Inverclyde council

PLEASE NOTE TIMES OF MEETING

A meeting of the Education & Communities Committee will be held on Tuesday 2 September 2025.

The Communities business will commence at <u>2pm</u> and the Education business at <u>4pm</u>.

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 1 September 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

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2.	**2025/26 Communities Revenue Budget and 2024/25 Out-turn** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Interim Chief Financial Officer	**p**
3.	**Communities Capital Programme Progress and Asset Related Items** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Interim 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.	**Ward 6 Community Facilities Review** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
6.	**Inverclyde Libraries Stock Management Policy** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
EDUCATION BUSINESS **PRESENTATION**		
7.	**Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Programme** Presentation by pupils and senior leaders from St Columba's High School and Clydeview Academy	
INSPECTION REPORT		
8. **	**Education Scotland Report on St Mary's Primary School** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT		
9.	**2025/26 Education Revenue Budget and 2024/25 Out-turn** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Interim Chief Financial Officer	**p**
10.	**Education Capital Programme 2025/28 - Progress** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Interim Chief Financial Officer	**p**
11.	**Education Services Improvement Plan 2025-26** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
NEW BUSINESS		
12.	**Education Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
13.	**Review of Transport for Pupils with Additional Support Needs** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
14.	**Consultation on Assessment of Transport for Pupils with Additional Support Needs** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**

15.	**Scottish Government Additional Funding for Additional Support for Learning** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
16.	**Improving Young People's Representation in Boards and Committees** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
ROUTINE DECISIONS AND ITEMS FOR NOTING		
17.	**Inverclyde Wellbeing Service – Annual Report 2024/25** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
18.	**Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Evaluation Report - Session 2024/25 Report** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
19.	**School Term Dates – Session 2026 / 2027 (amended)** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**p**
20.	**Education – Positive Relationships Policy 2025** Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	**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.

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

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	2 September 2025
Report By:	Interim Chief Financial Officer and Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	FIN/46/25/AE/IC
Contact Officer:	Iain Cameron	Contact No:	01475 712832
Subject:	2025/26 Communities Revenue Budget and 2024/25 Out-turn		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☐For Decision ☒For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the Communities Revenue Budget outturn for 2024/25 and the 2025/26 projected position.

1.3 In 2024/25, excluding the carry forward of Earmarked Reserves, there was an underspend of £56,000 within the Communities Committee. This was a reduction in expenditure of £5,000 from the projected outturn reported to Committee in May 2025. More details are provided in section 3 of the report.

1.4 The total Communities Revenue Budget for 2025/26, excluding Earmarked Reserves, is currently £5.724m. The latest projection is an overspend of £118,000, mainly due to the non-achievement of turnover savings within Libraries & Museum and Community Safety.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the final outturn for 2024/25 and that the Committee's Revenue Budget is currently projected to overspend in 2025/26 by £118,000.

2.2 It is recommended that the Committee notes that proposals to address the underlying budget pressures will be presented to future meetings of this Committee.

Angela Edmiston
Interim Chief Financial Officer

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & ODHR

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the current position of the 2025/26 Revenue Budget, as well as the 2024/25 final outturn and to highlight the main variances contributing to the £56,000 underspend for 2024/25 and the projected overspend of £118,000 for 2025/26.

3.2 The current Communities Revenue Budget for 2025/26 is £5.724m which is an increase of £1,300 from the Approved Budget. Appendix 1 provides details of the budget movement.

3.3 **2024/25 OUT-TURN (£56,000 Underspend – 1.0%)**

The final outturn for the Communities Revenue Budget in 2024/25, excluding Earmarked Reserves, was an under spend of £56,000. This was £5,000 less expenditure than reported to the last Committee in May 2025.

The main variations from budget and movements from the projected outturn position reported in May, were as follows:

Service	Revised Budget 2024/25 £000	Outturn 2024/25 £000	Variance to Budget £000	Variance to Budget %	May Projected Variance £000	Movement Since May Projection £000
Libraries & Museum	1,979	1,978	(1)	-0.1%	5	(6)
Sports & Leisure	2,057	2,065	8	0.4%	5	3
Community Safety	465	463	(2)	-0.4%	3	(5)
Community Halls	989	927	(62)	-6.3%	(65)	3
Community Grants Fund	296	297	1	0.3%	1	0
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	**5,786**	**5,730**	**(56)**	**-1.0%**	**(51)**	**(5)**

3.4 The actual outturn, excluding earmarked reserves was £5,730,000, which represents an underspend of £56,000, a reduction in spend of £5,000 since the May Committee. The main variances were within School Lets where there was an underspend of £41,000 due to a reduction in Bad Debt Provision and an over recovery in income of £10,000.

3.5 **2025/26 Projected Outturn (£118,000 overspend 2.1%)**

The main variances contributing to the £118,000 overspend are within Libraries & Museum employee costs which are projected to overspend by £77,000 and Community Safety employee costs which are projected to overspend by £19,000, due to not achieving turnover savings.

3.6 **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. There will be spend of £25,000 in 2025/26 to supplement a saving to the core budget. The remaining £50,000 will be carried forward to use over the next two financial years.

3.7 **Virements**

There are no virements this Committee cycle.

3.8 PROPOSALS

It is proposed that Committee note the current projected overspend for 2025/26 of £118,000 and that action will continue to be taken by the Corporate Director to reduce the overspend.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 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

4.2 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					

4.3 Legal/Risk

The Financial Regulations state that the responsibility for ensuring Revenue Budgets are not exceeded lies with the Committee and Chief Officer (Corporate Director). Actions are being progressed by the Corporate Director to bring the Committee back within budget.

4.4 Human Resources

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

4.5 Strategic

There are no specific strategic implications arising from this report.

5.0 CONSULTATION

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

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 There are no background papers for this report.

Communities Budget Movement - 2025/26

Service	Approved Budget 2025/26 £000	Inflation £000	Virement £000	Movements Supplementary Budgets £000	Transferred to EMR £000	Revised Budget 2025/26 £000
Libraries & Museum	1,955	1				1,956
Sport & Leisure	1,948					1,948
Community Safety	475					475
Community Halls	1,074					1,074
Community Grants Fund	271					271
Totals	5,723	1	0	0	0	5,724

Movement Details

£000

External Resources

Inflation

Non Domestic Rates (NDR)   1

                                                          1

Virement

                                                          0

Supplementary Budget

                                                          0

                                                          1

COMMUNITIES

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

CURRENT POSITION

2024/25 Actual £000	Subjective Heading	Approved Budget 2025/26 £000	Revised Budget 2025/26 £000	Projected Out-turn 2025/26 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/(Under)
2,052	Employee Costs	2,052	2,052	2,152	100	4.9%
2,339	Property Costs	2,215	2,216	2,213	(3)	(0.1%)
626	Supplies & Services	620	620	628	8	1.3%
3	Transport Costs	3	3	5	2	62.5%
72	Administration Costs	75	75	67	(8)	(10.6%)
1,113	Other Expenditure	1,051	1,071	1,085	14	1.3%
(418)	Income	(293)	(313)	(308)	5	(1.6%)
5,787	**TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE**	**5,723**	**5,724**	**5,842**	**118**	**2.1%**
0	Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0	
5,787	**TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING EARMARKED RESERVES**	**5,723**	**5,724**	**5,842**	**118**	**2.1%**

2024/25 Actual £000	Objective Heading	Approved Budget 2025/26 £000	Revised Budget 2025/26 £000	Projected Out-turn 2025/26 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/(Under)
1,971	Libraries & Museum	1,955	1,956	2,032	76	3.9%
2,131	Sports & Leisure	1,948	1,948	1,953	5	0.3%
463	Community Safety	475	475	508	33	6.9%
925	Community Halls	1,074	1,074	1,078	4	0.4%
297	Community Grants Fund	271	271	271	0	-
5,787	**TOTAL COMMUNITIES**	**5,723**	**5,724**	**5,842**	**118**	**2.1%**
0	Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0	
5,787	**TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING EARMARKED RESERVES**	**5,723**	**5,724**	**5,842**	**118**	**2.1%**

<u>COMMUNITIES</u>

<u>REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT</u>

<u>MATERIAL VARIANCES</u>

<u>Out Turn 2024/25 £000</u>	<u>Budget Heading</u>	<u>Budget 2025/26 £000</u>	<u>Proportion of Budget</u>	<u>Actual to 30-Jun-25 £000</u>	<u>Projection 2025/26 £000</u>	<u>(Under)/Over Budget £000</u>	<u>Percentage Over / (Under)</u>
1,375	**Libraries & Museum** Employee Costs	1341	290	319	1418	77	5.7%
Total Material Variances						**77**	

Appendix 4

EARMARKED   RESERVES   POSITION   STATEMENT

COMMITTEE: Communities

Project	Lead Officer/ Responsible Manager	Total Funding 2025/26 £000	Phased Budget 30-Jun-25 2025/26 £000	Actual 30-Jun-25 2025/26 £000	Projected Spend 2025/26 £000	Amount to be Earmarked for 2026/27 & Beyond £000	Lead Officer Update
Community Grants	Tony McEwan	75	0	0	25	50	£25k per year for 3 years to supplement reduction in Core Budget
Total		**75**	**0**	**0**	**25**	**50**	

Inverclyde council

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development and Interim Chief Financial Officer**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/54/25/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 £1.829m with total projected spend on budget. The Committee is projecting to spend £1.197m in 2025/26 with advancement of £0.140m (13.25%) 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 2025/28 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.

2025/28 Current Capital Position

3.3 The Communities capital budget is £1.829m. The budget for 2025/26 is £1.057m, with spend to date of £0.001m equating to 0.09% of the approved budget (0.08% of the revised projection). The current projection is £1.829m which means total projected spend is on budget.

3.4 The Committee is projecting to spend £1.197m in 2025/26 with £0.140m (13.25%) advancement in connection with the Broomhill pitch carpet replacement project. Appendix 1 details the capital programme.

<u>Communities Capital Projects</u>

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.

Broomhill 3G Pitch Carpet Replacement: The access path to the site has been adjusted with additional tarmac to improve the gradient and access for the works. The existing carpet and shock pad has been lifted. The new carpet and associated materials will be delivered mid-August with completion anticipated mid-September.

3.6 **Grieve Road Community Hall – Extension and Upgrade:**

The Scottish Government has recently awarded a grant of up to £0.7 million to support the development of a community-based childcare centre that will benefit most vulnerable families. This initiative is part of the broader Fairer Futures program, which commenced in November 2024 and will run 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 project design team has been formed with in-house Architects and external consultant Structural / Mechanical & Electrical Engineers appointed. Design proposals are being developed through RIBA Design Stage 3 (Spacial and Technical Co-ordination). Information for tender document preparation is being targeted for early September and tender issue thereafter. Pre-planning discussions have been held with the Planning Service with the possibility that car parking provision may be required as part of the development. The available funding may require to be augmented with a contribution from the Core Property allocation should the scope require to be amended to meet any requirement for parking provision. Subject to tender issue, evaluation and acceptance it is hoped that construction works could start pre-Christmas 2025, however it should be noted that the requirement to draw down the full Scottish Government grant by the end of March 2026 has associated risk as outlined in section 5.3 below.

Communities External Partner Projects

3.7 **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 working closely with the group to put together a contact.

3.8 **Auchmountain Community Hall**

A Stage 1 application for the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) was submitted to the Scottish Government in April for the 2026/27 funding cycle. The goal of this project is to modernise the existing centre by adding a new extension and a play area at the back of the site. We expect to hear whether our application has been successful and will be invited to the next stage by the end of September 2025.

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
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 known Legal implications contained within this report.

The recently awarded Scottish Government funding support for the Grieve Road Community Centre project involves extension and upgrades to the building with associated external works which will require to be progressed over the winter period. Property Services will endeavour to complete the full scope of works to maximise the available funding which is time limited and must be expended by the end of March 2026. The Core Property allocation within Environment & Regeneration may be required to address any works that are not able to be completed with funding drawn down in the current financial year.

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 Interim Director - Environment and Finance Services.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

COMMUNITIES CAPITAL REPORT

Appendix 1

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION & COMMUNITIES

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Project Name	Est Total Cost	Actual to 31/3/25	Approved Budget 2025/26	Revised Est 2025/26	Actual to 31/07/25	Est 2026/27	Est 2027/28	Future Years
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Communities								
Leisure Pitches AMP - Lifecycle Fund	681	0	160	300	0	261	120	0
Grieve Road Community Hall - Extension & Upgrade	700	0	700	700	0	0	0	0
Complete On Site	448	251	197	197	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,829	251	1,057	1,197	1	261	120	0

Appendix 2

The table below provides a list of current assets transfer applications which are being progressed through the work of the Asset Transfer Working Group.

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	Progress with the group is currently paused pending the achievement of SCIO status. They have revised their constitution to meet the necessary criteria and are also working with Council officers to resolve outstanding maintenance issues related to the asset. A meeting is being planned for August or September to support further progress.
KGV Bowling Club	Bowling pavilion and greens	Informal	Proposed Lease	Discussions between both parties regarding the establishment of a formal lease agreement have resulted in an agreement in principle. The group has confirmed their intention to proceed with the lease; however, several internal and external maintenance issues must be resolved before the process can advance. In the meantime, Council officers are assisting in identifying and securing funding opportunities to address these matters.
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 19/11/2024 and has since been signed and returned. The group has expanded its membership and strengthened its governance arrangements. They are now prepared to progress towards a formal lease, with the initial step being the commissioning of a property valuation.
Guides at Kilmacolm	Land	Informal	Proposed Long Term lease/asset transfer	Previous discussions following the submission of the expression of interest have explored options ranging from a formal lease to a full asset transfer. The most recent correspondence has centred on the group's efforts to develop their business plan and finalise their governance structure. Regular contact has been

				maintained, and we are currently awaiting feedback from the guides to help determine the next steps. As a full asset transfer would require the establishment of a SCIO, the group is continuing to work towards achieving clarity around 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 December 2024, and Council officers met with the group on 24 January 2025 to explore the available options. However, the group has not responded to subsequent communications regarding the next steps. As a result, the process is currently on hold.
Inverclyde Veterans Network	Building	Informal – initial conversations are taking place.	Proposed Lease	The newly formed Veterans group has submitted an expression of interest in securing a suitable venue for a veteran's hub. They have viewed both 14A King Street, Port Glasgow and Hillend Bowling Club, but have decided not to proceed with either property due to the extent of required refurbishment and limited parking availability. The group is currently reassessing their options.
Coppermine Community Hub	Building	Asset Transfer	Full Asset Transfer/informal	The group has submitted all required documentation, which has been reviewed by Council officers. Following a meeting between officers and group representatives, it was agreed that an informal asset transfer would proceed, allowing the group to take ownership of the asset. This process will be carried out with due diligence, and future reports will be submitted to the CMT and relevant committees for consideration.
Upper Larkfield Tenants Hall (Larkfield Housing Association)	Building	Asset Transfer	Long term Lease or Full Asset Transfer	On 25 April 2025, Council officers met with LHA for initial discussions regarding the Upper Larkfield Tenants Hall. The meeting was positive, with officers providing guidance on the available options for ownership or lease, as well as advice on the governance arrangements required to bring the asset

				under community ownership. However, there has been no response from LHA to subsequent communications, and no further updates have been received.
West Glen Rd, Kilmacolm Kilmacolm Eco Group	Land	Licence to occupy	Licence to occupy	A Licence to Occupy is now in place.
Wellington Park Bowling Cub	Land	Lease	Long term Lease	The bowling club has agreed to enter a formal lease, with a proposed start date of 1 October 2025. Council officers have been providing support to assist the club in accessing funding opportunities.
Riverside Club (formally old mans club)	Land	Lease	Long term lease/purchase	Council officers have been working with the group to support the transition to either a formal lease or ownership of the land on which the building is located. However, the absence of ownership records has prevented the group from securing external capital funding. While a land lease has been proposed as the preferred option, progress has been paused due to the ongoing review of assets in Port Glasgow.
Inverclyde Shed Pheonix Car club	Building	Lease	TBC	The Phoenix Car Club has begun the process of winding down its operations as a charity. In parallel, Inverclyde Shed is preparing to take on a lease for the asset, with the intention that former members of the Phoenix Car Club will transition to join the Shed. An exit date of 1 November has been requested, and the lease process for Inverclyde Shed will now proceed.

Inverclyde council

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks** **Corporate Director** **Education, Communities and Organisational Development**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/49/25/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. Crimestoppers off road bike campaign
2. Antisocial Behaviour Awareness Week
3. Early Adopter Affordable Childcare
4. Summer Programme 2025 – Inclusive Communities
5. Young Scot Partnership
6. Your Journey, Your Choice Campaign
7. Inverclyde Fire Skill Course
8. Connecting Inverclyde Heritage Project
9. Libraries as community spaces
10. Outreach
11. Children & Young People
12. Author events
13. Staff development
14. The HERDS - Art Fund Project
15. Inverclyde Stem Festival
16. 2025 ICON Awards
17. Fixing our broken planet
18. Exhibitions
19. Inverclyde Music Service

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 <u>Crimestoppers off-road bike campaign</u>

Inverclyde Council's Community Safety & Resilience Team joined with Crimestoppers in coordinating the local launch of a national campaign aimed at tackling the illegal and dangerous use of off-road bikes, e-scooters, and similar vehicles. The campaign, led by the Victims and Community Safety Minister Siobhian Brown, Crimestoppers Scotland, and supported by Police Scotland, was rolled out in Inverclyde at the end of June, in response to growing concerns about reckless vehicle use in public spaces.

Inverclyde has seen rising reports of anti-social behaviour involving off-road vehicles, with damage to greenspaces such as Whinhill Golf Club and near misses involving pedestrians on pavements.

The Community Safety & Resilience Team has been collaborating with partners to raise awareness of the issue locally and to promote public reporting.

The campaign highlights the impact on public safety and taxpayer resources, urging residents to report sightings and information—such as vehicle descriptions and locations—to support enforcement. The campaign also reinforces legal requirements, noting that off-road vehicles can only be used on public roads if fully licensed, insured, and taxed, or with landowner permission on private land.

The Council continues to work with partners to address this issue and encourages residents to report concerns anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or through Fearless.org ([Illegal off-road bike activity across Scotland | Crimestoppers](#)).
[Spotlight on dangerous and illegal use of off-road bikes across Scotland - Inverclyde Council](#)

3.2 <u>Antisocial Behaviour Awareness Week</u>

As part of Anti-Social Behaviour Awareness Week (30 June–6 July 2025), Inverclyde Council hosted two public information sessions to support residents affected by nuisance behaviour. The events took place at Boglestone Community Centre on Wednesday 2 July (12–1pm) and Grieve Road Community Centre on Thursday 3 July (2–3pm) and were promoted by local housing associations alongside The Council.

Staff from the Council's Community Safety & Resilience Team and the Community Wardens Team were available to listen to concerns and offer advice, including how to report incidents. The initiative supports the national Resolve UK campaign under the theme 'Making Communities Safer' and aims to raise awareness of issues such as noise, intimidation, vandalism, and verbal abuse, while signposting victims to support services.

The value of the community engagement was evident when, during one of the information sessions, council staff were alerted to potential rogue traders operating in the area, enabling swift referral to the appropriate enforcement agencies for investigation.
[Tackling anti-social behaviour - Inverclyde Council](#)

3.3 <u>The Early Adopter Affordable Childcare</u>

The Early Adopter Affordable Childcare Service provided regulated childcare delivered by qualified staff over a four-week period during the summer holidays, targeted at families on low incomes and those within the child poverty priority groups. Provision was offered from Newark Primary, St Joseph's Primary, and Wellington Pre-5 Centre in Gourock, with a £25 per child per day subsidy and additional support available through Universal Credit.

Of the 600 affordable childcare places made available in Newark and St Joseph's, uptake in Port Glasgow was 597 (99%) and 409 (68%) in Greenock. 14 children in Port Glasgow accessed 129 subsidised spaces, and 5 children in Greenock accessed 45. Local childminders were also invited to apply the subsidy, enhancing choice and flexibility. Over 1,000 childcare sessions were accessed by families across Inverclyde, with the majority attending the Newark/Port Glasgow site.

Alongside childcare provision, wider supports were delivered to strengthen family engagement and build new relationships. A Uniform Swap Shop held at the B'Hub in Port Glasgow supported 17 families to access school clothing. Family sessions in the Grieve Road area promoted the Early Adopter Childcare, with financial wellbeing, and employability, with 47 families participating.

For families of children with Additional Support Needs, a co-designed Summer Stay and Play programme was delivered at Boglestone and Ravenscraig. In response to feedback, twilight sessions were introduced for children who found earlier sessions challenging, resulting in participation from 195 children and 102 parents.

Feedback across all elements of the summer offer was overwhelmingly positive, with families valuing the inclusive, flexible nature of the provision, the quality of experiences, and the professionalism of staff. The Summer programme also supported stronger relationships with families and acted as an opportunity to access the Early Adopter and Fairer Futures Partnership services.

3.4 **Summer Programme 2025**

Inclusive Communities Services collaborated with local partners to provide a diverse range of holiday programmes during the summer of 2025. These coordinated activities included affordable childcare, playschemes, youth work, active schools' programs, school transitions programmes, childcare services, community programs, and family stay-and-play sessions. Many of these services were offered free of charge to children and families.

Inverclyde Leisure on behalf of Inverclyde Council operated the playschemes in seven venues across Inverclyde for four weeks and supported 9165 children on a first-come, first-served basis. This was an increase of around 11% more young people attending from the previous year.

The number of free swims over the summer holidays saw a slight increase with 11343 swims being recorded over the period of the first four weeks of the summer holidays across all the pools with the local authority. For the first time, 8 free ASN hour-long swim sessions were also provided with over 240 attendances being recorded at these sessions, with very positive feedback being received by parents.

The Active Schools program offered free access to 43 summer sports sessions, including four sessions specifically designed for children with additional support needs. Over 718 attendances were recorded from 267 distinct young people, with 32% coming from low-income families. 24% having additional support needs. The delivery of holiday provision was supported by 13 volunteers of which the majority are senior pupils, 98 volunteer hours were delivered through holiday provision. In addition, 123 young people with additional support needs engaged in Active Schools sport for all sessions.

The Youth Work Team successfully delivered a vibrant and varied summer program across Inverclyde. The program was designed to offer diverse opportunities for engagement, highlights of the summer included 15 evening drop-in sessions at our I Youth Zone buildings, which provided a safe and welcoming environment for young people to socialise and participate in a range of activities. Additionally, our Pop-Up Detached Events created fun and inclusive experiences

directly within local communities, featuring BBQs, sports, and arts across four afternoon and four evening sessions. The team also organized specialised sessions at venues like Bullseye and Elev8, offering unique recreational opportunities.

A key focus of this year's program was skill-building and new experiences. We piloted two successful two-week Scran Zones in Grieve Road and Inverkip, where participants learned to cook a complete three-course meal from scratch. Our Junior and Senior Geek Zone groups met four times, fostering creativity and a shared passion for games. A dedicated movie Popcorn Day and Inverclyde's inaugural youth Colour Run provided high-energy, celebratory events that were a huge hit with participants.

The summer concluded with a spectacular Games Experience at Lady Octavia Sport Centre, an immersive event inspired by a popular Netflix series, marking the third successful edition of this thrilling program. The positive feedback and high levels of participation throughout the summer underscore the value and success of these initiatives.

Throughout the summer, services were successfully delivered to meet the specific needs of Inverclyde learners. The provision of adult literacy services continued with two weekly sessions at the Greenock i-Youth Zone, helping individuals improve foundational skills. Furthermore, learners had the opportunity to enhance their employability through six weekly sessions held at Auchmountain Halls and Port Glasgow Library, where they could pursue SQA ICT qualifications.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision remained a priority, offering support through two weekly family sessions at the Southwest Community Hub and the Fox Street Church. These services were supplemented by collaborative initiatives, such as walking and cycling programs, which provided learners with additional opportunities to practice language skills and engage with the community in practical, social settings.

3.5 **Young Scot Partnership**

The service has enhanced its reporting this year by using interactive Power BI software to create a two-page infographic summary Young Scot Partnership Indicator (PI) Report for Inverclyde, covering the past twelve months. A copy of the summary highlighting the service's achievements can be found by within Appendix 1 of this report.

3.6 **Your Journey, Your Choice**

Inverclyde Council Inclusive Communities service will be launching a promotional campaign aimed at encouraging positive behaviour among young people on buses. The campaign, titled "Your Journey, Your Choice," focuses on key messages such as travelling safely and respectfully. It encourages young people to speak up if they feel unsafe, to be a role model for others, and to be respectful to fellow passengers, staff, and drivers.

The campaign also reminds them that antisocial behaviour could result in losing access to transport. The initiative is supported by Police Scotland and the British Transport Police. A sample of the campaign messaging is within Appendix 2 of this report.

3.7 **Inverclyde Fire Skills Course**

A group of young people learned all about team building, problem-solving and health and safety as part of a Fire Skills course at Port Glasgow Community Fire Station. S3 pupils from St Columba's High School and Clydeview Academy took part in the week-long course in May, which is run in partnership between Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and Inverclyde Council.

They learned vital skills then rounded off the week with a practical demo in front of representatives from their schools, their families, elected members from Inverclyde Council and other partner agencies. They received certificates to mark their participation by Provost Drew McKenzie and the work carried out during the week with will be used as evidence towards accredited awards by Inverclyde Council's Community Safety & Resilience and Youth Work teams.

3.8 **Connecting Inverclyde Heritage Project**

Following the appointment of a Heritage Coordinator in January 2025 to lead delivery of the Connecting Inverclyde heritage project (funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund), engagement with interested groups and individuals is now underway. This has included programming in support of both the Gourock Highland Games and the Comet Festival, alongside the Heritage Coordinator's active involvement in the Port Glasgow 250 commemorations. A partnership project underway with Inverclyde Libraries will see the launch of a new Port Glasgow Dungeons and Dragons (D+D) Campaign in August. This campaign has been developed with young people from Port Glasgow, and explores the history of the town through the prism of D+D adventures. Alongside engagement activity, the Heritage Coordinator has convened the first meeting of the Inverclyde Heritage Forum, output from which will ultimately inform a refresh of the Action Plan underpinning the Inverclyde Heritage Strategy.

3.9 **Libraries as Community Spaces**

Inverclyde Libraries is actively supporting the 'Flippin' Pain' campaign as part of the Self-management of Chronic Pain Sub-group hosted by the HSCP's Maximising Independence team. Flippin' Pain is a UK-wide public health campaign focused on changing how people think about, talk about, and treat persistent pain. In May books and self-help information about persistent pain were made available in all library branches. The library service will also participate in the Persistent Pain Community Appointment Day taking place at The Beacon Arts Centre on 23rd October.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has asked Scotland's libraries to help inform the public about Pension Credit as part of its Pension Credit Campaign. Relevant information will be made available in all library branches.

Playlist for Life is a UK-based charity that advocates for the use of personal playlists of meaningful music to help people with dementia. The organization believes that music can tap into memories, emotions, and parts of the brain that are often untouched by the disease. The playlists are used to improve mood, reduce anxiety, and stimulate conversations, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for those living with dementia and their caregivers. The Playlist for Life organisation has now launched the 'Soundtrack to Inverclyde' community playlist. This will be promoted through Inverclyde Libraries to encourage the Inverclyde community to get involved and submit a song which is meaningful to them. The aim is to provide a mix of music from all eras, genres and cultures, reflecting the communities and people that live in Inverclyde. 'Soundtrack to Inverclyde' will be celebrated on National Playlist Day on 19th September.

Macmillan Advice Service and Ardgowan Hospice held drop-in sessions in Gourock Library over a 10-week period to offer support to members of the community affected by cancer. Your Voice held a pop-up information session in Greenock Central Library to encourage library visitors to

engage with the ongoing cancer screening survey that is taking place in Inverclyde, which aims to understand why engagement with cancer screening is currently low in the area.

Inverclyde Libraries now hosts T.I.M.E Inverclyde - an LGBTQ+ youth empowerment community group – in Port Glasgow Library for a monthly adult book group. The group is open to anyone 18+ and focuses on reading and discussion LGBT books.

Sight Scotland Veterans donated a ClearView Magnifier to Central Library during Hi-Vis fortnight when libraries were promoting services to people who have a visual impairment. Staff will support people in how to use the magnifier and enable them to read a wider range of texts.

3.10 **Outreach**

Inverclyde Libraries' Development team has been out and about over the summer months, including outreach activity at the Gourock Highland Games, and the Kilmacolm and Port Glasgow Agricultural Show in May; and at the Comet Festival in June. During the Comet Festival Newark Castle hosted the library service and Scottish folk tales storyteller Allison Galbraith at a series of well-attended storytelling sessions. All outreach activity seeks to promote the resources available to all Inverclyde residents through the branch library network.

In support of Inverclyde Libraries' commitment to sustainability, several branch libraries participated in School Uniform exchange schemes in partnership with their local schools. Spaces were made available for parents to drop off and collect items appropriate to their child's school. In addition, Inverclyde Libraries now offer withdrawn stock to care homes, sheltered housing complexes and the local hospital. This allows the stock to extend its useful life, but without the pressure some people and/or establishments might feel when library books have a return date.

3.11 **Children and Young People**

'Story Garden' is the theme of this year's Summer Reading Challenge, which launched on Saturday 21st June in the community garden at Greenock South West Library. In the run up to the summer holidays, the Children and Young People's team spoke to pupils at school assemblies to promote the challenge. The Adult Development Team also organised an Adult Summer Reading Challenge, with a complementary 'green' theme.

A programme of summer holiday activities ran across all libraries, with a wide range of activities including a visit from a beekeeper, storytelling at Wemyss Bay train station, a family film show, and a visit from teen author William Hussey. The team also attended two stay and play sessions at Boglestone and Grieve Road community hubs to promote library services.

During Bookbug Week in May the theme of 'Bookbug's Big Bedtime' was celebrated across branches with bedtime story sessions and toy sleepovers. Bookbug continues to be a hugely important resource for families in Inverclyde – sessions have been delivered for new mums in Inverkip Community Hub as part of overarching wellbeing support; and at the Gourock Highland Games, the Comet Festival, the Beacon Arts Centre, and at the Big Beach Clean Picnic at Lunderston Bay. Bespoke Bookbug sessions for families with Care Experienced Parents, and Au-some Bookbug sessions for families of children with additional support needs have been delivered in Central Library.

The HSCP Oral Health Team attended Bookbug sessions across all branches offering advice and free toothbrushes and toothpaste for young children. Library staff tailored these sessions to include dental themed stories and songs. Free dental packs for young children are also available by the community fridges at Central Library and Port Glasgow Library.

During Refugee Week in June a Moomin storytelling evening was held in Central Library, with all branches displaying a Moominhouse for members of the public to decorate their own room, tying in with the 80th anniversary of the first Moomin book publication which was the official book of this year's Refugee Week.

3.12 **Author Events**

Inverclyde Libraries secured part-funding from Scottish Book Trust for five Live Literature sessions during 2025-26 totalling £550. Three sessions will be used for adult programming and two for children and young people. The library service also secured a bursary from Creative Scotland through the Galoshans Consortium Partners for author and former Children's Laureate, Joseph Coelho to deliver a session during the Galoshans Festival for local school pupils. This event will be hosted by the Beacon Arts Centre and is based on his poetry collection 'Spooky Poems Aloud'.

3.13 **Staff Development**

In the lead up to the schools' summer holiday and the launch of the annual Summer Reading Challenge all library staff have undertaken both annual Child Protection Training delivered by the Council's Children's Rights Officer as well as bespoke Reading Agency training around this year's challenge theme of 'Story Garden'.

Library staff Health and Wellbeing Champions within each branch continued their personal development by attending training on the topic of Consumer technology to support self-management of long-term health conditions'; another key role library staff undertake in providing access to trusted health information to customers.

3.14 **The HERDS – Art Fund project**

The Watt Institution participated THE HERDS - a public art and climate action initiative with global reach. As part of the project the Watt team worked in partnership with local schools and the community to collect ocean plastic from River Clyde beaches and transform it into 3D-printed puppets representing local marine animals impacted by plastic pollution. The project culminated with a puppet procession at the Watt, helping to celebrate World Ocean Day. This project extends work ongoing at the Watt to encourage dialogue informed by their Natural Sciences collection about the climate crisis. Puppets and resources produced during this project will form part of a new display within the museum space.

3.15 **Inverclyde STEM Festival**

The Watt Institution hosted the Inverclyde STEM Festival Family Day on Saturday 14 June. The event attracted an audience of over 800 across a full day of activities including Lego engineering; electronic snap-circuits; carboard construction; 3D scanning; and digital music making.

3.16 **2025 ICON Awards**

In recognition of the work ongoing at the Watt Institution to explore themes linked to the climate crisis, they have been shortlisted as a finalist in the 2025 ICON Awards in the Net Zero category.

3.17 **Fixing Our Broken Planet**

The Watt Institution has been selected as one of only three venues across the UK to be a partner in the Natural History Museum's (NHM) Fixing Our Broken Planet Campaign. As well as receiving funding from NHM the Watt will have access to staff expertise, collection resources, and exhibition content. This project will enable the Watt team to learn more about our collections, and explore new ways to tell stories that address climate change, and themes associated with empire and colonialism.

3.18 **Exhibitions**

As part of the Council's wider celebrations of Port Glasgow's 250th birthday, an exhibition about Newark Castle has been installed in the Watt Hall. Signposting between the Watt Institution and Newark Castle, encouraging visitors to explore both sites, is a key element of the exhibition.

A new exhibition exploring links between the Watt Institution collection and the Glasgow School of Art is now installed in the Art Gallery. This exhibition showcases work by former pupils and tutors at the art school, exploring the breadth and importance of the Council's fine art collection.

3.19 **Inverclyde Music Service**

While the Inverclyde Music Service enjoys its summer break, confirmation has been received of the continuation of YMI (Youth Music Initiative) funding from Creative Scotland, to deliver innovative and engaging music tuition for all Primary 5 pupils across the authority area.

Early review of the 2024/25 academic session shows an increase of almost 11% in pupil participation on the previous year. 1,650 pupils are now receiving music tuition through the service, across Inverclyde Schools. The focus in the coming academic session will be on maintaining these participation levels, whist promoting and encouraging participation in bands and ensembles.

Looking ahead, the IMS team have confirmed two dates for your diary. The Christmas Concert will take place on Thursday 4 December, and the Spring Gala Concert will take place on Thursday 26 March. Both concerts will be held in Greenock Town Hall.

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**

(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) <u>Children and Young People</u>

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.

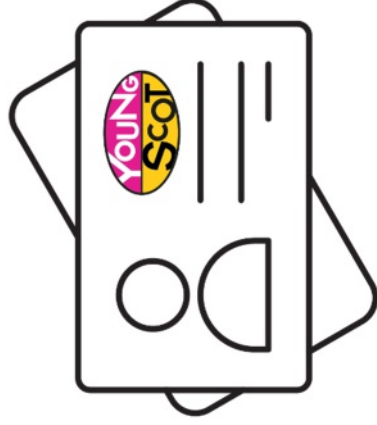**5.0 CONSULTATION**

5.1 N/A

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 N/A

Appendix 1

young.scot

YOUNG SCOT

Local Impact
Report Summary
April 2024 – March 2025

Inverclyde Council

8,409

Free bus journeys taken by young people from Inverclyde between April 2024 and March 2025

Free bus travel for U22 year olds enables young people to access education, employment and leisure, and have more flexibility to access services across the area.

11,148

Young Scot National Entitlement Cards…

…issued in your area. Over **88%** of 11 to 25-year-olds in Scotland have a card. The card gives access to a wide range of services, including PASS Proof of Age and discounts.

1,654

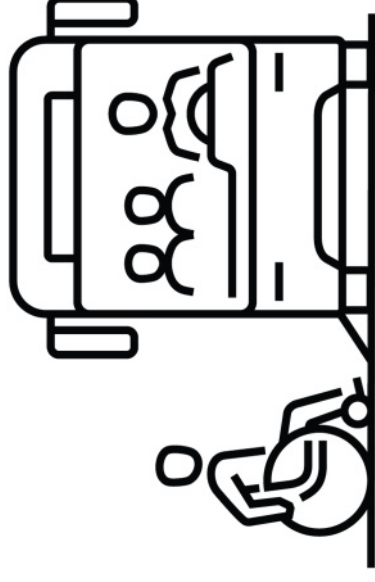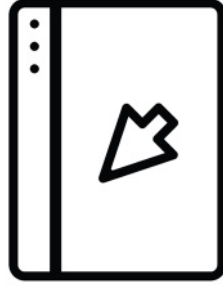**Inverclyde young people are signed up to Young Scot Membership.**

They collect Young Scot Rewards points for taking part in positive activities, use their points to access a range of exciting and innovative rewards and access online discounts.

41

Inverclyde young people have contributed to local and national decision making

by taking part in our Young Scot Hive participation and engagement programme, completing surveys or using our online voting site.

4M video views on our social media channels, and 1.6M views to our young.scot website

young.scot is Scotland's leading information website for young people – packed full of quality-assured information tailored specifically for young people. We share this information with young people within digital spaces they spend their time in – including TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Spotify and YouTube. 3,505 of those views were visits to your local pages on young.scot.

80

Young people in Inverclyde have benefitted from the Young Carers Package over the past five years.
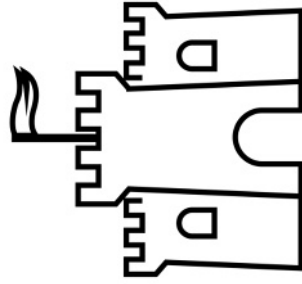
Young Carers Package #YSCarers

Historic Environment Scotland offers £1 entry to card holders.

In April - December 2024, 16,998 visits were made to Historic Scotland properties using the Young Scot £1 entry. We estimate savings to young people of £195,000 as a result.

YOUNG SCOT

young.scot

Your Journey
Your Choice

Whether you're commuting, exploring, or heading to school, travel safely and respectfully.

Appendix 2

Speak up: If you feel unsafe or see something wrong, tell the driver or a trusted adult.

Be a role model: How you act sets the vibe, others follow your lead.

Be respectful: Treat drivers, staff, and other passengers how you'd like to be treated.

In an emergency always phone 999.

⚠️ **Don't risk losing your access to transport**

Inverclyde council

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks** **Corporate Director,** **Education, Communities and** **Organisational Development**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/55/25/HS**
Contact Officer:	**Hugh Scott,** **Service Manager** **Inclusive Communities**	**Contact No:**	**01475 715459**
Subject:	**Ward 6 Community Facilities Review**		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☒ For Decision ☐ For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to undertake a detailed review of community provision within the Ward 6 area and report the findings back to a future meeting of the Committee.

1.3 As part of the Council's Delivering Differently programme, a strategic review of the leisure estate was undertaken in 2022. This review considered the Indoor Leisure Facilities, the Outdoor Leisure Facilities and Community Facilities. The report detailed the financial and operational challenges for community facilities due to increased costs and ongoing budget pressures. Several of these facilities exist within the Ward 6 area.

