from an early years to primary environment this means that the planning process should start at least six months prior to the transition. For those in transit from the primary to secondary sector this should commence at least twelve months prior to transition, though best practice suggests that this process would have been started at an earlier stage of a</p>	
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children's journey through primary school than this. In terms of the secondary to post school transition the expectation is that planning should start before a child becomes fifteen years of age. See [statutory guidance](#) and the attached PowerPoint.



Enhanced
Transition.pptx

3.2 (l) Incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots' Law (Appendix 3.8).

Incorporating the UNCRC into Scots' law will strengthen existing work to protect and respect children. Incorporation will ensure that children's rights are woven into policy, law and decision making. Children will be empowered to know, understand and be able to use their rights in key decision-making processes. Inverclyde is committed to this approach for all of its children and young people, including those who have additional support for learning needs for whom it is vital that their voice is heard. Appendix 3.8 contains numerous tools that can be used to gain the voice of children and young people.

3.2 (m) Inverclyde Dyslexia Pathway (Appendix 3.10, 3.17, 3.18, 3.19, 3.20, 3.21 & 3.22)

The Inverclyde Dyslexia Pathway is well embedded in Inverclyde's primary and secondary classrooms, it is derived from the Scottish Government's definition of dyslexia

'Dyslexia can be described as a continuum of difficulties in learning to **read, write and/or spell**, which **persist** despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. These difficulties often do not reflect an individual's cognitive abilities and may not be typical of performance in other areas.

The impact of dyslexia as a barrier to learning varies in degree according to the learning and teaching environment, as there are often associated difficulties such as:

- auditory and /or visual processing of language-based information
- phonological awareness
- oral language skills and reading fluency
- short-term and working memory
- sequencing and directionality
- number skills
- organisational ability.

Dyslexia exists in all cultures and across the range of abilities and socio-economic backgrounds. It is a hereditary, life-long, neurodevelopmental condition.

Learners with dyslexia will benefit from early identification, appropriate intervention and targeted effective teaching, enabling them to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.'

3.2 (n) Inverclyde Dyscalculia Pathway (Appendix 3.27 to 3.34)

In August 2024 Inverclyde Council endorsed the Scottish Government's Assessment and Intervention Pathway for Dyscalculia. This approach is now in common use across Inverclyde's educational establishments aimed at assessing need and supporting planning.

3.2 (o) Single Agency Assessment and Planning (Appendix 3.25 & 3.26)

Inverclyde Education Services has adopted a common approach to single-agency assessment and planning, this came about as a result of work between Inverclyde Educational Psychology Service and Educational Establishments Representatives.

3.2 (p) Support Organisation's

Inverclyde Educational Psychology Service (IEPS) (Appendix 3.7) ([WEBSITE](#))



**Inverclyde Educational
Psychology Service**

IEPS takes a strengths-based approach to its work with individual children and young people and their families. This can happen in Inverclyde's education settings or, in a few circumstances, for those children and young people who are educated outwith the boundaries of the local authority. It focuses on building capacity of staff and parents/carers with the purpose of achieving the best outcomes for children and young people, particularly Inverclyde's most vulnerable pupils.

How it does this:

- It uses psychology to inform assessment and intervention with individual children and young people.
- By adopting the principles of Additional Support for Learning and GIRFEC in all our work.
- It works with partners across agencies to support Inverclyde's children and young people who are placed out with the local authority including those in day and residential placements.
- By sharing and promoting 'what works' to both inform policy and develop practice in our educational establishments. Examples of some of the policies: - Promoting Positive Relationships, Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy, Anti-Bullying and Bereavement, Change and Loss. The service takes a lead role on many of these policy areas for the local authority.
- By raising awareness of the crucial role of relationships, nurture and communication in children's lives.

- Through training others in the use of the most up to date evidence base relating to the pedagogy of learning, teaching and inclusion. By using research in cognitive psychology, it can help education staff to prioritise the use teaching strategies that can have the biggest impact on learning.
- By emphasising the importance of thinking about the needs of the whole child and seeking solutions which build on and recognise the strengths and assets of individual children and their families.
- It supports effective transitions (early years into primary, primary to secondary, secondary to post school) to ensure young people are eventually successful in employment, further education or training.
- By working to ensure that assessment and intervention links to effective planning for children and young people.
- It designs and put into practice interventions which help both individuals and communities develop optimal health and wellbeing.
- Through the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in all of its work.
- By promoting and supporting the voice of the child in the decision-making process.
- Through prioritising its attendance at looked after reviews and Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings.

3.2 (q) Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service (ICOS)

ICOS delivers a training programme which concentrates on the staff involved in transitions. This is delivered in all schools within Inverclyde, it is offered to all staff involved in the infant stages in schools. It covers sessions on 'What is Autism?', Communication, Sensory Sensitivities, Strategies and finishes with the school constructing or updating their Autism Plan. When the child arrives in their education establishment, support is delivered in a variety of ways - supporting the child, supporting the parents and supporting staff - this can be delivered in a one-to-one, small group to develop skills needed for the classroom and playground. The team continues to deliver bespoke training for staff working with pupils, the team also deliver the Early Bird Parent Programme along with the Cygnet Parent Programme for those with children over the age of 9 years of age.

ICOS is accessed through referral to the ASG.

3.2 (r) Inverclyde Visual Impairment Support (VI)

Who we are: Inverclyde Council's Visual Impairment Service (Education) is based at Craigmarloch School. It is a Peripatetic Service that is made up of Teachers of the Visually Impaired.

Who we support: The Peripatetic Team provides support to School age pupils in Inverclyde who have a visual impairment.

	<p>What we do: The Peripatetic Service assists School staff with the development of key strategies for the pupil so that they can fully access the curriculum and learning. We aim to minimise the effect, where possible, of a visual impairment through support and advice and also to promote understanding of visual impairment. It is vital for any pupil who has a visual impairment that early identification and assessment of the pupil's educational needs take place. This is to ensure that barriers to learning are overcome, and the correct supports are accessed for the pupil.</p> <p>Who we link with: We also link in with –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS staff specialist staff, Education Services, Social Work & Mobility Services, Parents/carers, Partner organisations such as Visibility, and the RNIB (and their Education and Children and Families Manager). <p>VI Service is accessed through referral to the ASG.</p> <p>3.2 (s) Deaf Education</p> <p>Garvel Deaf Centre is the base for the service that supports all deaf and hearing-impaired pupils in Inverclyde.</p> <p>The Service is based between Moorfoot Primary School, where primary and pre-school aged deaf pupils who normally make use of sign language or would benefit from the support from our specialist staff are taught within the base, making use of the mainstream school to access parts of their curriculum depending on individual needs. The base has a ratio of one teacher to six children.</p> <p>Pupils who attend Garvel primary will normally transfer to the Deaf Education Department in Clydevue Academy at the end of P7, along with any other pupil supported by the service who would benefit from the type of support offered there. Primary and secondary pupils who require less intensive support receive this through its peripatetic service.</p> <p>With this four-fold provision, Garvel is able to provide support for children with any degree of hearing loss from the age of diagnosis to 18 as well as being a resource available to schools and families across Inverclyde and beyond.</p> <p>As outlined above, Clydevue Deaf Education Department is the secondary resource base linked to Garvel Deaf Centre. It supports deaf pupils across the curriculum according to their needs. Pupils are supported across the curriculum in order to ensure that they have equal access to teaching and learning opportunities. Pupils whose first language is British Sign Language are supported by Teachers of Deaf Pupils who use a Sign Bilingual approach. Resources can be differentiated in order to make them more accessible to deaf learners.</p>
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	<p>Pupils may have a reduced timetable which allows them to have tutorial support to consolidate learning and improve literacy skills. Adaptations to the curriculum will be discussed with pupils and their families in order to develop a timetable which best meets the needs of the deaf learner.</p> <p>Pupils are encouraged to manage their audiological equipment themselves and be as independent as possible. Where difficulties arise, staff are available to troubleshoot on a day-to-day basis, and the educational audiologist is available regularly to manage any issues with audiological equipment.</p> <p>Outreach is accessed through referral to the ASG, and placement via ASN Forum.</p> <p>3.2 (t) Virtual Head Teacher & Corporate Parenting Team (CPT)</p> <p>The Virtual Head Teacher (VHT) will have both a strategic and operational role for improving outcomes for care experienced children and young people, the VHT will also have line management responsibility for the corporate parenting team (CPT). This role will include a high degree of liaison with all partners involved in supporting care experienced children and young people, it will also involve an oversight of coordinated support planning.</p> <p>The role of the CPT is to improve the outcomes for our care experienced pupils – to improve attainment; reduce the attainment gap; improve attendance and reduce exclusions. We work closely with our Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, external providers and our colleagues in Health & Social Care Partnership.</p> <p>Pupils can be referred to us via their school, by social work or via the review process for looked after young people. Support is established that will best meet the needs of the pupil and can be in class, one to one in school, out with school in the pupil's home or a library etc. or remotely via TEAMS.</p> <p>We also have transition support from N5-P1 and P7-S1 available to ensure that these pivotal stages are given support if required. An S4 support programme has been in place for a number of years, and we aim to ensure that all S4 looked after pupils receive our support to ensure they leave school with the maximum qualifications possible.</p> <p>CPT is accessed through referral to the ASG.</p> <p>3.2 (u) Inverclyde Wellbeing Service (Weblink)</p> <p>The Inverclyde Wellbeing Service is a partnership between Education Services, Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership and Action for Children. It provides one to one direct support to children and young people across Inverclyde as well as group work approaches. It accepts referrals from a wide array of partners and particularly welcomes self-referrals.</p>	
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3.2 (v) Inverclyde Children and Young People's Community Mental Health Service (Appendix 3.16)

This service offers support for children and young people from age 5 to 25. It has three main aims:

No Wrong Door

- Access to a Directory of Services that work in the arena of children and young people's mental health.
- The provision of a Direct Referral Pathway for children, young people, families and practitioners to services to mental health services.

Community Strength

- Supporting children in transition from primary 7 to secondary 1 in relation to emotionally based school non-attendance issues.
- Provision of enhanced community based mental health support via the Barnardo's team
- Access to the Cygnets programme for families supporting pupils on the autism spectrum.

Nothing About Us Without Us

- Gathering service user views to inform future development of mental health services
- Identifying gaps in children and young people's mental health provision and supporting enhancements in to meet these needs.

3.2 (w) Lomond View Academy (Appendix 3.13)

Lomond View Academy is a specialised education establishment dedicated to supporting young people with social, emotional, and behavioural needs. We understand that traditional learning environments may not meet the unique challenges faced by these individuals, and we provide a nurturing and structured setting where every student can grow academically, socially, and emotionally. Our dedicated staff work collaboratively with families, communities, and external agencies to ensure that each young person has the tools and support necessary to succeed in both their education and personal development.