1.4 The report highlights the current condition and usage of various leisure facilities, along with planned maintenance and upgrades, many of which are impacted by financial constraints. These issues are compounded by the need to meet net zero targets and improve energy efficiency across public sector assets.

1.5 To ensure alignment with Inverclyde Council's wider strategic objectives and reflect current financial and operational realities, it is proposed that Council Officers carry out a review of community facilities in the Ward 6 area and make recommendations for the future operation of these facilities.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee:

    i.   requests officers undertake a review of community facility provision within the Ward 6 area and report back to a future meeting of the Committee.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 The closure of several Community Facilities was considered as part of the Council's 2018-19 budget process. Details of the facilities affected were contained in a report to the January 2018 Education & Communities Committee. The savings proposals were based upon a review of community facility provision carried out by Max Associates in 2015.

3.2 A decision was taken in the March 2018 budget not to progress with the proposal to close community facilities at that time. However, a further review of community facilities within Ward 7 was undertaken during the remainder of 2018, which resulted in both rationalisation and development of community facilities in the area.

3.3 As part of Delivering Differently Programme, a strategic review of the leisure estate was undertaken in 2022 to assess the condition, suitability, and utilisation of Inverclyde Leisure's and Inverclyde Council property assets, identify backlog maintenance and lifecycle replacement liabilities, and evaluate the assets' alignment with service delivery and policy objectives.

3.4 A key driver of the review was to address the technical, financial, and operational challenges associated with transitioning to net zero emissions by 2045, necessitating detailed feasibility studies and planning for low/zero carbon heating solutions and energy efficiency improvements across the estate. Additionally, the review aimed to inform future investment priorities, optimise asset utilisation, and ensure compliance with legislative and policy frameworks, such as Scottish Government targets for decarbonisation and asset management standards.

3.5 The findings on community facilities indicate that while they are important for local engagement, they face challenges related to usage, operational costs, and future sustainability. The report acknowledges Inverclyde Leisure (IL) cannot continue to deliver all of the services on behalf of the Council within the current management fee it receives.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 The CMT has given consideration as to the need to assess overall provision in the Ward 6 area strategically rather than considering the future retention of individual community facilities in isolation. In this regard, Members are asked to request officers to bring forward a detailed assessment of community provision within the Ward 6 area, as part of overarching leisure estate strategic planning, and report back to a future Committee.

4.2 This review will follow the precedent set by the Ward 7 community facilities assessment, ensuring a consistent approach to strategic asset planning that aligns with the methodology and priorities outlined in the Inverclyde Leisure estate review.

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**

Any financial implications as a result of the review will be considered as part of the 2026/28 budget process.

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
					.

5.3 **Legal/Risk**

Any funding changes and financial implications will be actioned in line with the funding agreement.

5.4 **Human Resources**

There are HR implications for IL associated with any potential reduction in IL facilities.

5.5 **Strategic**

IL is a significant partner to achieving the aims of the Council in respect of the delivery of its Corporate Plan and also the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

5.6 **Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People**

The Council will be required to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment as part of any proposed changes to the Community Facilities Estate.

(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 as part of any reduction in service, 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

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?

X	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed as part of the wider IL strategic asset review.
	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?

X	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA will be required if services are reduced.
	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**

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

Maintaining all facilities which currently exist in the leisure estate will have significant implications for the Council's ability to meet the requirements for Net Zero.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

X	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken as part of the wider IL strategic asset review.
	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 Consulted with CMT and property services

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Community Facilities Service Review Education & Communities Committee 23 Jan 2018 EDUCOM13/18/MM

7.2 Ward 7 Community Facilities Review Education & Communities Committee 4 Sep 2018 EDUCOM/84/2018/HS

7.3 Inverclyde Leisure Strategic Asset Review and 2023/25 Funding Shortfall Education & Communities Committee 1 Nov 2022 EDUCOM/59/22/RB

7.4 Inverclyde Leisure Strategic Asset Review

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/57/25/SC**
Contact Officer:	Sarah Christie Cultural Services Manager	**Contact No:**	
Subject:	**Inverclyde Libraries Stock Management 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 Inverclyde Libraries Stock Management Policy.

1.3 This policy formalises the Libraries Service's approach to Stock Management, reflecting the obligations of the service in a sectoral and strategic context.

1.4 The policy supports Council officers by establishing a clear framework for decision making regarding stock selection, underpinned by a commitment to intellectual freedom.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is recommended to

- note the contents of this report; and
- approve the Inverclyde Libraries Stock Management Policy in Appendix 1

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 Inverclyde Libraries Service comprises both the public library service and libraries in Inverclyde secondary schools. In total, there are six public library branches and five libraries in secondary schools. The James Watt Library which is managed within the Watt Institution sits outwith the scope of this policy.

3.2 In line with sector best practice, a Stock Management Policy outlines the basis on which library resources are acquired, selected and managed. The policy also reflects sector guidance on access to information and censorship. The policy will be subject to a five-year review.

3.3 Approval of the Inverclyde Libraries Stock Management Policy is sought in support of ongoing service improvement. The policy – attached as Appendix 1 – reflects guidance from both the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) and the Chartered Institution of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP).

3.4 The Stock Management Policy includes Inverclyde Libraries' stated position on access to information and censorship, and its commitment to upholding the CILIPs statement on intellectual freedom [originally issued in 1963, revised in 1997, 2005 and 2021), which states that 'access [to library resources] should not be restricted on any grounds except that of the law'.

3.5 The policy further outlines approaches to stock management that ensure accessibility for all customers, across the authority area. This includes the range of stock available in each branch; the circulation of stock between branches; stock requests; accessing age-appropriate stock; and the disposal of stock no longer required.

3.6 Adherence to the Stock Management Policy ensures that library users have access to a wide range of stock, alongside advice and guidance in their reading choices. It encourages diverse reading habits and promotes reading as a creative act within the wider lifelong learning agenda. The policy seeks to maximise the usage of available stock, encourage library membership, and support bringing readers together for reading and literature events.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 It is proposed that this policy provides a transparent framework for the management of stock across Inverclyde Libraries Service. This includes decision making in the procurement of new stock and the disposal of old stock. The policy also provides a clearly stated position in terms of the Libraries Service's commitment to intellectual freedom.

4.2 It is proposed that Committee approve the Inverclyde Libraries Stock Management Policy, which reflects the operational needs of the library service.

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**

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

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**

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 across Inverclyde Libraries Service; it has been developed in line with sector guidance and reflects nationally agreed standards of good practice.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Managing Safe and Inclusive Public Library Services

Inverclyde council

Organisational Development, Human Resources and Performance

INVERCLYDE LIBRARIES STOCK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Version No

1.0

Produced by:

Inverclyde Council
Municipal Buildings
GREENOCK
PA15 1LX

2025

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Responsibility		
Policy Title	**Corporate Group**	**Service**
Inverclyde Libraries Stock Management Policy	CCER	Cultural Services

Change History		
Version	**Date**	**Comments**
1.0	25/7/2025	

Distribution
Education and Communities Committee; Director of Education and Communities; Head of Service Communities, Culture and Education Resources; Cultural Services Manager; Libraries Team Leader, Library Development Officers, Supervisors and Senior Library Assistants

Policy Review		
Updating Frequency	**Next Review Date**	**Responsible Officer**
5 years	July 2030	Cultural Services Manager

Policy Review and Approval			
Name	**Action**	**Date**	**Communication**

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Inverclyde Libraries Stock Management Policy outlines the principles by which library stock is acquired, selected, managed, promoted and made accessible for the benefit of the people of Inverclyde. In line with the role of publicly funded library services the policy includes a commitment to intellectual freedom, and to providing free access to information on a range of subjects for the whole community.

Members of library staff are responsible for the management of stock following the principles laid down in this stock policy and acting within current legal requirements.

This policy will be publicly available to view in all Inverclyde Libraries and on the Inverclyde Council website.

1.2 BACKGROUND

This Stock Management Policy has been developed in line with sector guidance. *Forward – Scotland's Public Library Strategy 2021-2025* states that library services should publish a stock policy detailing accessible options and diverse stock selection methods.

This policy will underpin procedures for stock selection, maintenance and disposal used by library staff across Inverclyde Libraries Service, including its public libraries and libraries within secondary schools.

1.3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Stock Management Policy aligns with strategic priorities locally and nationally:

The vision of Inverclyde Libraries is for "an enriched, enhanced, empowered Inverclyde" and its mission is "to inform and inspire the people of Inverclyde by ensuring access to reading, learning and cultural opportunities for all."

This policy will help ensure that Inverclyde Libraries Service meets the following strategic aims and/or associated local actions as outlined in *Forward – Scotland's Public Library Strategy*:

- Embed libraries as lead contributors to reading and literacy by closing the learning gap in communities, through national programmes and local initiatives
- Encourage active citizenship through access to trusted, accurate information which empowers communities to make informed decisions
- Reflect the rich and diverse communities in both library resources and programming to make them accessible to all
- Ensure investment in physical and digital stock reflects the needs of users through robust consultation
- Develop a service improvement culture which embeds consistent data measurement and self-evaluation practices

In addition, the role of the school library in curating a range of reading material, resources and activities to support teaching and learning, and promote information literacy across the curriculum, is highlighted by *Vibrant Libraries, Thriving Schools, a National Strategy for School Libraries in Scotland*.

The Stock Management Policy is further informed by:
- Scottish Reading Strategy
- A Culture Strategy for Scotland
- A Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing Action Plan (produced by the Scottish Library and Information Council, the ALLIANCE, the Digital Health and Care Innovation Centre, and Scottish Government Self-Management and Health Literacy Team)

Furthermore, Inverclyde Libraries is committed to embedding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into its strategic planning. This policy supports Article 13 - Freedom of Expression; Article 17 - Access to Information; Article 28 - Right to Education; and Article 31 - Right to Leisure, Play, and Cultural Life.

1.4 LINKS TO LEGISLATION

Equality Act 2010
Human Rights Act 1998

1.5 AIM

This policy aims to ensure that library stock across Inverclyde Libraries Service is selected and managed in an effective manner, making the best use of resources, and meeting accessibility requirements. It also includes a statement on intellectual freedom and censorship which provides a clear rationale for appropriate responses to stock challenges.

2 SCOPE

This policy provides a framework for decisions covering the entire stock and resources of Inverclyde Libraries, including public libraries and libraries within secondary schools. It does not cover the James Watt Library which is managed within the Watt Institution, although the library service works with the Watt Institution to make local history material accessible across the library network.

The term 'stock' relates to all formats, including but not limited to physical books, audio books, newspapers and magazines, film, music, toys, tools, as well as electronic books and other electronic information resources.

3 POLICY CONTENT

3.1 PURPOSE

This policy outlines the basis on which library resources for Inverclyde Libraries are acquired, selected and managed.

This policy supports Inverclyde Libraries in:

- ensuring access to reading, learning, and cultural opportunities for all
- promoting reading for pleasure, literacy, and lifelong learning,
- providing information and ideas to support learning and teaching across the curriculum.
- promoting digital inclusion by providing access to digital services
- promoting economic wellbeing by providing free access to resources
- promoting health & wellbeing by providing access to a range of resources
- providing local opportunities for culture and creativity to flourish within Inverclyde's communities
- ensuring provision of excellent public services by offering access to a range of accurate, balanced, and current information in all appropriate formats.

3.2 CORE PRINCIPLES

Inverclyde Libraries aims to:

- provide a sufficient range of stock in order to meet learning, leisure and cultural, and health and wellbeing needs in a variety of formats (print, large print, audio, electronic)
- meet the library-related needs of the community in line with public sector equality duty. We will do this with due consideration to those with protected characteristics as specified in the Equalities Act 2010
- deliver free access to materials to all

3.3 STOCK ACQUISITION

3.3.1. Stock acquisition is dictated by budget allocation, space restrictions and the existing and planned use of libraries. Inverclyde Libraries develops an annual Stock Strategy, which informs the distribution of the annual budget for stock acquisition and ensures Best Value by purchasing the majority of stock items as part of a national consortium. Inverclyde Libraries positively welcomes suggestions for items of stock from both individuals and groups within our local communities. This forms part of our commitment to public involvement in service development.

The needs and profiles of the communities we serve are taken into account when stock is selected for purchase. We are committed to increasing use of our services by all, and active steps are taken to develop methodologies for identifying and addressing the needs of those who do not currently use library services, as well as meeting the needs of our existing members.

Each branch or school library aims to provide a broad-based and varied stock, appropriate to its size and the reading and information needs of its users. By providing a combination of new and older titles, we aim to ensure that a given library should be able to cater for the majority of everyday demands from its readers in

terms of subject coverage and depth of treatment. As a result, individual libraries may need to place different emphasis on certain areas or categories of stock in order to accommodate local reading demands. We consider it important not to stereotype a community or to distort the balance of stock. Smaller libraries cannot be fully comprehensive, but they stock a range of titles sufficient to stimulate wider reading habits.

3.3.2   Self-published materials - due to the lack of editorial and legal scrutiny involved in the production of self-published materials, Inverclyde Libraries will only purchase and stock this type of resource on very rare occasions. However, self-published material from local authors or material with local content will be considered for addition to stock. Consideration will also be given to self-published titles by established authors whose works have previously been published by recognised publishers.

3.3.3.   Artificial Intelligence (AI) Generated Material - Inverclyde Libraries will consider critically whether a given piece of media is genuine in an increasingly AI-mitigated information flow. Inverclyde Libraries will only purchase and stock this type of resource on very rare occasions.

3.3.4   Donations - Inverclyde Libraries may accept donations of stock on the understanding that they are subject to the same selection criteria as applies to the purchase of stock. We therefore reserve the right to decide on the most suitable location for donated stock selected for retention, and to dispose of materials not required.

3.4 STOCK SELECTION

3.4.1   Printed Resources - knowledgeable and experienced staff manage the stock selection process and use evidence based approaches to inform their work. Items from the criteria listed below will generally – but not exclusively – be used to inform the process:

- Popularity of author and subject
- Quality
- Cost
- Format
- Local and Scottish interest
- New editions, particularly in fields subject to change
- Requests from readers
- Media coverage
- Statistical evidence
- Professional knowledge and expertise
- Diversity of communities across Inverclyde
- National and local literacy initiatives which improve literacy and numeracy
- Relevance to the school curriculum

Inverclyde Libraries makes all reasonable attempts to achieve diversity of stock and will work in partnership with local and national agencies to represent the stock needs of the community in line with local and national priorities.

3.4.2   Electronic Resources – electronic information resources will be assessed and selected on an individual basis. Characteristics on which the resources will be assessed include quality and uniqueness of content, relevancy and currency of content, authority, overlap with other e-resources, frequency of updating, target audience, price, licence arrangements, website functionality, accessibility (IP address or password), customer support, reporting capabilities, etc.

Electronic books and periodicals will be assessed and selected according to both the criteria above for printed books and to that for electronic information resources.

3.4.3   In alignment with circular economy principles non-traditional lending resources, such as garden tools and toys, will be assessed and selected on an individual basis. Characteristics on which these resources will be assessed include:
- community demand and interest
- target audience
- educational or skill-building potential
- environmental impact
- robustness and durability
- ease of cleaning and sanitation
- maintenance requirements
- storage requirements
- safety standards
- ease of use
- clear instructions
- ergonomics (for tools)
- age appropriateness (for toys)
- price
- overlap with existing resources
- portability/transportation
- accessibility for pickup / return.

3.5 ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND CENSORSHIP

3.5.1   Public Libraries

Inverclyde Libraries adhere to the statement on intellectual freedom, access to information and censorship issued by The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) [statement originally issued in 1963, revised in 1997,2005 and 2021]:

"It is the role of a library and information service that is funded from the public purse to provide, as far as resources allow, access to all publicly available information, whether factual or fiction and regardless of media or format, in which its users claim

legitimate interest…. Access should not be restricted on any grounds except that of the law. If publicly available material has not incurred legal penalties then it should not be excluded on moral, political, religious, racial or gender grounds, to satisfy the demands of sectional interest."

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals' (CILIP) Managing Safe and Inclusive Public Library Services (2023) practical guide provides guidance to library authorities on the provision of library stock that may be considered controversial in nature. To reject stock solely because it is considered controversial would not be in the interests of intellectual freedom. Controversial material will be evaluated according to our selection criteria and the principles of this policy.

Whilst Inverclyde Libraries welcomes suggestions for stock, we will not add or remove any item of stock from our shelves solely at the request of any individual or group. Members of library staff do not label items to warn customers of 'offensive' or 'harmful' content.

Responsibility for the use of library materials from the adult lending collections by children rests with their parents or legal guardians, not with library staff. Procedures are in place, in line with legal requirements, to ensure that classified items such as DVDs are not issued to borrowers of inappropriate age. Similarly, parents or guardians must assume responsibility for guiding young people in their use of our digital and online services, whether these are accessed via the internet or apps. Inverclyde Libraries accepts no responsibility for materials accessed from the providers. The library only restricts access to material in order to protect it from damage or theft, not as a form of censorship. Some items of library stock are available for use in the library only and cannot be borrowed. These items are required for study, research or to answer customer enquiries and need to be available to all customers whenever required. They include directories and other reference resources and items for Local Studies, and these items are clearly marked as Reference Stock.

3.5.2. School Libraries

Inverclyde Libraries will make available in its school libraries materials which will enrich and support the curriculum, stimulate growth in learning and illuminate and illustrate different views, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of individual learners. We will oppose censorship for any purpose other than for material that is proscribed by law.

This joint statement from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), the CILIP School Libraries Group, and the School Library Association is intended to provide clear guidance for library staff and school leadership when considering issues relating to intellectual freedom and censorship:

"As leadership organisations for School Libraries, we believe that:

i)   *Intellectual freedom – the freedom to read, to learn, to question and to access information – is central to a functioning democracy*

ii)   It is a core role of libraries, librarians, and other library staff to promote
        intellectual freedom on behalf of their users, to empower users to enact their
        information rights and to oppose censorship in all its forms – both tacit and
        explicit.

iii)   School librarians and library staff are responsible for promoting and
        preserving intellectual freedom by working with school leadership and
        teaching colleagues to support children and young people in their
        development as informed and responsible citizens."

3.6 STOCK MANAGEMENT AND ACCESS TO STOCK

Inverclyde Libraries uses a range of strategies to ensure that stock is accessible to customers. Stock is managed as an Inverclyde-wide resource. Any item in stock at any public library is accessible to all customers through free reservations.

Inverclyde Libraries ensures that stock is circulated around the libraries to improve the range of titles available in each library and to increase the cost effectiveness of each purchase.

This is done using a range of strategies including, information gained from community profiles and evidence based stock management information taken from the Library Management System.

Inverclyde School libraries have a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction titles available for students to borrow covering many genres and suitable for all interests and abilities.

Titles which include mature themes and issues will be categorised as Senior Stock. S1-S3 pupils who request these titles may be required to obtain parental permission before borrowing.

Stock is routinely checked against agreed guidelines to ensure that it is current, in good condition and being used by library members. Inverclyde Libraries actively encourages readers to request items not currently in stock and gives all requests due consideration. Inverclyde Libraries operates a limited inter-library loan service whereby library members can access non-fiction resources not stocked within Inverclyde (charges apply).

Inverclyde Libraries will dispose of stock that is no longer required using a range of responsible and sustainable options.

3.7 STOCK AND READING PROMOTION

We seek to promote stock both to library users and to the wider public in order to:

- give the public access to a wide range of stock
- provide advice and guidance to individual borrowers in their reading choice
- encourage diverse reading habits
- promote reading as a creative act
- promote reading as part of the wider lifelong learning agenda
- maximise the usage of stock
- encourage library membership and use
- bring readers together for reading groups and literature events

3.8 MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed regularly and in line with any legislative and organisational changes.

3.9 ENQUIRIES

Enquiries regarding this policy should be addressed to:

Team Leader – Libraries

Inverclyde Libraries HQ

Wallace Place

GREENOCK

PA15 1JB

Tel: 01475 712330

Email: library.central@inverclyde.gov.uk

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 library service in upholding intellectual freedom.

4.2 CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chief Executive should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the library service in upholding intellectual freedom.

4.3 DIRECTORS

Directors should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the library service in upholding intellectual freedom.

4.4 HEADS OF SERVICE

Heads of Service should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the library service in upholding intellectual freedom.

4.5. SERVICE MANAGERS

The Service Manager has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this Stock Management 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

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The library service commits to both consulting and engaging with users and non-users on a regular basis, continuously reviewing services in the light of feedback received, and telling users and non-users how the service is performing. These objectives will be achieved by adherence to the service's Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

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:	2 September 2025
Report By:	Interim Chief Financial Officer and Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	FIN/47/25/AE/IC
Contact Officer:	Iain Cameron	Contact No:	01475 712832
Subject:	2025/26 Education Revenue Budget and 2024/25 Out-turn		

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 Education Revenue Budget outturn for 2024/25 and the 2025/26 projected position, including details of action being taken to reduce the projected overspend.

1.3 In 2024/25, excluding the carry forward of Earmarked Reserves, there was an overspend of £77,000 within the Education Committee. This was a decrease in expenditure of £43,000 from the projected outturn reported to Committee in May 2025. More details are provided in section 3 of the report.

1.4 The total Education Revenue Budget for 2025/26, excluding Earmarked Reserves, is currently £117.723m. The latest projection is an overspend of £287,000, mainly due to:

(a) A projected overspend of £115,000 for Employee Costs. An overspend of £376,000 for Non Teacher employee costs is mainly due to the turnover savings target not being achieved within ASN. This is partially offset by an underspend of £261,000 for Teachers, due to a number of additional teaching posts being left vacant.

(b) Water costs are projected to underspend by £58,000 due to consumption in schools being lower than budgeted. The projected underspend is in line with previous years.

(c) Transportation Costs are projected to overspend by £220,000. There are projected overspends of £40,000 for Pupil Consortium Transport, £26,000 for Pupil Vocational Transport, £23,000 for SPT Mainstream School Buses, £65,000 for Gaelic School Transport and £47,000 for Internal Transport Drivers, mainly relating to ASN runs.

(d) Free School Meals Holiday Payments are projected to underspend by £93,000.

(e) ASN Placements out with Inverclyde are projected to overspend by £42,000 and Income from Other Local Authorities for placements within Inverclyde Schools is projected to over recover by £64,000.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the final outturn for 2024/25 and that the Committee's Revenue Budget is currently projected to overspend in 2025/26 by £287,000.

2.2 It is recommended that the Committee notes that proposals to address the underlying budget pressures will be presented to future meetings of this Committee.

Angela Edmiston   **Ruth Binks**
Interim Chief Financial Officer   **Corporate Director**
                                            Education, Communities & ODHR

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the current position of the 2025/26 Revenue Budget, as well as the 2024/25 final outturn and to highlight the main variances contributing to the £77,000 overspend for 2024/25 and the projected overspend of £287,000 for 2025/26.

3.2 The current Education Revenue Budget for 2025/26 is £117.723m, which is an increase of £0.666m from the Approved Budget, largely due to additional budget for Probationer Teachers.

3.3 **2024/25 OUT-TURN (£77,000 Overspend – 0.07%)**

The final outturn for the Education Revenue Budget in 2024/25, excluding Earmarked Reserves was an overspend of £77,000. This was £43,000 less expenditure than reported to the last Committee in May 2025.

The variations from budget by Service and movements from the projected outturn position reported in May, were as follows:

Service	Revised Budget 2024/25 £000	Outturn 2024/25 £000	Variance to Budget £000	Variance to Budget %	May Projected Variance £000	Movement Since May Projection £000
Corporate Director	161	171	10	6.2%	8	2
Education Services	96,535	96,252	(283)	(0.3%)	(303)	20
Inclusive Education	18,991	19,341	350	1.8%	415	(65)
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	**115,687**	**115,764**	**77**	**0.1%**	**120**	**(43)**

3.4 The actual outturn excluding earmarked reserves was £115.764m which represents an overspend of £77,000. The main variances were as follows:

    (a) An underspend on Employee Costs of £226,000 of which £193,000 related to Teachers and £33,000 to other Education Employees. Additional Teacher vacancies were left vacant from August 2024.

    (b) An underspend of £49,000 for Water due to lower consumption within schools.

    (c) An underspend of £144,000 for PPP Schools Unitary Charge. This was mainly due to credits received for Insurance.

    (d) An overspend of £80,000 for Agency Staff used to cover Cleaning vacancies and Janitors' alarm call outs.

    (e) An overspend of £301,000 for Facilities Management Catering Supplies & Services. £262,000 of this overspend was Provisions expenditure, due to a combination of inflation and additional meals being produced. Catering Disposables accounted for £31,000 of the overspend. The Provisions budget was increased as part of the 2025/26 budget process.

    (f) An overspend of £218,000 for Transport Costs. (Mainstream Buses overspend £23,000, Gaelic Transport £63,000, Pupil Vocational & Consortium Transport overspend £49,000 and Internal Transport overspend £65,000).

    (g) An overspend of £299,000 for Early Years Partner Provider Payments. This is mainly due to increased uptake of Partner Provider nurseries. Action was taken in the 2025/26 budget process to address this overspend.

    (h) An underspend of £93,000 for Free School Meals holiday payments due to lower than budgeted uptake.

(i) An over recovery in Income of £138,000 for School Meal Income, £78,000 of which was due to a one-off grant from the Scottish Government to write-off historic bad debts in Primary Schools.

(j) An over recovery of £113,000 for Income from Other Local Authorities for ASN Placements within Inverclyde Schools.

3.5 **2025/26 Projected Outturn (£287,000 overspend 0.2%)**

The main projected variances contributing to the £287,000 overspend are explained in more detail below.

(a) Employee costs are projected to overspend by £115,000. This is mainly due to:
   i. An under achievement of turnover savings targets: £84,000 in Primary and Secondary non teachers, £426,000 in ASN and £35,000 in Other Inclusive Education.
   ii. An over recovery of CLD turnover savings of £88,000, mainly due to staff temporarily funded by grants not being back filled.
   iii. Within Facilities Management there is an over recovery of turnover savings of £122,000.
   iv. Projected over-recovery of turnover savings in the Teachers' budget of £261,000 mainly due to additional teaching posts being left vacant.

(b) A projected underspend in Water Charges across the Education Committee totalling £57,000.

(c) A projected overspend of £39,000 for Biomass heat generation charges at Port Glasgow Community Campus. This is more than offset by an over recovery of £69,000 for Renewable Heat Incentive and Feed-In Tariff Income.

(d) Within Facilities Management there are projected overspends of £30,000 for Agency Cleaning Staff, £20,000 for Janitors' Agency relating to Alarm Call Outs and £30,000 for Cleaning Materials and Disposables within Catering. Steps are being taken to address the use of Agency Staff, including the employment of Sessional staff to cover sickness absence.

(e) Transportation Costs are projected to overspend by £220,000. There are projected overspends of £40,000 for Pupil Consortium Transport, £26,000 for Pupil Vocational Transport, £23,000 for SPT Mainstream School Buses, £65,000 for Gaelic School Transport and £47,000 for Internal Transport Drivers. In addition to these projected variances, ASN external transport is projected to outturn £653,000 over budget. This overspend is being funded by a combination of earmarked reserve, pressures funding and additional Scottish Government ASL funding.

(f) A projected underspend of £93,000 for Free School Meals Holiday Payments due to actual uptake being lower than budgeted, in line with the previous financial year.

(g) A Projected overspend of £20,000 for Education HQ Licences

(h) A projected overspend of £42,000 for ASN Placements outwith Inverclyde, offset by additional income reported at 3.5(i).

(i) A projected over recovery of ASN Income from Other Local Authorities of £64,000. This over recovery partially offsets the projected overspend in ASN Employee Costs and ASN Placements.

3.6 **Earmarked Reserves**

Appendix 4 gives an update on the operational Earmarked Reserves. Spend to date on these operational Earmarked Reserves is 100% of phased spend and 8.7% of the projected expenditure for 2025/26.

3.7 **Virements**

There are no virements this Committee cycle.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 Steps are being taken to reduce the underlying budget pressures in the medium term with proposals to be presented to future Committees.

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**

The Financial Regulations state that the responsibility for ensuring Revenue Budgets are not exceeded lies with the Committee and Chief Officer (Corporate Director). Actions are being progressed at a Committee level to bring the Committee back within budget.

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 - 2025/26

Service	Approved Budget 2025/26 £000	Inflation £000	Virement £000	Movements Supplementary Budgets £000	Transferred to EMR £000	Revised Budget 2025/26 £000
Corporate Director	162					162
Education	96,793	72		794	(200)	97,459
Inclusive Education	19,981					19,981
Facilities Management	121					121
Totals	117,057	72	0	794	(200)	117,723

Movement Detail   £000

<u>External Resources</u>

Probationer Teacher Funding   794

                                                                       794

<u>Virements</u>

                                                                       0

<u>Inflation</u>

NDR Inflation   72

                                                                       72

                                                                       866

EDUCATION

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

CURRENT POSITION

2024/25 Actual £000	Subjective Heading	Approved Budget 2025/26 £000	Revised Budget 2025/26 £000	Projected Out-turn 2025/26 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/ (Under)
58,588	Employee Costs - Teachers	60,787	58,136	57,875	(261)	(0.4%)
32,098	Employee Costs - Non Teachers	30,974	31,067	31,443	376	1.2%
23,365	Property Costs	22,929	22,962	23,036	74	0.3%
7,838	Supplies & Services	7,925	8,013	7,958	(55)	(0.7%)
2,622	Transport Costs	2,391	2,397	2,617	220	9.2%
759	Administration Costs	885	885	888	3	0.3%
6,700	Other Expenditure	5,600	5,549	5,553	4	0.1%
(16,206)	Income	(14,434)	(11,086)	(11,160)	(74)	0.7%
115,764	**TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE**	**117,057**	**117,923**	**118,210**	**287**	**0.2%**
0	Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0	
0	DMR	0	(200)	(200)	0	
115,764	**TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING EARMARKED**	**117,057**	**117,723**	**118,010**	**287**	**0.2%**

2024/25 Actual £000	Objective Heading	Approved Budget 2025/26 £000	Revised Budget 2025/26 £000	Projected Out-turn 2025/26 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/ (Under)
171	**Corporate Director**	**162**	**162**	**162**	**0**	**-**
84,044	Education	84,252	85,118	84,296	(822)	(1.0%)
121	Facilities Management	121	121	150	29	23.9%
12,087	School Estate Management Plan	12,541	12,541	12,541	0	-
96,252	**TOTAL EDUCATION SERVICES**	**96,914**	**97,780**	**96,987**	**(793)**	**(0.8%)**
14,595	ASN	15,100	15,100	16,306	1,206	8.0%
2,565	Community Learning & Development	2,495	2,495	2,306	(189)	(7.6%)
2,181	Other Inclusive Education	2,386	2,386	2,449	63	2.6%
19,341	**TOTAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**	**19,981**	**19,981**	**21,061**	**1,080**	**5.4%**
115,764	**TOTAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE**	**117,057**	**117,923**	**118,210**	**287**	**0.2%**
0	Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0	
0	DMR	0	(200)	(200)	0	
115,764	**TOTAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE EXCLUDING EARMARKED RESERVES**	**117,057**	**117,723**	**118,010**	**287**	**0.2%**

EDUCATION

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

MATERIAL VARIANCES

Out Turn 2024/25 £000	Budget Heading	Budget 2025/26 £000	Proportion of Budget	Actual to 30-Jun-25 £000	Projection 2025/26 £000	(Under)/Over Budget £000	Percentage Over/(Under)
58,588	Employee Costs - Teachers	60,826	15,207	14,841	60,565	(261)	(0.4%)
32,098	Employee Costs - Non Teachers	31,081	6,727	7,092	31,457	376	1.2%
266	Water	340	57	48	283	(57)	(16.8%)
68	Biomass	84	10	15	123	39	46.4%
60	FM Cleaning - Agency Staff	0	0	25	30	30	-
20	FM Janitors - Agency Alarm Call Outs	0	0	0	20	20	-
74	FM Catering - Cleaning Materials/Disposables	46	12	27	76	30	65.2%
79	Pupil Transport Consortium	40	10	21	80	40	100.0%
36	Pupil Transport Vocational	13	0	0	39	26	200.0%
1,242	SPT Mainstream School Buses	1,228	307	313	1,251	23	1.9%
63	Gaelic Transport	0	0	0	65	65	-
544	Internal Transport Drivers	489	106	118	536	47	9.6%
65	HQ Purchase School Licences	50	50	67	70	20	40.0%
537	FSM Holiday Payments	630	106	89	537	(93)	(14.8%)
388	ASN Placements	371	93	107	413	42	11.3%
(46)	RHI / FIT Income	(55)	(14)	(30)	(124)	(69)	125.5%
(581)	Income from Other Local Authorities	(466)	(78)	(121)	(530)	(64)	13.7%
Total Material Variances						**214**	

EARMARKED RESERVES POSITION STATEMENT

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION

Project	Lead Officer/ Responsible Manager	Total Funding 2025/26 £000	Phased Budget 30-Jun-25 2025/26 £000	Actual 30-Jun-25 2025/26 £000	Projected Spend 2025/26 £000	Amount to be Earmarked for 2026/27 & Beyond £000	Lead Officer Update
Beacon Arts	Tony McEwan	60	0	0	0	60	Contingency, only to be used when required.
Probationers	Michael Roach	415	0	0	200	215	Contingency, only to be used if SG grant funding is lower than expected.
ASN Initiatives / Resources	Ruth Binks	600	0	0	180	420	Funding 1fte QIO Grade 1 from September 2025 and enhanced Summer ASN Playschemes. 30% of EMR projected to be spent 25/26 and 70% 26/27.
New Scots Funding	Michael Roach	207	46	46	147	60	Funding EAL Teachers.
Total		**1,282**	**46**	**46**	**527**	**755**	

Inverclyde council

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks** **Corporate Director** **Education, Communities &** **Organisational Development and** **Interim Chief Financial Officer**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/50/25/EM**
Contact Officer:	**Eddie Montgomery** **Interim Director - Environment**	**Contact No:**	**01475 712472**
Subject:	**Education Capital Programme 2025/28 – Progress**		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☐For Decision   ☒For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to consider performance for the Education part of the Education and Communities Committee and provide an update in respect of the status of the projects forming the Education Capital Programme.

1.3 The Education capital budget is £11.494m with total projected spend on budget. The Committee is projecting to spend £1.903m in 2025/26 with no slippage / advancement currently 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 2025/28 Capital Programme as outlined in the report and appendices.

Angela Edmiston   **Ruth Binks**
Interim Chief Financial Officer   **Corporate Director Education,**
                                                                   Communities and Organisational
                                                                   Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 This report shows the current position of the approved Education Capital programme reflecting the allocation of resources approved by Inverclyde Council on 6 March 2025.

2025/28 Current Capital Position

3.2 The Education capital budget is £11.494m. The current projection is £11.494m which means total projected spend is on budget. The budget for 2025/26 is £1.903m, with spend to date of £0.246m equating to 12.93%. The current projection is £1.903m with no slippage / advancement currently being reported. Appendix 1 details the capital programme.

Learning Estate Lifecycle Programme

3.3 **General:** The lifecycle programme for the Education estate is informed from externally procured condition surveys carried out in connection with asset management and Scottish Government School Estate Core Fact reporting. The last 5 yearly external condition surveys were undertaken via Aecom between October and December 2019 with an annual review carried out by Property Services to provide an overall asset condition rating which is reported as part of a range of Statutory Performance Indicators. The next full external survey exercise is now due and a funding allocation from the capital programme contingency was approved by the June 2024 Policy & Resources Committee. Officers have progressed the procurement of the necessary consultants with tenders returned and acceptance subject to approval of additional funding which is being requested via a report to the August 2025 Policy & Resources Committee. The lifecycle budget also addresses suitability issues identified from surveys undertaken through Heads of each establishment and sufficiency issues, where feasible, identified through the continued monitoring of school rolls and projections.

3.4 **Public Private Partnership (PPP) Schools:** The lifecycle programme across the Council's four PPP schools is managed as part of the contract through the Facilities Management provider with monitoring via Property Services. The rolling 2025/26 programme has been progressed with the majority of the planned works completed over the Easter and Summer holiday periods. A summary of the 2025/26 programme is included within Appendix 2.

3.5 **Estate Lifecycle Programme 2025/26:** The rolling 2025/26 programme across the estate is in progress and will look to maximise the use of school holiday periods wherever possible and term time works where feasible and able to be accommodated by establishments. A summary of the 2025/26 programme, as currently identified, is included within Appendix 2 with the larger scale projects also separately identified within Appendix 1. The approach to elemental works has been continued in 2025/26 as utilised in the previous year, with a series of contracts addressing specific areas such as flooring, decoration and toilet refurbishment involving multiple schools in combined tenders to aid internal resource efficiency and obtain better economies of scale through the use of a different range of contractors. As has previously been noted, it will be necessary to increasingly address larger lifecycle projects as the estate ages and in relation to the dates when each of the major refurbishment or new build projects under the previous School Estate Management Plan were completed.

3.6 **Artificial Pitches Asset Plan:** The activity under lifecycle also includes the work on school artificial pitches which continue to be progressed based on the asset plan agreed at the September 2020 Education & Communities Committee. A periodic review of the artificial pitch asset management plan is now due as part of the refresh of the various strands of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy and this work is in progress. No significant work is planned for 2025/26 with the majority of pitches across the estate having already received investment in the last 5 years. The work involved in reviewing the artificial pitches asset plan may involve externally procured specialist survey to establish the current condition and effectiveness of the existing planned preventative maintenance arrangements.

3.7 **Active Panel Refresh:** The Active Panel refresh programme is being progressed based on the approved 2021-28 Education Services Digital Learning Strategy. The next planned tranche of panel replacement is due in 2025 which will include three primary schools and two early years facilities as identified within Appendix 2.

3.8 **Net Zero:** The Councils approved 2022/27 Net Zero Action Plan includes an action under Energy Use in Buildings to consider energy efficiency improvements and incorporation of low carbon technologies in Council owned buildings as part of capital programme maintenance and lifecycle replacement activity.

The current lifecycle programme includes the Re-roofing project at Gibshill Children's Centre which will improve the fabric performance of the roof element of the building (last refurbished circa 2004 when the Building Standards U-value requirement was 0.25W/M SqK with the new value 0.11 W/M SqK, effectively doubling the thermal efficiency of the roof). The project has also incorporated 12.7kW of solar photovoltaic panels (38nr).

As noted above the school estate lifecycle projects will increasingly involve larger scale works and there is a need to also consider how those align with retrofit considerations and any retrofit studies undertaken on buildings including the availability of internal/external funding to support the delivery of Net Zero. There have been retrofit studies undertaken for three primary schools and one secondary school to date with a further three primary schools and one early years facility the subject of decarbonisation feasibility studies. The Council is also participating in a Net Zero Collaboration Group facilitated through hub West Scotland and in partnership with the BE-ST (Built Environment – Smarter Transformation) which is assisting in creating a roadmap for decarbonisation of the estate.