Lomond View Academy welcomes referrals for young people in S2-4 who experience social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties that significantly impact their ability to thrive in mainstream education. These may include young people dealing with mental health challenges, trauma, disruptive behaviours, or emotional instability. We work with young people who require a tailored approach to learning, offering a range of interventions designed to meet their individual needs. Our goal

	<p>is to support them in developing resilience, coping strategies, and self-confidence to transition successfully into adulthood.</p> <p>The goal of a young person attending Lomond View Academy is to support their reintegration into mainstream education by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing specialised support for social, emotional, and behavioural needs. • supporting young people through personalised learning and de-escalation strategies. • Building resilience and coping strategies for success in a traditional school setting. • Focusing on overcoming challenges that are barriers to academic and personal progress. <p>Lomond View Academy offers a variety of support models that are listed below:</p> <p>Broad General Education Model</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance should be 65%-70% or above. Young people are expected to attend LVA and their Base School. 2. Please note that the aim with young people attending our BGE model is to transition them back to their base school by the end of the session. 3. BGE pupils attend Lomond View Academy for 2 periods per day. They are expected to attend their Base School at all other times. <p>S4 Model</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance should be 65%-70% or above. Young people are required to attend LVA and their Base School. <p>The Emotionally Based School Avoidance Model – Horizon</p> <p>This service is intended for Young People who are not attending their school placement in Inverclyde because of emotional based school avoidance (EBSA). Young people accessing Horizon have little or no attendance at their mainstream school. Pupils can be either BGE or Senior Phase and it is expected that a variety of interventions have been put in place by their mainstream school, which have proved unsuccessful in getting them to attend.</p> <p>Interrupted Learners Service – ILS</p> <p>The Interrupted Learners Service is a new service, which will come into operation in August 2025.</p> <p>This service is intended for Young People who have barriers around attendance at their Base School. Young people accessing ILS will typically have a low level of attendance with an overall figure of around 50% or above. As this service is in its</p>
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infancy the 50% attendance figure is a guideline only at this stage. Pupils can be either primary or secondary and it is expected that a variety of interventions have been put in place by their mainstream school, which have proved unsuccessful in improving attendance.

NEST (Enhanced Nurture Provision)

Purpose and Provision

NEST is an enhanced nurture provision designed to support primary school children across Inverclyde who experience challenges in mainstream education due to attachment difficulties, trauma, or social and emotional needs. Operated by Lomond View Academy, NEST provides a structured yet flexible environment that prioritises emotional regulation, co-regulation, and connection while meeting children at their individual developmental stage. Recognising that many children referred to NEST may need to revisit early childhood experiences to build foundational emotional and social skills, the provision adopts a play-based, relational approach that supports the child's sense of safety, autonomy, and self-worth.

The provision is underpinned by three key principles: Being (accepting children as they are), Belonging (ensuring they feel safe, valued, and supported), and Becoming (providing intentional support for their development). Using a trauma-informed, play-based, and neuro affirming model, NEST reduces stress and fosters emotional growth while supporting children to build the confidence necessary to engage meaningfully in learning. In addition to direct support, NEST works in partnership with mainstream schools, offering outreach and professional development to help staff implement inclusive approaches that better meet children's needs and facilitate a smooth return to mainstream education.

Referral Process

Referrals to NEST are made by primary schools when a child requires additional support beyond what has been provided through existing interventions. The referral process begins with the school's Head Teacher or Depute Head Teacher making an initial inquiry to the Principal Educational Psychologist. The decision to offer a placement at NEST is based on a detailed assessment of the child's needs, which may include evidence from the Additional Support Needs (ASN) Forum, the Authority Screening Group (ASG), and any relevant assessments such as contextualised assessments or reports from relevant professionals. Placement decisions are made collaboratively, involving the child's family, school staff, and NEST team to ensure the provision is the most appropriate support for the child's development. Attendance at NEST is typically part-time, with children attending for two days per week, although some may require a more bespoke timetable or outreach support to remain in their mainstream setting. Placements are reviewed regularly to assess progress and plan for the next steps.

Shared Responsibility with Base Schools

Children attending NEST remain the responsibility of their base schools, reinforcing a partnership approach that ensures continuity of support and shared accountability for progress. Base schools are expected to maintain active engagement by providing relevant information, facilitating regular review meetings, and implementing trauma-informed strategies recommended by NEST. This collaboration aims to create an environment where children can successfully transition back to their mainstream setting. NEST also supports schools in building staff capacity through outreach services, assisting in the development of inclusive practices that reduce the need for specialist provision. The overarching goal is to provide children with a consistent, nurturing, and empowering educational experience that enables them to feel safe, understood, and able to thrive both at NEST and within their base school.

3.2 (x) The Inverclyde English as an Additional Language and Bilingual Service

The English as an Additional Language and Bilingual Service provides support to children and young people with English as an Additional Language (EAL) who attend educational establishments in Inverclyde. This includes pupils who have recently arrived in Inverclyde from another country, and also those who have always lived in Inverclyde but use a language or languages other than English at home. EAL teachers, Bilingual Assistants and PSAs work in primary and secondary schools and offer advice to colleagues in nurseries.

EAL Teachers work alongside other school staff to help children and young people with EAL to access the curriculum and achieve their potential. EAL staff support children and young people at all stages of their English language development. They work with children who are learning English for the first time, and those who have been using English for many years but still require support to develop their higher order language skills. EAL teachers also provide discrete ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes and present senior pupils for SQA ESOL qualifications at all levels from National 2 to Higher. The EAL team can offer training for staff on helping bilingual learners access the curriculum in the mainstream classroom.

In line with the principles of inclusion, the default position for all EAL and bilingual learners is that they should be with their peers in a mainstream classroom environment, and the EAL team will offer support to pupils in class wherever possible. However, pupils may be withdrawn from class for short periods for targeted support for specific English language development needs, or for topic or subject specific content.

Using their own first language skills, Bilingual Assistants play a vital role in helping EAL pupils access the curriculum in English, while also encouraging the maintenance and development of the home language/s. They also act as a link between families and schools for all day-to-day communications and assist with family meetings and parents' nights. EAL staff also work with external agencies such

	<p>as the Refugee Integration team and Community Learning and Development to ensure smooth transition and enrolment procedures are followed and that pupils can access activities and facilities in the wider community.</p> <p>3.2 (y) Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs)</p> <p>PSAs play a vital role supporting children and young people to learn and achieve. Their contract expresses that the purpose of their job is:</p> <p><i>To work as part of a school team to support children and young people who have been identified as requiring additional support. To undertake a range of activities to support the achievement, safety, care and wellbeing of identified children and young people.</i></p> <p>Within this the key operational aspects of their contract states that they are/will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for providing practical assistance to teachers in attending to the needs of all children and young people to support their participation and achievement in all aspects of the curriculum. • Responsible for providing practical assistance to teachers in attending to the needs of all children and young people to support their participation and achievement in all aspects of the curriculum. • Assist the teacher, as part of a team, in the planning, delivery and review of learning activities with individuals or groups of children. e.g. Supporting literacy or numeracy recovery programmes with individuals or small groups of children, supporting speech and language or motor skills programmes, providing motivational support to children whilst engaged in learning activities, scribing, organising play activities, providing support for children using digital technologies for learning etc. • Contribute information to the updating, planning and review process of individual children. e.g. supporting the evaluation of individual targets within a child's plan, recording children's progress within individualised programmes. Liaise with parents and school visiting staff as appropriate. • Demonstrate a commitment to Inverclyde's Positive Relationships Positive Policy and support children in developing positive interactions and relationships. • Supervise children in learning environments e.g. playground, corridors, classrooms, dining room, changing rooms, educational visits, swimming, use of resources etc. • Support the development of self-help skills. Assist with personal care and support children's physical needs. e.g. toileting and changing children, feeding, assisting children with specialist equipment as agreed in an individualised plan • Attend to individual healthcare or medical needs, with appropriate training, including the administration of emergency and routine medicines and basic first aid requirement
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the teacher with effective classroom organisation, maintenance of resources and administration to support learning and teaching activities. e.g. displaying evidence of children's learning, preparing resources for learning, ensuring children can access digital technologies needed for learning activities etc. Undertake appropriate development and training as required for the post. e.g. Child Protection, literacy and numeracy recovery programmes, Inverclyde's Positive Relationship Positive Behaviour Policy, moving and handling etc. Undertake any other duties and responsibilities as directed by line management. 	
4.0	Roles and Responsibilities	
4.1	Chief Executive The Chief Executive has responsibility to ensure that the ASL policy has had appropriate due diligence in line with Inverclyde Council's processes.	
4.2	Directors The Executive Director – Education, Communities and Organisational Development has overarching responsibility for the ASL policy.	
4.3	Heads of Service The Head of Education has the responsibility to ensure that this policy is implemented in all education establishments.	
4.4	Service Managers The Principal Educational Psychologist, or other designated manager, will ensure that the ASL Policy is implemented in a way that is supported by appropriate training and that it is updated in a timely manner.	
4.5	Officers Council officers will support education establishments with the implementation of the ASL policy.	
5.0	Implementation	
5.1	Training This policy is constantly being updated and rolled out to managers and staff within Education Services as appropriate.	

5.2	Communication of the Policy The ASL Policy will be distributed to all heads of education establishments, Additional Support Needs Leads, Parent Council Chairs and council officers with a view to dissemination.																																
6.0	Risk																																
6.1	Legislative Risk As the ASL policy is derived from the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, revised 2009 there is risk in not continuing to ensure that policy and practice in Inverclyde is not aligned to this legislation. This policy provides assurance that alignment will happen.																																
7.0	Equalities																																
7.1	Consultation and engagement																																
7.2	Equality Impact Assessment The EIA has been included as part of the submission of this policy.																																
8.0	Appendices Appendix Document Appendix Documents are located http://icon/hr/asl-policy/ Relevant Policies / Procedures <table><tr><th></th><th>Document Links</th><th>Name</th><th>Created / Updated</th></tr><tr><td>2.1</td><td>icon • ASL Policy</td><td>Education Services: Anti-Bullying Policy</td><td>November 2021 <i>Updated April 2025</i></td></tr><tr><td>2.2</td><td>icon • ASL Policy</td><td>Education Services: Promoting Positive Relationships</td><td>November 2019 <i>Updated August 2023</i></td></tr><tr><td>2.3</td><td>icon • ASL Policy</td><td>Education Services; Joint Support Meetings, Practice Guidelines</td><td>September 2021</td></tr><tr><td>2.4</td><td>icon • ASL Policy</td><td>Education Services: Critical incidents</td><td>January 2020 <i>Updated August 2023</i></td></tr><tr><td>2.5</td><td>icon • ASL Policy</td><td>Education Services: Contextualised Assessment, Policy and Practice Guidelines for Education Establishments</td><td>November 2019 <i>Updated August 2023</i></td></tr><tr><td>2.6</td><td>icon • ASL Policy</td><td>Bereavement Change and Loss</td><td>November 2019 <i>Updated January 2025</i></td></tr><tr><td>2.7</td><td>icon • ASL Policy</td><td>Flexi-Schooling Guidance</td><td>September 2023</td></tr></table>		Document Links	Name	Created / Updated	2.1	icon • ASL Policy	Education Services: Anti-Bullying Policy	November 2021 <i>Updated April 2025</i>	2.2	icon • ASL Policy	Education Services: Promoting Positive Relationships	November 2019 <i>Updated August 2023</i>	2.3	icon • ASL Policy	Education Services; Joint Support Meetings, Practice Guidelines	September 2021	2.4	icon • ASL Policy	Education Services: Critical incidents	January 2020 <i>Updated August 2023</i>	2.5	icon • ASL Policy	Education Services: Contextualised Assessment, Policy and Practice Guidelines for Education Establishments	November 2019 <i>Updated August 2023</i>	2.6	icon • ASL Policy	Bereavement Change and Loss	November 2019 <i>Updated January 2025</i>	2.7	icon • ASL Policy	Flexi-Schooling Guidance	September 2023
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Other Documents			
	Document	Name	Created / Updated
3.1	icon • ASL Policy	Additional Support Needs Forum/Authority Screening Group: Parental Leaflet	August 2021 <i>Updated August 2024</i>
3.2	icon • ASL Policy	Additional Support Needs Forum/Authority Screening Group: Calendar	August 2022 <i>Updated August 2024</i>
3.3	icon • ASL Policy	Additional Support Needs Forum: Establishment Proforma	August 2022 <i>Updated August 2024</i>
3.4	icon • ASL Policy	Additional Support Needs Forum/Authority Screening Group: Guidelines	August 2022 <i>Updated August 2024</i>
3.5	icon • ASL Policy	Additional Support Needs Leaders: Heads of Establishment Induction presentation	September 2021
3.6	Children in Scotland	ASL Review: 2020	June 2020
3.7	icon • ASL Policy	Educational Psychology: Service Delivery Policy & BPS Educational Psychology Assessment Position Paper	September 2022 2014
3.8	icon • ASL Policy	ICPC: Gaining the Voice of the Child	October 2017
3.9	icon • ASL Policy	Education Services: GIRFEC Pathways	July 2016
3.10	2021-11-25 Dyslexia Input.mp4	Inverclyde Dyslexia Pathway: Training	November 2021
3.11	icon • ASL Policy	Inverclyde Academy: Enhanced Transition Model	Spring 2022
3.12	icon • ASL Policy	Flexible Timetables	September 2022 <i>Updated August 2023</i>
3.13	icon • ASL Policy	Lomond View Academy Handbook	August 2021
3.14	icon • ASL Policy	Coordinated Support Plan (CSP)	2012
3.15	icon • ASL Policy	ASN Leaders: HGIOS-4	2015
3.16	icon • ASL Policy	Inverclyde Children and Young People's Community Mental Health	2021-2022
3.17	icon • ASL Policy	Dyslexia: Establishing Needs Form	November 2020
3.18	icon • ASL Policy	Dyslexia: Holistic Assessment Collation Form	November 2020
3.19	icon • ASL Policy	Dyslexia: Literacy Consultation Meeting Master and Scottish Definition of Dyslexia	October 2018
3.20	icon • ASL Policy	Dyslexia: Pathway Overview for the Identification and Support of Literacy Difficulties and Dyslexia	March 2021
3.21	icon • ASL Policy	Dyslexia: Pupil Checklist for Dyslexia	November 2020
3.22	icon • ASL Policy	Dyslexia: "What to look for" Check List – Curriculum for Excellence	March 2021
3.23	icon • ASL Policy	Wellbeing Checklist	April 2014
3.24	icon • ASL Policy	Directory of Education Services	July 2022