3.9 **Insurance Fund:** The final making good of damage across the estate caused as result of Storm Eowyn involves two larger projects and high-level roof areas at St Mary's and St Michael's Primary Schools. The work at St Mary's is projected to be substantially complete for the new term with the exception of one area which will be complete towards the end of August. The works at St Michael's is also nearing completion with completion anticipated late August / early September.

3.10 **Sufficiency Projects:** As noted above, the lifecycle fund also addresses sufficiency issues, where feasible, identified through the continued monitoring of school rolls and projections. As previously reported, a report to the April 2025 Committee on the Future of Additional Support Needs Specialist Provision identified expansion options to meet projected requirements for August 2025. Projects to expand spaces for pupils at Craigmarloch through reconfiguration of the Enterprise Centre and minor projects at All Saints Primary School (Communication and Language Base additional class) and Lomond View (relocation of NEST (formerly Thrive) from St Michael's Primary School) have been progressed over the summer and are projected to be complete for the start of the new term. The project to expand the Nursery Class at Moorfoot Primary School to address demand for places in Gourock has also been progressed with final certification anticipated to be in place for the new term.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 The Committee are asked to note the progress on projects 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
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 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 Interim Director – Environment.

7.0   BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1   None.

Appendix 1

EDUCATION CAPITAL REPORT

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION & COMMUNITIES

Project Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Est Total Cost	Actual to 31/3/25	Approved Budget 2025/26	Revised Est 2025/26	Actual to 31/07/25	Est 2026/27	Est 2027/28	Est Future Years
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
2025/26 Lifecycle Programme								
Gibshill Chidlren's Centre - Re-Roofing/PV	150	0	150	150	0	0	0	0
Whinhill/St Andrew's/ Newark - Façade Works	100	0	100	100	0	0	0	0
St Columba's/St Andrew's/Whinhill - Flooring/Decoration	150	0	150	150	0	0	0	0
Ardgowan/Gourock/Inverkip - WC Refurbishment	375	0	375	375	0	0	0	0
Moorfoot PS - Nursery Alterations/Expansion	60	0	60	60	0	0	0	0
Craigmarloch Expansion - Enterprise Centre Alterations	225	0	225	225	0	0	0	0
Remaining 2025/26 programme allocation	843	0	843	843	246	0	0	0
Balance of Lifecycle Fund	9,434	0	0	0	0	4,434	5,000	0
Complete on Site	157	0	0	0	0	157	0	0
Total Education	11,494	0	1,903	1,903	246	4,591	5,000	0

School / Centre Name	Lifecycle Element										Expenditure £000	Comments / description
	Floor Finishes	Decoration	Building Services / Systems	Fittings / Fitments	External Fabric Treatment	External Works / Fencing	Pitch / MUGA Asset Plan	Partial / Targeted Refurb	Sufficiency / Capacity Works	Active Panel Refresh		
Education Lifecycle Works 2025/26												
Education - Primary												
Aileymill Primary School			☑	☑	☑	☑					PPP FM	External decoration; ceiling tiles; lift lighting; disable call system replacement; external manhole and wall works.
All Saints Primary School			☑	☑	☑	☑					PPP FM	External decoration; ceiling tiles; lift lighting; barrel locks; nursery taps; disable call system replacement; external drainage (nursery; LED lighting upgrade
Ardgowan Primary School			☑					☑			tbc	Boiler flue upgrade; pupil toilet refurbishment.
Gourock Primary School								☑			tbc	Pupil toilet refurbishment.
Inverkip Primary School			☑	☑				☑			tbc	Pupil toilet refurbishment; water systems upgrade; loose furniture lifecycle replacement
Kilmacolm Primary School											-	
King's Oak Primary School											-	
Lady Alice Primary School										☑	tbc	
Moorfoot Primary School									☑	☑	60	Nursery expansion through internal remodelling.
Newark Primary School				☑	☑						tbc	External render clean and coating; signage.
St Andrew's Primary School	☑	☑			☑						tbc	External render clean and coating; partial decoration and flooring.
St Francis' Primary School				☑							tbc	Partial loose furnitue.
St John's Primary School											-	
St Joseph's Primary School						☑					tbc	Fencing at nursery.
St Mary's Primary School					☑						tbc	Storm damage repairs to roof (insurance funded).
St Michael's Primary School					☑						tbc	Storm damage repairs to roof (insurance funded).
St Ninian's Primary School										☑	tbc	
St Patrick's Primary School											-	
Wemyss Bay Primary School											-	
Whinhill Primary School	☑				☑						tbc	External render clean and coating; partial flooring.

☑ Work planned 2025/26

School / Centre Name	Lifecycle Element										Expenditure £000	Comments / description
	Floor Finishes	Decoration	Building Services / Systems	Fittings / Fitments	External Fabric Treatment	External Works / Fencing	Pitch / MUGA Asset Plan	Partial / Targeted Refurb	Sufficiency / Capacity Works	Active Panel Refresh		
Education - Secondary												
Clydeview Academy			☑	☑		☑					**PPP FM**	External decoration; ceiling tiles; part furniture and equipment (e.g. fitness suite / assembly projector / HE coldroom fridge); lift lighting; external drainage/ surafcing / markings work.
Inverclyde Academy				☑							**tbc**	Gaelic signage.
Notre Dame High School			☑	☑		☑					**PPP FM**	External decoration; ceiling tiles; part furniture and equipment (e.g. sensory room / HE coldroom fridge); lift lighting; external drainage/ surafcing / markings work.
Port Glasgow Community Campus									☑		**225**	Expansion of Craigmarloch within the Enterprise zone.
St Columba's High School	☑	☑									**tbc**	Partial flooring and decoration.
Education - Standalone Early Years Establishments												
Binnie Street Children's Centre											**-**	
Bluebird Family Centre											**-**	
Gibshill Children's Centre					☑						**150**	Re-roofing including u value improvement and PV panels.
Glenbrae Children's Centre											**-**	
Glenpark Early Learning Centre											**-**	
Hillend Children's Centre											**-**	
Larkfield Early Learning Centre						☑					**tbc**	Drainage works.
Rainbow Family Centre											**-**	
Wellpark Children's Centre						☑					**tbc**	Fencing works.
Education - ASN												
Lomond View Academy									☑		**tbc**	Alterations for NEST.

☑   Work planned 2025/26

Inverclyde council

AGENDA ITEM NO: 11

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	2 September 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/51/25/MR
Contact Officer:	Michael Roach, Head of Education	Contact No:	
Subject:	Education Services Improvement Plan 2025-26		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☒For Decision ☐For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to present the Education Services Improvement Plan for session 2025-26 for approval.

1.3 Councils are required under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 to publish a plan with local improvement objectives.

1.4 Inverclyde Council's Education Services Improvement Plan 2025-26 is appended to this report. The Standards and Quality Report for 2024-25 which was reported to Committee in May 2025 provides a focused summary of educational progress and a flavour of the work delivered by our establishments from April 2024 to April 2025. The Standards and Quality Report identified key areas where Inverclyde Education Services can improve further and draft targets for the Improvement Plan were shared.

1.5 This report shares the full final plan for 2025-26 and all actions that will be undertaken to achieve the intended outcomes. The plan is already under way and initial progress is being made. The plan seeks to support the ongoing improvement process of Schools and Early Learning Centres (ELC), addressing key areas for improvement.

1.6 For greater detail on the plans of any individual school, Elected Members should refer to the school or ELC's own Improvement Plan posted on their website. For schools this include details of how they will spend their Pupil Equity funding over the same time period.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee approves the content and the publication of the Improvement Plan for 2025 - 26.

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 which 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.

3.2 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.

3.3 As in previous years the annual report is made up of two parts, the Standards and Quality Report (presented to the Education Committee in May 2025) and the Improvement Plan. 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 shows how Inverclyde Education Services will pursue continuous improvement in key areas over the coming year.

3.4 The Improvement Plan identifies how we hope to build upon our success and further improve education in Inverclyde. Our key priorities remain consistent. This is because we made a commitment to schools to prioritise a few key areas and to provide continued support in these areas and not to overwhelm schools with competing priorities or levels of bureaucracy. We have further focussed the number of actions, priorities and projects against each national priority.

3.5 The Improvement Plan is written under the key national priorities which are:

- Achievement with a focus on literacy and numeracy
- Closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged
- Improvement in mental health and well-being
- Skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations

As well as this we also have two other areas of focus:

- Getting it right for every child
- Improving outcomes of care experienced children, young people and their families.

3.6 In the plan the actions and priorities we are taking as a service to address the first of these i.e., human rights and the needs of every child and young person, are highlighted in green. We see human and children's rights a golden thread throughout the plan.

4.0 Summary of key priorities and actions

4.1 **A Achievement with a focus on 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.

4.2 **B**   **Closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged**

B1 Implement the SEF Plan for sessions 25/26 and create a plan for session 2026/27: <u>Education Services in Inverclyde - Inverclyde Council.</u> 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.

C   **Improvement in mental health and well-being**

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 Skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations

D1 Continue to review and develop the post school offer in partnership with colleagues in the Environment and Regeneration team and wider partnership group.

D2 Work alongside colleagues in HSCP to implement the ASN leavers guidance in full by June 2026.

D3 All secondary 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 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 Clydeview 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 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.

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**

The Standards and Quality Report (2023/24) and this Service Improvement Plan (2024/25) fulfils our legal obligations under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 and the recently published statutory guidance under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 as amended by section 4 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

5.4 **Human Resources**

N/A

5.5 **Strategic**

The first section of the Education Service Plan (Pages 3 and 4) outline how this plan links to the overall Council Plan and other relevant plans such as the Children's Service 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 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.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty.

(c) <u>Children and Young People</u>

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**

Summarise any environmental / climate change impacts, positive or negative, 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.

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 N/A

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 See attached Education Service Plan 2024/25.

Inverclyde council

Education Services

Improvement Plan 2025/26

NURTURING INVERCLYDE

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD, CITIZEN AND COMMUNITY

Safe · Healthy · Achieving · Nurtured · Active · Respected · Responsible · Included

Nurturing Inverclyde

Inverclyde
council   EDUCATION SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025/26

Introduction

Welcome to the Inverclyde Education Services Improvement Plan. This plan forms the second part of our reporting and planning process for 2024/25 and 2025/26. The first part of this process is the Standards and Quality Report (SQR) for 2024/25 which can be found here: Education Services in Inverclyde - Inverclyde Council. The SQR allows us to report on our successes, the improvements we have made during the last year and to identify any areas for further development through our self-evaluation processes. Through our rigorous self-evaluation, we identify where we are performing well and areas that still require further improvement. In this way we can target our priorities for improvement over the coming year. A full glossary of terms used can be found at the end of the document.

The National Improvement Framework (NIF) requires an authority to prepare and publish annual plans and reports describing the steps they intend to take forward in pursuance of the NIF and the steps they have taken to improve outcomes over the course of the planning period.

The five priorities of the NIF are:-

- Improvement in mental health and well being

- Skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations

- Achievement with a focus on literacy and numeracy

- Human rights for all children and young people

- Closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged

In the plan below, the actions and priorities we are taking forward as a service address these priorities. We have retained a focus on getting it right for every child and our care experienced young people by having these as separate priorities. We continue to see the fourth priority i.e., human rights for all children and young people, as a golden thread throughout the plan, and as such have indicated how we are addressing these by highlighting actions relating to rights in green throughout the plan.

NIF Outcomes (previously drivers)

The previous six drivers of improvement have now been replaced with 7 key outcomes, the delivery of which will lead to improved educational outcomes for children and young people which are:

The outcomes we expect to achieve are:

- a globally respected, empowered, and responsive education system with clear accountability at every level that supports children, young people, and adult learners to thrive. The system enables the development of their knowledge, skills, values, and attributes that give them the best opportunity to succeed and contribute to Scotland's society and economy

- young people experiencing the benefit of schools and early years settings working in excellent partnerships with wider children's services and other partners, families, and communities, in line with the GIRFEC approach

- inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, and shape a sustainable future, while celebrating and supporting progression for all

- high levels of achievement across the curriculum for all learners, with action to close the poverty-related attainment gap

- highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs

- improving relationships and behaviour, and attendance, with increased engagement in learning and a culture of dignity and respect for all

- an education system engaging in digital technology to enhance all aspects of learning and teaching, supported by a digitally-skilled workforce and tackling digital inequality

Towards Empowerment

We will also consider how we can support the following dimensions of empowerment in our planning: autonomy, professional learning, participation and engagement collaboration, resources and impact.

Inverclyde's Strategic Outcomes for Children and Young People

Taking the national priorities into account, Inverclyde Education Services has identified strategic outcomes for the children and young people in our early learning centres and schools. These are:

- **Enhanced leadership at all levels will impact on learners ensuring that their outcomes continue to improve and are above national averages on all measures.**

- **All children and young people benefit from high quality learning experiences.**

- **All children and young people benefit from strong partnerships having been developed with families and the wider community. The ongoing partnerships contribute directly to raising attainment and achievement, and to securing positive and sustained destinations.**

- **All children and young people make expected or better than expected progress in all learning, but especially in literacy and numeracy, regardless of their background. Young people in Inverclyde use the skills they develop in our schools to achieve positive and sustained destinations.**

- **All children and young people in Inverclyde experience a high-quality curriculum that meets their needs.**

- **All children and young people feel safe and included in our schools and are achieving their potential.**

The plan will be evaluated by the Education Officer SIP oversight group which also tracks the progress of the plan at regular intervals throughout the year and will feed into the wider Children's Services Plan. The group meets at least four times a year to collate progress made, identify emerging impact and to analyse the data linked to the identified actions.

The Inverclyde Education Services Improvement Plan does not sit in isolation, it is informed by the overall alliance parentship plan, council plan Corporate Directorate Improvement Plan for Education, Communities & Organisational Development and the Inverclyde Children's Services Plan 2023-26.

The Inverclyde Education Services Improvement Plan directly supports the delivery of the following Inverclyde Alliance outcomes:

Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33

Theme 1: EMPOWERED PEOPLE

- Communities have their voices heard and influence the places and services that affect them.
  - Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced.

Theme 2: WORKING PEOPLE

- Poverty related gaps are addressed, so young people can have the skills for learning, life and work.

Theme 3: HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PLACES

  - People live longer and healthier lives.

Theme 4: A SUPPORTIVE PLACE

- Public protection and community safety are improved through targeting our resources to reduce the risk of offending and harm.

Theme 5: A THRIVING PLACE

  - Development of strong community-based services that respond to local need.
  - Easy access to attractive and safe public spaces and high-quality arts and cultural opportunities.

Inverclyde Council Plan 2023/28

Theme 1: PEOPLE

- Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced.
- People are supported to improve their health and wellbeing.

Theme 2: PLACE

- Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable.

Theme 3: PERFORMANCE

- High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money.

In turn, the plan refers to and is informed by, other specific plans and strategies as detailed below:

For our **2023-26 Children's Services Plan** we have identified four key outcomes

- **Outcome 1: Children, young people and families are listened to and their views are instrumental in designing and delivering services**
- **Outcome 2: Children and young people's health and wellbeing is promoted and improved**
- **Outcome 3: Children and Young people feel safe and loved and are supported to stay in their families**
- **Outcome 4: Children, young people, families and services work together to reduce inequalities**

Education Improvement Priorities	NIF Priorities	Partnership Plan / Council plan / Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan / Children's Service Plan	Education strategies/ plans
Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education	Human rights for all children and young people	CP theme 1 / CSP Outcome 1- Children, young people and families are listened to and their views are instrumental in designing and delivering services	
Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.	Achievement with a focus on literacy and numeracy	CP theme 1 / ED1: Continuous improvement in the Education Service will be delivered via the implementation of an Education Improvement Plan / ED3: ICT will support a more flexible, responsive and sustainable approach to delivering learning and teaching in schools. / ED4: Provision for Secondary Gaelic Education in Inverclyde will be established.	Digital Strategy / Literacy Strategy / Numeracy Strategy / Play Pedagogy strategy / Parental Engagement Strategy / Education Improvement framework / Leadership strategy / Gaelic plan
Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.	Closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged	CP theme 1 / CSP Outcome 4: Children, young people, families and services work together to reduce inequalities / ED5: Targeted interventions will be in place to reduce the poverty related attainment gap and support equity in education.	Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) plan / Digital Strategy / Literacy Strategy / Numeracy Strategy / Play Pedagogy strategy / Parental Engagement Strategy / Education Improvement framework / Leadership strategy

			Community Learning & Dev (CLD) plan
Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing.	Improvement in mental health and well being	CP theme 1 CSP Outcome 2: Children and young people's health and wellbeing is promoted and improved	CLD plan Health & Well Being (HWB) strategy Educational Psychology Improvement plan
Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.	Skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations	CP theme 1 ED6: Pathways for Senior Phase pupils will be enhanced.	Senior Phase Action plan Additional Support Needs (ASN) action plan
Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).		CP theme 1 CSP Outcome 1- Children, young people and families are listened to and their views are instrumental in designing and delivering services ED2: Targeted services for vulnerable children will be delivered to support the achievement of the priorities in the Inverclyde Children's Services Plan	Children's Services Plan ASN action plan Educational Psychology Improvement plan Family wellbeing hub plan
Improving outcomes of care experienced children, young people and their families.		CSP Outcome 3: Children and Young people feel safe and loved and are supported to stay in their families	Children's Services Plan ASN action plan Educational Psychology Improvement plan

A: Achievement with a focus on literacy and numeracy

**UNCRC
Articles 3, 23, 28, 29, 39**

Link to outcome 1 and 4 of the children's' service plan

Inverclyde Education Service Strategic Outcomes / NIF outcomes	Actions	How will we know we have had impact?	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
• Enhanced leadership at all levels will impact on learners ensuring that their outcomes continue to improve and are above national averages on all measures. • All children and young people benefit from high quality learning experiences. • All children and young people make expected or better than expected progress in all learning, but especially in literacy and numeracy, regardless of their background. Young people in Inverclyde use the skills they develop in our schools to achieve positive and sustained destinations.	**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.	• Maintain the percentage of establishments self-evaluating themselves as good or above for all QIs in NIF returns at 95% or above. • Increase the number of establishments self-evaluating themselves as very good or better for at least one of the QIs against the SQRs from June 2025. • Strengths and next steps for the service are identified through a completed self-evaluation paper linked to "How good is our Education Service? QI 1" as well as next steps from the work of the QUAD.	Head of Education (HOE) Education Officers (EO) Head of Education (HOE) Education Officer (EO) P'ship with other LA leaders / Education Scotland	By June 2026 By Jan 2026

Inverclyde Education Service Strategic Outcomes / NIF outcomes	Actions	How will we know we have had impact?	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
• All children and young people in Inverclyde experience a high-quality curriculum that meets their needs. **NIF outcomes:** • A globally respected, empowered, and responsive education system with clear accountability at every level that supports children, young people, and adult learners to thrive. The system enables the development of their knowledge, skills, values, and attributes that give them the best opportunity to succeed and contribute to Scotland's society and economy	**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.	• ACEL numeracy outcomes show an improvement against June 2025 data and are above our LGBF comparator LAs. • ACEL numeracy outcomes show that the PRAG has reduced again in comparison to 2025 outcomes. • Numeracy and maths networks show increased attendance and participation, including evidence of the sharing of practice	Heads of Establishment, EO for Numeracy / AC Project lead	By June 2026.
• Inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, and shape a sustainable future, while celebrating and supporting progression for all • High levels of achievement across the curriculum for all learners, with action to close the poverty-related attainment gap • Highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs	**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.	• ACEL literacy outcomes show an improvement against June 2025 data and are above our LGBF comparator LAs. • ACEL literacy outcomes show that the PRAG has reduced again in comparison to 2025 outcomes. • Evaluation complete with next steps identified for the 2026/27 SIP.	Heads of Establishment, AC Project lead	By June 2026
			AC Project lead	By April 2026
	A4 Continue to improve and ensure the data strategy's sustainability by reviewing and identify possible alternative tools.	• A decision is taken as to the best route for the service to take in relation to future proofing existing data tools	AC project lead	By April 2026
	A5 Continue to evolve and review authority tracking systems in place for both the BGE and Senior Phase.	• Evidence from QA activity that all establishments are using data tools and tracking systems to best effect and that all outcomes are improving. • Establishments feedback and evaluations of all tracking systems	AC project lead	By April 2026

Classification : Official

Inverclyde Education Service Strategic Outcomes / NIF outcomes	Actions	How will we know we have had impact?	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
• All children and young people benefit from high quality learning experiences. • All children and young people in Inverclyde experience a high-quality curriculum that meets their needs. **NIF outcomes:** • A globally respected, empowered, and responsive education system with clear accountability at every level that supports children, young people, and adult learners to thrive. The system enables the development of their knowledge, skills, values, and attributes that give them the best opportunity to succeed and contribute to Scotland's society and economy • Inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, and shape a sustainable future, while celebrating and supporting progression for all • High levels of achievement across the curriculum for all learners, with action to close the poverty-related attainment gap • an education system engaging in digital technology to enhance all aspects of learning and teaching, supported by a digitally-skilled workforce and tackling digital inequality		• provide evidence that they are effective and useful		
	A6 Establish the Curriculum Oversight Board including membership, terms of reference and related work plan.	• COB has met regularly over the academic year 2025/26 and has produced a clear work plan with related outcomes identified.	HOE	By April 2026
		• All Establishments can evidence how they are responding to the Curriculum Improvement Cycle through the work of the COB and cluster via their SQRs.	Heads of Est	By June 2026
	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.	• A 2 – 3 year strategy for the further development of play and enquiry based learning across primary is ready for implementation in 2025/26, including identification of progression of pedagogical approaches into S1 – 3.	QIM Early Years / Interim Education Officer Early Years	By June 2026
	A8 Complete the review of the Digital Strategy ensuring a revised version is in place for implementation from August 2026	• A new 2 – 3 year strategy for the further development of digital learning is ready for implementation in 2025/26.	Education Officer (Digital)	By June 2026

- ## B: Closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged

Link to outcome 4 of the children's service plan

UNCRC Articles 3, 23, 28, 29, 39

Inverclyde Education Service Strategic Outcomes / NIF outcomes	Actions	How will we know we have had impact?	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
Enhanced leadership at all levels will impact on learners ensuring that their outcomes continue to improve and are above national averages on all measures. All children and young people benefit from strong partnerships having been developed with families and the wider community. The ongoing partnerships contribute directly to raising attainment and achievement, and to securing positive and sustained destinations.	**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.	• The SEF plan for 2026/27 will be ready for implementation from Jan 2026 • If SAC / SEF funding is to cease in June 2027 then a clear exit plan is included as well as strategies for sustainability of the work to date. • Evidence the PRAG is decreasing again in 2025/26 in comparison to 2024/25	HOE, AA, AC Project leader	By January 2026
All children and young people make expected or better than expected progress in all learning, but especially in literacy and numeracy, regardless of their background. Young people in Inverclyde use the skills they develop in our schools to achieve positive and sustained destinations.	**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.	• Evidence the PRAG is decreasing again in 2025/26 in comparison to 2024/25	HOE, AA, EOs, AC Project leader	By April 2026

Inverclyde Education Service Strategic Outcomes / NIF outcomes		Actions	How will we know we have had impact?	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
NIF outcomes: • High levels of achievement across the curriculum for all learners, with action to close the poverty-related attainment gap • Highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs	**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.	• Referrals are being picked up and needs met through partnership planning, with waiting lists kept to a minimum. • There will be a clear operational plan for the early intervention and crisis management aspects of the WFWF that is agreed on by Education, HSCP and third sector staff. • For those families accessing early intervention there will be a reduction in escalation to statutory supports as their needs will be met at an earlier point. • Children and young people accessing the service will report improved wellbeing using a variety of measures. • Adults accessing the service will report an improved sense of agency using a variety of measures.	Bernardo's project manager for Inverclyde, AC project Lead, RFA service Manager Oversight from WFWF gov group	By June 2025 and then throughout 2025/26
	B4	Carry out a review of the Parental Engagement Strategy	• Parental Engagement Strategy complete and approved by Education Committee	EO for Parental Engagement	by June 2026.

- ## C: Improvement in mental health and well-being

Link to outcome 2 of the children's service plan

Inverclyde Education Service Strategic Outcomes / NIF outcomes	Actions	How will we know we have had impact?	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
• All children and young people benefit from high quality learning experiences. • All children and young people benefit from strong partnerships having been developed with families and the wider community. The ongoing partnerships contribute directly to raising attainment and achievement, and to securing positive and sustained destinations. • All children and young people in Inverclyde experience a high-quality curriculum that meets their needs.	**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.	• Evidence through ongoing tracking that the attendance strategy is being implemented with an impact on improving attendance outcomes in comparison to June 2025 • All establishments can evidence that they have reviewed and begun to implement their own attendance policies • Weekly tracking shows improved levels of attendance for all establishments in comparison to 24/25 i.e., to 92%; further data analysis and tracking shows improved attendance for key groups i.e., SIMD1 and 2, ASN and CEYP (88%) • All pupils with lower than 20% have a clear single and or multi agency plan in place – ASG to monitor pupils with less than 10% attendance.	Strategic Lead for Attendance (FW) Depute Principal Ed Psych (JJ) SAC project manager Attainment Advisor Strategic Lead for Attendance (FW) EO – inclusion	By April 2026 By Dec 2026 By June 2026 By June 2026
• All children and young people feel safe and included in our schools and are achieving their potential. **NIF outcomes:** • young people experiencing the benefit of schools and early years settings working in excellent partnerships with wider children's services and other partners, families, and communities, in line with the GIRFEC approach	**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.	• All establishments can evidence that they have reviewed, consulted on and begun to implement their own anti bullying policies • CLPL offer in place, delivered and highly evaluated • Recording of bullying incidents are in line with the revised policies and showing a decrease over time	Principal Ed Psych and EO team	By June 2026 By June 2026
	C3 Review the Inverclyde Promoting Positive Relationships and in doing so support all establishments to review their Promoting Positive	• Revised version of the Promoting Positive Relationships policy is approved by Education Committee	Principal Ed Psych EO Inclusion	By Sept 2025

• inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, and shape a sustainable future, while celebrating and supporting progression for all	Relationships policy in line with the Scottish Government action plan relating to behaviour.	• Related CLPL programme in place to support its role out to all establishments • Critical incident and H and S reporting has decreased in comparison to 2024/25 • All establishments review and revise their Promoting Positive Relationships in line with the authority version	By Oct 2025 By June 2026 By June 2026
• highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs • improving relationships and behaviour, and attendance, with increased engagement in learning and a culture of dignity and respect for all	**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.	• All Primary schools have access to new Inverclyde centred learning materials and an offer of CLPL to support effective engagement with the resources. • All Secondary establishments have engaged with the vaping roadshow to highlight the dangers of vaping.	EO – AM / EM By June 2026
	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.	• Secondary schools can identify gaps in young people's Health and Wellbeing and the data (gathered bi-annually) will show an improvement in specific areas as a result of interventions guided by the initial data set	EO - AM By June 2026
	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.	• All secondary schools can evidence how they are addressing financial education within their curriculum offer • Feedback from pupils e.g. via Clyde Conversations, is positive in relation to experience of FE and impact	EO – AM / EM By June 2026

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• D: Skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations

Inverclyde Education Service Strategic Outcomes / NIF outcomes	Actions	How will we know we have had impact?	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
• Enhanced leadership at all levels will impact on learners ensuring that their outcomes continue to improve and are above national averages on all measures. • All children and young people benefit from high quality learning experiences. • All children and young people benefit from strong partnerships having been developed with families and the wider community. The ongoing partnerships contribute directly to raising attainment and achievement, and to securing positive and sustained destinations. • All children and young people make expected or better than expected progress in all learning, but especially in literacy and numeracy, regardless of their background. Young people in Inverclyde use the skills they develop in our schools to achieve positive and sustained destinations. • All children and young people in Inverclyde experience a high-quality curriculum that meets their needs. • All children and young people feel safe and included in our schools and are achieving their potential.	**D1** Continue to review and develop the post school offer in partnership with colleagues in the Environment and Regeneration team and wider partnership group.	• Evidence of an increase in targeted employment opportunities such as MA for school leavers co • There will be an increasingly broader range of post school options available to young people and these will be available • The percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations and sustaining these by the annual June update, will increase to be above the national average and we will see this also reflected in the Annual Participation Measure. • More young people will secure placements in local regeneration projects.	HOE and EO Interim Director Regen	By June 2026
	D2 Work alongside colleagues in HSCP to implement the ASN leavers guidance in full by June 2026	• Increased positive and sustained destination figures for young people with a recognised ASN • Evidence of support for transition planning for young people with ASN being implemented across all education establishments.	EO (GB) and EO (VS)	By June 2026
	D3 All establishments to continue to develop their journey on the SCQF ambassador programme.	• At least 10 young people achieving a Modern Apprenticeship via the Babcock Apprenticeship Programme in partnership with West College Scotland. • An increase in Work Experience participation across all secondary	EO (GB) and Headteachers	By June 2026

15

NIF outcomes:
- a globally respected, empowered, and responsive education system with clear accountability at every level that supports children, young people, and adult learners to thrive. The system enables the development of their knowledge, skills, values, and attributes that give them the best opportunity to succeed and contribute to Scotland's society and economy
- young people experiencing the benefit of schools and early years settings working in excellent partnerships with wider children's services and other partners, families, and communities, in line with the GIRFEC approach
- inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, and shape a sustainable future, while celebrating and supporting progression for all
- highly skilled teachers and school-leaders driving excellent learning, teaching and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs

	- establishments with more young people gaining the Work Experience award - More young people will be involved in targeted programmes in construction and engineering delivered in partnership with the community benefits team.		By June 2026
D4 Continue to develop opportunities for more work-based learning and qualifications leading to employment and continued business links and partnerships	- At least 10 young people achieving a Modern Apprenticeship via the Babcock Apprenticeship Programme in partnership with West College Scotland. - An increase in Work Experience participation across all secondary establishments with more young people gaining the Work Experience award - More young people will be involved in targeted programmes in construction and engineering delivered in partnership with the community benefits team.	HOE and EO Interim Director Regen Senior Phase Curriculum Workstream	

E: Getting it Right for Every Child

UNCRC Articles 3, 23, 28, 29, 39

Link to outcome 1 of the children's service plan

Inverclyde Education Service Strategic Outcomes / NIF outcomes	Actions	How will we know we have had impact? (how and where)	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
• All children and young people benefit from high quality learning experiences. • All children and young people benefit from strong partnerships having been developed with families and the wider community. The ongoing partnerships contribute directly to raising attainment and achievement, and to securing positive and sustained destinations. • All children and young people make expected or better than expected progress in all learning, but especially in literacy and numeracy, regardless of their background. Young people in Inverclyde use the skills they develop in our schools to achieve positive and sustained destinations. • All children and young people in Inverclyde experience a high-quality curriculum that meets their needs.	**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.	• Strategy is complete and agreed by Education Committee • Plan for provision for 2026/27 is clear and being implemented	HOE EO – Inclusion	By April 2026 By Sept 2025
	E2 Continue focus on early ASN screening for all pre-three year old and develop the early years ASN panel.	• Evidence that a clear process has been agreed for the screening of all pre-three year olds as part of the ASG / ASNMF process • Evidence that the earlier indication of pupils' needs is supporting better outcomes for pupils inc improved identification of need / provision	QIM EYs Interim EO EYs EO – Inclusion	By Sept 2025 By April 2026
	E3 Support the establishment of the secondary additional support needs provision at Clydeview Academy.	• Provision is ready to open with support plan in place • Ongoing tracking and monitoring of pupil progress is positive over 2025/26 inc successful transition from P7- S1 • C'view SQR 25/26 reflects a positive evaluation of the work of the new provision	HT Clydeview EO – Inclusion	By Aug 2025 Throughout 2024/25

Inverclyde Education Service Strategic Outcomes / NIF outcomes	Actions	How will we know we have had impact? (how and where)	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
• All children and young people feel safe and included in our schools and are achieving their potential. **NIF outcomes** • young people experiencing the benefit of schools and early years settings working in excellent partnerships with wider children's services and other partners, families, and communities, in line with the GIRFEC approach • inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, and shape a sustainable future, while celebrating and supporting progression for all	**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.	• The authority PPR policy will reflect the requisite changes in relation to IEI3 • Relevant systems, and professionals will be reviewed in relation to IEI3 • Relevant CLPL re IEI3 will be delivered alongside the roll out of the PPR policy • Number of critical incidents will continue to reduce in comparison to 2024/25	EO – Inclusion and linked review group	By Oct / Nov 2025 By June 2026
	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.	• Evidence that majority establishments have reviewed or created their own equalities policies. • Ongoing evidence of accurate recording of equalities related data in racist incidents • Evidence that number of racist incidents is reducing in comparison to 2024/25	EO Equalities champions	By June 2026
	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.	• All relevant senior leaders have had Signs of Safety training • There will be an increase in confidence levels of trained staff in using strengths-based practice. • Evidence of clearer risk assessments by Education staff when submitting RfA to SW, inc reduction of the number of RfAs that re not accepted.	All Senior leaders resp for Child Protection Virtual HT Educaiton Officer – Inclusion	By April 2026

F: Improving outcomes of care experienced children, young people and their families.

Outcomes for learners
Link to outcome 3 of the children's service plan

UNCRC
Articles 3, 23, 28, 29, 39

Outcomes	Actions	How will we know we have had impact? (how and where)	Who is Responsible?	Timescale
• All children and young people benefit from high quality learning experiences. • All children and young people benefit from strong partnerships having been developed with families and the wider community. The ongoing partnerships contribute directly to raising attainment and achievement, and to securing positive and sustained destinations. • All children and young people make expected or better than expected progress in all learning, but especially in literacy and numeracy, regardless of their background. Young people in Inverclyde use the skills they develop in our schools to achieve positive and sustained destinations. • All children and young people in Inverclyde experience a high-quality curriculum that meets their needs. • All children and young people feel safe and included in our schools and are achieving their potential.	**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.	• Schools can make data-driven decisions by engaging with the CEYP dashboard, ensuring consistency in assessment and supporting accurate benchmarking of attainment levels. • Successful strategies supporting improved outcomes for CECYP can be shared and implemented across other establishments leading to improved practice. • The Literacy Overall attainment of CECYP in P1/4/7 will increase by 4% • The Numeracy attainment of CECYP in P1/4/7 will increase by 4% • The attendance of CECYP overall will increase by 2%	VHT, AA Project lead	June 2026
	F2 Continue multi agency working to further enhance the strategic planning and implementation of the care experienced attainment fund.	• An education support worker focusing on transition will ensure transitions are well supported and successful for children and young people moving out with or into the authority. • Positive destinations for CEYP will continue to be improved on 2024/25. • There will be a decrease in the amount spent on external mental health providers. • Self-directed funding will continue to contribute to increased attainment and engagement for those who benefit from the fund.	VHT, AA Project lead	June 2026
NIF outcomes • young people experiencing the benefit of schools and early years settings working in excellent partnerships with wider children's services and other partners, families, and communities, in line with the GIRFEC approach • inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment which gives young people the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to society, and shape a sustainable future,	**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.	• Exclusions of CECYP will further reduce in comparison to 2024/25 • CECYP attendance will increase in comparison to 2024/25 • There will be an increase in attendance for those children and young people being supported through the new family support service • There will be a reduction in the number of RfA's being rejected from education establishments.	VHT, AA Project lead	June 2026

while celebrating and supporting progression for all			
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.	• The average attendance figure for all categories of care experienced children and young people will continue to rise from this year's data. • There will be an increase in attainment and engagement for those children and young people accessing authority support for low attendance. • There will be an increase in the number of children and young people with low/non-attendance reintegrating with mainstream education.	Strategic lead for Attendance VHT, AA Project lead	June 2026

Appendix 1: Glossary of terms

Abbreviation	In full
AA	Attainment Advisor
AC	Attainment Challenge
ACEL	Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels
AFC	Action for Children
ASL	Additional Support for Learning
ASN	Additional Support Needs
BGE	Broad General Education
BRL	Building racial literacy
BYOD	Bring Your Own Device
CEYP	Care Experienced Young People
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
EO	Education Officer
EPS	Education Psychological Services
EY	Early Years
GIRFEC	Getting it Right for Every Child
HMIe	Her Majesty's Inspectors of education
HOE	Head 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
PEP	Principal Education Psychologist
PRAG	Poverty related attainment gap
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 Nationals Convention on the Rights of the Child
VHT	Virtual head teacher

Inverclyde council

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	2 September 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/02/25/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
- Placing request update 2025
- Support for ASN pupils and families over summer
- Education Reform / Education (Scotland) Bill
- Post School Educaiton reform
- Scottish Languages Bill
- Promise Bill
- Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill
- Religious Observance and RME in schools
- Use of Emergency Powers - Award of contracts for the Provision of Transport for Children with Additional Support/Medical Needs for 2025/26 and 2026/27

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**

Kings Oak Primary School – Nursery Class had an unannounced inspection on the 29th and 30th of April 2025. The evaluations of the quality indicators are as below:

How good is our care, play and learning?	Good
How good is our setting?	Good
How good is our leadership?	Very Good
How good is our staff team?	Very Good

The full report can be found here:
https://www.careinspectorate.com/berengCareservices/html/reports/getPdfBlob.php?id=323406

Whinhill Primary School – Nursery Class had an unannounced inspection on the 7th and 8th of May 2025. The evaluations of the quality indicators are as below:

How good is our care, play and learning?	Very Good
How good is our setting?	Very Good
How good is our leadership?	Very Good
How good is our staff team?	Very Good

The full report can be found here:
https://www.careinspectorate.com/berengCareservices/html/reports/getPdfBlob.php?id=323543

Wemyss Bay Primary School – Nursery Class had an unannounced inspection on the 6th and 8th of June 2025. The evaluations of the quality indicators are as below:

How good is our care, play and learning?	Good
How good is our setting?	Good
How good is our leadership?	Adequate
How good is our staff team?	Good

The full report can be found here:
https://www.careinspectorate.com/berengCareservices/html/reports/getPdfBlob.php?id=324092

Whilst the overall report for Wemyss Bay is a positive one, there is one indicator from the Care Inspectorate judgements which falls below good and as a result an action plan has been agreed with the school leadership team which will be supported by the Early Years team and tracked by the Quality Improvement Manager of Early Years.

Blairmore Early Learning Centre had an unannounced inspection on the 18th and 19th of June 2025. This was a follow up inspection after the inspection in October 24, when the evaluations were:

How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate
How good is our setting?	Adequate
How good is our leadership?	Good
How good is our staff team?	Adequate

The evaluations of the quality indicators in June 2025 are as below:

How good is our care, play and learning?	Very Good
How good is our setting?	Very Good
How good is our leadership?	Good
How good is our staff team?	Good

The full report can be found here:
https://careinspectorate.com/berengCareservices/html/reports/getPdfBlob.php?id=324047

It should be noted that moving from adequate to very good in two of the quality indicators in less than a year, is a significant achievement.