	3.25	icon • ASL Policy	Education Services: Single-Agency Assessment Planning Guidance	August 2023		
	3.26	icon • ASL Policy	TAC Monitoring Form	August 2023		
	3.27	Dyscalculia National Professional Learning Webinar Series (padlet.com) Session 1 Session 2 Session 3 Session 4	Dyscalculia National Professional Learning Webinar Series	June 2024		
	3.28	Supporting learners facing difficulties with numeracy & mathematics. Tickets, Multiple Dates Eventbrite	Supporting Difficulties with Numeracy and Mathematics (Eventbrite)	May 2024		
	3.29	icon • ASL Policy	Inverclyde Collaborative Dyscalculia Assessment Summary (Form 3)	March 2024		
	3.30	icon • ASL Policy	Inverclyde Dyscalculia Establishing Needs (Form 1&2)	March 2024		
	3.31	icon • ASL Policy	Inverclyde Dyscalculia Identification Pathway	March 2024		
	3.32	icon • ASL Policy	Inverclyde Possible Indicators of Dyscalculia (Learner, Parent and Teacher Checklists)	March 2024		
	3.33	icon • ASL Policy	Inverclyde Scottish Dyscalculia Observation and Planning Tool	March 2024		
	3.34	icon • ASL Policy	Inverclyde Scottish Working Definition of Dyscalculia and Resources	March 2024		
	3.35	icon • ASL Policy	CSP Training Presentation	March 2025		
	3.36	icon • ASL Policy	Authority Screening Group (ASG)	November 2024		

Appendix 2

Overview of Policy Updates		
Additional Support for Learning - May 2025		
PAGE	TITLE	PROPOSED CHANGE
Throughout		Use of new policy template
4	Introduction	New wording, due to introduction of this template, that has the same meaning of the previous iteration.
4	Executive Summary	Newly introduced section reflecting that this is the second iteration of policy.
4	Background	Newly introduced section reflecting that this is the second iteration of policy. It contains the list of additional support needs that the original policy had.
5	Strategic Context	This contains data regarding the scale of additional support needs in Inverclyde.
6	Links to legislation	This has added legislative and policy drivers i.e. Included, Engaged and Involved (Part 3) (2024), UNCRC Incorporation and Respect for All (2024).
6	Aim or statement of intent or policy statement	This new section is short and outlines the intent of the policy.
6	Links to Corporate Groups	ECOD is now referenced.
6	Terms of Reference	This new section has been added due to the template now in use. It references the terms behind the policy.
7	Scope	Introduction of new section in keeping with new template.
7-24	Policy Content	7. This new section has been added due to the new policy format. It is a short statement that indicates that this policy applies to all education establishments. 9. Alignment of the GIRFEC Pathway to SEEMIS stages of intervention model. 12. Updated Anti-Bullying policy. 14. Introduction of the Dyscalculia Pathway. 16. Change of referral process for ICOS. 18. Change of referral process for CPT 19-22 Change in offer from Lomond View Ac
24	Chief Executive	Introduction of new section in keeping with new template.
24	Directors	Introduction of new section in keeping with new template.
24	Head of Service	Introduction of new section in keeping with new template.
24	Service Managers	Introduction of new section in keeping with new template.
24	Officers	Introduction of new section in keeping with new template.

24	Implementation	Introduction of new section in keeping with new template.
25	Legislative Risk	Introduction of new section in keeping with new template.
25	Equalities	Introduction of new section in keeping with new template.
25	Appendices	25. Updated Positive Relationships policy 25. Updated Critical Incident form. 25. Updated Bereavement, Change and Loss policy. 25. Flexi-School guidance. 25. ASNF and ASG parental leaflets. 26. Flexible timetable guidelines. 26. Single Agency Planning guidelines. 26. TAC Monitoring Form. 26. Dyscalculia Pathway and associated training materials. 27. CSP presentation and pathway. 27. ASG Guidelines.

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	20 May 2025
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/36/25/MR
Contact Officer:	Michael Roach Head of Education	Contact No:	01475 712891
Subject:	Education Service Anti-Bullying Policy		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 ☐ For Decision ☒ For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to ask members of the Education and Communities Committee to note the Education Service's Anti-Bullying policy.
- 1.3 Our Educational Psychology team drafted the policy when it was last renewed in November 2021 and have reviewed it against updated national guidance.
- 1.4 There are some changes to the policy based on the refreshed national guidance cited above.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to:
- note the Education Service's Anti-Bullying policy.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 In November 2024 the Scottish Government issued refreshed guidance regarding bullying behaviour. This guidance evolves existing practice. This iteration of the policy in Inverclyde has been constructed in collaboration with Respect Me, the Scottish Government's nominated anti-bullying organisation. Furthermore, an extensive consultation took place with stakeholders to assist in the shaping of the policy.
- 3.2 The policy is designed to ensure schools continue to create climates that are aimed at prevention in the area of bullying behaviour. Furthermore, the policy provides a framework for responding to accusation that bullying behaviour has taken place.
- 3.3 The policy has been reviewed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including pupils, parents and staff across a range of establishments, as well as the organisation Respect Me.
- 3.4 The policy will support all establishments to then review their own policies relating to Anti Bullying during the academic year 2025/26, alongside a training programme delivered by our Educational Psychology team, to further support leaders and practitioners.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 This new iteration of the Anti-Bullying policy has been updated in line with new national documentation – Respect for All (2024), which has been produced by the Scottish Government: [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People](#). It makes use of the new national template for Anti-Bullying policies that has been distributed to local authorities from the organisation Respect Me. Key changes are highlighted below.
- 4.2 There is a new national definition of bullying behaviour that replaces the previous one that was generated in 2015 and is central to the current policy.

'Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face-to-face and online.' (Respect Me, 2015).

'Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person's sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in.' "The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.' (Respect for All 2024).

- 4.3 There are some process changes to the previous policy i.e.
 - In future all accusations of bullying behaviour must be investigated by schools – this is no longer discretionary. Again, this is in line with the new national guidance.
 - Advice from Respect Me has indicated that anti-bullying policies are best cited in the context of schools. Therefore, this policy will not be used in early years establishments. This is explained in the policy.
 - Following on from the launch of this local authority policy all schools are expected to work with staff, parents and pupils to generate a school-based policy that aligns to the local authority policy. This will provide greater detail on policy implementation within the school context e.g. reporting processes.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing	x	
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

N/A.

Annual recurring costs (savings)

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

5.3 Legal/Risk

N/A.

5.4 Human Resources

N/A.

5.5 Strategic

N/A.

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

Y	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required, a copy of which will be made available on the Council's website: https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/equality-impact-assessments
	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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

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

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

Y	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
N	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 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.
N	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 [Equality Impact Assessments - Inverclyde Council](#)

Education Services

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

DATE: 24th April 2025

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Contents

Introduction.

1. The Agreed National Definition of Bullying Behaviour as Set Out in 'Respect for All' Adopted by Inverclyde Council.
2. Inverclyde's Stance, the Scope and Aims of this Policy.
3. Preventing and Responding to Bullying Behaviour.
4. Children's Rights (and supporting legislation)
5. Equality Duties and the Implications of these for Inverclyde Council.
6. Expectations and Responsibilities of Children and Young People, Staff/Volunteers and Parents.
7. Respectful Behaviour.
8. Labelling.
9. Reporting, Recording and Monitoring.
10. Evidence of Children and Young People's Involvement.
11. Evidence that Parents/Carers Have Been Included and Consulted.
12. Evidence that Staff/Volunteers Have Been Included and Consulted.
13. Policy Review and Communication Plan.
14. Commitment of Inverclyde Council to Training and Supporting Staff.
15. Appendices.

Introduction

Inverclyde is located in the west of Scotland with a population of 78,400 people (Scottish Government, 2021). It has 9559 children and young people attending its schools.

Inverclyde Council prioritises the wellbeing of the children and young people in its education establishments as it recognises the centrality of this to the creation of responsible citizens, successful learners, confident individuals and effective contributors, key tenets of the Curriculum for Excellence (Scottish Executive, 2001). This prioritisation has recently been augmented through the commitment to embed trauma informed and responsive practices, which builds on a long history of supporting relationally based approaches within the local authority. This is the wider context within which Inverclyde's strategy for anti-bullying exists.

This policy replaces the Inverclyde Anti-Bullying policy that was launched in November 2021 and aligns to the document Respect for All (2024) that was created by the Scottish Government. Respect for All (2024) is an important reference point as it has widespread support across the Scottish educational landscape that includes:

- The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities.
- Education Scotland.
- RespectMe.
- The Association of Directors of Education in Scotland.
- The Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists.
- The Scottish Secondary Teachers Association.
- School Leaders Scotland.
- The National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children.
- National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers.
- The Educational Institute of Scotland.
- The Association of Heads and Deputies Scotland.
- Education Scotland.
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- Police Scotland.
- Scottish Youth Parliament.

Furthermore, this policy has been informed as a result of an extensive consultation exercise that has involved Inverclyde's children, young people, teachers, parents and volunteers.

1. The Agreed National Definition of Bullying Behaviour as Set Out in 'Respect for All' - adopted by Inverclyde Council.

Inverclyde Council considers that bullying should never be viewed as a normal or inevitable part of growing up. Adults are not expected to be the subject of abuse by colleagues or friends; therefore, it should not be any different for children and young people.