3.2 **Placing requests update 2025**
As part of the school admissions process for the academic year 2025/26 the follow information is a summary of the overall picture relating to placing requests. This is the data linked to the Pupil Placement Panel.

For primary schools

Total placing requests received	127
Total placing requests granted:	127
Total appeals received:	0
Total appeals successful:	0

For secondary schools:

Total placing requests received:	127
Total placing requests granted:	121
Total placing requests refused:	6
Total appeals received:	5
Total appeals successful:	0

3.3 **Support for ASN pupils and families over the summer**
A report was presented to the May 2025 Committee with proposals to expand the summer provision. This section provides a brief overview of recruitment of staff, the services offered and the uptake of services.

Recruitment of suitably qualified staff
A wide advertising campaign was undertaken to recruit suitably qualified staff. Despite these efforts, the service again experienced difficulties in securing the required staffing levels for summer provision.

Play 4 All Out of School Childcare (Chargeable Childcare Service)
This was the first year of the new allocation process in line with the Out of School Childcare change in policy. This change allowed the service to maximise the number of places available for parents who met the eligibility criteria.

Services offered over the summer period included:

1. **Play 4 All Holiday Out of School Childcare** – Chargeable full days over 4 weeks. A total of 19 applications were received, and all were allocated a place. 13 service users were allocated the maximum of seven days each. In total, 115 days were offered, with 103 attended, giving an overall attendance rate of **90%**

2. **Play 4 All Summer Club** – Full days over 4 weeks. Of 50 applications (including one late application), 47 places were allocated. 3 applications were declined as the children were still attending nursery and therefore did not meet the eligibility criteria.

In total, 124 days were offered across all allocations. Of these, 101 days were attended, and 23 days were lost to cancellations, non-responses, or 'no shows'. Attendance rates were:

- 78% for those allocated the maximum three days
- 75% for those allocated two days
- Lower attendance for single-day or split placements, largely due to non-attendance.

3. **Specialist provision operated by the third sector** – 2 days (Mondays & Fridays) over 4 weeks for children with communication needs who currently attend a specialist school.

- In total, 80 days were allocated, with 40 days attended, giving an overall attendance rate of 50%.

4. **Enhanced support for playschemes** – Provided in one school per week across 4 localities. For the additional support service aimed at pupils attending mainstream primary school:

- 23 applications were received, and all were allocated a place.
- 94 two-hour sessions were offered with 39 sessions attended.

In total 94 two-hour sessions were offered, with 39 attended, giving an overall attendance rate of 41%.

3.4 **Education reform / Education (Scotland) Bill**

The Education (Scotland) Bill provides for the establishment of a new qualifications body to replace the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and creates His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland removing the inspection function from Education Scotland. The Bill was introduced to Parliament on 4 June 2024 www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/s6/education-scotland-bill.

The Bill is in two substantive parts. Part 1 establishes Qualifications Scotland, to replace the SQA. It will be set up as a Non-departmental Public Body (NDPB), including appropriate governance arrangements and statutory functions. Qualifications Scotland will be responsible for delivering and awarding qualifications, and for accrediting qualifications delivered by others.

Part 2 establishes the office of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland. The statutory functions will be conferred on the Chief Inspector. The Chief Inspector will lead a new independent education inspectorate, to take forward the education inspection functions that currently sit within Education Scotland. The Bill sets out the governance arrangements and statutory functions necessary in relation to the full range of educational establishments and services currently inspected, from early learning and childcare to adult learning.

The Bill completed its Parliamentary passage by the summer recess with the new bodies being operational in Autumn 2025. The recruitment process to appoint the new Chief Inspector of Educaiton remains ongoing.

The new Chief Executive of the SQA was appointed in June 2025. Nick Page was appointed and more about this can be found here: Nick Page appointed Chief Executive of Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) - SQA

3.5 **Post School Education Reform**
In Programme for Government 2024-25, the Scottish Government announced a Post-School Education Reform Bill to simplify the post-school funding body landscape. Consultation took place on legislation which concluded in September 2024 and the proposal is to change existing arrangements within the post-school funding body landscape to consolidate all provision funding within one public body (currently Scottish Funding Council) and all student support funding within one public body (SAAS). The Bill has not yet been introduced to the Scottish Parliament but will be in time to conclude its parliamentary consideration in this session.

3.6 **Scottish Languages Bill**
Following the passing of the Scottish Languages Bill by the Scottish Parliament on 17 June 2025, the Bill received Royal Assent on 31 July 2025 and has now officially become an Act of the Scottish Parliament.

A link to the Scottish Languages Act 2025 is available via the Scottish Parliament's website - Scottish Languages Bill | Scottish Parliament Website or at this link - Scottish Languages Act 2025.

Part 3 of the Act came into force on the 1 August 2025) which gives the necessary powers to start to commence the substantive provisions of the Act in due course.

The Gaelic and Scots Division is now planning the implementation of the provisions and will share further details on these plans, as they are finalised and become available.

3.7 **Promise Bill**
The Scottish Government is committed to introducing a Promise Bill into the Scottish Parliament by the end of this Parliamentary session. This will provide an opportunity to make any legislative changes required in order to Keep the Promise by 2030. The Scottish Government are conducting a number of consultations which will inform the next steps on key areas such as the reform of the children's hearing system, the future of foster care, the definition of care experience and the support available to those moving on from care. Where appropriate, these may inform the Promise Bill.

3.8 **Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill**
This is a non-government bill, introduced to parliament on 20 June 2024 by Liz Smith MSP. The bill is currently at Stage 1.

The purpose of the proposed legislation is to establish that all pupils in state and grant-aided schools will have the chance to experience at least four nights and five days of residential outdoor education during their school career. The Education, Children & Young People Committee is lead committee for scrutinising the bill, and has conducted an initial Call for Views and held evidence sessions with stakeholders to inform its considerations. These activities concluded in December 2024.

The Scottish Government submitted its memorandum on the Member's Bill to Committee on 3 September, and the Minister for Children, Young People & The Promise provided evidence on 27 November.

The Scottish Government recognises the good intentions underpinning Liz Smith's Member's Bill, but have significant reservations and questions concerning key aspects of the provisions that must be fully considered and assurance given. These relate to: legislating in the curriculum; presenting a narrow focus on only one form of outdoor learning; and deliverability and affordability. The Finance & Public Administration Committee wrote to the Education Committee on 13 December following its scrutiny of the bill's Financial Memorandum, highlighting that it is likely some of the costs associated with delivery of the provisions are underestimated.

3.9 **Religious Observance and RME in schools**
The proposed legislation on religious observance and religious and moral education in schools is currently in the consultation stage, with the consultation scheduled to close on 26 January. The consultation seeks views on proposed changes to section 9 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 ("the 1980 Act"). The proposed changes will support the alignment of legislation with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by requiring that children and young people's views are taken into account in relation to their participation in religious observance ("RO") and religious and moral education ("RME") as a curricular area, also called religious education in denominational schools ("RE"), as part of their attendance at a public or grant-aided school. This would bring legislation into line with existing guidance on RO last updated in 2017. Following the consultation a report on the consultation responses will be prepared with the intention of publishing this in spring this year.

3.10 **Use of Emergency Powers - Award of contracts for the Provision of Transport for Children with Additional Support/Medical Needs for 2025/26 and 2026/27**
On 1 July 2025 Councillors Clocherty, McGuire, Moran, McCabe and Curley, the Interim Chief Financial Officer, the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services and the Chief Executive approved the use of Emergency Powers for the award of contracts for the provision of transport for children with additional support/medical needs for 2025/26 and 2026/27. The total annual value of the contracts was £200,000.

The use of Emergency Powers was required as it was essential the contracts were in place for the beginning of the new term on 19 August 2025 to enable smooth transition from one contract to another, for pick-up points to be confirmed and for parents to be notified prior to beginning of the new term, and this pre-dated the next Education & Communities Committee meeting. Inverclyde Council has an agency agreement with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) to conduct the procurement process and recommendations for the award of contracts is provided by them, and this was not available for the May Committee cycle.

This will also be reported to the Policy & Resources Committee at their next meeting.

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) <u>Children and Young People</u>

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:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks** **Corporate Director** **Education, Communities and** **Organisational Development**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/45/25/TM/NM**
Contact Officer:	**Tony McEwan** **Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources** **Neale McIlvanney** **Interim Director - Regeneration**	**Contact No:**	**01475 712828**
Subject:	**Review of Transport for Pupils with Additional Support Needs**		

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 on the work that has been undertaken in relation to the review of home to school transport for pupils with additional support needs (ASN).

1.3 The review forms part of the Council's change programme and is seeking to reduce the significant overspend in relation to ASN transport. A working group was established with the primary purpose of exploring whether ASN transport would be more cost effective if it was provided through the Council's internal transport service. This report sets out proposals for a pilot programme to extend the internal provision of ASN transport.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee:

- notes the outcome of the review of ASN transport; and
- agrees to the proposals for the service to work with Environment and Regeneration to extend internal transport provision by four buses and drivers as part of a pilot project.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 As part of the Council's change management programme and in response to a significant budget pressure, a review of school transport is being undertaken for pupils with additional support needs.

3.2 Currently, free transport is provided to all pupils with additional support needs who attend Craigmarloch School. In addition, transport is also provided to pupils with ASN who have been assessed as requiring it in settings such as Hillend Children's Centre, Lomond View Academy, in one of our communication and language bases or within mainstream settings. It has been custom and practice for many years for transport to be provided to these settings, regardless of pupil need. The service also provides free transport for children and young people who require transport to meet a short-term need. All of which is funded from the ASN transport budget.

3.3 Transport is currently provided through a number of means such as bus or taxi, by a number of private and 3rd sector providers and our own internal transports service. All contracts, except internal transport, are arranged through our partnership with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT).

3.4 ASN transport is largely demand-led and costed on where pupils live in relation to their placement which makes it very difficult to accurately project costs from year to year. While the number of pupils with additional support needs requiring transport has remained fairly static over the past few years, the number of settings has also increased. However, the main cause of the increased budget pressure has arisen from the increased cost of providing the transport. Although there has been a slight reduction in costs in 2024/25, this is offset by a significant increase projected in 2025/26. The table below shows the increased costs over the past several years and projected cost for 2025/26:

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 Projection
Total expenditure	735,543	886,491	1,083,379	1,323,566	1,292,878	1,611,470

3.5 A cross service working group of senior officers from educational resources, finance, and environment and regeneration was established to take a closer look at the feasibility of internal transport replacing the current arrangements. The working group looked more closely at the following:

- The lead in time, cost, and procurement of additional adapted vehicles;
- The recruitment and retention of drivers;
- The additional costs associated with the management and maintenance of a large fleet; and
- The utilisation of drivers between pick-up and drop-off times.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 The Corporate Management Team agreed that proposals should now be developed to undertake a pilot project to extend the current number of ASN transport contracts which are provided internally. This would allow the Council to establish whether cost reductions and better cost certainty could be achieved.

4.2 A pilot scheme based would present an initial estimated saving of **£13,760** by bringing 4 routes in-house, commencing in August 2026. This is based on costings for 16/17 seat mini-bus provision. This saving is the minimum expected cost saving (*vs current provision*) on the basis that it does not assume vehicles and drivers will be utilised outwith pick-up and drop-off times. Should the pilot be approved for development, it would be intended that the project group continues to manage governance and identify activities for drivers and vehicle utilisation to maximise utilisation of resource outwith pick-up/drop-off times by the go-live stage of the project in August 2026. While it is not possible to specify those use cases to occupy drivers and vehicles out with their primary function at present, areas of exploration are likely to include HSCP utilisation, other 'daytime' education needs and scoping across the Council to identify other uses. Once use cases for residual driver/vehicle resources have been developed it is anticipated that the cost saving identified may increase and other project benefits will materialise. Further updates on this will be provided to the Education and Communities Committee as the pilot develops.

4.3 Some additional known considerations are set out as follows, encompassing current perceived benefits, risks or areas for development:

- In respect of the suggestion of change to the start and finish times of schools to allow for double runs for school transport, officers are not aware of any other council having considered this. It should be recognised prior to development of the detail of a pilot scheme that the very early start for some pupils (pick up being approximately 7 a.m.) and the later start for others starting at 10 a.m. would be highly unlikely to be popular with parents. It would also exclude any possibility for inclusion in mainstream in secondary schools and cause additional issues with staffing, contracts and childcare provision (potentially including where siblings are involved);
- This model, with a year lead for procurement, will create capacity to test recruitment assumptions related to availability of drivers in the marketplace, feasibility of term-time/ part-time contracts and whether there are existing staff that are suitable for the roles or activities that drivers could undertake beyond education and HSCP functions. It should remain the assumed position that part-time drivers will be harder to progress given marketplace for drivers is limited;
- It should be noted that although there was some contingency in place in cost baseline, staff (driver) absence remains a risk insofar as if there were a number of drivers off at the same time, there is a risk that additional agency costs could be incurred, which would be passed on to education services;
- In terms of potential for damage to fleet vehicles, bodywork damage up the value of £2,500 and any vehicle downtime that required a hire vehicle being brought in, these are additional potential service costs, which would be passed to education services; and
- A booking system approach to utilisation of vehicles and drivers outwith pick-up/drop-off times, has been considered, but unlikely to be operable. The project working group concluded that pre-programmed driver/vehicle activities would work best, and this will be further explored in developing use cases. This was likely more suitable to Consortium travel where it could be planned on a term-to-term basis; with Transport assisting in the programming into the driver's day; and
- In almost all cases, all forms of transport require the presence of one or two pupil support assistants (PSAs) on escort duties, which is not contained within the ASN transport budget and is not included in the costs detailed.

4.4 On this basis, it is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee supports the recommendations in this paper, which will entail commencing procurement activity for 4 x ASN vehicles and continuation of the working group to fully develop remaining components of the business case for the pilot as referenced in this report. While it is not possible to specify the precise operating arrangements for a pilot ASN transport scheme for 4 vehicles, it is competent to proceed to develop the pilot on the basis it will allow exploration of strategic challenges

associated with in-house provision, and the estimated worst case financial position would equate to a saving of c.£13k.

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
Vehicle Maint.	Employee Costs Fuel/Materials	Aug 2026	£95k £20k	Education ASN	Overall a net saving of £14k. Virement from ASN Transport to cover loans chgs £34k, employee costs of £95k and vehicle running costs of £20k.
Miscellaneous	Loans Chgs		£34k		
Education	ASN Transport		(£163k)		

5.3 **Legal/Risk**

Under Section 42 of the Education (Scotland) Act, the authority must provide free transport or make such other arrangements for all pupils up to age 8 who live more than 2 miles from their local catchment area school and to all pupils over age 8 who live more than 3 miles from their local catchment area school. The Act also makes provision for a number of exceptional circumstances and special conditions under which the authority may also provide free transport.

5.4 **Human Resources**

The deployment and contracts of drivers will be considered by the working group in order to ensure efficiencies.

5.5 **Strategic**

In order to mitigate the impact of poverty, the local authority has amongst the most generous transport policies in the country.

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

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?

x	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
	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?

x	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**

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.

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 N/A

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A

Inverclyde council

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks** **Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/47/25/TM**
Contact Officer:	**Tony McEwan** **Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources**	**Contact No:**	**01475 712828**
Subject:	**Consultation on Assessment of Transport for Pupils with Additional Support Needs**		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☒For Decision   ☐For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek approval by the Education and Communities Committee to begin a consultation process on the introduction of an assessment of school transport for pupils with additional support needs.

1.3 This consultation forms part of a wider review of school transport for pupils with ASN which seeks to reduce the significant budget overspend in relation to ASN transport.

1.4 The consultation would be based on the merits of aligning the mainstream transport policy distance criteria with that of ASN transport. This would mean that pupils who attend an ASN provision living within either 1 or 2 miles from school would not be automatically entitled to transport but would only qualify following an assessment of need. The consultation process would not be statutory in terms of the Education Act but rather seek views on refining the current custom and practice of allocating ASN transport without assessment.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee:

- agrees for the service to begin consultation on the introduction of assessments for transport for pupils with ASN who live within the qualifying distances, in line with the existing transport policy.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 As part of the Council's change management programme and in response to a significant budget pressure, a review of school transport is being undertaken for pupils with additional support needs.

3.2 Currently, free transport is provided to all pupils with additional support needs who attend Craigmarloch School. In addition, transport is also provided to pupils with ASN who have been assessed as requiring it in settings such as Hillend Children's Centre, Lomond View Academy, in one of our communication and language bases or within mainstream settings. It has been custom and practice for many years for transport to be provided to these settings, regardless of pupil need. The service also provides free transport for children and young people who require transport to meet a short-term need. All of which is funded from the ASN transport budget.

3.3 Transport is currently provided through a number of means such as bus or taxi, by a number of private and 3rd sector providers and our own internal transports service. All contracts, except internal transport, are arranged through our partnership with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT).

3.4 The overspend on ASN transport remains significant and the review detailed in a separate report being considered at this committee will not produce significant year on year savings. In addition, specialist transport is becoming increasingly difficult to secure and there is a need to protect specialist transport where there is an essential need or a legislative requirement to do so. The current custom and practice is that all pupils who are allocated a place at a specialist provision automatically receive transport regardless of distance from their provision and/or their specific needs. Analysis of 2024/25 pupil rolls shows that of 375 pupils with allocated places for ASN transport 97 pupils live within either one mile from their primary provision or two miles from their secondary provision. This means that a quarter of pupils are allocated places on transport over and above the council's own distance policy (which is more generous than the statutory requirements) without any additional assessment of need taking place. Officers seek approval to undertake initial work to identify if there is a possibility to review the allocation of school transport for ASN pupils and to introduce an application system which will assess their need for transport. The proposal, if agreed, would not remove transport for every pupil based on distance but would look at the types of assessment currently used in other authorities to allocate places for pupils living within accessible distance of their provision.

3.5 Provision already exists within the existing home to school transport policy for an assessment of need to be implemented for pupils with additional support needs. However, as stated at 3.2 above, the Council has through custom and practice, provided transport for pupils with additional support needs attending ASN settings, regardless of need.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 It is proposed that the service develops and implements a consultation process which takes into account the views of stakeholders, namely, pupils, parents and head teachers and elected members. Results of the consultation will then be reported back to committee early in 2026, with any proposed changes being implemented from August 2026.

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**

Under Section 42 of the Education (Scotland) Act, the authority must provide free transport or make such other arrangements for all pupils up to age 8 who live more than 2 miles from their local catchment area school and to all pupils over age 8 who live more than 3 miles from their local catchment area school. The Act also makes provision for a number of exceptional circumstances and special conditions under which the authority may also provide free transport.

5.4 **Human Resources**

N/A

5.5 **Strategic**

In order to mitigate the impact of poverty, the local authority has amongst the most generous transport policies in the country.

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.

5.7 **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.

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 The proposals set out in this report are to consult with relevant stakeholders.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks** **Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/56/25/MR**
Contact Officer:	**Michael Roach** **Head of Education**	**Contact No:**	**01475 712891**
	Tony McEwan **Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources**		
Subject:	**Scottish Government Additional Funding for Additional Support for Learning**		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☒For Decision ☐For Information/Noting

1.2 The 2025/26 Scottish Government Budget allocated an additional £29 million nationally for Additional Support for Learning (ASL). The allocated amount to Inverclyde was £384,000.

1.3 The Education and Communities Committee has already agreed a report on the expansion of ASN provision on 22 April 2025. The associated teaching and support costs for this expansion were contained within the staffing exercise.

1.4 The report outlines recommendations for the allocation of the additional £384k allocated by the Scottish Government:

- £200k towards transport costs, which has already been allocated as detailed in a separate report to the Education and Communities Committee on 2 September 2025;
- £24k to provide additionality to purchase ASN resources for pupils;
- £40k for an additional resource to support the efficient deployment of the ASN resource allocation and transport requirements; and
- The remaining £120k towards increasing the budget for pupil support assistants to create more resilience across our ASN provisions; and supporting ASN provision resulting from the revised ASN strategy which will be reported to this committee at a future date.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended the Education and Communities Committee approves the use of the funding for ASL as outlined in section 4 of the paper.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Educational Resources

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 The 25/26 Scottish Budget allocated an additional £29 million for Additional Support for Learning (ASL) of which £28 million is to be allocated to local authorities with £1 million reserved for national priorities. The allocated amount to Inverclyde was £384,000.

3.2 The funding was allocated to help improve outcomes for all children and young people with ASN in line with the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004, and should build on existing spend on inclusion, to ensure the broadest possible reach.

3.3 On 22 April 2025, the Committee considered a paper on the increased provision to be put in place for August 2025. This included:

- Expansion of places at Craigmarloch: Work to expand learning spaces for pupils at Craigmarloch and a review of staffing allocations at Craigmarloch has also been undertaken to ensure sufficient teaching and non-teaching staff are in place;
- Communication and Language Base (CLB) at All Saints Primary School: From August 2025, an additional class was introduced to the CLB at All Saints. An existing learning space within the school has been identified, with limited alterations required; and
- NEST provision / Lomond View Academy Currently the primary enhanced nurture provision called NEST (formally Thrive) is housed at St Michael's Primary School. Previously, the fostering and adoptions / HSCP team have been based at Lomond View Academy and have now moved into the new HSCP premises at the James Watt building thus freeing up space at Lomond View. This has provided the opportunity to now move NEST to Lomond View and it will occupy the vacant space on the ground floor and collocate the provision as part of Lomond View. The move will take place for August 2025.

3.4 Appropriate additional teaching staffing to support the provision has largely been contained and has been assigned through the annual staffing exercise.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 The increase in additional provision has resulted in extra spend on transport. This cannot be contained within the transport budget which already under significant pressure. An emergency powers report which is being considered elsewhere at this Committee, allocated £200,000 for additional transport that is required for the increase in specialist settings and numbers attending.

4.2 The increasing allocation of specialist places and the assessments and resource allocations required to ensure that pupils are allocated the correct provision and that their transport needs are being met (either mainstream or specialist provision) is putting pressure on the central team. The central administrative team is not resourced sufficiently to deal with the associated allocation of pupil support assistants and the increasingly complex and efficient planning for transport that is required. As such, it is proposed that part of this funding is used to increase capacity to support these processes and look for efficiencies.

4.3 The budget to purchase specialist resources for those with additional needs is also continually under pressure as more resources are required. The proposals will allow the service to continue to ensure that legislative requirements for adaptations are met.

4.4 The budget for the current PSA allocation for pupils is under pressure. This is because the resource is needs driven and cannot always be identified in advance. In many cases sickness absence has to be covered otherwise pupils would be left without adequate support. The service is also currently developing its ASN Strategy and funding will be required to support the actions contained within that strategy. It is therefore proposed that the remaining Scottish Government funding is utilised to increase PSA capacity and support the revised ASN strategy when it is completed.

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
ASN	Various	2025/26	£384,000		£200k Transport £24k ASN Resources £40k HQ Employee Costs £120k PSA Employee Costs

5.3 **Legal/Risk**

N/A

5.4 **Human Resources**

N/A

5.5 **Strategic**

This delivers on the objectives of the Alliance and 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 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

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.

(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**

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 N/A

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A

Report To:	**Education & Communities Committee**	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/52/25/TM**
Contact Officer:	**Tony McEwan Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources**	**Contact No:**	**01475 712828**
Subject:	**Improving Young People's Representation in Boards and Committees**		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☒For Decision ☐For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the consultation undertaken by Young Scot to look at ways of improving the representation of Young People at decision making forums led by the Council.

1.3 In November 2024, the Committee was advised that Young Scot would undertake a consultation exercise with young people with the aim of co-designing a model that would improve the involvement of young people in the work of the Education and Communities Committee and that the findings from the consultation be reported back to the Committee.

1.4 This report summarises the findings of the exercise and presents recommendations for the Committee to improve the engagement of young people by refining the mechanisms which already exist to involve young people, so that they can play a fuller and more meaningful role in the work of the Committee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee:

- notes the content of this report;
- notes the Young Scot Report 'Supporting Young People's Engagement in Boards and Committees in Inverclyde Council; and
- agrees to the pilot of a Young Person's Forum on Education and Communities to support the engagement of young people in committee business.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 In September 2024, the Education and Communities Committee asked officers to bring forward proposals to improve the views and engagement of young people of the business of the Committee. In November 2024, the Committee was advised that Young Scot would undertake the consultation exercise and that the findings from the consultation be reported back to the Committee.

3.2 Young Scot undertook several engagement sessions between February and March 2025. Its report, 'Supporting Young People's Engagement in Boards and Committees in Inverclyde Council' can be accessed here is attached as an appendix to this report.

3.3 The consultation aimed to:

- develop processes, formats and engaging ways of involving young people – at different levels within the organisation's structures; and
- ensure young people have opportunities to feel their contribution is recognised, valued and they are playing an important role in relation the development of the work of Inverclyde Council.

3.4 As a result of the engagement with young people, the report made ten recommendations, which are detailed below with commentary from the service on how these can be implemented (in bold):

1. Engage with young people to co-design future decision making opportunities for young people/ Young people value the opportunity to be involved in decision making processes but recognise they need support to participate. **This can be achieved through Clyde Conversations and the proposal in section 4;**
2. Young people want to be seen as equal members/contributors within decision making spaces, recognising the parameters that might exist due to the significance and responsibility of governance roles and structures. **This can be achieved by continuing to strengthen pupil voice at Pupil Council level;**
3. If young people are to be meaningfully engages, committee, groups and meetings must be designed and delivered in ways which are accessible for all young people. This includes the venues and spaces that are used, how and when information is shared and the language and terminology that is used. S**ee proposal in section 4;**
4. To support young people to participate meaningfully, and feel safe, supported and respected, meeting should be held in venues and spaces which feel safe, equitable and non-intimidating; This could relate to central venues which are used for meetings, or looking at venue options for decision-makers to meet with young people such as schools, community centres etc. **See proposal in section 4;**
5. Meetings need to be designed and delivered in ways that are accessible, inclusive and equitable for young people to meaningfully participate in them. This includes thinking about the length of meetings, how information is shared/discussions are explained, options for online engagement etc. Young people would also like to see other ways for young people to feed in other than speaking in meetings. Again, young people would like to explore ways young people can meet externally and feed their contributions into the main Education Committee. **This could be achieved through Clyde conversations and see proposals in section 4;**
6. Young people need clearly defined roles within decision making structures. The role young people can play in decision-making is important. Young people see the value in them being equal members on groups such as the Education Committee. There is a role for young people to contribute in other ways, but the parameters for this need to be clearly communicated to young people so that they understand what they do and do not have the ability to inform and influence. Young people should be able to share their views and contribute to all discussions, not just being asked to share their experiences. Young

people should be able to actively participate – to ask questions as well as answer them. There must always be established feedback loops so young people understand how their contributions are informing and influencing decisions. This includes clear communication even when their contributions cannot be taken forward. **Clyde Conversations and see proposals in section 4;**

7. There should be opportunities for a number of young people to engage with and contribute towards the Education Committee (and other decision-making roles). It is not enough to have one young person present. Attention needs to be paid to the diversity of young people engaged to ensure representation from across ages, backgrounds, schools and communities. If young people are not directly to attend the Education Committee, mechanisms must be created to ensure groups of young people can meet and their views be fed in. **This can be achieved through Clyde Conversations and the development of the Council -also see proposals in section 4;**

8. Attention must be paid to when meetings are held to ensure young people can contribute equitably. Young people's educational engagement and key pressure points across the academic calendar (holidays, exams etc.) must be considered. Where business must be conducted during the working day, schools should be worked with to ensure time is given for young people to participate. **Clyde Conversations, Youth Council and see proposals in section 4;**

9. Traditional ways for doing business may not be suitable to enable young people's participation. Frequency and regularity of meetings must be designed to support young people to regularly contribute. If young people are be equitable members of decision-making groups/committees them meetings should be scheduled in line with the availability of all members – including young people. If other options for young people's participation are preferred, scheduling of meetings must be delivered in ways which allow young people to meet in line with these to ensure adequate time is given for young people's inputs to be tabled, considered and responded to. **Clyde Conversations, Youth Council and see proposals in section 4;** and

10. Young people need mechanisms and support to hold decision-makers to account for how they are listening to and acting upon the inputs of young people, to ensure young people's contributions hold weight and are taken seriously. **Clyde Conversations, Youth Council and see proposals in section 4.**

3.5 The Council has several well-established mechanisms in place for engaging and consulting with young people including:

- Clyde Conversations;
- Youth Council;
- Pupil Councils within schools;
- Pupil Council forum which meets regularly with the Education and Communities Directorate; and
- Inverclyde's MSYPs as members of the Thriving Communities Partnership

3.6 Clyde Conversations is perhaps the most wide-ranging of the engagement forums because it is designed and delivered by young people drawn from our secondary schools. The discussion topics are chosen by young people themselves and representatives from services from the subject areas attend to take evidence and respond to questions. Elected members are also invited and often attend the engagement sessions.

3.7 Inverclyde Youth Council, along with the MSYPs for Inverclyde, carryout various pieces of consultation work with young people across Inverclyde. It hosts focus groups, carries out interviews and conducts surveys with young people from all areas and backgrounds. The information gathered during these pieces of work is then communicated to the youth services team, Inverclyde council and its partners and is used to inform practice and provision of services.

The views of young people that are gathered are used to plan what activities and groups are available in I Youth Zones, plan holiday programmes and informs detached youth work provision. The information is also used to inform the responses of the youth councillors and MSYPs when they are being asked to represent the views of Inverclyde's young people.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 Although there are fairly comprehensive existing mechanisms in place to engage young people and for their views to be heard, it is acknowledged that more can be done to engage young people in the specific work of the Education business of the Education and Communities Committee.

4.2 Given the feedback from the young people, it is proposed to pilot an adaptation of the meetings of the pupil councils with the directorate to include members of the education and communities committee. To date the meeting agendas have been led by the young people themselves, but the meetings have also discussed the budget and the Education Improvement plan. The initial proposal for the pilot is to have two meetings over the year with members of the Education Committee, one on-line and the other in person. Members of the Youth Council and MSYPs could also be invited to these meetings and representation will also be sought from care experienced young people and seldom heard groups. This new group would be known as the young Persons Forum and the first pilot meeting could take place prior to the November Committee.

4.3 Clyde Conversations was initially set up for decision makers to hear the voice of young people. Since its inception it has gone from strength to strength and is led by the young people themselves. However, in recent years, despite invitations being sent out, attendance by decision makers has dropped off. It is proposed to try to increase attendance by decision makers at these events by further promoting the event and rationale for attendance. The work of Clyde Conversations already influences the committee planning, however there are opportunities to strengthen this.

4.4 If agreed by the Education and Communities Committee, the service will pilot the establishment of a new Young Person's Forum in the coming months where the business of the Committee will be discussed with young people and their views sought. Feedback from these forums will be presented back to the committee as they develop.

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**

Improving our approaches to consulting with communities, including young people, forms a significant part of the objectives of the Council and service improvement plans.

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.

5.7 **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.

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 Consultation results are presented as an appendix to this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A

YOUNG SCOT

Supporting Young People's Engagement in Boards and Committees in Inverclyde Council

Young People's Engagement Findings Report

Supporting Young People's Engagement in Boards and Committees: Inverclyde Council

Thursday 27 February and Thursday 6 March 2025

Findings Report

Background Information

Following ongoing internal work and discussions around the valuable role young people can play within key functions of the organisation, Inverclyde Council approached Young Scot as part of their wider considerations around how young people can be best engaged as part of decision-making processes, in inclusive and meaningful ways. As an initial area of focus, Inverclyde Council's Education Committee was identified as suitable for this exploration.

Through discussions between Inverclyde Council's Service Manager- Community Learning and Development, Community Safety& Resilience and Sport, and the Young Scot Hive team, three co-design sessions were agreed with local young people to begin exploring this theme.

The overall outcome of these sessions was to gather experiences, views and recommendations from local young people which can be considered by Inverclyde Council as part of work to develop a toolkit to support young people's engagement across Council decision-making opportunities.

Project Aims

The key aims of this project were to:

- Support Inverclyde Council, through the delivery of three co-design sessions with local young people, to develop new approaches to embedding young people in decision making processes, starting with the Education Committee.

- Support idea generation to inform the development of a co-designed toolkit to support Inverclyde Council to ensure future engagement with young people around decision making processes is meaningful.

- Ensure successful delivery, and safeguarding of co-design sessions.

- Demonstrating a meaningful and manageable co-design model which can be applied in future activity, we hope to inspire staff and colleagues to involve young people across other areas of their work.

- Establish ways of working and models for delivery of engaging with young people around governance themes. This includes support to:

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o Develop processes, formats and engaging ways of involving young people – at different levels within the organisation's structures.

o Ensure young people have opportunities to feel their contribution is recognised, valued and that they are playing an important role in relation to the development of the work of Inverclyde Council.

Methodology/Approach

Utilising Young Scot's YSHive process, we supported the young people to explore themes, develop ideas and test and refine these in order to ensure robust conclusions are drawn from our work and the recommendations reported on have been examined and refined. The stages of this process are:

- Explore – Frame the vision, probe problems and question the big picture
- Create – Seek opportunities to prototype and play with ideas to take a deeper dive into the issues
- Disrupt – Test ideas in the real world and question the future to learn if they have value
- Act – Share learning stories and pitch bold ideas to challenge decision-makers and influence real system change

Aligned to Lundy's Model of Child Participation, #YSHive provides a child rights-based approach, with a strong focus on exploration/research, ideas generation, testing and refining. Our process allows us to produce informed solutions and recommendations for action and implementation. Young people are at the heart of this process to ensure reporting meets their expectations as co-designers.

Across three sessions, delivered on 27 February and 6 March 2025, we engaged directly with groups of young people (19 young people in total), identified by Inverclyde Council from across local school and youth work groups, to explore methods and contribute ideas towards a toolkit that can be developed to support the creation of the right conditions to engage and interact with young people within governance structures, including a Board and Committee level.

Whilst the outputs from this engagement will be applicable across a range of settings, the initial focus was on how young people can engage directly with Inverclyde Council's Education Committee.

Through this engagement we provided the young people with opportunities to

- Share experiences of how they have previously been involved in decision making in their lives – this could be through school, clubs, extra-curricular activities and other areas.

- Identify areas they would like to be more involved in decision-making

- Identify the barriers they face to being involved in decision-making opportunities and explore potential solutions to overcoming these barriers

- Share their expectations of decision-makers in creating equitable spaces for young people to be involved, decision-makers expectations on how young people should behave within these spaces, and the support that is required from others, including teachers, parents/carers and youth-workers, to enable young people to meaningfully take part.

- Define key themes that should be addressed to ensure young people can meaningfully participate in the Education Committee and develop recommendations on how this can be done.

Delivery of Sessions

Sessions 1 and 2 – Thursday 27 February 2025, Greenock Town Hall

Both sessions followed the same session plan, but with two separate groups.
- *Group 1: 3:30-5:30pm - 13 young people from schools across Inverclyde.*
- *Group 2: 6:00-8:00pm - 5 young people from youth work services.*

Overview
The purpose of sessions 1 and 2 was to engage young people from the local area on their experiences of decision making opportunities, what has worked and what hasn't, and what opportunities they might like to get involved in in future.

We also wanted to provide young people with the opportunity to share their opinions on how young people should be involved in decision making opportunities within Inverclyde.

Within this report, where appropriate, all comments/insights shared have been kept in the original language/spelling provided by the young people.

Activities
Following a short ice-breaker activity, we delved into four activities designed to gather the young people's views and experiences on decision-making opportunities across their lives.

Activity One: Opportunity Body Map
We split the young people into small groups, and on large rolls of paper, asked them to draw the outline of a young person.

Inside of the outline of a young person, we asked the group to write out the decision-making opportunities they have been part of, or opportunities they are aware of to take part in. This could include topic areas that young people are engaged on in schools/through clubs etc, but also in all areas of their lives.

Responses:

Group 1
- Junior Voice Leaders
- The Clydeview Lesson Plan
- Big Voiss Co-ordinators
- Young Coaches Education
- Voice Lesson Leaders
- Junior Leadership Team
- Umpires
- PSeven Transitions
- S1 – S3 Support
- Badminton Coaches
- Grieve and Growth Education
- Pupil Council
- Language Leaders
- Legacy Leaders

- Pupil Leadership Team
- Pupil Council
- Sports Ambassadors
- Mental Health Ambassadors
- 10 Minute Toilet Rule
- Cut Cost Caddy
- Future Assets
- Sports Leader
- SCQF
- Period Poverty Group
- Caritas
- Rights Respecting Group
- Phone Ban for First Years

Group 2
- School Leadership Team
- Yearbook Committee
- Prom Committee
- Scouts – deciding on what badges and activities we do
- People Council
- Learning Posters/design
- Lunch – what to eat
- Pupil Council
- Football – when and where I play
- Dinner – what to eat
- Pupil Council
- Classroom
- MVP
- Young Leaders
- Housegroups
- Girls and Boys Brigade
- Duke of Edinburgh

Group 3
- Pupil Parliament
- Committees
- Pupil Leadership Team
- Teacher's Affairs
- Student Affairs
- Activities for Class Rep
- College
- Agenda for Youth Council
- What I wanted from Saba
- School options
- What uni I would like to attend
- Youth Council
- House Ambassador

...

- I get a voice to help with decisions with drama
- I get to make decisions of what to talk about at my LGBT group
- BGE pupil consultation
- I get to choose to willfully learn new things
- I get to choose to go to my athletics club
- I get to choose to go our with my friends
- I get to choose what happens in my school (pupil councils)
- I get to choose what I wear
- I get to choose what we do in the youth club
- I get to choose what sports to play or do
- I get to choose what I do as I have free will

Outside of the outline, we asked the groups to detail the types of decision-making opportunities they would like to get involved in, both specific opportunities and the topics they would like to have a say in decision-making.

Responses:

Group 1
- How to access Parent Pay (the pin machines being took away)
- Exam System
- Canteen Food
- Toilet Lock
- Dress Code
- Fire bells being pulled
- Recycling programme
- Fights to do with vaping (how to address the vaping issue)

Group 2
- School food
- No blazers
- Allow branded clothing
- School spending
- Supported study times
- Lunch food
- New lunch food ideas
- More fun days/culture days in denominational schools
- School trips and activities
- More options for non-academic subjects for people looking to attend apprenticeships
- Doors should not be locked at lunch and interval
- Uniform to be taken more leniently
- Lunch food ideas

Group 3
- Work Experiences
- Bus Driver's behaviour
- Ethical Use of AI

- SQA wording
- I would like to have a say in things I think are immoral or wrong
- I want to have a say in street violence and drug misuse
- I would like to have a say in what happens near me
- I would like to have a say in the misuse of mobile phones in class
- I would like to have a say in safety and rights of the child
- I would like to have a say in the way education treat young people in school
- I want to have a say in school class
- What is taught in PSE
- How social areas are run (year specific)
- SQA
- How teachers treat pupils
- What food is offered at school
- Let us use AI! (teachers should use it too)

Activity Two: Identifying Barriers

Using the body maps, each group were then asked to write down the barriers that stop young people getting involved in decision-making opportunities. This could be practical issues, such as transport, costs, or this could be support needs and confidence levels in taking part in opportunities.

Responses:

Group 1
- Teachers have the final say
- The solution is not long lasting
- It is not in our power – it's an issue that needs to be dealt with higher up
- Some issues being discarded due to lack of interest by staff
- We feel we are pushed towards recycling, but see it is not carried through by staff
- Disrespectful to property
- Use of vapes in the toilets
- Being dismissed
- Judged by peers
- Travelling

Group 2
- They don't find all categories as important
- Because (sometimes) people don't like to listen
- Student's decisions in which we are passionate about where not taken seriously enough
- Age barrier
- Forced into it
- Don't understand how to
- Cause people don't listen
- People misuse the opportunity they have
- Misunderstood
- Cashless lunch system
- Focused on stopping vaping and not on the issues that lead to vaping

- We feel that staff are afraid to comment on dress code due to reputation
- Seen as too young
- Our views are moved to the side
- Younger years' ideas aren't took into consideration

Group 3
- Difference in views
- Voice not heard
- Not productive
- Bias
- Lack of incentives
- Transport
- Some kids don't care to have a say as they think it's a waste of time
- Political views
- Young people could feel scared or uncomfortable to speak up
- Another barrier could be that people don't think their say matters
- A barrier for children could be time (during school)
- Religious views
- Kids aren't mature enough
- Complex words
- Religion
- "Not mature enough!"
- Knowledge
- Words used are far too complex for young people and should be simplified
- Sexuality
- Accessibility
- Location
- Rigid school system – reluctance towards change
- Too shy to speak up
- Things being online only

Activity Three: Problem Trees

In small groups, the young people were given a "Problem Tree" tool – an A4 page with a tree diagram on it (roots – issues/barriers and branches – impact/solutions).

For each tree, the young people were asked to identify a barrier from the previous activity and then populate the branches with support, solutions and measures that can be put in place to tackle the barrier.

Each group was asked to feedback one of their "Problem Trees" and the solutions they identified.

Barriers	Solutions
Our views are moved to the side	Start a petition within the students for important matters
	Take the matter to a different group of people
	Invite an MP into school to discuss

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	Be persistent
Younger years ideas aren't taken into consideration	Make time for them and give them time to come up with well-rounded ideas
	Make a pupil head of each year group
	Set up younger focus groups that don't include 4th year or above
	Older pupils can echo the issues
We feel that out school is focused on stopping vaping and not the issues that lead to vaping	Focus groups with younger peers
	Asking people anonymously why they started vaping (QR code)
Teachers have the final say	Survey for pupils and parents
	Talk with pupil representatives
	No pupil is too young for an opinion
	Teachers should discuss with pupil leadership team
	Teachers should show more respect
Seen as too young	Meeting with school
	More opportunities for groups
	Junior leadership team
Accessibility and Language	Discuss topics in a way that young people can understand
	Use surveys/QR codes (anonymously)
	Locations and transport
Too shy to speak up	Encourage them
	Comfort zone
	Give support
	Tell someone who can voice it for you
	Friendly environment
	Contact with other schools
	Stronger bonds between teachers and pupils
Things being online only	Try alternatives
	Bring back the money machines
	Reduce cash-free approach
	Improve feedback (pupils to teachers, teachers to pupils) - constructive
Rigid school systems – reluctant for change	More opportunities for pupil involvement
	Opportunities for hands on learning/apprenticeships at a younger age
	Early identification of students who do not benefit from the academic system
	Better access to non-academic subjects
	Better education on the SCQF
	More important for pupil councils within ALL schools
Decisions not taken properly – they don't find all categories important – they sometimes don't listen	They should listen to the views of pupils more
	All categories should be treated in a fair way
	All decisions from students should be taken properly

	In the decisions of uniforms students should take a part in decision making
	Learning to ask more and be understood more
"Kids aren't mature enough"	Listen and take ideas on board
	Have kids voices heard through an adult
Complex Words	Have someone explain what some words mean
	Simpler words
	Easier to access information
Accessibility	Provide food
	Incentives
	Benefits to young people for taking part
	Have built in accessibility for disabled people
Feeling as if their say doesn't matter	Listen and take responsibility/actions to their ideas
Voices not heard	Listening to young people
	Effective communication
Lack of incentives	Providing incentives for young people
Censoring	Respecting and allowing young people to have their voices
Time of meetings	Ask young people what time is better for them
Don't get listened to	Let young people have a voice and let their opinions matter
Don't get asked for our views	Reach young people via various social media channels
	Promote council opportunities to young people
	Promote ways to share your views in the places young people go – clubs etc.
	Advertising in schools could be better

Activity Four: Expectations & Roles

The young people were then invited to focus in on three key groups of participants in decision-making processes, and explore the expectations each group might have or that young people might have of those groups, in relation to participation in committees within Inverclyde Council. The three key participant groups were:
- Young People
- Decision Makers within Inverclyde Council
- Support networks that enable them to take part (parents/guardians, schools, youthwork etc.)

The young people were asked to consider:
- What each of their roles will look like,
- The support they might provide,
- Their commitment to the process,
- Anything they can do to ensure young people are able to take part meaningfully in decision making processes.

Using flipcharts and post-it notes the young people identified the following:

Responses:

Young People: what they expect from the Education Committee
- Expect to be respected
- Should be polite and kind to everyone
- Expected to be made to feel welcome
- To not be dismissed – especially because of age
- Not to just be asked about youth issues but can have a say on everything discussed
- Be an equal member
- To be supported by others on the group
- To feel safe
- There should be an even amount of young people on the group (not just one)
- Engage young people of different ages
- Role could be to bring ideas in relation to their school
- Action is taken forward based on what the young people share/input
- Be allowed to make decisions
- Be given the proper amount of time to input/debate
- Given information in advance and in understandable language/formats
- Make sure you are 100% on any decisions made
- Find ways for us to take part that work for young people
- Accommodate young people within their meetings – be flexible
- Don't run long meetings – break into smaller parts

Decision Makers within Inverclyde Council: what they expect from young people who participate
- We should be polite and kind to everyone
- Young people should concentrate in meetings
- Expect us to respect their meeting
- Expect us to be mature in how we engage about issues
- Expect us to come with realistic ideas/inputs
- Expect us to take their views into consideration
- Expect us to attend regularly (be committed)
- Young people on the group should come prepared and be professional
- Expected to be actively engaged
- Expected to come prepared

Support Networks: What we need from them to help young people participate
- Support young people prepare for meetings
- Support at meetings
- School should provide transport
- Help us to share our views – speak on our behalf if needed
- Be a listening ear and a helping hand
- Use QR codes/technology to help us access helpful information
- Be encouraging

- Provide transport and lunch
- Help us feel safe
- Ensure accessibility

Key support identified included:
- Guidance councillors
- Youth workers
- CLD staff
- Teaching staff
- Parents/carers

Identification of Key Themes for Exploration in Session 3

Towards the end of Session 1 and 2, the young people identified eight key themes that should be looked at in Session 3 to form the basis for the recommendations that would be developed to enable Inverclyde Council to develop a toolkit and approaches to meaningfully and equitably embed young people within decision-making processes, including the Education Committee.

These eight themes are:
- Accessibility: what needs should be considered regarding where/when meeting are held and how information is shared.
- Environment: the venues and space that meetings should be held in.
- Roles: what role do young people want to play and to what extent should they been involved.
- Representation: how can we ensure that young people are fairly represented, how many young people should be involved and what support should be available for them to take part.
- Timing: when should meetings be held to make them accessible for young people.
- Frequency: how frequent/regular are the meetings and how regularly should young people be involved?
- Format – how can the meetings be run in a way that is accessible and inclusive for young people?
- Accountability – how can young people hold decision makers to account on decisions that are made within these decision-making spaces?

Session 3 - Thursday 6 March 2025, Greenock Town Hall

This session consisted of young people from the previous two sessions plus one new young person.
- *Group: 3:30-5:30pm - 13 young people from schools and youth work across Inverclyde.*

Overview

The purpose of session 3, was to reconvene the young people to recap on the last sessions and the areas covered. We also wanted to delve deeper into the key themes identified on how Inverclyde Council's Education Committee can be delivered in inclusive, accessible and equitable ways to meaningfully support the engagement of young people. Finally we wanted to explore the roles young people would like to play within the committee.

At the end of the session, our aim was to have developed some recommendations on how Inverclyde Council can develop toolkits and approaches to support the embedding of young people within decision-making processes.

Activities

Following a short ice-breaker activity, we delved into two activities designed to gather the young people's views and recommendations on this work.

Activity One: Recap Activity – Roles and Expectations

We split the young people into small groups, provided them with flipchart sheets with each of the following headings:
- Young People
- Decision Makers/Committee Members
- Support Network

Each sheet featured the key/common comments from session one in relation to roles and expectations of each of these groups and how they can contribute towards creating meaningful and equitable opportunities for young people to engage with the Education Committee.
Using sticky dots, the group were asked to vote on which ones they think are most important.
The purpose of this was to inform the developments of recommendations that can be shared with decision-makers around the expectations/hopes the young people have for future engagement with the education committee.

Responses:

Young people	
What you expect from Education Committee	**Votes**
Be an equal member	6
Expect to be respected	5
Find ways for us to take part that work for young people – Accommodate young people within their meetings – be flexible	5
Don't run long meetings – break into smaller parts	3
Be allowed to make decisions	3
Should be polite and kind to everyone	2
Expected to be made to feel welcome	2

There should be an even amount of young people on the group (not just one)	2
To feel safe	2
Engage young people of different ages	2
Role could be to bring ideas in relation to their school	2
To not be dismissed – especially because of age	1
Be given the proper amount of time to input/debate	1
Given information in advance and in understandable language/formats	1
Make sure you are 100% on decisions made	1
Not to just be asked about youth issues but can have a say on everything discussed	0
Action is taken forward based on what the young people share/input	0
To be supported by others on the group	0

Decision Makers	
What Education Committee might expect from young people	**Votes**
Expect us to be mature in how we engage about issues	12
Expect us to take their views into consideration	6
Expected to be actively engaged	5
We should be polite and kind to everyone	5
Expect us to respect their meeting	5
Expect us to come with realistic ideas/inputs	3
Expected to come prepared	1
Young people on the group should come prepared and be professional	1
Expect us to attend regularly (be committed)	1
Young people should concentrate in meetings	0

Support Networks	
What we need from support network	**Votes**
Ensure accessibility	8
Be encouraging	8
School should provide transport	4
Support at meetings	1
Support young people prepare for meetings	5
Provide transport and lunch	4
Help us feel safe	4
Use QR codes to help us access helpful information	0
Be a listening ear and a helping hand	3
Help us to share our views – speak on our behalf if needed	2

Activity 2: Developing Recommendations

Using the information gathered in sessions one and two, the group explored the eight identified themes that should form the basis for the recommendations that would be developed to enable Inverclyde Council to develop a toolkit and approaches to meaningfully and equitably embed young people within decision-making processes, including the Education Committee.

These eight themes are:
- Accessibility: what needs should be considered regarding where/when meeting are held and how information is shared.
- Environment: the venues and space that meetings should be held in.

- Roles: what role do young people want to play and to what extent should they been involved.
- Representation: how can we ensure that young people are fairly represented, how many young people should be involved and what support should be available for them to take part.
- Timing: when should meetings be held to make them accessible for young people.
- Frequency: how frequent/regular are the meetings and how regularly should young people be involved?
- Format – how can the meetings be run in a way that is accessible and inclusive for young people?
- Accountability – how can young people hold decision makers to account on decisions that are made within these decision-making spaces?

The following responses have been grouped under each of the key themes, from these, recommendations have been developed which can be seen on page 20.

Accessibility:
- Places
- Spaces
- How information is shared
- Emails, more continuous meetings e.g. this one
- Needs to be accessible for young people with disabilities
- Information needs to be easy for young people to understand
- Information should be given in a way we understand – online, notes
- Information should be shared through gmail, glow accounts
- It is well ok at greenock town hall
- We could do this in a bigger space
- Making a team online
- QR Codes
- Online sources
- Info QR codes
- Post things online in some sort of group
- Place close enough to travel to
- Shouldn't be too complex

Environment:
- Where should these meetings be held (that would work for young people)?
- Try to do different locations
- Could be held in schools where we are comfortable
- School
- Online
- Town hall
- In a less intimidating environment
- Town hall
- Meetings should be held, halls a peaceful place where you will not really hear lots of noise
- Community centre

- Online material
- Online question time
- Rotate high schools
- Town hall

Roles:
- What role do young people want to play?
- Full members?
- Invited to give input?
- At some/all meetings?
  - It's one thing to be listened to and another to influence
  - Be able to question and not just [be] questioned
  - Attend all meetings that affect us, that might imply full members
  - Be allowed to voice/raise our own issues
  - Even when the young people leave school, they should still get a say
  - Something where their voice can be listened to
  - At whatever meetings they can make
  - A young person's role is to talk about what we would like to see more of

Representation:
- How many young people should be involved?
- What support is available for them to take part?
- A group of people from each of the schools, maybe 2-3
- Committee style approach – meet termly and small group = more issues addressed
- Represent all young people
- Plenty of young minds
- Group of young people, hopefully representing different schools
- 1 rep from each school in Inverclyde
- Group of people so you can have multiple ideas and opinions

Timing:
- When should meetings be held?
- Days/times?
- Any times/dates to avoid?
- If during school hours, what support is required to make this happen?
- Mini bus
- Taxi provided
- Straight after school, 3/4pm Mon-Fri
- Avoid exam diet as there won't be as much pressure on young people
- During summer to avoid clash
- School provided transport
- I think meetings should be held mid-September away from Christmas and summer and also exam time

Frequency:
- How frequent/regular are the meetings?
- Having shorter and more frequent meetings that focus more in depth on one topic, instead of longer ones that cram all the topics to.
- Every month
- Regularly – young people must be committed and make whatever meetings they can
- If the meeting must be held during school hours, there should be measures in place to help. Students catch up on missed work
- Not too often as young people still need a life and have school, maybe once a month
- Shorter meetings more frequently

Format:
- How can the meetings be run in a way that is accessible and inclusive for young people?
- How long should they be? Should there be breaks? How should information be shared? How can young people share their views?
- The meetings involving young people should help include the opinions of young people, especially on topics that affect them directly
- Think they should be as long as the issues last but necessary breaks
- I think the meetings should be done online on a video call and last max 1 and a half hours
- Let some young people join meeting online from school support
- Once every couple of months
- For it to be accessible the council should think of the life of a young person and the other things going on in their lives such as studying and clubs
- A 'youth' committee that feeds into the actual committee with a rep on the actual [one] as well
- Time limit – 90mins -2 hours, online option – Zoom/Webex
- Instead of having a long 3 hour meeting, split them up into shorter ones
- Clear information of when young peoples input is required
- Having separate groups that meet outside of education council and reports back to them
- I think the meetings should have breaks, every 50-45 minutes, as your brain cannot concentrate for that long
- Possibly online meetings
- Meetings not incredibly long as young people have a lot to prepare for
- Having shorter meeting could be better as a young person could not be able to sit for 2-3 hours
- If people don't want to speak, try online/printed feedback

Accountability:
- Places
- Spaces
- How information is shared

- Emails, more continuous meetings e.g. this one
- Needs to be accessible for young people with disabilities
- Information needs to be easy for young people to understand
- Information should be given in a way we understand – online, notes
- Information should be shared through gmail, glow accounts
- It is well ok at green – ok town hall
- We could do this in a bigger space
- Making a team online
- QR Codes
- Online sources
- Info QR codes
- Post things online in some sort of group
- Place close enough to travel to
- Shouldn't be too complex

Recommendations

From the findings gathered throughout these sessions, we have complied the following list of recommendations that we would encourage Inverclyde Council to consider as part of any future discussions around engaging young people in decision-making processes.

1. **Engage with young people to co-design future decision-making opportunities for young people.** Young people value the opportunity to be involved in decision-making processes but recognise they need support to participate.

2. **Young people want to be seen as equal members/contributors** within decision-making spaces, recognising the parameters that might exist due to the significance and responsibility of governance roles and structures.

3. **If young people are to be meaningfully engaged, committees, groups and meetings must be designed and delivered in ways which are accessible for all young people.** This includes the venues and spaces that are used, how and when information is shared and the language and terminology that is used.

4. **To support young people to participate meaningfully, and feel safe, supported and respected, meetings should be held in venues and spaces which feel safe, equitable and non-intimidating.** This could relate to central venues which are used for meetings, or looking at venue options for decision-makers to meet with young people such as schools, community centres etc.

5. **Meeting need to be designed and delivered in ways that are accessible, inclusive and equitable for young people to meaningfully participate in them.** This includes thinking about the length of meetings, how information is shared/discussions are explained, options for online engagement etc. Young people would also like to see other ways for young people to feed in other than speaking in meetings. Again, young people would like to explore ways young people can meet externally and feed their contributions into the main Education Committee.

6. **Young people need clearly defined roles within decision-making structures.** The role young people can play in decision-making is important. Young people see the value in young people being equal members on groups such as the Education Committee. There is a role for young people to contribute in other ways, but the parameters of this need to be clearly communicated to young people so they understand what they do and do not have the ability to inform and influence. Young people should be able to share their views and contribute to all discussions, not just being asked to share their experiences. Young people should be able to actively participate – to ask questions as well and answer them. There must always be established feedback loops so young people understand how their contributions are informing and influencing decisions. This includes clear communication even when their contributions cannot be taken forward.

7. **There should be opportunities for a number of young people to engaged with and contribute towards the Education Committee (and other decision-making roles).** It is not enough to have one young person present. Attention needs to be paid to the diversity of the young people engaged to ensure representation from across ages, backgrounds, schools and communities. If young people are not to directly attend the Education Committee, mechanisms must be created to ensure groups of young people can meet and their views be fed in.

8. **Attention must be paid to when meetings are held to ensure young people can contribute equitably.** Young people's educational engagement and key pressure points across the academic calendar (holidays, exams etc.) must be considered. Where business must be conducted during the working day, schools should be worked with to ensure time is given for young people to participate.

9. **Traditional ways for doing business may not be suitable to enable young people's participation. Frequency and regularity of meetings must be designed to support young people to regularly contribute.** If young people are to be equitable members of decision-making groups/committees then meeting should be scheduled in line with the availability of all members – including young people. If other options for young people's participation are preferred, scheduling of meetings must be delivered in ways which allow young people to meet in-line with these to ensure adequate time is given for young people's inputs to be tabled, considered and responded to.

10. **Young people need mechanisms and support to hold decision-makers to account** for how they are listening to and acting upon the inputs of young people, to ensure young people's contributions hold weight and are taken seriously.

Next Step Options

Our hope is that this work, and the young people's brilliant contributions can go some way to informing and influencing decisions made, within Inverclyde Council, on how young people can be meaningfully engaged within the work of the Education Committee, and other decision-making opportunities.

Young Scot would be open to discussing ongoing support and engagement including;

- facilitating discussions with staff (including any young people currently involved) within Inverclyde Council to better understand the needs and ambitions around embedding young people within their internal decision-making structures.

- delivering some in-person training with Inverclyde Council staff to explore structures and approaches to ensure young people can meaningfully take part in Board and Committee settings. This could incorporate learning from the previous engagement with staff, and will include wider learning from other settings where Young Scot has supported organisations to engage with young people in this way.

For more information, please contact:

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Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	2 September 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/46/25/MR
Contact Officer:	Michael Roach	Contact No:	01475 712850
Subject:	Inverclyde Wellbeing Service – Annual Report 2024/25		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☐ For Decision   ☒ For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to share with members of the Education and Communities Committee the annual governance report for 2024/25 from Action for Children who deliver the Inverclyde Wellbeing service which includes the school aged counselling service. The report is attached as Appendix 1 to this paper.

1.3 As well as the counselling service Action for Children offer curriculum-based support groups for secondary school pupils as well as an innovative transition support program for P7 pupils as they move into S1.

1.4 The report outlines the impact of the service and the positive evidence it has in meeting the key performance indictors set for the year.

1.5 The service has a balanced budget going into the school year 2025/26.

1.6 Action for Children are now entering year 2 of the refreshed contact for the Wellbeing Service following on from their initial 4-year contract. The current contract is due to expire in July 2027.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members of the Education and Communities Committee are asked to note the content of the annual governance report for the Inverclyde Wellbeing service.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 Since August 2020 the Inverclyde Wellbeing service has been in operation delivered by Action for Children in partnership with HSCP and Education Services. The service is funded by an annual grant for school counselling and is enhanced by funding from HSCP to offer a wider wellbeing service to all school aged pupils who live in Inverclyde.

3.2 The service is accessed by referral and these can be made by pupils, parents, education staff, health and social care services. These referrals are then triaged by representatives from health, educational psychology and HSCP. The wellbeing service offers tier 2 counselling but the triage process may determine that a tier 3 service is required.

3.3 As well as the 1:1 counselling offer there are a number of group work programmes also being offered by the service e.g. the BLUES programme. A full update is given in the report attached as Appendix 1 to this paper.

3.4 There remains a waiting list for counselling once triaged. The longest young person is waiting is 6 months; this has remained consistent with this point last year. This had reduced from approximately 9 months during periods of lockdown and covid restrictions. The number of referrals also increases at times when there is promotion of the service. An annual letter is sent to all parents in September of each year.

3.5 The service is funded by a grant from the Scottish Government. However, the HSCP agreed that they would provide additional funding in order to ensure that all school pupils have access to this service as well as widen the scope beyond just counselling e.g. the delivery of group work programmes. The current contract with Action for Children runs out in July 2027.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 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/Strategic Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

4.2 **Finance**

There are limited financial costs associated with the information provided in this paper.

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					

4.3 **Legal/Risk**

There are no legal implications.

4.4 **Human Resources**

N/A

4.5 **Strategic**

N/A

5.0 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.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

Action for Children Report

Inverclyde Wellbeing Service Governance Report

Year 5: July 2024 – June 2025

Contents

Introduction Year 5 –

June 2024 began the 5th year of delivery for the Action for Children Inverclyde Wellbeing Service (IWS), after successfully winning the tender to deliver a schools based emotional health and wellbeing service for the next 3 years, until July 2027.

Having now firmly established a service over 4 years, the IWS continued to deliver our range of tier 1 and 2 early intervention work across all Inverclyde schools, reaching over 1700 children and young people (CYP) in the reporting period.

Working with partner agencies, both statutory and third sector, and school staff, we continued to develop our close working relationships to enhance and widen our reach, ensuring access for all CYP, appropriate for our services.

As in previous years, we are represented on a number of local steering groups with a particular focus on emotional health and wellbeing. Aware of where our services overlap with new and existing services, we contribute to the wider aims of supporting CYP to access a variety of supports that enhance their overall wellbeing, and which impact positively on their ability to engage and attain academically in school.

Service delivery

The IWS has continued to deliver its early intervention-based initiatives across both primary and secondary schools in Inverclyde, contributing to a menu of services offered across the local authority with other partner agencies. As stated above, the IWS focuses on support at tiers 1 and 2, with tier 3 being the threshold for support by CAMHS.

Group work programmes continue across both primary and secondary, with all P7 pupils taking part in Bouncing Back, which acts as a precursor to The Blues Progamme, an intervention offered to pupils who meet the threshold for this intervention later in secondary school (S3).

In S3, all pupils are invited to complete questionnaires to assess whether the Blues Programme would be of benefit to them, after attending a presentation in their Personal and Social Education (PSE) classes. If scoring above the threshold to be invited to take part, Blues Programme facilitators work with schools to ensure the composition of each group is conducive to encouraging attendance and participation.

A well-established model is now in place with our counselling team providing in situ support to all secondary schools, varying dependent on waiting lists and levels of need, while we continue to dedicate a proportion of our counselling resources to primary schools. Demand is typically lower in primary than in secondary school. We rotate counselling staff across primary schools to meet the demands of individual schools on an equitable basis.

One to One Counselling

The counselling service continues to work to a model of 8 sessions, based on the referral criteria widely shared with potential referral sources, such as school guidance staff. Information is also distributed to all parents/carers through Education Department communications via e mail at specific points in the year, for example at the beginning of the school year after the summer holidays.

Referral figures for the year show that of new referrals received during the reporting period, approx. 70% were for secondary school pupils, with the remaining 30% for primary-aged pupils.

Of those referrals active within the reporting period, i.e. offered counselling sessions, approximately 79% were secondary school aged, with 21% being primary school aged.

There is regular communication between the service and secondary schools, with updates on waiting lists, and discussions on referrals, considering priorities and levels of need. Relevant meetings such as TAC (Team Around the Child) meetings are attended when IWS staff are invited for their input. Boundaries around confidentiality are maintained, with the exception of the disclosure of any safeguarding risks. These concerns override confidentiality to ensure CYP are kept safe, and concerns are shared as appropriate.

All counsellors continue to access monthly clinical supervision as per the requirements of their role, as well as maintaining their CPD (continuing professional development) throughout the reporting period. All have access to training and development opportunities, both internal and external.

Waiting list times

Waiting list times remain consistent with previous annual reports, with an average waiting time of approximately 6 months. The service continues to work collaboratively with all partners to best meet the needs of individual CYP, and will respond to requests for the prioritisation of referrals based on an individual assessment of the presenting issues. A degree of flexibility is required to ensure each CYP receives the service that best provides them with the support they require, and each case is reviewed with their counsellor in supervision on a monthly basis, or more frequently as and when required.

Counselling delivery figures

The figures below show details for the current reporting period July 2024-June 2025:

- 195 new referrals received during July 2023-June 2024, see **Fig. 1**

- 268 CYP *(# active referrals)* offered access to counselling support during July 2023-June 2024

- Approx. 80% referrals offered support were from secondary schools (213 YP) Approx. 20% were from primary schools (55 YP) *(# active referrals)*

- Circa 60 currently engaging or at initial assessment stage *(# active referrals)*

- Over 92% CYP completing sessions showed an improvement *(# active referrals)*

- 119 CYP (of a total of 129, or 92%) showed an improvement on completion of agreed sessions (Number of children who have reported an improved outcome following access to a counsellor using a Young Person Clinical outcomes in Routine Evaluation (YP-CORE) or a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) or another measure), see **Fig. 2**

- Less than 1% of scores remained consistent throughout sessions

- Less than 9% of scores declined during sessions

- A number of those CYP who have disengaged *(see number below) have done so as a result of feeling they no longer require further sessions or to quote anecdotally from school staff "are in a better place", but due to not attending final sessions, we are unable to provide a figure for how many of this figure this applies to. The views of the counselling team are sought for these CYP, based on their assessments during sessions attended, and are subjective. This figure also includes those CYP where there was no further action following initial offer of counselling or assessment session.

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*circa 60+ disengaged from support (see note above) this figures includes those CYP who declined or withdrew from sessions, CYP accessing other supports (10+ CYP accessing other services) including, CAMHS, private counselling or other therapeutic inputs.

(# denotes active referrals, those offered counselling within reporting period)

Waiting List figures

	Number on List	% of List
Cases on Waiting List (as of end of June 25)	81	
Primary School Waiting List	35	43%
Secondary School Waiting List	46	57%

Comparison figures for 2023-24 2024-25 (# active referrals):

129 CYP completed sessions and recorded a measurable outcome, with 119 CYP showing an improvement, which is <92%, or 119 of 129 CYP.

This is an increase in CYP completing sessions, from 101 in 2023-24, to 129 in 2024-25, with an increase in those CYP with an improved score from 99 in 2023-24 to 119 in 2024-25.

There was also an increase in the number of CYP accessing support, up from circa 205 in 2023-24 to circa 260 in 2024-25.

As stated above, anecdotal evidence from discussion with school staff suggests a number of CYP disengage from counselling when they feel they have improved in their general wellbeing or have talked through a concern or issue which they feel has been resolved. While this is positive for CYP in this situation, we are often unable to complete sessions and record these outcomes positively, as no final sessions take place.

Fig.1

Fig. 1 shows the breakdown of **new referrals received in the reporting period** July 2024 to June 2025, with numbers for pupils per source, i.e. Primary or Secondary school, along with comparable data from the previous reporting period.

	Year 4 2023-24			Year 5 2024-25		
Month	**Primary**	**Secondary**	**Total**	**Primary**	**Secondary**	**Total**
July	<5	5	7	<5	<5	<5
August	<5	12	16	<5	<5	<5
September	6	13	19	11	14	25
October	5	10	15	7	12	19
November	8	21	29	<5	14	16
December	<5	10	13	<5	14	17
January	<5	19	23	6	9	15
February	<5	13	16	6	14	20
March	<5	18	20	6	24	30
April	<5	8	10	<5	7	11
May	<5	11	15	5	10	15
June	<5	18	20	6	13	19
TOTAL	45	158	203	58	137	195

Fig. 2

Fig. 2 shows the breakdown of age group of pupils **accessing counselling in the reporting period** who completed agreed sessions, and outcomes recorded using YP Core, or CORS (Child Outcome Rating Scale) as appropriate, dependent on age and level of understanding of each CYP. **(# active referrals)**

Year Group	Improved Outcome	Score Declined	Score Remained Consistent
P1	<5		<5
P2	<5		
P3	<5		
P4	<5		
P5	9		
P6	9	<5	
P7			
S1	27	<5	
S2	25	<5	<5
S3	17		
S4	10	<5	
S5	7		
S6	<5	<5	
TOTAL	119	8	<5

Fig. 3

Fig. 3 indicates the age ranges of all CYP **offered counselling in the reporting period (# active referrals)**

Stage Specific Data	Number CYP
Number of children in P1	5
Number of children in P2	6
Number of children in P3	6
Number of children in P4	6
Number of children in P5	12
Number of children in P6	17
Number of children in P7	<5
Number of children in S1	47
Number of children in S2	59
Number of children in S3	44
Number of children in S4	37
Number of children in S5	18
Number of children in S6	7
TOTAL	268

Fig. 4

Fig. 4 indicates the number of CYP male, female or non binary **offered counselling in the reporting period (# active referrals)**

Gender	Number CYP
Number of female pupils	153
Number of male pupils	111
Number of young people identifying as non-binary	<5
TOTAL	**268**

Fig. 5

Fig. 5 indicates the referral source for referrals **offered counselling in the reporting period (# active referrals)**

Referral **Source**		Numbers
Self-referral		<5
School Staff		198
Social Services		<5
GP		8
School Nurse		<5
Health Professionals:	CAMHS	24
	Skylark	11
Other:	Community Link Worker	<5
	Ed Psych	11
	Parents/carers	<5
	Children 1st	8
	Inverclyde Emotional Wellbeing Hub **(IEWH)**	
TOTAL		**268**

Fig. 6

Fig. 6 indicates the issues reported by referral information for CYP **offered counselling in the reporting period (# active referrals)**

Mental Health and Wellbeing issues reported by children and young people					
Exam Stress	0	(0%)	Self-Harm	5	(2%)
Trauma	10	(4%)	Depression	0	(0%)
Bereavement	20	(8%)	Anxiety	74	(27%)
Gender Identity	0	(0%)	Emotional/ Behavioural Difficulties	89	(33%)
Substance Use	0	(0%)	Body Image	<5	(<1%)
Low Mood	55	(20%)	Parental separation	<5	(1%)
Other Issues including physical health relationships, parental incarceration, parental ill health, young carers, phobias, self esteem:				10	(4%)

Fig. 6 above indicates the number and percentage of referrals which highlight the above headings as reasons for initial referrals, as recorded on referrals submitted. In addition, during counselling, further presenting issues are disclosed by CYP as they engage in sessions.

These include, but are not limited to, parental divorce/separation, incarceration of family members, peer relationships, family relationships, caring responsibilities, exam stress, dyslexia, school attendance/non-attendance, familial mental health, grief and anticipatory grief, bullying, dealing with pre diagnosis/diagnosis such as ASD/ADHD/OCD, trauma, sleep issues, social media, physical health (own and family members), disabilities, school transitions, gender identity, domestic abuse, loss, and feelings of anger.

Re-Referrals

Within the reporting period, 40 re-referrals have accessed support. This is generally as a result of a CYP having previously benefited and engaged in support. Equally, they may have moved from a position of non-engagement or no further action on assessment of their initial referral. The shortest period between referrals resubmitted was 6 months, with the longest between referrals being over 4 years, suggesting a sense of trust in young people's experience or in their knowledge and understanding of what the service offers.

Self-Referrals

While the total number of self-referrals is low as shown in Fig. 5 above, many CYP are supported to refer, as they may lack confidence in accessing the means to refer on their own. This could be by approaching school staff, or through having worked with IWS staff in group work or other activities. Further work to encourage and increase the number of direct self-referrals included IWS staff attending Personal and Social Education sessions with senior phase secondary school pupils and will also involve posters with QR codes being displayed in schools on pupil notice boards in the coming school year. This will direct CYP to the IWS website and referral form, as well as give them information on how to seek support to be "assisted" to self-refer.

Group Work Programmes

Blues Programme

7 schools took part in Blues programme delivery in 2024-25, with the closure of Cedars school of Excellence reducing the number of previously participating schools from 8.

Port Glasgow High School, St Stephens High School, Notre Dame, Inverclyde Academy, Clydeview Academy, St Columbas Gourock, and St Columbas Kilmacolm all continued to participate in 2024-25.

	Year 3 (22/23) (across 8 schools)	Year 4 (23/24) (Across 8 Schools)	Year 5 (24/25) (Across 7 Schools)
Number of Blues Groups across 7 schools	22	22	17
Number of CES-D completed	694	652	692
Scoring Over Threshold and invited to Programme	41% (288 pupils)	38% (246 pupils)	37% (256 pupils)
Scoring Under Threshold	59% (407 pupils)	62% (406 pupils)	63% (436 pupils)
Pupils Invited and began Programme	75% (215 pupils)	58% (144 pupils)	46% (119 pupils)
Number of participating pupils whose CES-D score improved*	58.6%	82%	72%
Number of participating pupils whose CES-D score didn't change*	27%	4%	9%
Number of participating pupils whose CES-D score decreased*	13%	14%	19%

* based on pupils who completed the Programme and completed a second CES-D questionnaire

These figures for the reporting period show that from a cohort of S3 pupils, the number who completed CES-D's (questionnaires), rose to 692 (2024-25) from 652 (2023-24).

256 scored over the threshold which would indicate they would benefit from the intervention and were given the opportunity to take part in 2024-25, an increase from 246 in 2023-24.

The numbers of pupils opting to participate reduced to 119 in 2024-25, down from 144 in 2023-24.

Overall, 92% of YP who took part rated the programme as 4 out of 5 stars.

Scores varied across schools with the highest improvement post intervention being 83%, and the lowest 40%.

Variances between schools of scores which remained the same was from the highest at 50% to the lowest at 0%, and variance of scores which deteriorated during the intervention ranged from the highest at 29% with the lowest a school which recorded 10% of reduction in pre to post intervention scores.

These variances in scores are significant as they continue to demonstrate the impact of individual group dynamics on the resulting scores. Each group presents in their own way, and this can influence outcomes in terms of how comfortable YP are to be open and feel able to share, the effect of peers in a group, as well as the overall engagement of the group, as a whole.

Blues Programme facilitators continue to work closely with key school contacts to look at the makeup of each group, to try where possible to reduce any issues which might impact negatively on the positive delivery and outcomes of the 6 weekly Blues Programme in each school. This also helps encourage engagement and attendance at sessions. Information is shared with schools in advance of the delivery of groups, to promote the intervention and encourage more young people who have been invited to attend. This year 37% of YP scored over the threshold to be invited (compared to 41% in 2023-23, and 38% in 2023-24) and a total of 119 YP participated, 46% of those invited.

Bouncing Back

All P7 classes across all primary schools were again invited to take part in Bouncing Back sessions during the term after the Easter school holidays.

21 schools took part, with the closure of Cedars School of Excellence reducing the figure from 22 schools in 2023-24.

The focus of Bouncing Back, based on the Blues Programme principles though condensed and simplified as appropriate for the age group, remains to support the P7 pupils with making the transition to S1 successful. By looking at strategies, skills and techniques that the pupils will learn during the sessions, we help build their resilience and ability to 'bounce back' when faced with life's challenges and changes.

Mental health "first aid kits" were created and distributed to each P7 class taking part in Bouncing Back, providing a range of items for the pupils to use, to help remind them how to use the skills and techniques they gained to look after their health and wellbeing, when feeling anxious or worried.

Figures below for Bouncing Back delivery in Year 5

- **26 groupwork sessions were delivered**
- **Over 661 CYP took part in these group work sessions across all P7 classes**

Comparison figures for Year 5 show an increase in the number of pupils accessing Bouncing Back, up to 661 in 2024-25 from 568 in 2023-24

26 group sessions were delivered, down from 31 in 2023-24, due to an overall reduction in the number of P7 classes, although the number of pupils increased in 2024-25 (661 CYP)

Sample school data shows:

> – **78% of CYP taking part in Bouncing Back rated the intervention 4 or 5 stars, from a rating of 1 to 5 in 2024-25, which is slightly lower than in year 4 (80% in 2023-24)**

Other group work activities

Other activities to support CYP across both primary and secondary schools include a combination of 1 to 1, and small group sessions:

Secondary school, weekly "drop in" sessions, arranged with guidance staff to support identified CYP who would benefit from early intervention support, provide a safe space for the young people to open up about mental health and wellbeing. Signposting to any further support where necessary takes place if specific needs are identified and require escalation.

In an ASN school, bespoke 1 to 1 and small group sessions take place. Developed by staff to provide a non-judgmental listening ear for the CYP and helping them to understand their emotions, these have evolved and adapted over time to provide what is effective through observing and listening to staff and young people. Supporting young people across both primary and secondary school, a weekly "friendship group" has been offered with female pupils, to help confidence and self-esteem and to encourage peer support.

Primary school weekly sessions.

A primary had requested support for some group work sessions with a group of male pupils who were currently in separate classes, but would be in the same class after the summer. The pupils presented with a variety of needs and can struggle to regulate their emotions. We worked on team building exercises and teaching some skills to help the pupils recognise and manage their emotions better.

Primary school group work sessions to support a group of female pupils who presented as having low self-esteem, and in particular one pupil has very low confidence and would struggle to come in the main school gates in the morning. Work with the pupils was focused on trying to increase confidence and self-esteem overall, and to firm up friendships. The school are hopeful that with some continued group engagement the transition to high school will not be as challenging as it currently seems, when the pupils are ready to make the transition.

Further school engagement

The IWS continued to contribute to all secondary school Joint Support Team meetings on a regular basis, along with other partner agencies. In addition, IWS attends a variety of school events, including PSE sessions for senior school pupils, parental engagement events, careers events and primary transition evenings. This provides opportunities to engage with wider school communities and increases the profile and reach of our service.

The service also attends and contributes a regular update to Education colleagues throughout the school year, sharing outcome data, feedback and training opportunities with senior school staff and leaders for health and wellbeing and ASN provision across both primary and secondary schools.