The local authority has adopted the national definition of bullying, as set out in Respect for All (2024), which is laid out in italics below:

"Bullying is face-to-face and/or online behaviour which impacts on a person's sense of physical and emotional safety, their capacity to feel in control of their life and their ability to respond effectively to the situation they are in."

“The behaviour does not need to be repeated, or intended to cause harm, for it to have an impact. Bullying behaviour can be physical, emotional or verbal and can cause people to feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out.”

It is regarded as helpful to interpret the definition through the provision of exemplifications as this can provide further clarity and guidance to schools. As a result of this, Inverclyde Council recognises the examples set out below as being representative of bullying behaviour

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened (face to face and/or online).
- Being hit, tripped, pushed or kicked.
- Having belongings taken or damaged.
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you (face-to-face and/or online).
- Sending abusive messages, pictures or images on social media, online gaming platforms or phones/tablets.
- Behaviour which makes people feel like they are not in control of themselves or their lives (face-to-face and/or online).
- Being targeted because of who you are or who you are perceived to be (face to face and/or online).
- Increasing the reach and impact of bullying or prejudice through the recruitment and/ or involvement of a wider group.

(Respect for All, 2024)

Inverclyde Council recognises that there are times when people enter disagreements that do not meet the criteria for bullying behaviour as set out above. Further information in respect of this can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy, entitled ‘*What is not bullying?*’ This Appendix focuses on the differences between bullying behaviour, conflict and criminal behaviours. It also contains a link to the Scottish Government document [Mobile Phone Guidance for Scotland's Schools](#), which has guidance on supporting pupils’ awareness of safe and secure use of mobile technology. Signposting to up to date advice in this area was a request that came from parent and staff questionnaires.

2. Inverclyde’s Stance, the Scope and Aims of this Policy.

Inverclyde Council considers bullying behaviour in its schools to be unacceptable in all circumstances. All children and young people have the right to access learning environments in which they feel safe and free from all forms of abuse, bullying or discrimination. It has been recognised that the most effective intervention in tackling the issue of bullying behaviour is prevention. Resultingly, the importance of prevention will form a key strand that will be threaded throughout this policy. The policy also recognises that bullying behaviour is a violation of rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, notably Articles 3, 12, 13, 19, 29 and 39.

The 2025 version of Inverclyde’s Anti-Bullying policy applies to Inverclyde’s schools; however, it does not apply to early years establishments. It is recognised that early years establishments play a significant role in creating the building blocks of the preventative approaches required in respect of an anti-bullying strategy through their work on social skill-building around

compromise, sharing, taking turns and showing respect. It is, however, not considered helpful to introduce bullying as a concept in the early years.

This policy aims to reinforce and extend existing practice within Inverclyde's schools. All schools in Inverclyde will create their own Anti-Bullying policy in collaboration with their pupil population, staff, volunteers and parents. Establishment policies must be submitted to the Head of Education by the end of academic session 2025-2026 to be approved in order to ensure alignment to national and local frameworks. Furthermore, it is also recommended that establishments engaging in this work base their policy on the [national template](#) developed by RespectMe. Alongside this, establishments will create 'pupil friendly' versions of their policy in collaboration with their pupil and parent population. This recommendation is a result of the consultation with pupils and parents alluded to earlier. This should ensure that policies are accessible to all and become embedded into day-to-day practice in education establishments. A detailed breakdown of expectations in this area can be taken from the consultations and can be found in Sections 10, 11 and 12 of this policy as well as Appendix 6. Further information on this recommendation can be found at [Respect Me - Guide to Practice CYP](#).

Having highlighted the importance of accessibility, through the recommendation set out in the previous paragraph, the consultations also brought forward the issue of publicity. There was a consistent theme that emphasised that both this policy and individual establishment versions of it should be augmented by a publicity strategy. As a result of this, it is envisaged that the Local Authority policy will be supported by the creation of a slogan and mascot. This was a clear proposal that emerged from the voices of Inverclyde's children and young people through the consultation process. In terms of establishments it is recommended that, as well as consulting with key stakeholders in the creation of their establishment anti-bullying policy, they ensure that this is supported by a proactive approach to publicising policies and practices.

It is also recommended that senior managers from all education establishments and in Education Services central teams undertake initial training to orient themselves to this policy. This will take place in August 2025. Further to this, members of staff can access training on an ongoing basis as laid out in Section 14 of this document.

3. Preventing and Responding to Bullying Behaviour.

As stated in Section 2, prevention is the most effective intervention in relation to tackling bullying behaviours in education contexts. In Inverclyde it has long been recognised that a positive culture and ethos is central to the delivery of the Four Capacities as laid out in the Curriculum for Excellence. This has been achieved through the adoption of relational practices namely Restorative, Solution Oriented and Nurturing Approaches, which are embedded in Inverclyde's educational establishments. It has also made salient the development of approaches to listen to and act upon the voices of its children and young people and is active in its engagement of the Rights Respecting School approach. More recently Inverclyde has adopted the National Trauma Transformation Programme (NES, 2021) as a key driver for change across the local authority, including within its educational establishments.

Inverclyde has also promoted and embedded approaches to promote equality. For example, it has adopted the Scottish Government's guidance document *Supporting Transgender Young People in Schools* (Scottish Government, 2021), and training is available to all professionals working in Inverclyde's schools on its implementation.

Furthermore, the local authority will roll out the guidance document ‘*Guidance on LGBT Inclusive Education*’ (Scottish Government, 2024) to its education establishments commencing in March 2025. This document recommends that citizens from the LGBT community should have greater representation within the curriculum.

Inverclyde Council has also committed to achieving the goals of The Promise. This is an agenda that emphasises Scotland’s ambition and commitment to ensure that care experienced children and young people children grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential. Work to realise the aims of The Promise is very visible throughout Inverclyde’s education establishments.

Moving on to examining anti-racism, Inverclyde is proud of its central role in the development and implementation of the Building Racial Literacy (BRL) course in its education establishments. Indeed, Inverclyde’s work in this area has been recognised nationally through being cited in Respect for All (2024) (see below).

Newark Primary School, Inverclyde Council case study

Newark Primary School experienced an increase in prejudice-based bullying as the school community became more diverse. Senior leaders prioritised building racial literacy and provided staff with training to address and discuss race confidently. The school updated its curriculum to include diverse literature and anti-racist critical thinking. These efforts empowered children to identify and report racist behaviour, promoted cultural learning, and improved staff confidence in handling racial issues. Additionally, trauma-informed practices were implemented to support new learners, creating a supportive and inclusive environment.

(Respect for All, 2024)

In conclusion, Inverclyde recognises that the most appropriate and successful ways to tackle bullying behaviour lie in the creation of education environments that have a culture and ethos based on prevention. These focus on inclusivity, mutual respect and a restorative approach to the management of conflict. This policy recommends that this vital work, operating at a preventative level, should continue and evolve in line with ongoing local and national developments.

4. Children’s Rights (and supporting legislation)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international treaty that protects children and young people’s rights. It is based on equality, dignity, respect, protection, development and participation. The UNCRC is now enacted in Scots’ Law. Inverclyde Council considers bullying behaviour to be a violation of children’s rights and to be incompatible with the UNCRC. Through this policy Inverclyde Council recognises that bullying behaviour violates the UNCRC in relation to the following articles:

Article 2

- *The right to ‘protection against discrimination’*

Article 12

- *The right ‘to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously’*

Article 13

- *The right to freedom of expression*

Article 19

- *The right to protection against all forms of violence – including physical or mental violence.*
- *The right to be kept safe from harm.*
- *The right ‘to be given proper care by those looking after them’*
- *The right ‘to contribute meaningfully to the decisions and circumstances that affect their lives’*

Article 29

- *Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment*

Article 39

- *The right to help to when inappropriately treated*

Appendix 2, which is taken from the Respect for All document (2024), contains further information about the UNCRC and connected policies and legislation that underpin the Inverclyde approach to tackling bullying behaviour.

5. Equality Duties and the Implications of these for Inverclyde Council.

This policy recognises the equality duties that are placed on Inverclyde Council. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the Equality Act (2010) requires organisations exercising public functions, such as schools, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in the exercise of those functions. As a result of this it is imperative that all schools are aware of the ‘Protected Characteristics’ set out in law and, through their actions, seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity. These Protected Characteristics are as follows:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

As well as these characteristics, Inverclyde does not condone bullying behaviour against people for the following reasons that are not covered by equalities legislation, which is in line with Respect for All (2024):

- Additional support needs
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Body image and physical appearance
- Care experienced children and young people
- Family and household circumstances
- Family imprisonment
- Forces children
- Mental health stigma and discrimination
- Sectarianism
- Socio-economic/poverty prejudice
- Young carers

Appendix 3 provides information relating to both Protected Characteristics and the groups that are not covered by these, but which are covered above

6. Expectations and Responsibilities of Children and Young People, Staff/Volunteers and Parents.

The policy places specific expectations on children and young people, staff/volunteers and parents in respect of their responsibilities related to the anti-bullying agenda. These are derived from both the consultation exercise as well as an analysis of the Respect for All (2024) guidance.

Children and Young People will:

- be aware of the anti-bullying policy in place in their establishment and follow the processes contained within it, where necessary.
- understand that bullying behaviour is a violation of children's rights.
- treat all people with respect.
- participate in the creation of their education establishment's anti-bullying policy and the pupil friendly version of this, if they wish to do so.
- take part in publicity connected to the implementation of the policies above.
- challenge bullying behaviour, where safe to do so, through the use of skills gained from interventions such as Mentors in Violence Prevention and Restorative Practices.
- share concerns with a trusted adult and/or peers and work collaboratively with adults and peers to help create safe and positive environments where bullying cannot thrive.

Parents will:

- participate in the creation of their child's school anti-bullying policy and the child friendly version of this, if they wish to do so.
- listen and take children and young people's concerns seriously.

- be aware of anti-bullying policies and practices, including complaints procedures, in their child's education establishment.
- share any concerns about a child as early as possible with an adult in their child's education establishment.
- role model respect and promote safe, positive, supportive and respectful relationships for children and young people. Reflect this in all interactions with education staff.

Staff and Volunteers will:

- be aware of, and adhere to, the Inverclyde Anti-Bullying policy and school based version of it.
- listen to and take children and young people seriously.
- act in accordance with the relevant professional standards and codes of conduct, e.g. GTCS Standards, Common Core CLD/youthwork/volunteer adult SSSC.
- share concerns appropriately within their establishment and seek support where necessary.
- participate in the creation of their education establishment's anti-bullying policy and processes and the child friendly version of this, where appropriate.
- ensure that children and young people are aware of how to recognise and report an incident of bullying behaviour and are comfortable with the means of doing so;
- be aware of their responsibility to prevent and respond to prejudice-based bullying behaviour;
- embed the promotion of equality, diversity and children's rights in their own professional practice.
- role-model respect and promote safe, positive, supportive and respectful relationships.

7. Respectful behaviour

Scottish education has long recognised that there is a strong correlation between positive outcomes for children and young people and the culture and ethos of the education establishments that they attend. Furthermore, it has been asserted that the existence of an ethos based on relational approaches impacts positively on the prevalence of bullying behaviour (Better relationships, better learning, better behaviour, 2017). For this reason, Inverclyde Council has a Positive Relationships policy based on relational approaches, which aligns to this policy.