Staff Training 'What's the Harm: Self harm awareness and skills' training

3 IWS staff are now trained as 'What's the Harm: Self harm awareness and skills' trainers, and sessions have been offered to schools, as well as partners working to support CYP and families across Inverclyde.
Full day training sessions have been offered to schools, as well as the option of bespoke split sessions to best incorporate the training into the school day. These sessions can be delivered in person as well as online and can also be offered as parental engagement sessions where schools feel there would be an appropriate level of interest from parents/carers to participate.
IWS staff will also be accessing further training in understanding neurodiversity, and how to better support CYP who present with a diagnosis or ASD traits.

Single Point of Access – Centralised Referral System - Inverclyde Emotional Wellbeing Hub (IEWH)

THE IWS continues to take part in fortnightly assessment meetings with the IEWH team, working with participating partners, both statutory and third sector, including Barnardos, Educational Psychology, School Health, Social Work and CAMHS.

The group utilises the FORT (Fast Online Referral Tracking System) Referral system, which allows members to upload referrals and allocate these to services, once discussions have taken place during fortnightly meetings, and the appropriate services have been agreed.

This continues to have a positive impact on redirecting referrals to the service that best meets their needs from the participating partners, reducing the need for referrals to return to "square one" and repeat the referral process to seek support from other agencies.

Key Performance Indicators

Example Key Performance Indicators	Example Year 5 Targets:	Year 5 Outcomes:
Reach KPIs: - **Number of appointments** - **Number of group work sessions** - **Number of 1:1 sessions** - **Number of preventative sessions**	- 1,600 pupils directly supported in Year 3 i.e.: - 600 primary pupils – *Bouncing Back* groups - 600 secondary pupils completed Blues Programme Questionnaire - 200 secondary pupils participating- *Blues Programme* groups - 375 pupils - targeted 1:1 support/counselling/school drop ins	- Circa 1750 pupils engaged in Wellbeing Service supports - 661 Bouncing Back (P7) - 692 Secondary pupils completed Blues Programme Questionnaire. - 256 invited to participate in Blues Programme - 119 secondary pupils participated in Blues - 268 offered 1:1 support/counselling - 84 YP (Secondary school) drop in/small group work - Approx. 100 CYP supported across primary and ASN schools in 1 to 1 or bespoke small group interventions
Outcome KPIs: - **Improved CYP wellbeing, mental health and resilience** - **Reduced Tier 3/CAMHS referrals**	- 88% of pupils improving against selected SHANARRI Wellbeing Outcomes - % of pupils addressing their needs without the requirement for specialist services	- > 92% completing agreed sessions showing an improved outcome using a Young person's Clinical outcome e.g. Young Persons CORE
Quality KPIs: - **Accessible service/the right help at the right time** - **Structured support and goal-setting** - **Providing relationship-based interventions** - **Informing CYP/families of available support**	- Maintain 95% of pupils providing positive feedback on their experience of the service - including: - Service accessibility - Relationship-based support - Quality of interventions	- 99% of Blues participants would recommend the programme. - 92% of secondary pupils (S3) gave a 4 or 5 star rating for Blues Programme sessions, from a scale of 1 to 5 - 72% of Blues participants score improved pre to post intervention, 9% remained the same, and 19% of scores decreased. - 78 % of P7 pupils gave a 4 or 5 star rating for Bouncing Back sessions, from a scale of 1 to 5

Finance year 4

Cost Type	Core Service
Employee Costs Total	£266,803.88
Other Employee Related Costs Total	£20,773.57
Premises Costs Total	£3,000.00
Equipment Total	£4,778.66
Communication Costs Total	£1,216.91
Variable Costs Total	£0
Activity Costs Total	£861.53
Management Fee	£33,015.24
Total	£330,449.79
Income	(£306,000)
Action for Children Income Contribution*	(£24,449.79)
Surplus / Deficit	£0

* In order to maintain the level of service delivery in the previous contract, Action for Children have committed to contribute financial support for the duration of this contract.

Access to funding for CYP and families <mark>Additional Funding Received</mark>

The IWS continued to look at opportunities to support CYP and families engaged with the service to access funding opportunities provided by Action for Children through corporate partnerships.

These include our Family Fund, Crisis Fund, Enrichment Activities Fund, Turner and Townsend Education Fund, and our partnership with Dell Technologies.

Cost Type	Value	No of CYP Benefitting	Impact
Fundraising Corporate Partnership Enrichment Fund	£590.33	55 pupils	Sensory Bags and Mental Health Support for pupils at an ASN school, to help focus in class and emotional regulation. Mental Health First Aid Kits to aid focus in class, independently manage emotions and self-regulate, improving mood and wellbeing Group activity session to build confidence, goal setting and mental health support
Fundraising Corporate Partnership Family Fund	£500	<5 families / 8 children	Supermarket vouchers to ease financial hardship, improved hygiene, laundry, school uniform and to contribute to energy costs.
Turner and Townsend Fund	£100	<5 pupils	Funding towards school clothing and materials to help raise attainment at school and relieving financial pressures.
Dell Chromebooks	£2,800	7 families	
Christmas Gifts	N/A	15 pupils	Gifts received by a local secondary school that were in excess of what the school could distribute, which the IWS was then able to distribute to pupils being supported in other schools by the service, and other Action for Children services operating locally.

Next Steps Year 6 August 2025

After a period of uncertainty between the end of the initial 4 year contract and the confirmation of the successful tender bid to continue to deliver for a further 3 years, the IWS has been able to consolidate the service and team through recruiting to fill any vacant posts, ensuring the service is fully staffed.

This has allowed the service to place counselling staff in secondary schools who have been able to remain consistently in situ, which has provided the opportunity for both the school and counselling staff to become more familiar with each other and further develop working relationships. This consistency has been beneficial when working collaboratively to improve the engagement of some "hard to reach" CYP, through showing a flexible and determined approach to continue to reach out to these CYP, over a period of time when issues around attendance or engagement may further impact on their wellbeing, as well as their willingness to work with the service offered to them.

Continuing to work alongside schools and partner agencies allows the service to promote collaborative working, such as the Inverclyde Emotional Wellbeing Hub Triage Team, as well as ensure there is a clear pathway and menu of services, including the IWS, to help CYP and families to be directed to the support they need, at any given time.

Inverclyde council

Report To:	**Education & Communities Committee**	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks** **Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/53/25/MR**
Contact Officer:	**Michael Roach** **Head of Education**	**Contact No:**	**01475 712850**
Subject:	**Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Evaluation Report - Session 2024/25 Report**		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☐For Decision ☒For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to present the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Evaluation Report for Session 2024/25 (Appendix 1) and to ask the Committee to note its contents.

1.3 The Scottish Government provided updated guidance in May 2023 indicating that Local Authorities should plan for the remainder of the Attainment Challenge programme through to the end of Session 2025/26 and report on progress made in narrowing the poverty related attainment gap.

1.4 The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Evaluation Report for Session 2024/25 outlines progress across all aspects of the Attainment Scotland Fund (ASF)
   - Strategic Equity Fund (SEF),
   - Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and the
   - Care Experienced Children and Young People's Fund (CECYP)

1.5 The report reinforces the Council's commitment to equity and excellence in education.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee notes:
   - the content of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Evaluation Report for Session 2024/25

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 The Attainment Scotland Fund (ASF) is a targeted initiative focused on closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children. The fund provides support for the Scottish Attainment Challenge which is split into the following areas for session 2024/25:

- **Strategic Equity Fund (SEF):** £ 1,311,926
- **Pupil Equity Fund (PEF):** £ 2,585,290
- **Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund (CECYP):** £89,833

3.2 The Education and Communities Committee agreed the Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) Plan 2024-26 and associated stretch aims for session 2024/25 at the Education and Communities committee meeting on 21 May 2024

3.3 The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Evaluation Report for Session 2024/25 highlights progress made against identified outcomes, outlines effective practice, and sets out recommendations for ongoing improvement.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 In session 2024/25, Inverclyde's continued engagement with the Scottish Attainment Challenge has had a measurable impact on children, young people and families as we attempt to narrow the poverty related attainment gap.

4.2 Through targeted use of Strategic Equity Fund, Pupil Equity Fund and the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund, the authority enhanced professional learning for staff, and embedded evidence-based teaching practices across schools. The continued focus on raising attainment has seen overall gains in literacy, numeracy and attendance in the primary sector.

4.3 Good progress has been made implementing the **Strategic Equity Fund (SEF)** Plan for session 2024/25. An initial review of the Logic Model led to a more targeted plan with many previous outcomes already embedded.

Key highlights include:
- 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.
- Strategic Pedagogical Leads (SPLs) delivered quality coaching and mentoring sessions with individual teachers across all sectors resulting in improved pedagogy evident in peer reviews
- SPLs supported Literacy and Numeracy developments delivering quality professional learning opportunities for all staff
- The Data Lead effectively supports establishments through updating their dashboard at the beginning and end of each session aligned with the updating of establishment data packs. Throughout the session the Teacher Professional Judgement tracker is updated a the agreed tracking periods of November, February and May, before the final cleanse and submission of Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL) data to the Scottish Government in August each year.
- The Data Lead also communicated attendance data via the attendance dashboard which is supporting establishments to better track attendance and support absence in line with the recently updated Attendance Policy.
- An Education Officer was appointed to support improvements in young people achieving initial positive destinations and also in sustaining positive destinations. The Education Officer was instrumental in securing the positive outcomes for targeted young people.
- The Community Learning & Development (CLD) attainment programme was effectively implemented at S3 pupils upwards aiming to support them achieve a level 5 qualification.

- Very good progress from the Barnardo's Family Support Work service continues in relation to meeting the aims of the service provision in delivering full family support as part of the Attainment Challenge, and with the overall aim to increase the young person's 'readiness to learn'.
- A Procurement Officer was appointed to the Attainment Challenge team in July 2024 with the remit of increasing compliance in educational spend across the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF). The Procurement Officer worked closely with the Attainment Challenge project lead in securing joint working with East Ayrshire council's procurement team to create a shared Education Procurement Framework. This framework ensured Head Teachers would be compliant with the councils procurement legislation, when using PEF, to access suppliers who would provide interventions supporting improved outcomes for children and families.

4.4 The **Pupil Equity Fund (PEF)** continues to play a vital role in Inverclyde's efforts to close the poverty-related attainment gap.

Key highlights include:
- **Leadership Opportunities:** Some establishments employed promoted staff to effectively track and monitor the progress of the PEF plan leading to improved outcomes of targeted children and families
- **Targeted Literacy and Numeracy Support:** some establishments employed additional staff to support interventions leading to raised attainment in literacy and numeracy for targeted children
- **Positive Relationships:** Emphasis was placed on building strong relationships between staff and pupils, which was seen as central to improving outcomes.
- **Family Support:** Interventions to improve readiness to learn for targeted children and families has led to increased attendance and engagement
- **Professional Development:** Support staff were offered quality training providing them with the skills to deliver targeted interventions, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
- **Cost of the School Day:** all establishments include an element of supporting the cost of the school day with interventions ranging from providing uniform and class materials to supporting residential trips ensuring children and families can fully access school life.

4.5 Good progress has been made in providing additional supports to children and young people via the **Care-Experienced Children and Young People Fund (CECYP)**. 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.

Key highlights include:
- 45% of the applications were to support and enhance the ability of care experienced young people to participate and access community groups. Most were in relation to health and wellbeing such as accessing sports and other activities. Examples are the gym/ swimming lessons/ martial arts etc.
- 20% were in relation to assisting care experienced young people to access IT equipment to enhance their ability to access school/ college work and to seek employment. Examples were Unaccompanied young people who were going to use computers to improve their English as this was not their first language.
- 13% of applications were to access therapies that would help the child or young people in relation to their emotional wellbeing & regulation to help them be more ready to learn.
- 8% was to advance a young person's skills in relation to driving that would provide more independence and open more opportunities for training & employment.
- 3% was in relation to equipment to help a young person access college courses & equipment.
- 8% was in relation to educational tutors.

- 3% of the applications were to allow children/ young people to access school trips such as the residential trip in primary 7.
- Two Education Support Workers were also employed via the CECYP Fund to work under the supervision of the Virtual Head Teacher (VHT) to positively impact the outcomes for targeted young people.

4.6 Next steps:
- Implement the SEF Plan for session 25/26 and create a plan for session 2026/27:
- Continue to track progress towards agreed Local Authority CORE and CORE+ Stretch Aims supported by full implementation of the BGE and Senior Phase Trackers.
- Continue to use available resources to provide a sustainable approach focusing on improving outcomes for children, young people and families impacted by poverty.

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
02545	Employee Costs & Other Expenditure	2025/26	£593,532	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, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

N/A

(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.

(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.

(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

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 N/A

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendices:
1. The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Evaluation Report for Session 2024/25

Attainment Scotland Fund

Year end report
June 2025

Contents:

1. **Context**

The Attainment Scotland Fund is a targeted initiative focused on closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children. The fund provides support for the Scottish Attainment Challenge which is split into the following areas for session 2024/25:

Strategic Equity Fund (SEF): £ 1,311,926
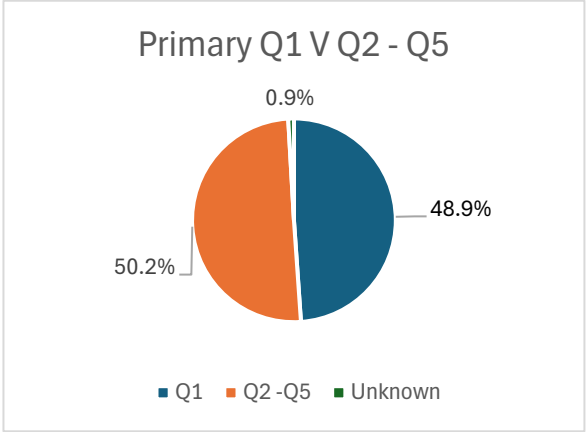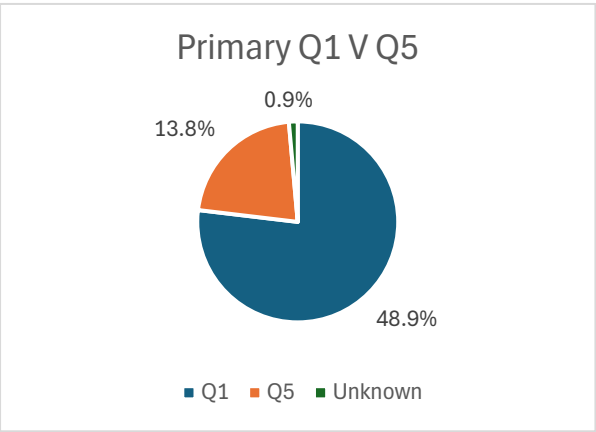
Pupil Equity Fund (PEF): £ 2,585,290

Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund (CECYP): £89,833

The local authority remains committed to progressing support for children, young people, and families impacted by poverty. Strategic use of data continues to enhance decision-making, guiding future actions at both the school and local authority levels. However, the gradual reduction of funding presents an ongoing challenge. As the SEF programme phases out, sustainability remains a key focus, with efforts directed at preserving effective initiatives through alternative delivery approaches.
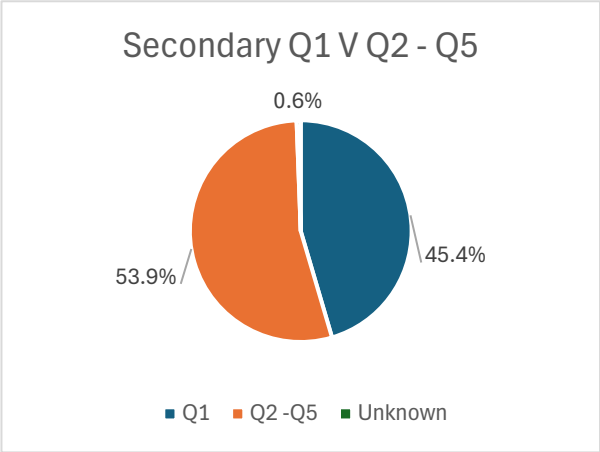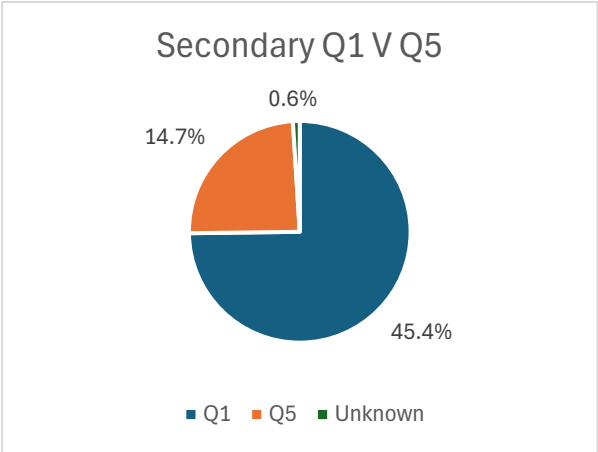
Reporting on the Gap:

The Scottish Government measures gaps nationally and compares data from Q1 with Q5. Inverclyde's gap is outlined below using this comparison:

Primary Gaps:

Primary Q1 V Q5 — 0.9%, 13.8%, 48.9% — Q1, Q5, Unknown

Primary Q1 V Q2 - Q5 — 0.9%, 48.9%, 50.2% — Q1, Q2 -Q5, Unknown

Secondary Gaps:

Secondary Q1 V Q5

0.6%
14.7%
45.4%

■ Q1 ■ Q5 ■ Unknown

Secondary Q1 V Q2 - Q5

0.6%
45.4%
53.9%

■ Q1 ■ Q2 -Q5 ■ Unknown

To ensure a balanced measurement, within Inverclyde, we compare Q1 data with Q2-5 data. Fluctuation of cohorts within Q5 indicates that the trend data would be unreliable with low numbers of pupils living in Q5 meaning that some schools can have no Q5 pupils, in addition national data can at times be redacted. Comparing Quintile 1 data with Quintile 2-5 data provides increased accuracy for identifying and providing the supports to where they are really needed.

2. Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) 2024/25 Progress:

Good progress has been made implementing the SEF Plan for session 2024/25. An initial review of the Logic Model led to a more targeted plan with many previous outcomes already embedded.

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. 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.

a. CORE / CORE+ Stretch Aims

- 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.
- A full report on the progress towards the agreed stretch aims will be available in September 2025 when the Insight data for the Senior Phase is released.

b. Strategic Pedagogical Leads (SPLs) Progress:

Literacy Development

- Literacy Framework completed, launched through roadshows, supported in schools, and complemented by tailored CLPL (online and in-person).
- Inverclyde Literacy Network established with 3 meetings held
- National Literacy Network participation ensured national insights were shared with local literacy champions.
- Writing Assessment Criteria developed collaboratively and incorporated into the Literacy Framework following feedback.

Numeracy & Mathematics Enhancement

- Numeracy Strategy refreshed, launched to heads of establishment with supporting materials (poster and recorded presentation).
- Active contributions to the Numeracy & Maths Champions Group and Numeracy Authority Working Group

- National Numeracy Network: Attended 4 sessions to contribute to both local and national developments.
- Early years collaboration initiated for participation in the West Partnership Maths Conference (Nov 2025).

Moderation & Assessment

- All SPLs contributed as trained QAMSOs, delivering training and facilitating moderation groups during May 2025 events.
- Developed and disseminated updated Writing Assessment tools based on stakeholder feedback.

Professional Learning & Capacity Building

- Broad range of CLPL delivered to practitioners across early years, primary, and secondary sectors—face-to-face and online.
- Support for NQTs included enquiry mentoring, drop-ins, and a celebration event at year end.
- Coaching and Modelling (CMO/1:1 support): Offered at all levels, covering planning, assessment, modelling, and professional advice.
- Promotion of Pedagogy and Support for Equity Web Blog (PASE), integrating evidence-based resources and CLPL.

c. **Data:**

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:

- 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.
- 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.
- Dashboards are updated at the beginning and end of each session aligned with the updating of establishment data packs. Throughout the session the Teacher Professional Judgement tracker is updated at the agreed tracking periods of November, February and May, before the final cleanse and submission of Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL) data to the Scottish Government in August each year.

- Clear communication of attendance data via the attendance dashboard is supporting establishments to better track attendance and support absence in line with the recently updated Attendance Policy.
- 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.

d. **Annual Participation Measures (APM):**

An Education Officer was appointed to support improvements in young people achieving initial positive destinations and also in sustaining positive destinations. The Education Officer was instrumental in securing the following positive outcomes:

- **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.
- **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 within 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.

e. **Community Learning Development (CLD):**

The CLD attainment programme was effectively implemented at S3 pupils upwards aiming to support them achieve a level 5 qualification. In some cases, this may be over a 2-year academic period.

Looking at the new academic year we are on track with the returning pupils to achieve a level 5 qualification, who were previously S3 or S4 and new groups identified will be S4 upwards who will also achieve a level 5 qualification.

Across multiple youth groups, young people facing a range of social, emotional, and educational challenges have actively engaged in Community Learning & Development (CLD) programmes throughout the year. A notable number are on part-time timetables, yet many have made a clear effort to incorporate CLD into their weekly routines, demonstrating enthusiasm and ownership over their involvement.

Participation and Topics Covered

Group sizes varied, with engagement numbers ranging from 1 to 14 per group. Despite attendance fluctuations in some cases, consistent participation was evident in most. A diverse array of practical and discussion-based topics was covered, including:
- Drugs and alcohol awareness
- Consent
- Cooking and budgeting
- Hair and beauty
- Literacy and numeracy
- Crime and charity projects
- Team building and employability
- Fire skills courses
- Knife crime consultations
- Art and cultural identity projects

Some groups also explored topics tailored to their interests, such as designing clocks inspired by Scottish artists or developing ideal football teams based on skill analysis.

Adaptability and Group Dynamics

Flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of young people played a critical role in the success of these programmes. In several cases, group structures were adjusted early in the year to foster improved dynamics, which significantly boosted confidence and engagement. In others, peer relationships proved influential, especially where group cohesion impacted overall participation.

Awards and Achievements

Recognition of young people's efforts was a key element of the programme:

- 44 participants earned **Bronze Youth Achievement Awards (BYA)**
- 13 young people achieved **Dynamic Youth Awards (DYA)**
- 12 young people attained the **SCQF Level 5 Personal Development (PDC) Award**
- 5 young people achieved a **Young Leaders Award** for leadership and peer support contributions

Overall, the range of awards celebrates individual progress, sustained commitment, and the acquisition of new skills—both personal and social.

f. **Barnardo's Family Support Worker Service:**

Very good progress from the service continues in relation to meeting the aims of the service provision in delivering full family support as part of the Attainment Challenge, and with the overall aim to increase the young person's 'readiness to learn'. This view continues to be supported by the data outlined below which is collated using the Barnardo's Outcomes Tracking Framework.

The service continues to provide effective whole family support to families within Inverclyde, which includes:

- parenting support,
- family interventions and
- individual interventions with children and young people.

The support aims include:

- improving family relationships,
- improved mental health and wellbeing,
- reducing isolation,
- reducing the impact of poverty, and
- addressing the impact of trauma, all with the overall aim of increasing the child and young persons 'readiness to learn'

Family support workers continue to be embedded within Inverclyde schools and provide effective family support to families identified as most in need. Regular school reviews continue to take place to ensure that the model of support is guided by the needs of the school, meaning that school can prioritise families for full family support and groupwork is also delivered which aims to address themes identified by respective schools.

Some of the groups delivered to young people over the past year include:
- Star Café,
- B-Wild lunch group,
- Seasons for Growth,
- Wellbeing Group,
- Resilience Group,
- Social Skills Group,
- GEM, BEM,
- Dynamic Youth Award,
- Your Pathways,
- Homework and Singing Groups.

Impact Data from the Attainment Challenge Logic Model:
(Readiness to Learn)

R1: Most of the Children and Young People (CYP) whose families receive a bespoke package of family support have demonstrated improved mental health and emotional wellbeing, increasing their "readiness to learn" - 87% achieved (target 86%).

R2: Most parents who receive a bespoke package of support have demonstrated improved mental health and emotional wellbeing through targeted interventions, increasing their emotional availability for their child and positively impacting the child's overall wellbeing and "readiness to learn" – 87% achieved (target 86%).

R3, R4: Most parents who receive a bespoke package of support have a better understanding of attachment relationships and their child's developmental needs, which has a positive impact on family functioning & parent/child interaction, and supports to enhance their parenting skills/capacity – 85% achieved (target 83%).

Additional information:

- 332 families have accessed full family support (358 parents/ 429 CYP)
- 312 parents have engaged in attachment-based parenting interventions.
- 247 parents have received outreach support within the family home to establish routines and provide predictability and consistency for their children.
- 387 CYP open for full family support have participated in a range of 1-1 and group interventions, aimed at addressing loss and change, emotional literacy, self-belief & confidence, anxiety, and support to understand and improve relationships.
- 71% of CYP's supported with school attendance have demonstrated improved attendance at school.
- 84% of families accessing full family support are living in SIMD 1&2.
- 87% of families engaging/engaged in full family support have shown progress in their targeted outcomes.
- 65% of families receiving full family support have a collaborative plan where the FSW or service works in partnership with other agencies to meet the targeted outcomes of the support plan.
- There are 123 families remaining on the waiting list, some of which will already be allocated and in the process of opening.
- 186 families have benefited from brief financial interventions. This has included:
- 31 families who have had access to Barnardo's 'Children in Poverty Fund' for food, utilities, clothing and essential furniture. These families have received individual funding amounts of between £100-£300, which has totalled £6790.
- 37 families have received supermarket vouchers/foodbank parcels.
- 30 families received utility vouchers.
- 17 families have also received Cinema and Pantomime tickets.

Summer Plan:

All open families will have access to our summer programme – which includes a Service Fun Day, a trip to Lunderston Bay, and a weekly family drop-in session. This will offer summer activities for families over the long summer period and will also support some families with process of closing following the end of the attainment contract.

g. **Procurement:**

A Procurement Officer was appointed to the Attainment Challenge team in July 2024 with the remit of increasing compliance in educational spend across the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF).

- The Procurement Officer worked closely with the Attainment Challenge project lead in securing joint working with East Ayrshire council's procurement team to create a shared Education Procurement Framework.
- This framework ensured Head Teachers would be compliant with the councils procurement legislation, when using PEF, to access suppliers who would provide interventions supporting improved outcomes for children and families.
- Throughout the session the Procurement Officer provided training and support for Head Teachers and School Business Officers in relation to the framework and responded to any queries as they arose. The framework has been a success with almost all education PEF spend being compliant.
- Further work regarding increasing the list and rage of suppliers will continue through next session.

3. **Pupil Equity Fund (PEF):**

Almost all primary and secondary schools in Inverclyde receive a funding allocation which is to be used to improve outcomes for children and families impacted by poverty.

Establishments receive support when planning their use of PEF and complete a contextual analysis of need to support the decision making process. Stakeholders in establishments are invited to have a say in how the fund is utilised within each establishment.

Throughout the session, Head Teachers engage in dialogue with the project lead and School Business Officers to track and monitor the progress of the plan and the associated spend. Head Teachers report on this progress via their Standards and Quality reports posted on their websites by September each session.

Sample of Key Interventions and Outcomes

- **Leadership Opportunities:** Some establishments employed promoted staff to effectively track and monitor the progress of the PEF plan leading to improved outcomes of targeted children and families
- **Targeted Literacy and Numeracy Support**: some establishments employed additional staff to support interventions leading to raised attainment in literacy and numeracy for targeted children
- **Positive Relationships**: Emphasis was placed on building strong relationships between staff and pupils, which was seen as central to improving outcomes.
- **Family Support**: Interventions to improve readiness to learn for targeted children and families has led to increased attendance and engagement
- **Professional Development**: Support staff were offered quality training providing them with the skills to deliver targeted interventions, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
- **Cost of the School Day**: all establishments include an element of supporting the cost of the school day with interventions ranging from providing uniform and class materials to supporting residential trips ensuring children and families can fully access school life.

The Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) continues to play a vital role in Inverclyde's efforts to close the poverty-related attainment gap.

4. Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund (CEF):

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 and wellbeing and help them feel included. Delivering interventions and resources specifically targeted at individual Care Experienced Children & Young people through a self-directed support approach, the trends were noted as follows:

- 45% of the applications were to support and enhance the ability of care experienced young people to participate and access community groups. Most were in relation to health and wellbeing such as accessing sports and other activities. Examples are the gym/ swimming lessons/ martial arts etc.
- 20% were in relation to assisting care experienced young people to access IT equipment to enhance their ability to access school/ college work and to seek employment. Examples were Unaccompanied young people who were going to use computers to improve their English as this was not their first language.
- 13% of applications were to access therapies that would help the child or young people in relation to their emotional wellbeing & regulation to help them be more ready to learn.
- 8% was to advance a young person's skills in relation to driving that would provide more independence and open more opportunities for training & employment.
- 3% was in relation to equipment to help a young person access college courses & equipment.
- 8% was in relation to educational tutors.
- 3% of the applications were to allow children/ young people to access school trips such as the residential trip in primary 7.

Two Education Support Workers were employed via the CECYP Fund to work under the supervision of the Virtual Head Teacher (VHT) to positively impact the outcomes for targeted young people.

Education Support Workers Impact:

- In September the initial figure for care experienced leavers was 92.7%, meaning we fell slightly below our target of 94%. The follow up figure of 76.7%, relating to sustained destinations, is an increase of 7.5% on last year's figure of 69.2%. Although this did not meet our 10% target, it is a very positive picture.
- Currently the education support workers have supported 83% of their caseload into positive destinations. This has been predominantly college places, some activity agreements and a small number in Street League. They are developing a strong partnership with SDS and are working more closely together.
- The caseloads for the education support workers are fluid, however there still remains a number of young people who are referred at the point of leaving school. Their current caseloads reflect 45% of senior phase pupils. This is something that we will continue to highlight with schools to ensure referrals are made in an effective timeframe.

5. **Summary Statement**

In session 2024/25, Inverclyde's continued engagement with the Scottish Attainment Challenge has had a measurable impact on children, young people and families as we attempt to narrow the poverty related attainment gap. Through targeted use of Strategic Equity Fund, Pupil Equity Fund and the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund, the authority enhanced professional learning for staff, and embedded evidence-based teaching practices across schools. The continued focus on raising attainment has seen overall gains in literacy, numeracy and attendance in the primary sector. At the time of writing this report we do not have the Senior Phase attainment data however, this will be published in September 2025.

Inverclyde
council

Inverclyde council

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks, Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/48/25/TM**
Contact Officer:	**Tony McEwan, Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources**	**Contact No:**	**01475 712828**
Subject:	**School Term Dates – Session 2026 / 2027 (amended)**		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 ☒For Decision ☐For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Committee for corrections to the school term dates, which were previously agreed at the January 2025 committee for the session 2026/27.

1.3 The corrected dates should now read:

- The new year public holiday falling on Sunday 2nd January 2027 was not allocated to Monday 4th January 2027 with schools returning on Tuesday 5th January 2027. Schools will finish for the Christmas break on Tuesday 22nd December 2026 with a return date of Wednesday 6th January 2026.
- The May holiday weekend in 2027 previously published as Friday 21st May – Monday 24th May 2027 should now read Friday 28th May – Monday 31st May 2027.

Consultation has taken place with Trade Unions on the corrections with no adverse comments received.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Committee is asked to approve the amendments to the term dates for 2026/27 as set out in appendix 1 and appendix 2.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 The teachers' working year consists of 195 days. 190 days coincide with the school year for pupils and the remaining 5 days are set for the purpose of teacher in-service days.

3.2 Work is undertaken each year to try, as far as possible, to align the term dates with our neighbouring councils.

3.3 At the January 2025 Education and Communities Committee, the 2026/27 school terms and holidays were approved. However, a review of the dates showed that amendments were required to be made to ensure that the specification detailed at 3.1 above, were met.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 It is proposed that the Education and Communities Committee agrees to the correction of the school term dates for the session 2026/27.

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**

None

(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**

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.

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 Consultation has taken place with Trade Unions and Parent Council Chairs on the proposed term dates and in-service days with no adverse comments received.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

Inverclyde Council ~ Education Services

2026-2027 School Calendar

August 2026

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2026

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2026

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2026

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2026

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2027

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2027

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2027

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2027

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2027

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

July 2027

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- 🟥 School Closed/ Holidays
- 🟧 Teacher in-Service Day (no school for students)
- 🟩 School Open

In-service days – 5
Teacher days – 195
Pupil days – 190

Inverclyde School Holiday and Term Dates 2026/2027

August 2026
- Friday, 14 August 2026 (Return date for Teachers & In-service day)
- Monday, 17 August 2026 (In-service day)
- Tuesday, 18 August 2026 (Return date for pupils)

September 2026
- Schools close at the end of the day on Thursday, 24 September 2026
- Friday, 25 September 2026 & Monday, 28 September 2026 (September weekend)
- Schools return on Tuesday, 29 September 2026

October 2026
- Schools close at the end of the day on Friday, 09 October 2026
- Monday, 12 October 2026 to Friday, 16 October 2026 (October week)
- Monday, 19 October 2026 (Return date for Teachers & In-service day)
- Tuesday, 20 October 2026 (Return date for pupils)

December 2026
- Schools close at 2.30 pm on Tuesday, 22 December 2026
- Wednesday, 23 December 2026 to Tuesday, 5 January 2027 (Christmas & New Year)

January 2027
- Schools return on Wednesday, 6 January 2027

February 2027
- Schools close at the end of the day on Friday, 12 February 2027
- Monday, 15 February 2027 & Tuesday, 16 February 2027 (Mid-term break)
- Wednesday, 17 February 2027 (Return date for Teachers & In-service day)
- Thursday, 18 February 2027 (Return date for pupils)

March 2027
- Schools close at the end of the day on Thursday, 25 March 2027
- Friday, 26 March 2027 & Monday, 29 March 2027 (Good Friday/Easter Monday)
- Schools return on Tuesday, 30 March 2027

April 2027
- Schools close at 2.30 pm on Friday, 2 April 2027
- Monday, 5 April 2027 to Friday, 16 April 2027 (Spring Break)
- Schools return on Monday, 19 April 2027
- Schools close at the end of the school day on Friday, 30 April 2027

May 2027
- Monday, 3 May 2027 (May Day)
- Tuesday, 4 May 2027 (Return date for Teachers & In-service day)
- Wednesday, 5 May 2027 (Return date for pupils)
- Schools close at the end of the day on Thursday, 27 May 2027
- Friday, 28 May 2027 & Monday, 31 May 2027 (May weekend)
- Schools return on Tuesday, 1 June 2027

June 2027
- Schools close at 1.00 pm on Wednesday, 30 June 2027

Report To:	**Education & Communities Committee**	**Date:**	**2 September 2025**
Report By:	**Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development**	**Report No:**	**EDUCOM/58/25/MR**
Contact Officer:	**Michael Roach Head of Education**	**Contact No:**	**01475 712891**
Subject:	**Education – Positive Relationships Policy 2025**		

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 approve the Positive Relationships policy.

1.3 As previously reported to the Education Committee this policy was due for review during the academic session 2024/25 however the Education Service was waiting on updated guidance from the Scottish Government in relation to the joint National Action Plan on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools, created on the back of the Behaviour in Scottish schools: research report 2023.

1.4 This policy has been reviewed in line with guidance referred to in 1.3 from the Scottish Government in the form of the document *Fostering a positive, inclusive and safe school environment* (2025).

1.5 There are some changes to the policy based on the refreshed national guidance cited above – see appendix 10 of the attached policy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to:

- Approve the Education Service's revised Positive Relationships policy.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 The Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research (BISSR) showed that the majority of staff in 2023 perceived that all or most pupils are generally well-behaved around the school and in the classroom. However, there was also evidence that a review needed to be carried out to address an increase in a range of behaviours which were challenging the system, alongside support for schools and staff to deal with this.

3.2 From this research a joint National Action Plan on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools, Relationships and behaviour in schools: national action plan 2024 to 2027 - gov.scot was created and from this new national guidance has been published on:

Schools - fostering a positive, inclusive and safe environment: guidance - gov.scot

Schools - violent, aggressive and dangerous behaviour: risk assessment guidance - gov.scot

3.3 **Addressing Racism and Racist Incidents in Schools interim guidance**
As part of this new guidance, further interim guidance on "Addressing Racism and Racist Incidents in Schools" has also been published: Schools - addressing racism and racist incidents: guidance - gov.scot.

The interim guidance has been developed in partnership with the Racism and Racist Incidents workstream of the Anti-Racism in Education Programme. This interim guidance focuses on addressing racist behaviour experienced by or displayed by pupils, providing information on what constitutes a racist incident, how to differentiate it from bullying, supporting affected children, and responding to those who display racist behaviour. It also includes guidance on recording and monitoring racist incidents and example scenarios. The interim guidance is the first stage in the development of a wider Whole School Approach to preventing and responding to racism and racist incidents in schools, which will be published in early 2026.

4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 This new iteration of the Positive Relationships policy has been updated in line with new national documentation – Fostering a positive, inclusive and safe school environment (2025), which has been produced by the Scottish Government. It provides information to enable all education establishments in Inverclyde to develop their own versions o policy throughout this academic session.

4.2 Key changes include insertions about expectations and consequences. It also aligns practice in Inverclyde to Included, Engaged and Involved (Part 3) (2024), which provides guidance in respect of seclusion and restraint.

4.3 The policy also provides updated information in respect of process changes in Inverclyde i.e. the formation of the Authority Screening Group, the refreshed Anti-Bullying policy and the new Single Agency Planning Framework.

4.4 This revised version of our existing Promoting Positive Behaviour policy will support all establishments to then review their own polices during the academic session 2025/26 in collaboration with stakeholders. This is a key action within the Education Service's Improvement plan for 2025/26 and all establishments will be expected and supported to do this. This will include a launch of this policy and related training for school leaders.

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, and 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 N/A.

Inverclyde
council

Organisational Development, Human Resources and Performance

Promoting Positive Relationships

Version No 2

Produced by:

Inverclyde Council
Municipal Buildings
GREENOCK
PA15 1LX

2024

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Responsibility		
Policy Title	**Corporate Group**	**Service**
Promoting Positive Relationships	Education, Communities and Organisational Development.	Education.

Change History		
Version	**Date**	**Comments**
2	September 2025	The original policy was due to be re-freshed and has now been so to align to the new Scottish Government guidance in this area Promoting a positive, inclusive and safe school environment (2025).

Distribution
All educational establishments in Inverclyde. Central teams in education Parent and pupil councils.

Policy Review		
Updating Frequency	**Next Review Date**	**Responsible Officer**
As new guidance comes from Government.	Scheduled review September 2028.	Michael Roach.

Policy Review and Approval			
Name	**Action**	**Date**	**Communication**

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This refreshed version of the Positive Relationships policy continues advice and guidance for all establishments on positive relationships, preventative and responsive approaches, relational approaches, consequences and expectations, assessment and planning and links our approach to other key drivers. All educational establishments now must take this guidance and work with pupils, parents and staff to generate their own version of a positive relationships policy.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Inverclyde Council was one of the first local authority areas in Scotland to create a Positive Relationships policy, which came into being in 2014. Over time there has been a realisation that all local authorities should have such a strategic driver. The Inverclyde iteration of policy has had micro level changes over time with the key drivers, namely the salience of relational approaches remaining the same. This is the first comprehensive re-fresh of the policy, which was led by the publication of new guidance from the Scottish Government cited above.

1.3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

In June 2025 the Scottish Government released guidance on positive relationships in the shape of the aforementioned document. The document cited also calls on local authorities, COSLA and the Scottish Government to now work together on its implementation. It emphasises that outcomes across numerous domains will improve should the guidance be successfully implemented.

1.4 LINKS TO LEGISLATION

The following legislative and policy aspects underpin the policy:

- UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 amended 2009
- Education (Scotland) Act 1980
- Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- 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 (2023).
- Respect for All (2024).
- Inverclyde GIRFEC Pathways (2015).
- General Teaching Council for Scotland Professional Standards (2021).

1.5 AIM

The aim of the policy is to provide support to all education establishments to develop and implement their own version of policy in session 2025-26.

1.6 LINKS TO CORPORATE GROUPS

This policy comes under the work of Education, Communities and Organisational Development.

1.7 TERMS OF REFERENCE

This policy will be used to provide information to all establishments in Inverclyde to support them to develop their own Positive Relationships Policy.

2 SCOPE

This policy will apply to all education establishments in Inverclyde.

3 POLICY CONTENT

Inverclyde Positive Relationships Policy 2025

Welcome to the 2025 version of Inverclyde's Positive Relationships policy. It is important to note that this iteration of policy builds on previous policy and practice that is evident throughout Inverclyde's education establishments. Inverclyde has a strong tradition of recognising the correlation between establishment ethos, pupil wellbeing and academic attainment. As such, there is a clear synergy between the Positive Relationships policy and the wider education agenda in Inverclyde.

There have been a number of key national developments in the area of positive relationships in recent years that led to the publication by the Scottish Government of the document Fostering a positive, inclusive and safe school environment (Scottish Government, 2025). This guidance document has been a seminal influencing factor behind changes seen in the 2025 version of our Positive Relationships policy. I thank all who have contributed to this policy and wish practitioners well in their endeavours in respect of its implementation.

Michael Roach (Head of Education)

Lead Officer – Varri Steel (Education Officer – Inclusion)

September 2025

3.1 BACKGROUND

This policy builds and supplants the previous iteration of Inverclyde's Positive Relationship policy and incorporates key messages from the document *Fostering a positive, inclusive and safe school environment (*Scottish Government, 2025). It will be implemented in Inverclyde through a process that will involve establishments working with pupils, parents and staff to create their own version of a Positive Relationships policy that incorporates the key messages from this local authority policy. Establishment policies will reflect the need within their own context whist aligning to the key messages contained within this policy. They should clearly indicate how the establishment implements preventative and relational approaches, whilst indicating how they respond to situations and implement aspects of policy and practice cited in this document.

Inverclyde Council – Education Services

3.2 PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The agreed purposes and aims of this policy, in accordance with Getting it Right for Every Child, are to:

- Implement key national documentation, namely: Fostering a positive, Inclusive and safe school environment.
- Promote positive teaching and learning environments across all establishments.
- Value every child and develop a climate of mutual respect in all our establishments.
- Maintain high expectations of the children/young people themselves, establishments, support services and the community.
- Bring the work of all agencies together to encourage a partnership approach to promoting positive relationships.
- Promote early intervention.
- Demonstrate that relationships are at the heart of an excellent establishment.
- Include all our children and young people in their establishment's and communities.
- Improve achievement and attainment.
- Actively promote the development of nurturing establishments and communities.
- Ensure staff develop an in-depth understanding of social, emotional, and behavioural issues.
- Provide high quality staff development opportunities.
- Establish a strategic and authority wide lead in this area.
- Teach children and young people the social skills needed to interact positively with others.
- Promote an ethos of empathy and understanding of all children, young people and their families.
- Reflect constantly on our practice in order to improve interventions and outcomes.
- Recognise and meet our duties and responsibilities as corporate parents.
- Provide policy and direction around the process of exclusions including for those pupils who are care experienced.
- Provide a template for education establishments to self-evaluate their current practice and use this information to develop their own policies in the positive relationships area.
- Provide information regarding seclusion and restraint that is in line with the document IEI, 3.
- Support establishments in the development of their own policies in this area for session 2025-26.

3.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

> *'Curriculum for Excellence cannot be delivered without good relationships and positive behaviour. Children and young people should feel happy, safe, respected, and included in the learning environment and all staff should be proactive in promoting positive behaviour in the classroom, playground, and wider learning community. Underpinning this is the emotional health and wellbeing of staff.'*
> ***Curriculum for Excellence***

The development of a positive learning environment is essential if effective learning and teaching is to take place within an educational establishment. Effective learning and teaching is also dependent on the nurturing of positive relationships through the daily interactions between staff and learners and between learners themselves.
The policy is based on a set of core principles identified by the group which permeate all aspects of the guidance: ***Respect, empathy, aspiration, inclusion, resilience, empowerment, nurture, trust, fairness, and unconditional positive regard.***
Inverclyde Council has developed a vision of creating a 'Nurturing Inverclyde' where we 'Get it Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community'.

Through this policy we strive to support the achievement of the core outcomes associated with 'GIRFEC.' All aspects of this work will lead to our learners being:
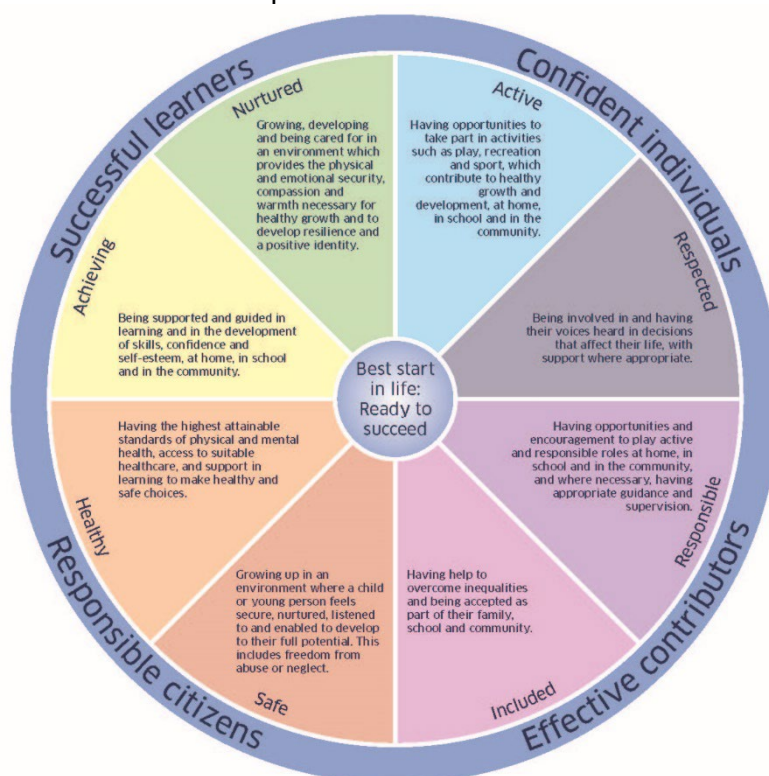

Figure 1: GIRFEC Wellbeing Wheel

> *"I feel confident about dealing with conflict because I have a better understanding of other people's emotions"*
> ***Inverclyde learner***

3.4 KEY DRIVERS

This policy is further guided by the legislative and policy and practice landscape in Scottish Education as outlined below.

This guidance is underpinned by a legal framework which includes:

- UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 amended 2009
- Education (Scotland) Act 1980
- Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- 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 (2023).
- Respect for All (2024).
- Inverclyde GIRFEC Pathways (2015).
- General Teaching Council for Scotland Professional Standards (2021).

This policy encourages the development of a whole establishment approach to creating a culture of positive relationships, which are supported by positive practices. This was highlighted in the various iterations of the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Report and through wider research. It is clear, therefore, that whole establishment approaches reinforce a positive ethos and foster inclusive values.

3.5 PREVENTATIVE APPROACHES

Ethos, Values and Expectations

Developing a whole establishment ethos.

A strong ethos begins with a set of cohesive values that reflect the identity and aspirations of the learning community. To ensure that establishment approaches to responding to behaviour support this ethos effectively, establishments should adopt a structured approach based on clear values, expectations and consistent application.

Values

To develop an effective approach to relationships and behaviour, establishments should first determine their core values that underpin their approach. These values should be:

- meaningful and relevant to the particular context, ensuring they are understood and agreed across the establishment community
- developed collaboratively with children and young people, staff and parents to foster shared ownership and commitment
- clearly communicated so that everyone understands their significance and how they shape the culture and approach to behaviour
- embedded and reinforced in daily practice to ensure modelling, consistency and clear link to expectations and responses

Establishments should regularly reflect on how well these values are shaping their culture and practice. This includes using self-evaluation processes such as:

- analysing behaviour data to identify patterns, trends or areas that require additional focus through self-evaluation mechanisms, such as HGIOS4
- conducting surveys or consultations with children and young people, staff and parents to gather diverse perspectives
- engaging the wider establishment community in ongoing dialogue about how values are lived and experienced within the establishment environment
- Values should be regularly reviewed and adapted in response to what is working, what is changing, and the evolving needs of the establishment community.

Translating values into expectations

To ensure that values translate into daily practice, establishments should develop clear, practical expectations that align with them, in collaboration with the whole establishment community. This involves:

- defining specific behaviours that reflect the identified values
- ensuring expectations are inclusive, simple, explicit and easy to meet
- communicating expectations consistently through daily interactions, assemblies, classroom/learning space discussions, establishment policies, and parental engagement sessions
- applying expectations to all members of the establishment community, including children and young people, staff, and parents.

Approaches to expectations should be inclusive and reflective of the diversity of age and developmental stages across the establishment community and framed in such a way that ensures children and young people are able to meet them, particularly those who may be disadvantaged or face barriers linked to a protected characteristic. For example, an expectation that children and young people should 'follow instructions first time' may be unachievable for children and young people due to their age, developmental stage or neurodiversity. 'To follow instruction', may be an alternative, more inclusive and achievable expectation.

Applying expectations consistently

Underpinning a whole establishment approach to relationships and behaviour is the importance of consistency. This means that while expectations of behaviour apply equally to all members of a establishment community, the support and interventions provided will be tailored to individual needs, ensuring a child-centred equitable approach that is most likely to lead to change.

Key aspects of consistency include:

- all members of the establishment community – children and young people, staff and parents – should be expected to uphold establishment values and model expected behaviours to create a predictable, structured environment
- where a child or young person's behaviour does not meet expectations, it should be addressed in line with the establishment's relationship and behaviour policy, which outlines processes for responding
- expectations are regularly and positively reinforced across the setting, with clear and consistent messaging to and from all members of the learning community
- a clear escalation process should guide the progression of responses when expectations are not met
- high expectations should emphasise children's rights, fostering a sense of fairness, equity, accountability and social and moral responsibility
- expectations should be applied equitably, with responses tailored to individual needs
- opportunities for professional learning for all staff to ensure a shared understanding of expectations and effective responses to types of behaviours, or situations, that present staff with more challenge, in line with the relationships and behaviour policy

Consistency is promoted through a structured, staged approach, in line with the GIRFEC approach and Additional Support for Learning Statutory Guidance.
Adapted from Fostering a positive, inclusive and safe school environment (Scottish Government, 2025)

The Environment for Learning – physical pedagogical and curricular.
As an authority, Inverclyde takes a holistic view of promoting positive relationships and uses every possible opportunity across our educational provisions to teach the skills

required for this through all subjects, conversations and our day to day interactions with children and young people.

"Behaviour" must be considered in the same way as any other area of the curriculum where staff would assess, plan, teach, differentiate, and evaluate in order to ensure that pupils understand and develop the skills required. This work sits at the heart of the Health and Wellbeing curriculum, particularly the aspects that are 'The Responsibility of All.'

Since the seminal work of educational researchers such as Rutter et al (1979) and more recently Hattie (2014) there has been a strong body of evidence that the culture and ethos created by education establishments and individual staff members can significantly shape outcomes, often is spite of extraneous factors. In promoting positive relationships it is essential that a playroom, class, playground or whole establishment environment is conducive to meeting needs and preventing any distressed behaviour from occurring.

When considering the best possible learning environment for children and young people, staff should consult environmental/attitudinal checklists (Appendix 1a and Appendix 1b) and monitor and adapt accordingly. These checklists can also be used as a self-evaluation tool in this area of work.

A summary of key questions for practitioners are listed below. These can be used as a checklist of positive practice and can also be used to stimulate professional dialogue.

- Is the playroom/class uncluttered and well organised?
- Are areas clearly marked and signposted?
- Is the lay out and type of furniture appropriate? (heights of tables and chairs etc)
- Are group dynamics/seating set to allow for the most successful interactions to take place?
- Is it appropriate to have personal work stations/time out space in the classroom or establishment?
- Are there any sensory issues affecting pupil behaviour e.g., colour, light and noise/pitch levels?
- Do staff speak in a calm, non-confrontational way?
- Are establishment values/codes of conduct displayed around the establishment in pupil friendly forms?
- Are general good practice strategies in place e.g. daily schedules, signposting for all?

> *In one Inverclyde school, class daily plans and routines are clearly displayed and accessible for all, including cover staff. This ensures a consistent approach in all classes and children are less unsettled by a change of staff.*

In the playground

- Are suitable activities available?
- Is training in place for mentors?
- Are buddies/mentors used successfully?
- Do playground staff interact with pupils?
- Are there quiet/safe haven spaces available?
- Are children and young people encouraged to sort out problems with each other through restorative approaches or peer mediation?
- Can a resolution been found to "interval difficulties" before returning to class?

Teaching /Learning and Curriculum Delivery

In all Inverclyde Educational Establishments every measure is taken to deliver an enabling and stimulating curriculum. Using active, contextualised, and meaningful

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approaches to teaching and learning will stimulate interest and minimise opportunities for negative interactions.

In order to develop skills such as positively participating in groups, acquiring and developing social skills and being able to manage their own emotional regulation, children and young people need strong, trusting relationships, to feel known by the adults and peers in their establishment, and opportunities to acquire and develop such skills through modelling, planned experiences and learning. This also involves clear expectations, consistent routines and boundaries, effective responses and opportunities to learn from their behaviour. This provides the structure that allows them to acquire and develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. In doing so, it supports their growth as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors – the four capacities of the curriculum.

Personalisation in curriculum delivery may be required in order to establish positive work patterns and engage children and young people with their learning environments. Relationships between curriculum delivery and relationships are well documented and within our authority we have examples of some very imaginative curriculum delivery centred on pupils' interest and needs.

All children follow a personal learning pathway, but for some this may be a very bespoke learning plan and programme.

> *"I feel good because I can sort out hard situations by myself and I can help younger pupils in the school by talking to them."*
> ***Inverclyde learner***

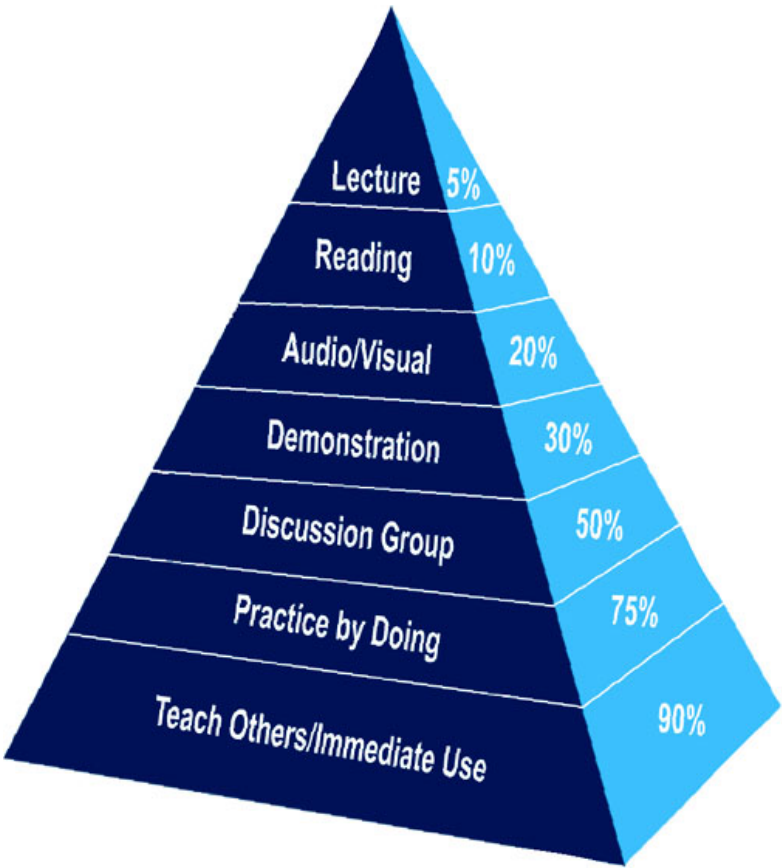It is useful to note George's (1995) average retention rates by levels of learning:

Figure 2: Average Retention Rates (George, 1995)

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The Importance of Play / Active Learning

> *"The benefits of play are both immediate and long term, and contribute to all aspects of children's health and development including their physical and mental well-being, their educational development, brain development, and opportunities for language development, spatial and mathematical learning, creativity, and identity formation"*
> **Coalter and Taylor, 2001**

Well planned active learning should provide opportunities for:

- progression in learning and the development of skills
- engaging and challenging children's thinking
- investigating and exploring
- consolidating learning
- focussed learning and teaching
- fun and enjoyment

Building the Curriculum 2 'Active Learning in the Early Years' describes the importance of active learning approaches across the Early Level of Curriculum for Excellence and beyond.

Staff in establishments should ask the following key questions about their curriculum delivery:

- Are children and young people encouraged to have high expectations and a 'can-do' attitude to their learning?
- Is the curriculum planned carefully in order to meet learners' needs?
- How can support staff be involved in planning to meet pupil needs and support the delivery of the curriculum?
- Is teaching and learning carefully matched to previous experiences of children and young people?
- Are different outcomes/achievements equally valued?
- Are lessons well structured?
- Are learning intentions created and shared with children and young people?
- Are resources matched to need?
- If plans are required are they appropriately challenging and do they demonstrate progression in learning?
- Is the curriculum delivered using a range of approaches?
- Are children and young people encouraged to participate using responsive planning?
- Are staff reflective - consistently asking: "could this lesson/activity/interaction be improved"?
- Do staff share best practice?
- Is full account taken of children and young people's comprehension levels?

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Explicit teaching of skills

Health and Wellbeing Curriculum

> *'The responsibilities of all include each practitioner's role in establishing open, positive, supportive relationships across the school community, where children and young people will feel that they are listened to, and where they feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of their lives; in promoting a climate in which children and young people feel safe and secure; in modelling behaviour which promotes health and wellbeing and encouraging it in others; through using learning and teaching methodologies which promote effective learning; and by being sensitive and responsive to the wellbeing of each child and young person. Practical responsibilities include understanding of anti-discriminatory, anti-bullying and child protection policies'*
> ***Health and wellbeing across learning: responsibilities of all: principles and practice***

The aspects of the Health & Wellbeing curriculum which are everyone's responsibility sit at the heart of this policy and principles.

Health and wellbeing is not just about encouraging children and young people to eat well and to exercise: it encompasses a much broader, holistic approach. At the heart of health and wellbeing is the capacity to form and sustain good personal, social, and working relationships. When children and young people have good relationships, they are more likely to feel confident about their learning, have higher self-esteem, to show resilience when faced with personal challenges and to show respect for others.

> *"The earliest years of children's lives are critical to their future development. Scientific evidence tells us how future health and wellbeing are determined by the ways children's brains develop.*
>
> *Inequalities experienced by parents and their own lifestyles such as drug and alcohol use can harm their children. Support for families that improves children's mental and physical health and life prospects is needed. This must continue through an education system that develops in young people the qualities of resilience and adaptability, together with aspirations and the capacity to go on learning and developing throughout their lives."*
> ***Equally Well, 2008***

3.6 RELATIONAL APPROACHES

It has been recognised for some time in Scottish education that whole establishment approaches are salient to the creation of emotionally healthy children and young people (Black et al, 2012). Inverclyde has a long tradition of recognising this and has supported the roll out of these in its establishments. These are outlined below:

Nurturing, restorative, and trauma informed approaches
Inverclyde Council Education Service adopts a nurturing, restorative and trauma informed approaches to promoting positive relationships in our establishments. Staff development continues in this area and over time we expect all establishments to adopt this approach. Inverclyde education staff are offered training in: *attachment theory, nurture approaches, restorative approaches, solution oriented methods, and the National Trauma Transformation Programme (NTTP)*. Although all establishment s will have access to the training, establishments have started to use restorative and nurturing approaches making use of basic principles and suggested resources. In recognition that 'stand-alone' training has limitations to impact and outcome, it is expected that

establishments prioritise training to match the expectations raised in their improvement planning process.

The adoption of Rights Respecting Schools' practices also supports the principles of restorative approaches.

Key principles of nurturing approaches

- Any understanding of nurture must be based on the 6 principles originally identified by Marjorie Boxall.
- Nurture can involve a targeted or universal approach or both. The former involves the use of a nurture class the latter looks at upscaling the 6 nurture principles across a whole establishment. Frameworks of self-evaluation based around HGIOS 4 are used to support these programmes.
- Nurture approaches are evidence based and operate across all levels i.e. early years, primary and secondary.
- Attachment Theory can help us understand our most vulnerable pupils. Attachment based approaches in use in Inverclyde include 5 to Thrive, and Attunement.
- With a greater insight into the meaning and implications of pupils' emotional and social needs a establishment's capacity to respond to pupils changes.
- Early childhood experiences affect a child's response to education. Understanding this can enhance our ability to work with learners affected by relationship damage.
- Through nurturing approaches learners can grow and develop their resilience and emotional ability to form relationships and deal with difficult situations.

> *"In p4, my friend and I fell out because we were playing tig. We were shouting at each other because we kept going for each other. We took some cool time to calm down and then we talked about it. We managed to get a win/win ending by ourselves because our teacher had taught us skills to deal with difficult situations."*
> ***Inverclyde Learner***

Key principles of Restorative Approaches

- Being responsible for one's own actions and their impact on others
- Respecting other people, their views, and feelings
- Empathising with the feelings of others
- Being fair
- Everyone in establishment being actively involved in decisions about their own lives
- Returning issues of conflict to the participants
- Willingness to create opportunities for reflective change in pupils and staff

Why Use Restorative Approaches?

Pupils seek fairness from adults who are dealing with behavioural issues. Whether they are a perpetrator or a victim, their focus is not on winning or losing, but on trusting in a fair process. Restorative approaches help teachers ensure that pupils, staff, and parents can be part of a fair process, while helping all involved to understand the impact of their behaviour on others.

Restorative approaches can:

- Manage the varied expectations of behaviour standards which exist among all establishment staff
- Help develop a Whole establishment positive ethos
- Encourage members of the establishment community to effectively resolve and learn from conflict in a way which maintains relationships or terminates them in a positive way

- Support any necessary sanctions by processes of learning and reconciliation

How Can Restorative Approaches Be Used?
Restorative Approaches can be used at different levels at school:

- As **preventative** – to promote positive relationships within the Whole Establishment Community

- As **responsive** – and repairing when difficulties arise

- As part of support and intervention for more long-term and persistent difficulties

The approach involves including an individual in finding a solution to the problem. Instead of asking **'Who's to blame and how are we going to punish them?'** focus is put on reasons, causes, responsibilities and feelings. Those involved are asked questions such as **'who has been affected and how?'** and **'How can we put it right and learn from this experience?'**

(Extracted from Education Scotland website, 2019)

Managers should be mindful that Restorative Approaches may require time to be implemented successfully and should plan appropriately with staff members in light of this situation.

"Having introduced restorative approaches, there was a noticeable shift in emphasis towards repairing harm rather than imposing sanctions"
Inverclyde Staff Member

National Trauma Transformation Programme
National Context

The Scottish Government has presented a vision for the future that centres on the desire to improve life chances for people who are likely to face poorer outcomes due to experiences of inequalities, trauma and adversity. This is reflected in several strategies and approaches, including the Equally Safe strategy (Scottish Government, 2018), the incorporation of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** (UNCRC), The Promise (Independent Care Review, 2018) and Fairer Scotland Duty (Scottish Government, 2021) legislation.
In recognising psychological trauma and adversity as a public health priority, the Scottish Government made an initial commitment, as outlined in the Survivor Scotland Strategy (Scottish Government, 2015), "to develop a national approach to enable the workforce to respond to the needs of survivors". This commitment has since been reaffirmed within successive Programmes for Government (Scottish Government, 2022-23), the Mental Health Strategy (Scottish Government, 2017-27), in the Covid-19: Mental Health - Transition and Recovery Plan (Scottish Government, 2020) and the National Strategy for Community Justice (Scottish Government, 2022).
Implementation Process
In Inverclyde the Educational Psychology Service has led on the roll out of the NTTP. The implementation plan going forward can be found in Appendix 2.
Inverclyde Council has made the following pledge:

"Inverclyde Council recognises the widespread impact of psychological trauma on individuals and communities, and we believe it is a priority to ensure that everyone is offered the support and opportunities they need to achieve their fullest potential. We will strive towards a culture, workforce and services that are trauma informed and responsive, by embodying the trauma informed principles of collaboration, choice, empowerment, safety and trust in all that we do.

We will progress towards all members of our workforce being offered trauma informed training appropriate to their role, and aim to develop systems, services and environments that are designed with an understanding of trauma and its impact at their heart.

It is vital that all stages of our work are co-produced with people with lived experience of trauma, helping us to better understand how we can prevent further harm and remove barriers for people to access the support they need, when they need it.

We are aware that anyone can be affected by trauma, including people within our own workforce. We will aim to promote and strengthen the resources that are available to support staff wellbeing, helping to ensure all members of our workforce feel safe, supported and valued."

3.7 RESPONDING

Consequences

Definition of consequences

What do we mean by 'consequences' in a establishment context? Consequences are an important tool to help reinforce boundaries and expectations. In this guidance, the term 'consequences' refers to the actions or interventions implemented in response to a child or young person's behaviour. While these are often thought of as the actions or interventions taken in response to behaviour that falls below expectations, they can also be a response that reinforces positive behaviour and the meeting or exceeding of shared expectations. The use of consequences where behaviour does not meet expectations is about addressing the young person's behaviour and supporting them in a way that reduces the likelihood of the behaviour occurring in future. This means approaches will often be tied to understanding the underlying drivers of a young person's behaviour, and taking separate, supportive action to address related needs. The use of consequences to strengthen positive behaviour and make it more likely to occur in future is called reinforcement. This guidance will refers to both 'responses' and 'consequences' throughout. The use of consequences within this guidance should therefore be interpreted as focusing on the response to support a child or young person. A table of illustrative examples of consequences can be found at Appendix 1.

Identifying appropriate consequences Behaviour interventions sit within the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) staged intervention framework, ensuring responses are proportionate, fair and tailored to individual needs. These responses can be:

- universal (preventative approaches linked to underpinning ethos and culture)
- targeted (individualised approaches for those requiring additional support)
- specialist (for more complex needs or linked to a specific risk assessment, often involving multi-agency support)

Universal (whole- establishment level) An establishment's culture, values and ethos should establish clear expectations and boundaries for behaviour. This allows for consistency in expectations across all areas of the establishment and in classrooms/learning spaces ensures all children and young people understand what is expected of them.

As set out in the section above on consistency of approach, responding to behaviour at a universal level should involve staff persistently stating and reinforcing expectations, linking these expectations to establishment values. Proactively identifying when these values are not being evidenced, through warmly stating the expectation and reminding children and young people of them is important. This means explicitly teaching and practising routines, structures, transitions and appropriate learning behaviours.

Staff can deploy a range of classroom/learning space management strategies to encourage positive behaviour and address low-level disruption. For example, acknowledging and praising children and young people who meet expectations or using non-verbal cues such as eye contact, proximity or hand signals to redirect behaviour subtly. Establishments should seek to develop standardised approaches such as agreed and consistent use of merits, warnings, and de-merits, training on de-escalation techniques and processes that are used to avoid further escalation of behaviour.

Most children and young people will respond positively to this approach. Responding to unmet expectations is more equitable when the approach taken to consequences is predictable for all children and young people, staff, and parents.

Targeted

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There may be situations where universal approaches are not enough and a child or young person requires more support, for example:

- when the needs of the child or young person require a more individualised response
- when the nature or severity of the behaviour requires a targeted response
- when universal approaches have been unsuccessful and additional support is required

Specialist

When targeted interventions have not been successful, specialised support may be required through an individualised support plan.

Specialist interventions could involve risk assessments and/or multi-agency collaboration, including joint work with educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, or child mental health services. These interventions can also involve consideration around the curricular offer, bespoke environment, groupings, pedagogical approaches or interventions designed on assessment of need. In some cases, it may also be appropriate to seek advice from specialist organisations, particularly when supporting children and young people where issues of discrimination, inequality or identity are present.

Assessment

In many cases, targeted and specialist interventions should be informed by:

- an assessment of the child or young person's needs and behaviour; and, if appropriate, a risk assessment to identify and mitigate the likelihood of further harm to the child, other children in the class or staff, or the recurrence of behaviour.

Schools and education authorities should have clear processes and Career-Long Professional Learning (CLPL) in place to support staff in carrying out these assessments and implementing appropriate, proportionate responses.

Needs assessment

An assessment of a child's needs should align with GIRFEC policy guidance and Additional Support for Learning legislation and statutory guidance. Where behaviour is an ongoing area of need, it is a wellbeing concern.

In order to do this, an assessment of the child's needs should be made using the GIRFEC key questions.

- What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?
- Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
- What can I do now to help this child or young person?
- What can my agency do to help this child or young person?
- What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

Adapted from Fostering a positive, inclusive and safe school environment (Scottish Government, 2025)

Physical Intervention Including Seclusion and Restraint

Included, Engaged, and Involved (Part 3 – 2024) (IEI3) Physical Intervention in schools, a relationships and rights based approach sets the context for Physical Intervention and De-Escalation in terms of the National Practice Model from GIRFEC. This guidance replaces the advice on physical intervention and seclusion in *Included, Engaged, and Involved* part 2. Its purpose is to improve children and young people's learning experiences in school by:

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- promoting positive relationships, behaviour and wellbeing;
- minimising the use of restraint and seclusion and eliminating their misuse;
- ensuring children and young people's rights are understood, respected and complied with in all decisions around the use of physical intervention, restraint and seclusion

All education authorities have a duty of care to all children and young people attending school in respect of the health, safety, wellbeing and welfare of the children and young people in their care.

Restraint and seclusion should not be viewed as, or become, routine practice in schools. They should not routinely form part of a child or young person's support plan. They should only be used:

- within a culture that prioritises positive relationships, behaviour, wellbeing, and planned preventative approaches;
- to avert an immediate risk of injury to the child or young person, or to others, where no less restrictive option is viable (reflecting the principle of last resort);
- for the shortest time necessary and in the safest, least restrictive manner;
- by those who are trained (except in emergency situations where no trained staff are available); and
- where it does not degrade, punish or deprive a child or young person of their liberty.

IEI3 informs us that prevention of physical intervention should always be the priority this can be achieved through many methods and preventative methods should away be considered first and should therefore be prioritised. This should be encouraged through promoting positive behaviour and creating positive learning environments as described on other sections of this document.

IEI3 states that despite preventative approaches being in place, there will still be situations where a child or young person requires support from adults to regulate their emotions, behaviours and stresses in a school environment. These situations may occur unexpectedly. Some children and young people who are neurodiverse may mask increasing stress levels. Most children, over time and with support, will learn how to self-regulate when they are distressed.

However, some children and young people, such as those with complex additional support needs or those who have experienced trauma, may require ongoing or periodic support from adults to regulate their emotions or behaviour. This is known as co-regulation. At times, and as a natural outcome of human interaction, individuals can misunderstand each other or disagree, causing disputes. In these situations, anger and stress can escalate quickly. De-escalation strategies can be used to reduce the intensity of a dispute. Resources on co-regulation and de-escalation can be found on Education Scotland's website.

Withdrawal is a method that is considered before physical intervention. The definitions of staff and pupil led withdrawal are below:

Definition of pupil-led withdrawal: "Where a child or young person temporarily moves away, at their choice, from a situation they are finding challenging to a place where they have a better chance of regulating their emotions and behaviour. The child or young person is free to leave the space they have moved to."

Definition of staff-led withdrawal: "Working with a child or young person to move away from a situation they are finding challenging to a place where they have a better chance of regulating their emotions and behaviour. The child or young person is free to leave the space they have moved to."

If the above approaches have not worked and it is deemed that physical intervention is necessary staff must remember that *It is only acceptable to physically intervene where the member of staff reasonably believes that if they do not physically intervene, the child or young person's actions are likely to cause immediate physical damage or harm to that pupil or to another person.*

Definitions;

physical intervention: "Physical contact carried out with the purpose of providing support to or preventing the actions of a child or young person."

Non-restrictive physical intervention: "Physical contact between a member of staff and a child or young person for the purpose of education, communication, providing aid, reassurance or comfort where there is no element of restraint would be considered a non-restrictive physical intervention"

Restraint: "An act carried out with the purpose of restricting a child or young person's movement, liberty and/or freedom to act independently."

Seclusion: "An act carried out with the purpose of isolating a child or young person, away from other children and young people and staff, in an area in which they are prevented from leaving."

All relevant staff should be offered professional learning opportunities to learn about de-escalation techniques and to understand the different types of challenging behaviour.

Clyde Valley Training Partnership Approach/Promoting Positive Behaviour is an approach for understanding, responding to and managing behaviours that challenge. The training in this approach was designed by staff from the Clyde Valley Training Group which includes representatives from a number of local authorities including Glasgow, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, North Lanarkshire and Inverclyde.

Training in this approach concentrates on understanding behaviour that challenges and the various factors which may influence a young person's behaviour; understanding the stages of Crisis Behaviour and when and how to intervene; recovery from an incident and reducing the likelihood of reoccurrence. Physical intervention techniques are also included in the approach to allow staff to safely manage situations where children, young people or staff safety is at risk due to behaviour that challenges. It is anticipated, however, that these will only be used *where the member of staff reasonably believes that if they do not physically intervene, the child or young person's actions are likely to cause immediate physical damage or harm to that pupil or to another person.*

Any instance of restraint or seclusion must be recorded in a critical incident and using the ICON system. There must be detail of the restraint that has been used and the amount of time that this occurred. The following timelines must also be adhered to:

- IEI3 states that parents must be informed with 24 hours. Inverclyde council requests that parents are informed of any restraint or seclusion the same day that it occurs preferably before the young person goes home.
- Critical incident and ICON form must be completed within 5 working days and submitted to the Authority Screening Group.

Senior Staff should be monitoring Critical Incident and ICON forms to determine patterns and adapt any pupil support, health and safety or risk assessments that are in place.

This is a small overview it is recommended that all staff review *Included, Engaged, and Involved* (Part 3 – 2024) for more detailed guidance.

3.8 POLICY AND PRACTICE

Self-Evaluation

This policy recognises that establishment policies must be based on good quality self-evaluation and reflection. As such, it recommends the use of the following sections from Fostering a positive, inclusive and safe school environment (Scottish Government, 2015) that can be found in Appendix 4 of this policy:

- Monitoring and reviewing impact.
- Reflective questions to assess culture and ethos.
- Reflective questions for staff in responding in the moment.
- Reflective questions for senior leadership teams for supporting responses in the moment.

Authority Screening Group

The Authority Screening Group (ASG) plays a key roll in monitoring relationships and behaviour in education contexts. Part the work of the group is to ensure that a holistic picture of need and support can be provided to education establishments at both an individual pupil and/or establishment level. It has a representative from Health and safety to support this process. More information about the group and a copy of the Critical Incident Reporting Form that it uses can be found in Appendix 5.

Exclusions

Inverclyde Council follows legislative guidance and national best practice in relation to the exclusion process. More information about exclusions and expectations around the exclusions of Care Experienced children and young people can be found in Appendix 6.

[Anti-Bullying policy](#) (ICON- ASL Policy Page)

In May 2025 Inverclyde Council refreshed its Anti-Bullying policy in alignment with national guidance in the shape of Respect for All (Scottish Government, 2024). The policy emphasises the salience of relationships in the amelioration of bullying behaviour. Inverclyde Council has also adopted the national definition of bullying behaviour cited in the above document:

"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."

Single-Agency Planning and the GIRFEC Pathway

An important mechanism in use across all educational establishments in Inverclyde is the single Agency Planning process. This allows for outcome focus and strength-based planning to be made by all involved in the Team Around the Child process. It also enables education staff to feed into wider planning across all partners in line with GIRFEC. A template of the planner can be found in Appendix 7.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chief Execvtutive has the overarching role in overseeing the implementation of this policy.

4.2 DIRECTORS

The Executive Director (ECOD) is responsible for leading on the roll out of policy,

4.3 HEADS OF SERVICE

The Head of Education will work wwith officers to ensure the roll out of policy is successful.

4.4 SERVICE MANAGERS

Head of Establishment are responsible for developing policy in their own context and managing this on a day to day basis.

4.5 OFFICERS

The Education Officer (Inclusion) will lead in the development and implementation of this policy.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 TRAINING

A suite of training has been created that includes key areas such as Promoting Positive Behaviour, Relational Approaches and Anti-Bullying.

5.2 COMMUNICATION OF THE POLICY

The policy will be disseminated to all heads of establishment and Addiitonal Support Needs Leads.

6 RISK

6.1 LEGISLATIVE RISK
None

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT
The policy distills national guidance in this area. As cited in the policy, it is expected that all establihments create their own version of policy through consultation with stakeholders.

7.2 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
None

8 APPENDICES

Inverclyde Council – Education Services

8.1 SAMPLE ENVIRONEMENTAL CHECKLIST FROM AN INVERCLYDE ESTABLUSHMENT

* The term 'Positive', used throughout this policy, is synonymous with 'Healthy'. Positive relationships build and maintain an individual's emotional, mental, and social health and wellbeing.

This checklist aims to support and challenge all staff in its implementation and it outlines our establishment's approach to the following areas:

1. **Positive Expectations:** Our establishment's Code of Conduct and its role in how we communicate our vision of positive relationships.

2. **Promoting Positive Relationships:** The proactive measures we take in order to establish opportunities for positive relationships to thrive.

3. **Managing Relationships Positively:** The active skills we use to manage, protect, and repair relationships.

4. **Supporting Children:** The reactive whole establishment framework for meeting the Additional Support Needs of children, including those children who are experiencing the type of social and/or emotional difficulties, which may result in disruptive patterns of behaviour and unhealthy relationships.

This is illustrated in the diagram below.

Honesty
Empathy Respect
Encouragement

Positive Expectations

Promoting Positive Relationships

Managing Relationships Positively

Supporting Children

The Establishment Community has identified the following values on which we base all of our decisions.