Positive role modelling from adults in education establishments is considered to be central to successfully implementing relational approaches. For this reason, the General Teaching Council for Scotland Standards for registration emphasise that teaching staff should:

- promote health and wellbeing of self, colleagues and the children and young people in their care.
- build and foster positive relationships in their learning community that are respectful of individuals.
- respect the rights of all learners as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and their entitlement to be included in decisions regarding their learning experiences and have all aspects of their wellbeing developed and supported.
- commit to social justice through fair, transparent, inclusive, and sustainable policies and practices in relation to protected characteristics, (age, disability, gender reassignment,

marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation) and intersectionality.

- value and respect social, ecological, cultural, religious, and racial diversity and promote the principles and practices of sustainable development and local and global citizenship for all learners.
- demonstrate a commitment to motivating, and including all learners, understanding the influence of gender, social, cultural, racial, ethnic, religious and economic backgrounds on experiences of learning, taking account of specific learning needs and seeking to reduce barriers to learning.
- demonstrate a commitment to supporting learners who are experiencing or who have experienced trauma, children and young people from a care experienced background and understanding responsibilities as a corporate parent.
- understand and challenge discrimination in all its forms, particularly that which is defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Adapted from Respect for All (2024)

As a result of this, Inverclyde Council commits to its education staff, and volunteers working in its education establishments, role modelling respectful behaviour in all interactions with its pupil population.

8. Labelling

The dangers of labelling people have been known for some time. There is recognition that this approach can lead to people assuming the attributes assigned by society to these labels. In relation to this policy, it is considered that labelling children and young people as ‘bullies’ or ‘victims’ or ‘perpetrators’ can be disempowering or confer status. Furthermore, it can be unhelpful in supporting people to change their behaviour or to recover from the impacts of bullying.

In light of this it is vital that adults maintain focus on the behaviour itself and the impact it has had, rather than simply applying labels. This approach assists children and young people to have a greater understanding of their behaviour and its impact and what is expected from them instead. The aim of this approach is to support all to achieve resolutions.

This policy, therefore, avoids the use of labelling language. Furthermore, it recommends that establishment based anti-bullying policies do likewise. As an alternative it is suggested that establishments use language such as ‘*people displaying bullying behaviour*’ or ‘*people experiencing bullying behaviour towards them*’. This language should be reflected in SEEMiS when recording incidents.

Adapted from Respect for All (2024)

9. Reporting, recording and monitoring

This section of the policy sets out the three stepped approach to the management of alleged incidents of bullying behaviour, namely *Reporting*, *Recording* and *Investigating*. It is important that all members of a school's community are aware of and follow these processes. The complaints procedure is also cited at the bottom of this section should there be dissatisfaction in respect of the process or outcome.

Step 1: Reporting

There are different ways in which an establishment or organisation may become aware of potential bullying behaviour.

- It may be raised by the child or young person who believes they are being bullied.
- It could be raised by another child or young person who has witnessed behaviour they perceive as bullying.
- It could be raised by a parent or other family member.
- It could be observed by a member of staff or adult volunteers/youth leaders.

Education establishments should listen to their children and young people and, as a result of this, be creative in how they generate opportunities for reporting incidents of alleged bullying. Furthermore, it is crucial that each school ensures that children, young people and their parents have a full understanding of the mechanisms regarding how concerns can be raised. This includes provision being made to ensure that there are discreet or anonymous reporting mechanisms for pupils. Therefore, all education establishments must ensure that their anti-bullying policy has clear information relating to the processes through which allegations of bullying behaviour can be reported.

Step 2: Recording the incident/concern

It is recommended that once an incident or concern has been raised, this should be logged on the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities system as soon as possible by a key staff member and that the investigation should commence in a timely manner.

It is not necessary for an allegation to be substantiated before it is recorded. Rather details of the reported incident should be recorded, capturing information about the behaviour that took place, who was involved, where and when it is reported to have happened, any potential underlying prejudice, including details of any protected characteristics, and whether the impact indicates any wellbeing concerns or the need for additional support. An investigation into the incident should follow, as set out in the Section 3, with the recording system being updated throughout the process on the outcome of this investigation, and any action taken as a result.

What information should be recorded?

It is important that a thorough picture of the bullying incident be recorded. When recording potential bullying incidents, the following information must be included:

- the children and young people involved, as well as staff/volunteers or any other adults who witnessed the incident or were involved in the initial response;
- where and when bullying has taken place;
- the type of bullying experienced, e.g. name-calling, rumours, threats;
- any prejudice-based attitudes or behaviour presenting;
- details of any protected characteristic(s);

- consideration of personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns;
- the outcome, including if the issue was resolved, not resolved or unfounded;
- the impact of the incident, including consideration of personal or additional support needs and wellbeing concerns; and
- actions taken including resolution at an individual or organisational level.

In line with the UNCRC (including Article 12), children and young people have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously, and Article 16, children and young people have the right to a private life), where possible, the content of this record should be agreed with the child or young person.

Step 3: Investigation

In Inverclyde's education establishments it is recommended, that investigations should be concluded within three working days with the outcomes communicated to all those involved i.e. children, young people and their parents. All allegations of bullying behaviour must be investigated. Bullying is a combination of behaviour and impact and should be addressed with compassion and professional curiosity when investigating incidents. Although bullying is often persistent, a single incident can have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of children and young people and instil a fear that it might happen again. Impact on the individual/group's health and wellbeing and/or learning and school environment can be established through an investigation of alleged, observed or reported bullying incidents.

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 (updated 2023) makes clear that individual agencies are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent and confident in carrying out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting children's wellbeing. We expect teachers and all those working with children and young people to identify and act on any concerns to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person concerned, in line with their local child protection procedures. A helpful approach would be to ask:

- what was the behaviour?
- what impact did it have?
- what does the child or young person want to happen?
- what do I need to do about it – for example, is there a child protection concern?
- what attitudes, prejudices or other factors may have influenced the behaviour?

Once an investigation has concluded, the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module should be updated with the outcome. This should include whether the incident was considered to be resolved, not resolved or unfounded. Where an incident is found to be bullying, schools should record what supports/interventions were put in place for both for individuals/groups affected by the behaviour and those displaying the behaviour. If the incident is not bullying, but due to other factors such as changing friendship groups or interpersonal conflict, it can still be difficult for a child or young person and their parents. In these situations, it is important for those involved to understand that even though the incident is not bullying there will still be a response from staff who can work with the child or young person and potentially peers to improve the situation.

Adapted from (Respect for All, 2024)

It is the aim for all establishments to resolve investigations into allegations of bullying behaviour amicably for all involved. However, on occasion, this may not be the case. In these circumstances, schools should signpost to complaints process.

[How to make a complaint - Inverclyde Council](#)

10. Evidence of Children and Young People's Involvement.

Consultation workshops were conducted with over 300 children and young people to develop this policy. These sessions were led by Inverclyde's Health and Social Care Partnership's Children's Rights Officer and the Children and Young People's Engagement and Development Officer from the organisation Your Voice, Inverclyde. Pupils explored how they wanted schools to manage situations involving bullying behaviour and what children and young people required from staff, parents and one another in these circumstances.

Key themes emerging from the consultations are cited below. They are set out under the themes of publicity, accountability and keeping the focus on the policy. This has help shape the development of this policy and should also support the development of school-based versions of it.

Publicity

- all members of the school community should have easy access to the policy, which should be based on the template promoted by Respect Me.
- there should be a pupil friendly version of this policy that is actively promoted.
- the school-based version of the anti-bullying policy must use language that makes it accessible.
- there should be a proactive approach to the issue of publicising policies and procedures.

Accountability

- all staff working in education, connected to schools, should be aware of the policy - including senior leaders in education.
- where a school or individual member of staff is not applying the policy, this must be addressed.
- it is important that pupils, parents and carers and staff are listened to and have opportunities to influence the school-based policy to prevent bullying.

Keeping the focus on the policy

- there should be regular reminders for all in the school community of the expectations and processes contains within the school anti-bullying policy.
- all schools should participate in anti-bullying week each year and use this as an opportunity to continue to publicise their anti-bullying policy and strategies.

The pupil consultations also contained a theme that suggested that the local authority policy should have a mascot and slogan. This was considered as giving the policy a higher profile and level of recognition across the local authority. Work is now under way to enact this recommendation.

More detailed information from the pupil consultations can be found in Appendix 6

11. Evidence that Parents/Carers Have Been Included and Consulted.

Inverclyde Parent Council Chairs were updated on the development of this policy. Following on from this, Parent Councils were encouraged to gather views from their parent body electronically using questions derived from the Scottish Approach to Service Design (2019). Key messages emerging from this consultation influenced the policy in relation to accessibility and publicity.

Further guidance can be found in Appendix 4 for education establishments engaging with parents in the creation of their own anti-bullying policies and practices.

12. Evidence that Staff/Volunteers Have Been Included and Consulted.

Staff and volunteers had the opportunity to be involved in the development of this policy via distribution of the electronic consultation document used with parents cited above. This was distributed through the teacher union link to the policy and via the Additional Support Needs Leader network. Every education establishment in Inverclyde has a nominated member of this network who meet on a quarterly basis. This consultation brought forward the need for a pupil friendly version of the school-based policy, the need for publicity and for a citation in policy to advise staff in respect of electronic forms of bullying behaviour. This led to the link in Section 1 that signposts users to the most updated advice in this area from the Scottish Government.

Further guidance for staff can be found in Appendix 5 of this policy.

13. Policy Review and Communication Plan.

As outlined in the Introductory Section this policy replaces the previous Anti-Bullying policy, which was launched in November 2021. Inverclyde Council recognises the importance of updating policies in order to keep them current. As such, it is envisaged that this policy will be reviewed starting in late 2027 in order to re-launched in August 2028.

It is anticipated that this new version of the policy will launch in August 2025 with a key recommendation that all schools work with staff, volunteers, parents and pupils to develop their establishment version of this policy and a pupil friendly version of it too. The creation of the establishment policy should be cited in the school-based improvement plans for session 2025-26. By the end of this session, it is expected that all education establishments will have developed their own version of this policy, which will have been signed off by the Head of Education in order to ensure alignment to the local authority version of this policy.

Publicity, accessibility and training are key elements of the communication strategy underpinning this policy. More information can be found in relation to these areas in Sections 10, 11, 12 and 14 of this policy as well as in Appendix 6.

14. Commitment of Inverclyde Council to Training and Supporting Staff.

One of the key messages derived from the consultation exercise was the need for Career Long Professional Learning in order to develop policy and practice in this area of work. Inverclyde Council has a productive relationship with Respect Me, which is Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service funded by the Scottish Government and jointly managed by the Scottish Action for Mental Health (SAMH) and LGBT Youth Scotland. Respect Me has produced a suite of training for education establishments, which can be accessed at www.respectme.org.uk. By working with Respect Me and using its key publications to shape policy, such as Respect for All (2024), Inverclyde Council commits itself to train and support its staff and volunteers going forward.

Further to this, bespoke training will be delivered to all Inverclyde's schools at the point of launch of this policy on its contents and the expectations in relation to its implementation. It is also envisaged that this policy will form a key focus of work being undertaken with ASN Leads going forward. Furthermore, there is also a commitment to continue to work with Inverclyde's Health and Social Care Partnership's Children's Rights Officer and the Children and Young People's Engagement and Development Officer from the organisation Your Voice in their ongoing engagement with children and young people in order to ensure that future training meets needs identified by children and young people themselves.

Appendices

Appendix 1

What is not bullying?

Establishments and organisations will deal with a variety of behaviours on a daily basis. However, while some of these behaviours may be reported or described by a child or young person, or their family, as bullying, it is important to recognise that not all such behaviour will be bullying or should appropriately be treated as such.

It is recognised that behaviour will be context specific and should be considered on a case-by-case basis. In identifying what response is appropriate, it will often be necessary for staff to use their professional judgement to identify the nuanced differences between types of behaviour. Each set of circumstances will be fact specific, and staff should ensure they have gathered all relevant information before making a determination, remembering that the nature of some behaviours may constitute criminal offences, and advice should be sought from Police Scotland where there are significant concerns.

There is added complexity in that some types of behaviour can overlap and/or without early intervention may escalate. For example, the normalisation of derogatory and pejorative language use or slurs about a social group, and the perpetuation of harmful social or cultural stereotypes or myths, if unaddressed can create a culture that can lead to more intense levels of behaviour, including violence or hate crime, for example. Similarly, bullying behaviour can mirror the absence of positive values, the presence of negative role-models, globally influential figures and social media trends prevalent across popular culture which can promote unhelpful and divisive messaging.

Early intervention and prevention are therefore essential for addressing these behaviours by disrupting the cycle, promoting understanding and empathy, and fostering a culture and ethos that values respect and inclusion. This proactive approach reduces the likelihood of behaviours escalating to more intense levels.

Differentiating bullying from conflict

It is important for children and young people to discuss how they feel and to help them develop the social competence and communication skills needed to help them to manage their relationships. We know that children and young people will fall out and disagree with each other as they form and build relationships. This is not considered to be bullying; this is considered to be a normal part of growing up.

It may be possible to differentiate conflict from bullying by having regard to the relationships and dynamics involved. Conflict is normal and can happen in healthy, happy, equal relationships. Usually at least one party involved doesn't want the conflict to continue unresolved, and will try to take early action to make amends and improve the situation. Healthy relationship conflict is not the same as bullying and is unlikely to lead to bullying as the people involved have a vested interest in restoring equilibrium and staying connected to each other.

Those working with children and young people may be faced with increasing conflict between peers. The Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research 2023, reported staff experiences of young people having less developed social skills compared to previous years following the Covid-19 pandemic. Early and mid-primary students (P1 to P5) who experienced disruptions in their

nursery and early school years were noted to lack essential language and social skills, negatively affecting their educational development and behaviour. Secondary school staff also reported deficits in social and communication skills among older students, though to a lesser extent, highlighting difficulties with social interactions and group work due to reduced socialising opportunities during lockdowns.

Differentiating bullying from potentially criminal behaviour

There is no legal definition of bullying in Scotland and bullying is not, in itself, considered a crime. However, the nature of certain behaviour that could be perceived as, or reported as, bullying may include behaviour that is criminal in nature.

Understanding the individual facts and circumstances present in any situation is important to distinguish between bullying and potentially criminal offences. Examples include the following.

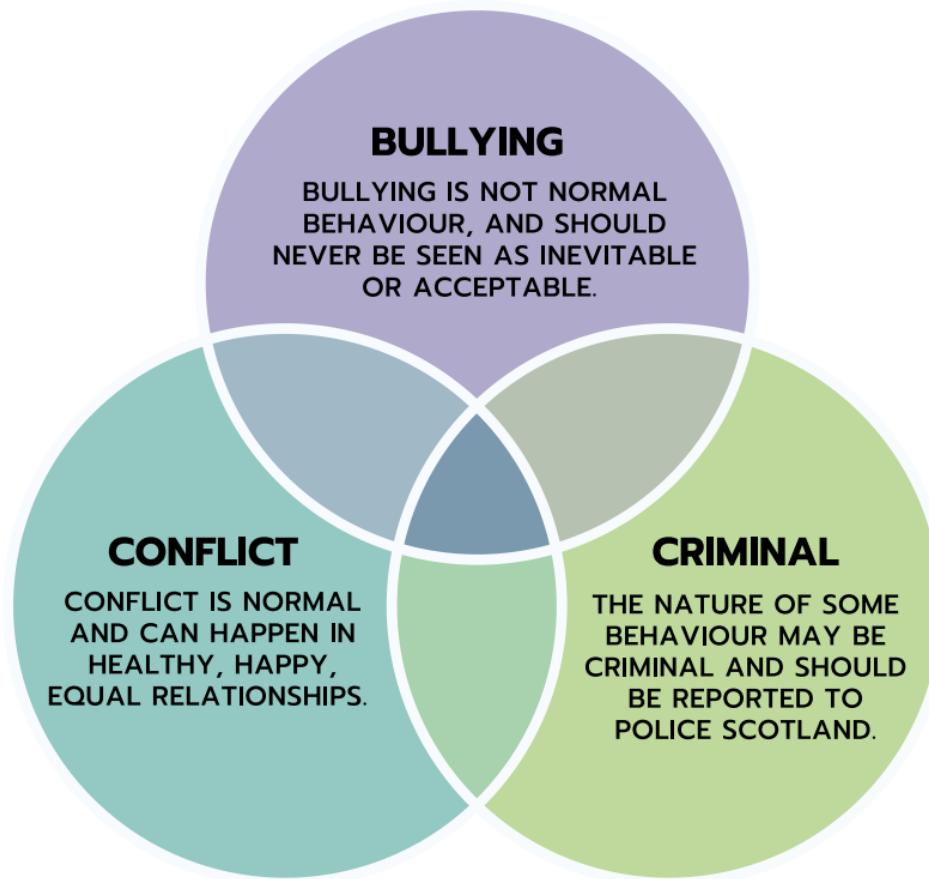
Physical behaviour: peer-on-peer violence can be verbal abuse, physical aggression and/ or physical violence, which can have both short- and long-term impacts on the mental and physical health and wellbeing of all involved. If there is an intent to cause harm, regardless of whether or not an injury occurs, this may amount to an assault.

Sexual behaviour: when someone is coerced or pressurised to do something sexual or is touched inappropriately, this is not bullying. This is sexual assault or abuse and a form of gender-based violence (GBV). More information about the legal framework surrounding GBV, and guidance for schools for responding to GBV incidents, is available within the Scottish Government's framework on preventing and responding to gender-based violence in schools.

Online behaviour: there are various legal provisions designed to protect individuals from online harassment, abuse, and harm. Some online behaviour may therefore be illegal; further guidance on supporting pupils' awareness of safe and secure use of mobile technology is contained within the Scottish Government's guidance on mobile phones in Scotland's schools.

Hate Crime: bullying can be motivated by prejudice similar to hate crime. The distinction between bullying and hate crime is that for hate crime, the behaviour aggravated by prejudice must be motivated by malice and ill-will towards a group of people due to a relevant characteristic or intended to stir up hatred, and be criminal in nature, such as assault, graffiti or a breach of the peace. For example, damage to property through graffiti may constitute a crime and this may be aggravated by prejudice towards an individual who possesses or appears to possess a relevant characteristic protected under the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021. Adults should seek immediate support from Police Scotland if they have reason to believe that a crime may have occurred or that a child or young person has been seriously harmed. Schools/organisations should follow national child protection procedures in these cases, and should work closely with their education authority and colleagues in core agencies (Social Work, Health and Police Scotland) to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and staff. It should be noted that under The Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019, a child under the age of 12 cannot be arrested, charged or prosecuted for a crime. However, Police Scotland may still be involved

The diagram below shows the differentiating behaviours which can sometimes overlap and/or escalate in trajectory.



● **CONFLICT**

Usually at least one person doesn't want the conflict to go on unresolved, and will try to take action to improve the situation. It can highlight the importance of the relationship, providing a chance to build on strengths, solve problems, and move forward positively.

Healthy relationship conflict is not the same as bullying and is unlikely to lead to bullying as the people involved have a mutual interest in restoring equilibrium and maintaining connection.

● **BULLYING**

Bullying occurs within social relationships and typically involves an imbalance of power that allows a relationship of dominance and subordination to emerge. Bullying can be intentional or unintentional, occurring once or repeatedly.

Resolution usually requires adult support, meaningful intervention and a change of behaviour in the instigating person. There can sometimes be an escalation from bullying to violence.

● **CRIMINAL**

While bullying is not in itself a crime, some behaviour that may be reported or perceived as bullying could constitute a criminal offence, such as physical or sexual violence, online behaviours or hate crime.

It is not for staff to determine if behaviour is criminal; they should seek immediate support from Police Scotland if they have reason to believe that a crime may have occurred or that a child or young person has been seriously harmed.

Usually at least one person doesn't want the conflict to go on unresolved and will try to take action to improve the situation. It can highlight the importance of the relationship, providing a chance to build on strengths, solve problems, and move forward positively. Healthy relationship conflict is not the same as bullying and is unlikely to lead to bullying as the people involved have a mutual interest in restoring equilibrium and maintaining connection.

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BULLYING While bullying is not in itself a crime, some behaviour that may be reported or perceived as bullying could constitute a criminal offence, such as physical or sexual violence, online behaviours or hate crime. It is not for staff to determine if behaviour is criminal; they should seek immediate support from Police Scotland if they have reason to believe that a crime may have occurred or that a child or young person has been seriously harmed.

CRIMINAL Differentiating bullying from structural and social inequalities It is important that the umbrella term "prejudice-based bullying" should not lead to the dilution or avoidance of the issue of structural inequalities, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia, or prejudice and discrimination towards disability or faith. These can manifest themselves in many subtle and implicit behaviours, including microaggressions, misrecognition, implicit bias and othering,¹³ as well as structural and social inequalities.

Adapted from Respect for All (2024)

Appendix 2

The legal framework and policy landscape

There are a number of legal obligations on education authorities and schools that must be considered as part of their approach to preventing and responding to bullying.

Legal framework:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 (the “UNCRC Act”)

Following the introduction of the UNCRC Act, it is now unlawful for a public authority in Scotland, which is likely to include education authorities and some schools, to act (or fail to act) in connection with a relevant function, in a way which is incompatible with the UNCRC requirements. Although there is not an express right not to be bullied within the UNCRC, a number of rights are upheld through the furtherance of anti-bullying work. This includes the right of every child to live free from violence, abuse, and neglect, which includes protection from violence committed by other children, and places emphasis on their rights to education, health, and participation in decisions affecting their lives. Grounding anti-bullying efforts in this framework of rights ensures a holistic approach that respects and protects the dignity and wellbeing of every child, and reinforces the importance of creating safe, inclusive, and supportive environments where children can thrive.

The UNCRC requirements as incorporated by the UNCRC Act, should be considered by all public authorities in Scotland who are carrying out a relevant function, as set out in the Act. However, public authorities are encouraged to take a children’s rights approach regardless of the legal source of their duties. The UK has been a signatory to the UNCRC since 1991 and regardless of the scope of the legal duties in the UNCRC Act, the UNCRC is at the heart of GIRFEC and the Scottish Government’s commitment to ensuring that all children and young people have the best possible start in life.

Schools and education authorities should avoid basing policies on a single UNCRC article without considering broader implications. The UNCRC supports taking effective action against bullying to protect children’s health and safety, and education authorities should take all appropriate measures to protect children from violence, including peer violence.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) from discrimination, victimisation and harassment and supports progress on equality. The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published guidance on the Equality Act 2010.

Education authorities and some schools in Scotland are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).²⁰ This comprises the general equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, and the Scottish specific equality duties which are set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (2012 Regulations). The general equality duty requires due regard in the exercise of functions to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. The purpose of the specific equality duties is to help public authorities better perform the general equality duty. Education authorities and the

schools that are subject to the PSED have an obligation to ensure that policies aimed at preventing bullying or responding to the consequences of bullying meet the needs of the general equality duty.

Not ensuring consideration of equality can lead to unlawful discrimination, greater inequality and worse outcomes for particular groups of people in our communities. The general duty requires equality considerations be built into the design of policies and practices and the delivery of services, and for these to be kept under review. The EHRC has issued guidance on the PSED for Scottish public bodies.

Listed authorities, including education authorities and some schools, have legal obligations under the PSED as service providers and employers. Of note when developing and implementing policies to address bullying is the specific duty requirement to assess the equality impact of proposed and revised policies and practices (regulation 5 of the 2012 Regulations).

Chapter 6 of the technical guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty: Scotland describes what is required from public bodies in carrying out an equality impact assessment. It sets out a number of steps including assessing the potential impact by considering whether the equality evidence indicates potential differential impact on each protected characteristic group or provides an opportunity to improve equality in an area; taking account of results in developing proposals and ensuring due regard when making decisions about the policy and its implementation, documenting decisions, publishing results and monitoring the actual impact of the policy. Public Sector Equality Duty: specific duties in Scotland | EHRC (www.equalityhumanrights.com)

Online bullying

There are various legal provisions designed to protect individuals from online harassment, abuse, and harm. Some online behaviour may be illegal under the following legislation:

1. The Equality Act 2010: this Act prohibits discrimination, harassment, and victimisation based on protected characteristics, such as race, disability, and sexual orientation, which can encompass certain forms of online bullying.
2. The Communications Act 2003: Section 127 of this Act makes it an offence to send grossly offensive, obscene, or menacing messages through public electronic communications networks.
3. The Malicious Communications Act 1988: this Act covers the sending of letters or other articles with the intent to cause distress or anxiety, including online communications.
4. The Protection from Harassment Act 1997: this Act provides protection against a course of conduct amounting to harassment, which can include repeated online bullying incidents.
5. The Defamation and Malicious Publication (Scotland) Act 2021: this Act modernises the law on defamation, allowing individuals to seek redress for harm caused by false and damaging online statements.
6. The Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016: criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.

7. The Online Safety Act 2023: creates a number of new offences, including encouraging or assisting serious self-harm, cyberflashing, sending false information intended to cause non-trivial harm, threatening communications, intimate image abuse.

These legal provisions can empower parents, young people, schools, authorities, and Police Scotland to take action against online bullying. Understanding that these laws exist can help adults working with, or caring for, children and young people to recognise when behaviour crosses legal boundaries and to take appropriate steps to protect them.

Legislation relevant to aspects of online safety, including the safe and responsible use of mobile phones, can be found in Appendix C5 of the Scottish version of the online safety policy tool for schools, 360 Degree Safe Scotland. The 360 Degree Safe Scotland self-review tool is free to use and is intended to help schools review their online safety policy and practice. Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016 (legislation.gov.uk)

Hate crime

Hate crime is the term used to describe behaviour which is both criminal and rooted in prejudice or which is intended (or can be considered) to stir up hatred. In Scotland, the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021 criminalises behaviour based on prejudice towards those with the following characteristics:

- age
- disability
- race
- religion
- sexual orientation
- transgender identity
- variations in sex characteristics.

Where bullying occurs that is also linked to prejudice towards one of the above groups, this could also constitute a hate crime, under certain circumstances based on conduct and motivation.

Bullying can be motivated by prejudice similar to hate crime. The distinction between bullying and hate crime is that the behaviour motivated in prejudice must be criminal in nature, such as assault, graffiti or a breach of the peace. For example, damage to property through graffiti may constitute a crime and this may be aggravated by prejudice towards a relevant characteristic. Sharing of discriminatory materials may, in some cases, constitute an offence of stirring up hatred.

The Lord Advocate has issued guidelines about which category of offence will be reported to the Procurator Fiscal for consideration of prosecution. Children who do not come within these guidelines may be referred to the Children's Reporter or made subject to Police direct measures, depending on the circumstances. The Procurator Fiscal and the Children's Reporter discuss cases which are subject to joint referral and the Procurator Fiscal will decide where the case is best dealt with.

Age of Criminal Responsibility

Some behaviour displayed by a child or young person may constitute a criminal offence. School staff should have a general awareness of the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019 which increased the age at which a child is considered to have the capacity to commit a crime from age 8 to 12. This means that children younger than 12 cannot accrue convictions or criminal records. The 2019 Act removes the ability to refer a child to a children's hearing on offence grounds and makes it possible to only refer a child under 12 to a children's hearing on welfare and protection grounds. It provides specific investigatory powers for the police, to enable incidents of seriously harmful behaviour by under-12s to be investigated.

Policy landscape

This guidance takes account of the wider policy context that supports children and young people's health and wellbeing. Some of the other key drivers for the current guidance are:

- Getting it Right for Every Child
- National Child Protection Guidance for Scotland 2021 – Updated 2023
- Learning in Health and Wellbeing, including Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) Education
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma
- One Good Adult: Job Description

Professional Standards

Many professionals who play a role in the lives of children and young people will be governed by a set of professional standards. These include:

- the General Teaching Council for Scotland – The Professional Standards for Scotland's Teachers and Code of Professionalism and Conduct (CoPAC)
- the Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the 'Children's Workforce' in Scotland
- the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice
- the Health and Social Care Standards

The values and principles set out by the Standards Council for Community Learning and Development for Scotland are in step with this revised National Approach

Appendix 3

Prejudice-based bullying

This section provides information regarding different forms of prejudice-based bullying behaviour. This includes those related to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 as well as broader characteristics or circumstances which may be the target of bullying behaviours.

Equality Act 2010

There are nine characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Part 6 (chapter 1) of the Equality Act 2010, which deals with school education, does not apply to the protected characteristics of 'age' and 'marriage and civil partnership'.

Age: Part 6 (chapter 1) of the Equality Act 2010, which deals with school education, does not apply to the protected characteristic of 'age', however, people are protected from discrimination on the grounds of age in other settings including workplaces and further education.

Disability: the Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Increased knowledge and understanding about disability and the barriers and challenges they can face can help reduce bullying. The language and behaviour used may be a result of a lack of understanding about the nature of a person's disability. People who bully others may see disabled people as being more vulnerable and less able to defend themselves or tell an adult about the bullying.

Gender reassignment: the term 'gender reassignment' is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and refers to those who propose to go through, are going through, or have gone through a process for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

The term 'transgender' or 'trans' is a term used to describe people whose gender is not the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Gender identity is a person's innate sense of their own gender. 49 Transgender people face significant societal prejudice largely because they are perceived as not conforming to gender stereotypes, expectations and norms. As a result, transgender young people can be particularly vulnerable to bullying.

Transphobic bullying is behaviour or language which makes a young person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of perceived or actual transgender identity or transgender expression. This can manifest in many ways including verbal abuse and slurs or deliberately mis-gendering them. A young person may also experience transphobic bullying if someone is perceived to be transgender or someone they are associate with is transgender, i.e. a parent, relative or other significant figure. The Scottish Government has published guidance on Supporting Transgender Pupils in Schools, which includes information on transphobic bullying.

Marriage and civil partnership: Part 6 (chapter 1) of the 2010 Equality Act, which deals with school education, does not apply to the protected characteristic of ‘marriage and civil partnership’, however people are protected from discrimination on the grounds of marriage and civil partnership in other settings including workplaces and further education.

Pregnancy and maternity: young parents can experience bullying because of the stigma and judgement that is still associated with young parenthood. Staff should be aware of the increased possibility of bullying in relation to a young pregnant person or young parent and that this can occur face to face as well as online. Schools and organisations should be cognisant of their anti-bullying practice and approach and ensure young people receive adequate information and guidance around this topic. For those who are pregnant/young parents, this can add to what is already a potentially highly emotional and stressful time. The Scottish Government has published guidance on Supporting young pregnant women and young parents in school.

Sexual orientation: bullying based on sexual orientation is largely motivated by prejudice towards lesbian, gay or bisexual people, and those sexual orientations or gender identities which are not heterosexual or heteronormative. Homophobic or biphobic bullying is when a young person’s actual or perceived sexual orientation is used to exclude, threaten, hurt, or humiliate them.

Any young person can be homophobic bullied, irrespective of their actual sexual orientation. Sometimes young people can be homophobic bullied because others think that they are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT), because they have LGBT family or friends or, often, because they are seen as different or not conforming to gender stereotypes. Transgender children and young people can therefore also experience homophobic bullying.

Homophobic or biphobic language and jokes around the school can create a climate of homophobia; for example, the use of the word ‘gay’ to mean substandard or have negative connotations. This type of language is prejudice-based and should therefore be addressed as part of a school culture and ethos which promotes equality and inclusion. Scottish Government and Time for Inclusive Education have produced guidance for school staff to support the implementation of LGBT Inclusive Education.

Racism and race: under the Equality Act 2010, race includes colour, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins. Children and young people from groups who are at risk of experiencing racism may experience racist attitude and behaviour based on perceived differences which reflect wider societal patterns of inequality, power imbalance and discrimination. Prejudice towards the minority ethnic group a child or young person belongs to – or to which people assume they belong – in a school, community or organisation can often lead to a child or young person experiencing bullying behaviour. Racist behaviour and incidents can

arise from a misguided and learned belief that children and young people from minority ethnic groups are less valued and ‘deserve’ to be treated differently, or with less respect.

Children and young people from Gypsy/Traveller communities may be at greater risk of bullying. Some bullying behaviour against these groups may be of a racist nature which, given that race is a protected characteristic, can contravene equality legislation and have hate crime implications. Perceived risks about bullying and parents’ own experiences of discriminatory and racist behaviour may lead to low levels of enrolment and poor attendance for Gypsy/Traveller children and young people as well as early exit from formal education. Other Traveller and Roma families may have similar concerns.

Religion or belief: people who have a religion or belief, as well as those who do not, are protected under the Equality Act 2010. Religious, belief- or faith-based discrimination may manifest through actions or words directed towards a person of faith or a faith community, for example, anti-Hinduism, antisemitism or anti-Sikh discrimination. Discrimination can also happen within groups who share the same religious belief, for example, Muslim or Christian sectarianism.

Prejudice may centre on aspects of traditions, beliefs and etiquette of different faiths and can lead to religious intolerance. Differences in practices of religions such as prayer times, dietary requirements, fasting and the wearing of religious clothing or articles of faith can result in misunderstandings and stereotyping, which may lead to bullying.

In some cases, racism is the underlying factor in religious discrimination against people from minority ethnic communities. For example, learners who are not Muslim may experience Islamophobic bullying or anti-Hinduism as a result of racially stereotypical assumptions linked to their skin colour or other aspects of their appearance.

Sex (including sexual harassment, sexism and misogyny): the Equality Act 2010 protects people from being treated differently because of their sex. Girls and young women can be subjected to a range of behaviours by boys and young men because of gender inequality. This includes sexism, misogyny, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV). Sexism is discrimination or discriminatory language which seeks to belittle women and girls. Misogyny is the hatred of women, often expressed with hateful, sexualised language which aims to imply that women are inferior. Sexism and misogyny create a context where GBV can thrive. Girls and young women often experience bullying which is based on sexism and misogyny. Girls experiencing more than one form of inequality are at higher risk of being subjected to misogyny, which can often be combined with racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other prejudices.

Sexual harassment is distinct from the behaviours above and can include catcalling, wolf whistling, sexual language and sexualised intimidation or threat. It is important that sexual harassment is treated as GBV. The Scottish Government has published guidance to support schools in preventing and responding to gender-based violence. [Preventing and responding to gender-based violence: a whole school framework](#)

Many of these behaviours are caused by gender inequality – unequal social power between girls and boys – and create a context which can allow serious forms of violence to take place. It is often unseen and unreported.

Bullying which draws on misogyny can also be directed against boys and young men. For example, 'you throw like a girl'. Even when directed at boys, it still draws on the degradation and belittling of women and thus causes girls further harm. It can be linked to homophobia.

Other characteristics

The following characteristics may be the target of prejudice-based bullying; while they are not explicitly protected by law under the Equality Act 2010, there are aspects of the characteristics that may be caught depending on the circumstances. Irrespective of this, a robust response should be taken to any form of bullying. It is important for schools to consider whether there are patterns of bullying behaviour within their school communities which could be addressed by providing learning for children and young people about inequality and diversity.

Additional Support Needs: these can arise for any reason and be of short- or long-term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from a school learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors, and therefore may relate to a protected characteristic. A child or young person may be bullied because they have an additional support need and crucially, being bullied can also lead to an additional support need. Some with additional support needs may be protected under the disability protected characteristic.

Children and young people with an additional support need may not realise that the behaviour happening to them is bullying. Staff should therefore be alert for behaviour that may constitute bullying, without the responsibility solely being on the child or young person to report it. Staff are able to report bullying incidents on SEEMiS without a child or young person reporting it.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees: children and young people who are asylum seekers or refugees may be at greater risk of bullying. Some bullying behaviour against these groups may be of a racist nature which, given that race is a protected characteristic, can contravene equality legislation and have hate crime implications. Stigma, due to lack of knowledge and reluctance to burden parents with extra worries can allow bullying to go undetected and continue.

Body Image and Physical Appearance: this can be hugely important to children and young people and significantly negatively impact their wellbeing. Body image and physical appearance can also be a highly sensitive area in which school staff will need to carefully consider their responses. In some cases, bullying relating to body image and physical appearance may intersect with a protected characteristic, such as race or disability, for example being bullied for female body/facial hair, facial deformities and scars (potentially from war/torture).

Care Experienced Children and Young People: [care experienced children and young people](#) can be particularly vulnerable to bullying. Children and young people can face bullying behaviour simply because they are care experienced and seen in some way as 'different'. Children and young people who are cared for away from home can also experience bullying behaviour in their residential care home, at school and in their community. Care experienced children and young people may not always have a stable support network to turn to when experiencing bullying. For some children and young people forming positive relationships with peers and adults can be more difficult due to their early childhood adversity. Developing trusting and supportive relationships between children, young people and practitioners is required to address bullying of all forms and in all settings.

Family and household circumstances: children and young people may experience discrimination for their family situation. For example, if the child or young person is from a single-parent family, a blended family or has a relative who is in a same-sex relationship. Bullying of children who endure parental substance use can also be prevalent.

Family imprisonment: children and young people affected by family imprisonment are at risk of bullying for a range of reasons. Keeping in contact with a family member in prison can mean children and young people miss time at school, clubs, and socialising with friends. Having to explain or make excuses for their absence can pose challenges for peer relationships. Children and young people affected by imprisonment can also often feel left out in peer discussions about parents or other family members. The stigma of having a family member in prison can lead to children and young people trying to keep the experience hidden from their peers. This can make it difficult to form and maintain peer relationships. Where children and young people choose to disclose their family member's imprisonment, or where this information is shared by others in the community or the media, the stigma of imprisonment can make them a direct target of bullying behaviour.

Forces children: children from armed forces and veteran families can face significant challenges due to forces life. They may experience frequent moves around the country which for some are challenging due to the loss of friendships and disruption to education. Deployments and separation from parents are also events that can happen due to forces life. Some families may move up to once every two years which means children and young people re-establishing themselves in a new school and some feel there is no point even trying to make new friends which can lead to isolation. This group can sometimes feel different from their classmates and can be bullied for a number of reasons such as having a different accent, or simply for being in a forces family. Having a parent being away can also add to the emotional difficulties a child or young person may feel as they may not want to open up about the difficulties they face to their non-serving parent. Research has shown that children who attend schools which are more educated about military life face less bullying and discrimination, so it is important schools understand their lives more and are able to support this group.

Mental health stigma and discrimination: children and young people may feel uncomfortable to speak about their mental health for fear of the consequences. Fear of stigma and discrimination can prevent an individual from sharing their mental health concerns. Judgemental preconceptions about mental health may endorse negative stereotypes which can impact someone who experiences mental health problems, potentially making them feel worse about themselves and hindering recovery.

Sectarianism: most people understandably associate sectarianism with religion, which is a protected characteristic. The reality of prejudice however means that family background, supporting particular football teams, where a child or young person lives, which school they attend or the colour of clothing they wear can be a target of sectarian abuse, regardless of the individuals' beliefs. In Scotland, sectarianism is most often related to Protestant and Roman Catholic divisions within Christianity but can also relate to other religions, for example, Sunni, Ahmadi and Shia Muslims within Islam, and Orthodox and Reform Jews within Judaism.

Socio-economic/poverty prejudice: poverty contravenes a number of articles laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and denies children and young people many of their rights.

Bullying due to socio-economic status can take place in any community. Small differences in perceived family income/family living arrangements/social circumstances or values can be used as a basis for bullying behaviours. These behaviours, such as mocking speech patterns, accents, belongings, clothing, etc., can become widespread through those considering themselves to be in the dominant socio-economic group. Where poverty-related bullying is witnessed or experienced, it is based upon the consequences of poverty, such as: poor appearance or lack of school uniforms, shoes and PE kits; type of clothing worn on non-school uniform day; lack of money to socialise with friends, being in receipt of free school meals; and not being able to have 'sleepovers'. Schools and organisations need to be aware and compassionate around both the emotional and financial consequences of poverty and how it affects children and young people in all areas of their life.

Young Carers: the lives of young carers can be significantly affected by their responsibility to care for a family member or friend to illness, disability, mental health problems or an addiction. Young carers are at risk of bullying for a variety of reasons. Carers Trust survey work indicates that 36% of young carers who responded had been bullied about their caring role. Depending on their caring responsibilities, they may find themselves being unable to fully participate in school or after-school activities or 'fun stuff'. This can make it difficult for them to form and sustain relationships with peers; it can hinder successful transitions or lead to them not achieving their educational potential.

Appendix 4

Including parent/carers in the policy development process is respectful of their rights and the role they play in the whole school community. It enables them to contribute to, and supportive of, the processes and measures in place to ensure safety for all children and young people, as well as what procedures are in place for complaints and escalation if dissatisfied. By including parent/carers in the process, it creates an opportunity to further encourage positive relations between all parties involved.

Ways to engaging parent/carer inclusion in the policy development process are set out below and exemplified in RfA:

- Collaboration and feedback
- Regular communication and support
- Transparency and reporting Inclusive
- and supportive events

All parents and carers can actively help to prevent bullying behaviour, and support the school/club endeavours, by:

- Being aware of potential signs of bullying behaviour such as distress, lack of concentration, feigning illness or other unusual behaviour
- Reporting all bullying incidents as quickly as possible
- Being vigilant to dangers online and encourage appropriate use of technology
- Understand that 'fall outs' and disagreements are a normal part of growing up, however bullying behaviour is not
- Seek support from the school or group the young person attends for themselves and their child(ren)

Evidence of involvement via parent councils, parent forum or surveys, etc., should be referenced in the policy document

Appendix 5

Staff and volunteers have a direct role in the implementation of a school/club policy, making their views highly influential in anti-bullying policy consultations.

All teachers, and staff working in other settings with children and young people, have a responsibility to ensure that anti-bullying policy is in place to keep children safe. This aim can be achieved through engaging them in the policy development process to consider how they will be equipped to:

- Promote and role model positive relationships and positive behaviour
- Report any bullying incidents that they have been made aware of or have witnessed
- Record all incidents using the Bullying & Equalities module in SEEMiS which will be monitored by the authority through SEEMiS annual reports.
- Listen to children and young people and take their concerns seriously
- Ensure that children and young people have a right to express their views in matters that affect them, and for these views to be given due weight
- Act in accordance with the school values, professional Codes of Conduct and the values and principles of RfA
- Ensure that all children, young people, parents and carers are aware of the school's procedure to responding to anti-bullying incidents
- Ensure that the anti-bullying policy is followed and that the setting upholds its duty to promote the safety and well-being of all children and young people
- Refrain from using labels e.g. 'bully' and 'victim'
- Engage in anti-bullying policy development and undertake anti-bullying training
- Be vigilant to the signs of bullying behaviour and play an active role in measures to prevent bullying behaviour

Evidence of involvement via SLR, staff meetings, surveys, etc., should be referenced in the policy document.

Appendix 6

Recommendations from the children and young people's consultation exercise contained the following themes:

- Establishment based policies and pupil friendly versions of these need to be bright and colourful.
- These should contain images and characters to make them more eye catching.
- The Local Authority policy should have a mascot and slogan/strapline.
- School badges should be displayed around the outside of establishment policy and all head teachers should be signing it on behalf of their pupils.
- A copy of the new policy and new charter should be emailed out to all staff and also all parents/carers to ensure that they have access to this. Schools should engage in anti-bullying week.
- QR code with links to Kooth and other mental health supports and also a link to a form to report bullying. (Link Tree) Could be a QR on the charter and within the document.
- Explore other countries policies and how they look at education reform and if there is anything that we could explore to help us here – some young people have offered to research this if required.

Appendix 7

Overview of Policy Updates		
Anti-Bullying Policy		
PAGE	TITLE	PROPOSED CHANGE
Throughout		Use of policy template provided by Respect Me.
3	The Agreed National Definition of Bullying Behaviour as Set Out in Respect for All	Statement that Inverclyde Council adopts the new definition of bullying behaviour, and exemplifications, as promoted by the Scottish Government through the Respect for All document (2024)
4	Inverclyde's Stance, the Scope and Aims of this policy.	The original policy did not have a scope section. This indicates that the policy is for schools only and does not apply to all educational establishments. This is on direct advice from Respect Me. It also states that each school will develop their own versions of this policy to match local context as well as pupil friendly versions of policy.
5	Preventing and Responding to Bullying Behaviour.	This section contains more information on the preventative approach.
8-9	Expectations and Responsibilities of Children and Young People, Staff/Volunteers and Parents.	This section has been updated to reflect new guidance within the Respect for All Document (2024) and to reflect feedback from consultations.
9	Respectful behaviour	This is a new section from the Respect for All (2024) template.

10	Labelling	This is a new section from the Respect for All (2024) template.
11	Reporting, recording and monitoring.	This is an updated section. This aligns Inverclyde to the Respect for All (2024) document. Now ALL accusations of bullying behaviour must be investigated. In the previous policy there was some leeway for staff judgement to be used.
13	Evidence of Children and Young People's Involvement.	Statement regarding the consultation exercise.
14	Evidence that Staff/Volunteers Have Been Included and Consulted.	Statement regarding the consultation exercise.
14	Evidence that Parents/Carers Have Been Included and Consulted.	Statement regarding the consultation exercise.
14	Policy Review and Communication Plan.	Refreshed guidance regarding timescales for review.
15	Commitment of Inverclyde Council to Training and Supporting Staff.	New section committing the local authority to training and support.
16-33	Appendices	<p>16-19 Appendix explaining bullying behaviour from conflict.</p> <p>20-23 Appendix providing an in depth look at the legal and policy framework behind the policy.</p> <p>24-29 Appendix focusing on prejudice based bullying.</p> <p>30 Appendix providing advice to schools on gaining parental/carers views as part of their policy development process.</p> <p>31 Appendix providing advice to schools on working with staff and volunteers in the development of policy and practice.</p> <p>32 Appendix providing further information regarding the pupil consultation.</p> <p>33 References.</p>

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