We believe in:

- Honesty
- Empathy
- Respect
- Encouragement

Positive Expectations

This is the vision we have for conduct within our establishment.

- We are kind and caring.
- We show good manners to everyone.
- We make safe and responsible choices.
- We always try our best.
- We let others learn.
- We look after our establishment.

The Code of Conduct is intentionally simplistic in language and can be applied to all stages. The primary aim of following the Code is to ensure healthy, positive relationships between everyone within our establishment community.

Positive Expectations

I demonstrate a clear understanding that better learning leads to better behaviour by striving to deliver excellent learning and teaching.	
I actively promote the highest possible expectations of all pupils in all areas of our establishment; in classrooms, in the playground, in the corridors and in the dining hall.	
I model the Code for all people within our establishment.	
I clearly display and refer to the Code positively within our class.	
I engage children in regular discussion and activities related to the Code of Conduct and make it clear that we follow the Code to ensure the establishment is a happy, safe place for everyone to be.	
I reinforce expectations in a firm, fair and friendly manner and with a clear focus on building and maintaining the positive relationships within the establishment.	
I maintain a safe and orderly environment by ensuring close supervision in less-structured, busier settings such as the corridors, lunch hall and playground.	
I identify, praise and reward positive conduct, by giving positive attention to positive behaviour.	
I deliver praise in a way that helps pupils understand the specific behaviour that is being recognised and the impact this has on others.	
I create a climate in establishment in which all pupils earn praise every day and can be recognised as Golden Pupils during the establishment year.	
I ensure that the establishment 'Magic' reward scheme and other class-based reward systems are delivered in line with establishment procedures.	
I avoid over-using rewards to ensure we discourage 'positive behaviour for self-centred motives'.	
I ensure that rewards are only awarded and never taken away.	
I provide a short, description of any reward systems with the class Daily Plan (or on clear display within the classroom) to inform visiting staff.	
Promoting Positive Relationships	
I know that positive, healthy relationships are achieved when individuals become Emotionally Intelligent and I ensure that Health and Wellbeing learning and teaching reflects these four factors: Self-awareness (ability to recognise their own feelings) Self-management (ability to manage these feelings positively) Awareness of others (ability to recognise the feelings of others) Relationship management (ability to manage their relationships)	
I lead the delivery of high quality learning and teaching, which specifically sets out to teach children the social skills required to be emotionally intelligent individuals.	
I identify patterns/issues or barriers to positive relationships and help address these situations proactively through the curriculum, at class, stage, or establishment level.	
I ensure I am up-to-date with establishment, local and national policy and good practice on promoting positive relationships (stringently evaluated in terms of their connectedness with our core values) and I recognise the important role my own professional development plays in being able to achieve this.	
I ensure that when pupils work together they are clear on what behaviours or social goals are expected and how to achieve these.	
I ensure that children support their fellow group members in meeting social goals and that the focus is on a cooperative approach and collective responsibility.	
Managing Relationships Positively	
I use calming strategies which are based on positive communication and meet the immediate emotional needs of children.	
I lead by example and minimise unnecessary confrontation by responding assertively, but not aggressively, even in challenging situations.	
I judge the behaviour and not the person.	
I am sensitive to pupils' self-esteem by discussing issues with them privately rather than publicly.	
I seek establishment -based support from colleagues to help establish strategies for promoting positive relationships and managing relationships positively.	
I provide 'no-blame' support and nurture to colleagues, who are dealing with challenging behaviour or unhealthy relationships, and I ensure that my colleagues know that seeking support equates with competency.	
I actively promote a 'culture of listening' when responding to others and I ensure that respectful listening occurs at all available opportunities; children are trained to actively listen as a matter of priority.	
I relax with colleagues, have fun, and ensure everyone can be included.	
I acknowledge and celebrate when things go well and talk openly and constructively about things that go wrong.	
I respect that making mistakes is part of learning and understand that 'incidents' of behaviour that contradict our establishment Code of Conduct can provide useful points of reference in helping children develop more appropriate forms of behaviour and relationships.	
I look at each challenging situation individually and emphasise repairing harm and I do not assign blame and dispense punishment.	

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I ensure that almost all consequences are agreed or negotiated through restorative approaches, as part of a process of repairing harm.	
I value the views/feelings of all and work from their current point of view, even if their perception of a situation is different.	
I effectively use the establishment's 'Cool Time' procedures as a non-punitive consequence to assist with pupils' self-management skills.	
I am able to defer conversations about challenging situations until all people who are involved are calm enough to communicate positively.	
I effectively use the establishment's 'Mediation' procedures when conflict occurs to assist with pupils' relationship management skills.	
I only impose consequences when these are required to maintain the safety and wellbeing of children or staff and I ensure any imposed consequences help to maintain and build the wellbeing and relationships of all those involved.	
I use my professional judgement when deciding whether to report incidents to a member of the Management Team; hierarchical referral systems are understood to be disempowering, although seeking support to <u>assist</u> with significantly challenging situations can allow for 'ownership' for those involved to be protected.	
I ensure when responding to a serious incident (in which a child's behaviour may put him/her in danger, other children in danger or a member of staff in danger) appropriate members of staff are contacted using a red card/walkie-talkie system and that I fulfil my duty of care by making decisions which reduce the risk of harm.	
I record all serious incidents, including violence to staff and those where a physical intervention is required, in line with establishment procedures	
Supporting Children	
I identify children who may require Additional Support in order to develop healthier relationships, contribute to the solution-oriented assessment and planning process.	
I maintain accurate behaviour monitoring records for pupils identified as requiring additional support in line with establishment procedures.	
I respect the confidentiality of pupils who require additional support by only sharing information with those who need to know and by doing so in a way which is consistent with establishment values.	
I work in partnership with parents/carers in a way that is Solution-Oriented and reflects establishment values and I notify parents/carers promptly of improved relationships and behavioural patterns.	
I know that behaviour which contradicts our Code, if left unchecked, can lead to bullying and that I have a duty to respond to this type of behaviour and the impact it is having, rather than relying on a rigid definition of 'bullying'.	
I understand that 'bullying' represent a dysfunctional or unhealthy relationship and is a breach of Children's Rights. I do not use the term 'bully' or 'victim' to label individuals, but, instead, describe behaviour as 'bullying behaviour'	
I explicitly state to children that 'bullying behaviour is never acceptable' and I show equal concern in addressing all 'bullying behaviour'; irrespective of whether the behaviour was displayed at establishment, out of establishment or online.	
I demonstrate that anti-bullying procedures are more formal types of additional support (e.g. a Restorative Conference) that are required to effectively repair the harm for all concerned, when less formal methods have proven to be ineffective. i.e. the fear or worry about what has happened, or that it might happen again, has not yet been effectively addressed	

8.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST EXAMPLE (LEARNING AND TEACHING)

Environmental Checklist

Example from Inverclyde Establishment

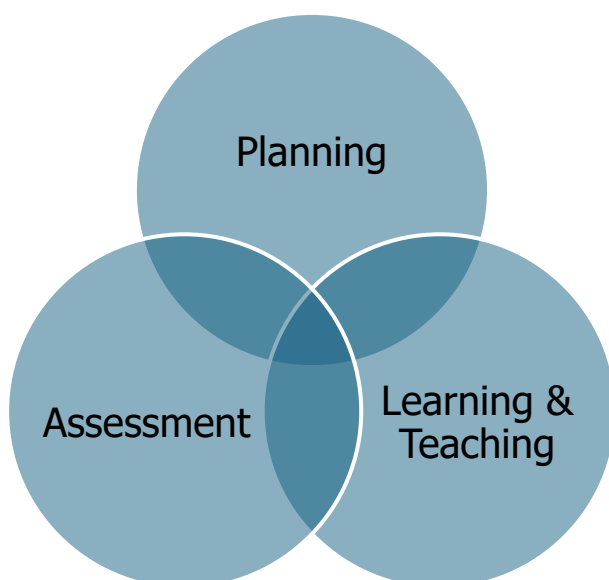**Learning and Teaching Checklists**

These checklists aims to support and challenge all staff in its implementation and it outlines our establishment's approach to the following areas:

5. **Planning:**

6. **Learning and Teaching:**

7. **Assessment:**

This is illustrated in the diagram below.

The Planning, Learning & Teaching and Assessment Cycle.

The processes of planning, learning & teaching and assessment inform each other. The combined process is flexible and responsive to pupils' learning needs and interests.
This allows our planning to reflect the 7 principles of CfE curriculum design:
- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

Teachers and pupils are involved in dialogue, which is integral to the planning process; teachers strive to ensure children are involved in planning topics and chunks of learning. Teachers and colleagues, who are stage partners, also use professional dialogue to plan cooperatively. Senior Managers have regular, informal discussions with teaching staff to monitor the process of planning, learning & teaching, and assessment. This is supplemented with scheduled Learning and Development meetings, (a minimum of once per term); a detailed professional dialogue which follows this agenda:

- Planning: How do the Strategic Forward Plans direct the Daily Plans?

- Learning & Teaching: What's going well and what are the challenges which need to be addressed?

  o Curriculum
  o Methodology

- o Resources

- Assessment: What progress are children making, how is this being recorded and how will next steps be achieved?

Planning	
I ensure that Strategic Forward Plans highlight the breadth of learning outcomes towards which pupils are working. These plans are simple in terms of detail and demonstrate the breadth of the curriculum experiences for pupils.	
I ensure Strategic Forward Plans contain discrete planners for literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing and context-based planners which identify: curricular area, key E&Os, intended learning, assessment evidence, evaluation of learning and next steps.	
I ensure that Daily Plans articulate how pupils will demonstrate their learning by linking E&Os with clear learning intentions, success criteria and learning activities designed to meet the needs of all learners. These plans are more detailed (in practical terms) and demonstrate how pupils will apply their skills in increasingly challenging contexts.	
I create Daily Plans that focus on the learning, teaching and assessment of skills, rather than a route through resources.	
I ensure that all planning documents are well maintained, up-to-date, organised, and easy to access for colleagues (including visiting staff providing cover).	
Learning and Teaching	
I establish a classroom atmosphere which is nurturing, happy and safe and conducive to learning; pupils and adults are welcomed with a smile and friendly greeting and worries or concerns are addressed effectively to allow children to concentrate on their learning and leave establishment happy at the end of every day.	
I ensure lessons have a stimulating start, which captures pupils' interests.	
I ensure lessons use active methodology and maintain pupils' motivation throughout.	
I explicitly build on pupils' previous learning.	
I relate lessons to pupils' real-life experiences.	
I ensure that learners are given opportunities to work and think independently.	
I ensure learners are given opportunities to work and think cooperatively and I use pupils as instructional resources for each other.	
I deliver lessons which reflect a variety of different learning styles and differentiate lessons in all areas of the curriculum to meet learners' needs.	
I clarify the purpose of the lesson and criteria for success with pupils.	
I ensure learners are given opportunities to be creative and show initiative.	
I provide easily-accessible, relevant and enjoyable tasks and activities for children to complete independently to ensure that there is no "Dead Time" in class.	
I ensure that lessons are effectively summarised.	
I establish creative routines for children to reflect on their learning and complete Learning Logs to record achievements and personal targets.	
I model an enthusiasm for learning, which pupils respond positively to.	
I establish and maintain high and achievable expectations throughout the lesson; including written tasks and other areas of presentation.	
I ensure pupils' contributions are encouraged, valued, and built upon.	
I teach pupils when and how to seek help and I respond efficiently and effectively to this.	
I effectively use humour and fun to engage pupils.	
I ensure wall displays are bright and creative, and celebrate and motivate children's learning with clear links to learning intentions and skills.	
I establish and maintain a classroom environment which is tidy, with resources labelled and accessible to children and in which children are supported to ensure trays and other 'personal' spaces are tidy and clear of clutter. Classrooms are left tidy at the end of the day to allow our cleaners to clean, not tidy up!	
Assessment	
I effectively monitor progress of individuals/groups during the lesson.	
I ensure explanations and instructions are clear to pupils and check this regularly.	
I skilfully use a range of effective questioning techniques (e.g. Bloom's Higher Order questions).	
I skilfully use a range of effective answering techniques (e.g. 'no hands up rule'/random selection/show me boards) to establish high levels of positive individual accountability.	

I integrate informal assessment effectively within the lesson.	
I use quality feedback which clarifies what a pupil has achieved and the next steps in their learning; verbal feedback and comments in jotters/folders/learning logs reflect this.	
I maintain useful notes within the class Daily Plan, which comments on pupils who require further support or extension and gather this information efficiently with the purpose of reporting to parents.	
I use a variety of approaches (from day to day activities to specific tasks and tests) and a range of evidence (observations, records, interactive questioning, written responses, products, accounts from others etc) in relation to agreed Es&Os in literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing for the purpose of tracking pupils' progress. I record this on individual pupil tracking records to identify how well each pupil has learned (i.e. the depth of the pupil's learning) and use this information to plan next steps.	

Trauma Informed Practice Implementation in Education

Stage	What is required
Stage 1	Education establishment leaders (Heads, Deputes, PT's etc) should engage in **Trauma Informed Leaders Training** Input will be delivered at ASN Leads meeting by Educational Psychology Service **(date to be confirmed)**
Stage 2	All staff to engage in **Level 1 training** (this is a short 15-minute video) Sowing Seeds: Trauma Informed Practice for Anyone Working with Children and Young People on Vimeo
Stage 3	Staff to engage in **e-modules** available on Inverclyde Learns that can be accessed here
Stage 4	5 sessions of **"Keeping Trauma in Mind"** delivered by Education Scotland Education Scotland run these modules on a regular basis (August 2025 – onwards dates still to be confirmed) • Session 1 What is Trauma • Session 2 The importance of Attachment & Attunement • Session 3 Recognising and Responding to Trauma • Session 4 Self-regulation • Session 5 Traumatic Bereavement
Stage 5	**Sustainability (Facilitated peer support network)** • By this stage establishments should have an identified representative or working party that are leading on embedding what they have learning in to practice in their own contexts. • As part of Inverclyde's continued commitment to developing trauma-informed practice across the whole workforce, **Facilitated Peer Support Sessions** will continue to be offered for staff who have a key role in leading the development, embedding and implementation of trauma informed practice within their school/educational establishment. • Sessions are facilitated by Inverclyde Educational Psychology Service (IEPS) and provide opportunities for networking, reflection, support, signposting and sharing good practice with colleagues from other establishments/services who are working to develop trauma-informed practice within their settings. Sessions are evaluated and responsive to areas of need and interest. • Dates for 2025/26 session are still to be confirmed.

8.4 ILLUSTRATVE EXAMPLES OF CONSEQUENCES

([LINK](#) Appendix 1)

This guidance cannot prescribe specific consequences schools should use to respond to particular behaviours. The table below is for illustrative purposes only, highlighting a range of behaviours, some possible underlying reasons, and examples of potentially appropriate responses. It aims to demonstrate that there can be a number of underlying reasons behind behaviour and that children and young people may act in similar ways for very different reasons and therefore the appropriate response will differ depending on the particular context and needs of the child. Responses should be considered in line with local authority policies, procedures and approaches as not all responses illustrated here may be appropriate or available in all areas.

Schools should take a child-centred approach when determining an appropriate response. Understanding the specific needs of each young person is crucial, as the most suitable response to a behaviour may vary – even for the same child – depending on their circumstances on a given day. In some cases, staff may not be aware of the underlying need at the time of the incident, but a response is still required. Where the underlying need is unclear, taking steps to understand it after is an important part of providing effective support.

While immediate responses to behaviour are often necessary, consistently applying universal approaches (such as simply asking a child to apologise) may address the surfacelevel issue in the moment but fail to resolve the underlying cause. Children and young people are still developing – both emotionally and neurologically – and factors such as puberty, mood changes, societal or personal challenges can influence their behaviour. However, this table reinforces the importance of looking beyond the behaviour itself to ensure that responses support the child's development and long-term wellbeing.

The list below is not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive and responses may sit across different categories.

Behaviour	Underlying needs and functions of behaviour	Examples of responses
Meeting or exceeding expectations.	• A child is feeling safe, valued and connected within their environment. • A child is experiencing success and positive feedback, reinforcing their motivation to engage and behave positively. • A child feels a sense of belonging and agency within the school community. • A child's needs are being proactively met, including emotional regulation, sensory input, social connection, and cognitive support. • A child may be seeking to contribute positively to the school culture and relationships	• Verbal praise that is specific and genuine. • Opportunities for increased responsibility or leadership roles. • Celebrating progress and effort, not just outcomes (e.g.: "You worked really hard to stay focused through a tough task"). • Recognition in assemblies, newsletters or merit systems. • Time with a trusted adult to reflect on what helped them succeed. • Encouraging the child to model positive behaviour or mentor peers. • Maintaining supportive relationships and regular

Behaviour	Underlying needs and functions of behaviour	Examples of responses
		check-ins even when behaviour is positive.
Low-level disruptive behaviour. For example: • continually disrupting learning and teaching • disengaging from learning by wandering in corridors instead of being in class • continually or seriously disrupting extra-curricular activities at lunchtimes or after school	• A child seeking connection may enjoy the reaction from peers or adults. • A child who struggles with low self-esteem may act out to avoid situations where they feel they might fail. • A child experiencing difficulties at home may struggle to focus and use disruption as a distraction. • A child with additional support needs may become frustrated and disruptive when this need is unmet, and they are unable to participate equally. • A child struggling with work, or with attention lapses, may disengage to avoid work they find challenging. • A child may be seeking acceptance from their friends so following the crowd • A child who struggles with transitions may find it hard to shift from classroom/ learning space expectations to a more informal setting. • A child who lacks confidence in their abilities may disrupt to avoid participating. • A child who has difficulty with authority may see after-school activities as less structured and act out	• A reminder of the expectation. • Being asked/instructed to move to different seat within teaching area. • Being asked/instructed to complete work in a different room/area under supervision. • Being given an alternative activity to the rest of the class that allows the child to regulate their emotions or behaviour. • Being asked to take a break from the class or activity for a short time. • Discussion and reflection with the child to assist self-regulation. • A reinforcement of the expectation with differentiated explanation. • A reduction in the stress load for the child, for example if they have dyslexia, Autism or ADHD. • Access to learning support. • Support strategies such as check-ins or a one-toone conversation to help address the underlying causes of behaviour. • Period by period registration and letting home know any period a young person does not attend. • Identify a safe space for the young person if mainstream class becomes too overwhelming. • Parental communication (truancy texts, attendance information, parental meeting). • Timetable adaption

Behaviour	Underlying needs and functions of behaviour	Examples of responses
Unsafe, anti-social, or otherwise unacceptable behaviour, including shouting, abusive or potentially physical behaviour during breaks or period changes (secondary).	• A child may be showing off to friends to gain authority/ acceptance/status. • A child with ADHD may struggle with impulse control and act without considering consequences. • A child who feels excluded or lonely may engage in disruptive behaviour to gain attention or connection. • A child with autism may be seeking sensory input or struggling with personal space. • A child is not yet developmentally able to understand and manage big emotions and feels overwhelmed. • A child is modelling the behaviour of others. • A child has limited control in other areas of their life, resulting in a need to assert themselves and retain agency within the safety of the school setting. • An excitable child may accidentally knock into others without realising the impact • A child with a sensory impairment may not be aware of their proximity to others. • A child with high anxiety may rush through corridors to avoid social interactions. • A child with a history of being bullied may push through crowds defensively as a stress response or safety mechanism in response to the trauma they experienced.	Restricted access to corridors/areas during lunchtimes/morning breaks for a period of time • • Requirement to be collected by parent/ other responsible adult for intervals and/or lunchtimes. • Reflective time/exercise to consider the impact of the behaviour on themselves and others. • 'Out of class two minutes early' so they move through corridors while largely empty. • Escort to collect and walk child to next class. • A reduction in transitions. • Additional adult support to aid co-regulation. • A conversation to jointly problem solve with the child and perspective take, once they are regulated, with regards to what to do differently next time. • Explicitly taught the skills they do not yet have in a way that leads to learning in this area. • Social and emotional skills curricula. • In-school alternative provision for a period of time (to allow matters to calm, time for planning, parental meetings etc). • Exclusion from school (to allow matters to calm, time for planning, meeting with parents etc). • Risk Assessment and safety planning to be completed, if appropriate, that may have mitigations that are restrictive or limiting to some extent (depending on location, activity, triggers etc)

Behaviour	Underlying needs and functions of behaviour	Examples of responses
Displays prejudicebased behaviours such as racism, misogyny or genderbased violence, homophobia.	• A child may be seeking to establish social capital by targeting those seen as 'different'. • A child may be being influenced by other people in their lives, such as family, friends or online influences. • A child may be repeating language they have heard elsewhere. • A child may be vulnerable to prejudice based narratives because they feel excluded, or marginalised. • A child may be vulnerable to far-right radicalisation. • A child may be displaying behaviours they have themselves experienced. • A child or young person's behaviour may reflect an exertion of power or control over others, influenced by their own position of relative privilege in relation to an oppressed group	• Utilising break or afterschool time to educate and reflect on the harm caused by the prejudicebased behaviour through developmentally appropriate education and discussion. • Removal from unsupervised corridors/ areas during lunchtimes/ morning breaks for a period of time. • Requirement to undertake additional supervised activities during lunchtime/breaks. • Referral to specialist agencies. • Reviewing curricular-based responses, such as learning through Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) education to promote empathy for others and learning about the impact of language, or topics such as consent. • Identifying whole-school interventions to ensure promotion of an inclusive and respectful school culture, such as embedding a whole-school approach to anti-racism. • Some behaviours may require more tailored responses. See Respect for All
Being violent towards others.	• A child experiencing frustration or anger may be lashing out due to difficulty regulating emotions. • A child who has experienced trauma may perceive a threat and act defensively. • A child with attachment difficulties may struggle with relationships and	• In-school alternative provision for a period of time (to allow matters to calm, time for planning and for any additional staffing or alternative placements to be put in place, parental meetings etc). • Exclusion from school (to allow matters to calm, time

Behaviour	Underlying needs and functions of behaviour	Examples of responses
	misinterpret social cues as hostility. • A child experiencing stress at home may have heightened emotional responses and struggle with self-regulation. • A child may be modelling abusive relationships witnessed at home	for planning, meeting with parents etc). • Risk Assessment and safety planning to be completed, if appropriate, that may have mitigations that are restrictive or limiting to some extent (depending on location, activity, triggers etc). • Provide a developmentally appropriate list of actions to take when frustrated in the future. Laminated set of bullet points, for example- to remind and support them to step away, seek help and follow an agreed, and rehearsed process

8.5 REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS
(LINK Appendix 2)

Reflective questions to assess culture and ethos
Developing values, priorities and expectations

- How have staff/children/young people/parents collaborated in the development of the school's expectations?
- What opportunities are provided for the school community to share their views and experiences in order to build a shared understanding of the school's climate and culture?
- How is data used – alongside collegiate dialogue and the views of professional associations – to identify particular challenges and develop informed, collaborative responses?
- Have young people had sufficient opportunity to express their views and be listened to and taken seriously, in line with Article 12 of UNCRC?

Promoting values, priorities and expectations

- How does your school communicate with children and young people, parents and staff to ensure there is a shared understanding of school's expectations?
- What teaching, displays, and communication takes place to ensure expectations are exemplified and reinforced regularly throughout the year?
- What measures are in place to support supply or temporary staff to understand the school's approach to boundaries and expectations?

Applying values, priorities and expectations

- How are the views of staff gathered to ensure they feel equipped to support the values ethos and climate of the school?
- What CLPL opportunities are available to ensure all staff have a consistent understanding of how school-wide expectations should be implemented?
- What time is made available to support staff to reflect on this and to come together to discuss the impact of the CLPL collectively?
- How are values reinforced daily, weekly and throughout the year?
- How does the leadership team support and model best practice, such as through its visibility to children and young people and staff?
- How are the views of parents gathered to establish whether there is buy-in or push-back from parents regarding any approaches?
- What support is afforded to the leadership team to implement local authority and national policy and guidance?

Reviewing values, priorities and expectations

- How does the school measure the impact of its approach?
- What are the indicators of success that tell you the approach to behaviour and relationships is effective?
- How is feedback from children and young people, staff, and parents used to refine policies?
- How is support available from the local authority used to assist with self-evaluation and planning next steps?

Reflective questions for staff for responding to in the moment behaviour

- What is the nature of the behaviour?
- Does the nature of the behaviour impact on the rights of the young person themselves, the rights of others or of staff?
- What might motivate this behaviour? is there an underlying unmet need?
- Could this behaviour be the result of a communication need, such as difficulty with speech, language, understanding instructions or expressing emotions?
- Can the behaviour be dealt with through universal approaches or does it require a targeted or specialist approach?
- Are there any features of the behaviour that require particular consideration, such as where it involves prejudice or an additional support need?
- Is the nature of the behaviour such that it requires an immediate response, such as where safety or dignity is compromised?

Rights

- Does the proposed response impact on any rights under UNCRC, for example right to an education, right to play, right to safety or other rights such as those protected under the Equality Act 2010/Health and Safety legislation/European Convention on Human Rights?
- If so, is the approach compatible with these, and is it proportionate, and legitimate in order to address both their needs and the need to protect the rights of others?
- Does the response maintain a child's right to dignity?
- Does the proposed approach involve a plan for how any removed privileges will be reinstated over time?
- Are there other children or young people whose rights must also be considered in determining an appropriate response?

Child-centred

- Does the child or young person have an identified additional support need that is relevant to the behaviour?
- Does the child have experience or trauma/adverse childhood experiences that are relevant to the behaviour?
- Is there a child's plan or risk assessment in place, and what guidance does it provide regarding appropriate responses?
- Is the proposed approach aligned to a child's developmental stage and does it support reducing the frequency and intensity of the disruptive behaviour over time?
- Does the child have a level of social and emotional development that allows them to engage effectively with the approach?
- Holistic assessment – what is happening for the child or young person in the community and at home?
- Has the young person been asked what might be causing them to behave in that way?
- Has the young person had the opportunity to participate in discussions about approaches to consequence?

Interactions with policies and legal frameworks

- Does the proposed action constitute seclusion10 as defined in Included, Engaged and Involved Part 3?

- If considering exclusion, has account been taken of the checklist of Key considerations to be made prior to, during and after exclusion, as set out in Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2?
- Is the young person care experienced?
- Is the proposed action compatible with duties under the Additional Support for Learning (ASL) legislation?
- Is the response consistent with the school's duties under the UNCRC, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), and the Equality Act 2010?

Strategies

- Timing of response – is the child in a position where they are able to constructively learn from the intervention?
- Is CLPL, guidance and support available and promoted to staff to support them in navigating challenging conversations with young people?
- Does the nature of the behaviour require particular considerations to appropriateness of intervention, such as where it involves prejudice and the need to avoid contributing to any trauma or mental health impact for any person affected?

Reflective questions for senior leadership teams for supporting responses in the moment

Processes

- How are the views of staff gathered, including through engagement with relevant professional associations, to establish whether they feel supported in responding to behaviour in school?
- What opportunities are available to ensure all staff have a consistent understanding of how school-wide expectations should be implemented?
- What structures are in place to support all staff to apply relationships and behaviour policies consistently?
- How are the views of staff gathered to support a shared understanding of when responses should be escalated, and are there clear pathways for that?
- What CLPL or other opportunities are there for staff to train together and have professional dialogue and are staff able to engage with these?
- How are children and young people supported to reflect on the impact of their behaviour?
- How are supply or temporary staff supported to understand the school's approaches to expectations and processes for responding?
- What opportunities are there for staff to share experiences and undertake peer learning?
- How are new or temporary staff joining mid-year provided with clear information and guidance to implement responses in line with school policies?

Implementation

- What arrangements are in place to ensure staff have the time to implement approaches effectively?
- What support is available to ensure responses can be conducted in a timely manner? • If only certain staff are trained in such approaches, what mechanisms are in place to ensure they have sufficient capacity to undertake approaches in a timely manner?
- What CLPL is available to support the implementation of approaches such as restorative, nurture and solutions-oriented approaches?
- How is consistency in approach supported across all staff and departments?

Engagement

- When and how are parents informed and engaged in responses to address their child's behaviour?
- How are staff supported by senior management in promoting positive relationships and behaviour when there is resistance from children and/or their parents?
- How is feedback gathered from staff about how things are working and what support might be required?

Reporting, recording and monitoring

- How is the effectiveness of approaches monitored?
- How are reports of violence and aggression followed up both with the local authority and with staff members involved? Are these in line with local authority procedures?
- Has any young person, or staff member, affected been supported, as well as provided with reassurance, within confidentiality parameters, that appropriate action has been taken?

Reflective questions for senior leadership teams

- What specific operational guidance is there for staff outlining the processes and possible steps staff can take to address behaviour through targeted interventions?
- What CLPL opportunities are available to ensure all staff have a clear understanding of the processes in place should targeted interventions be required?
- What time is afforded within working hours to undertake CLPL and support effective implementation of the strategies involved?
- How are all staff, including support staff, given the opportunity to discuss children's individual needs to inform the development of appropriate plans and responses?
- How are the underlying needs of the child or young person being assessed and supported?
- How are all staff, including support staff, informed about the details of plans in place to support children's needs?
- How is feedback gathered from staff about how things are working and what support might be required?
- What assessment is undertaken to review the curricular offer to ensure it supports young people's engagement?

Assessments

- How does the school ensure that needs assessments are conducted consistently and in a meaningful way?
- What processes are in place to regularly review and update needs assessments to maintain their relevance and accuracy?
- How are all staff, including support staff, given the opportunity to contribute to assessments that inform the development of appropriate plans and responses?
- How is relevant information from assessments and plans shared with all staff, including support staff, so they can implement it in their practice?
- What structures are in place to draw support from other services?
- What evaluation is carried out to ensure responses used are effective in changing behaviour while supporting wellbeing?
- Do the assessments show examples of impact and improvements?
- Are there clear timeframes for review, and are these shared with all relevant individuals?

- What processes are in place to assess risk, implement appropriate risk mitigation measures, and ensure consistent reporting, recording, and regular review of risk assessments?

Reflective questions for school leadership on monitoring

- What guidance is in place to support approaches to incident recording and monitoring?
- What processes are in place for oversight of patterns of individual behaviour, to enable a holistic view to be taken of a child or young person's behaviour and needs? For example, is a young person repeatedly displaying the same behaviour across different classes, or receiving repeated consequences for the same issue, which might indicate the need for a more targeted response?
- What processes are in place to track school-wide patterns around culture, behaviour and responses and to ensure this is properly interrogated? If monitoring indicates that responses are being applied more frequently to particular groups or characteristics, an equality impact assessment may be warranted.
- Are there particular times or locations that increase the likelihood of incidents, and how might these be better managed?
- How is data collected and used to support staff and children and young people?
- What feedback does the school engage with from various affected groups?
- Is child/young person voice gathered from varied groups? For example, Pupil Council, care-experienced young people, children and young people with additional support needs, those with previous exclusions or low attendance?

8.6 CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Authority Screening Group (ASG)

REFERENCE:
CI

Critical Incident (CI) (2024-2025)

Notes:
- **This is a recording of debrief planning.**
- **Where possible this proforma is to be completed by the staff member involved in the incident and then sent to the Head Teacher / Head of Centre to complete Section 7 before forwarding to ASG.**
- **This is a record of a singular Critical Incident, please complete a new proforma for separate incidents**
- **This form should be typed, handwritten requests will not be processed**
- **Please forward WORD file not PDF**
- **Criteria for what constitutes a "Critical Incident"**
    1. **There is a significant or severe risk to health and safety e.g. carrying of a knife.**
    2. **When a pupil has been physically (purposely or significantly) violent towards a staff member.**
    3. **When a pupil has been physically violent towards another pupil in a manner that can be considered severe and a risk to health and safety.**
    4. **If a pupil has destroyed property at a level that the Head of Education should know about and taking account of their additional support for learning needs.**
    5. **If there are risks/threats to staff and pupils from someone external to the establishment.**
- **FEEDBACK – Feedback will be sent via email, if you have not received your feedback within two weeks of meeting please contact the ASG mailbox.**

1. INCIDENT DATA

Date of Request:	
Date of Incident:	
Time of Incident:	
Name(s)/Designation of all staff involved: *(if appropriate)*	
Initial(s) of all Young People Involved: *(if appropriate and only if mentioned in report below)*	
When looking at criteria for a critical incident (above), which apply in this case?	
Head Teacher / Head of Centre in agreement with content of this Critical Incident:	
Named Person:	

2. YOUR DETAILS (Person Completing Request)

Name:		Role/Designation:	

Location:		Contact Number:	
Email address:			

3. COPIES TO (Who should be included in any response)

The response from the ASG will automatically be sent to the Head Teacher / Head of Centre and those who will be completing any needed actions. Please provide details for anyone required i.e. Depute Head Teacher, Named Person etc.

Name/Designation:	E-mail:

4. PUPIL'S DETAILS

Young Person's Name:		Date of Birth:	
		Post Code:	
Educational Establishment:		Stage: (i.e. N4, P1, S1 etc.)	
Key Agencies Involved: *i.e. ICOS, Barnardos etc.*			
Relevant Pupil Needs: *i.e. ASN etc.*			
Is the young person on the Child Protection Register?	Yes ☐ No ☐	Is the young person Care Experienced*? *LAC/LAAC etc.*	Yes ☐ No ☐

* 'Care Experienced' refers to **anyone who has been or is currently in care or from a looked after background at any stage of their life**, no matter how short, including adopted children who were previously looked after.

5. DETAILS OF CRITICAL INCIDENT

Description / timeline of Incident *(Please only include the name of the young person above, any other pupils should be initials only)*:

SITUATION *A brief summary of the incident*	
ACTION *Description of action(s) taken by pupil(s) involved in incident*	

RESPONSE *Action taken by staff member*	
TRIGGER *What may have caused the incident*	
PHYSICAL INTERVENTION OR SECLUSION *(Please detail physical intervention used)*	

	Are the staff member(s) involved PPB Trained:				
Have the Parent(s) been informed?	Yes ☐	No ☐	**Date parent informed:**		
Was anyone injured during this incident?	Yes ☐	No ☐	**If yes, please confirm you have completed a Health and Safety Incident Report (ICON)**	Yes ☐	No ☐

Any other relevant information:

6. PREVIOUS INTERVENTIONS ATTEMPTED

CLASS	
SCHOOL	
PARTNERS	
PARENT(S)	

7.   EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT DEBRIEF (COMPELTED BY SMT)

Date of staff debrief and issues arising *(if appropriate)*
Identified Next Steps:
Please indicate if the learning from this incident has been fed into the wellbeing assessment/child's plan (if appropriate)

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS REVIEW MUST BE FORWARDED TO
AUTHORITYSCREENING.GROUP@INVERCLYDE.GOV.UK**

8.   EDUCATION SERVICES FEEDBACK

Educational Establishment feedback will be sent via email.

8.7 A POSITIVE APPROACH TO PROMOTING INCLUSION AND MANAGING EXCLUSIONS

Introduction/rationale

In line with the principles outlined in *' Included, engaged and involved' Part 2: A positive approach to managing exclusions,* Inverclyde Council supports the development of 'peaceful, positive and inclusive' learning environments, where all our learners can be **safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included.**

In order to do this it is essential that we keep all our learners engaged in education and that this document is set in a context where exclusion is prevented and only used when all other measures have been exhausted.

Inverclyde Council Education Services fully adopts the approaches detailed in the document *'Included, engaged and involved' (IEI) Part 2: A positive approach to managing exclusions.* This Standard Circular outlines the key areas for schools to focus on when considering the exclusion of a learner from their establishment. Senior Managers should refer to the IEI guidelines throughout this process. They should also ensure that all staff are aware of these guidelines.

Our Educational Establishments educate learners from 0-18. The scope of legislation related to exclusion covers the 5-18 age range, but it should be acknowledged that Early Years Establishments supports children and families in engaging with learning from a very early age. Inverclyde Council does not exclude any child from an early year's establishment.

The rationale behind this paper is that Inverclyde Education Authority bases educational provision on nurturing and restorative principles. It is hoped that the authority's use of exclusion will be minimal and where this is necessary will be conducted in a supportive way which repairs relationships and improves these for the future.

Comments at the bottom of the pages are taken from young people across Scotland talking about their experiences of being excluded.

'I keep getting in trouble and nobody helps.'
Kelly (S1)

Legislative Background

- The power to exclude a learner rests ultimately with Education Authority. The Authority has given delegated power to Heads of Establishments (or their delegated Senior Manager) to exclude learners where appropriate for a maximum of 10 days. An exclusion of more than 3 days would only be sanctioned as a result of a serious incident. The authority is ultimately responsible for the decisions that schools make on their behalf and may advise a change of decision if required.

- The power to exclude a learner from a school and the circumstances under which a learner may be excluded are set out in Regulations 4 and 4A of the Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975 ("the 1975 Regulations"), as amended [S.I 1975/1135: the relevant amending Regulations are the Schools general (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 1982 (S.I 1982/56) and the Schools General (Scotland) Amendment (No 2) Regulations 1982 (S.I 1982/1735).

- The exclusion policy should be seen in the wider context of an authority's duties to:

1. Under section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980: *"… secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education …"*

2. Under section 2(1) of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 ("the 2000 Act"): *"….secure that the education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential".*

3. Under section 2(2) of the 2000 Act in regard of section 2(1): *"………have due regard, so far as is reasonably practicable, to the views (if there is a wish to express them) of the child or young person in decisions that significantly affect that child or young person, taking account of the child or young person's age and maturity.*

4. Under section 28 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980: *"…….have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of suitable instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents".*

'No-one really listens at meetings. They don't care what me or my Mum think'
Craig (S 3)

Regulations

- Regulation 4 states that an Education Authority shall not exclude a learner from school unless the authority;

"are of the opinion that the parent of the pupil refuses or fails to comply, or to allow the pupil to comply, with the rules, regulations, or disciplinary requirements of the school", or

"consider that in all the circumstances to allow the pupil to continue attendance at the school would be likely to be seriously detrimental to order and discipline in the school or the educational well-being of the pupils there".

- Complying with Regulation 4 is essential. If this is not the case the authority may be open to legal challenge by the parent and/or learner.

- Educational establishments must take account of all facts and circumstances surrounding an incident or learner before deciding to exclude.

- All exclusions must adhere to anti-discrimination, human rights, and equalities discrimination. This includes Equalities Act 2010.

- Parents/learners (aged 12+) must be informed on the day of exclusion that the decision has been made. They must also be given a date of a solutions focussed meeting to return to the educational establishment.

- Educational establishments must also contact parents prior to the exclusion to ensure that appropriate care arrangements can be made.

- The views of learners and parents should be listened to and recorded on the TAC meeting minutes

- Parents and learners over the age of 12 must be informed of their right to appeal and given the relevant information.

- Overall a learner should only be excluded when all other measures have been tried and have failed. or in the case of a very serious incident. Educational establishments will be expected to provide evidence of strategies and approaches already used e.g. behaviour assessment and planning.

'I don't want to go to school, things always go wrong'   Dean S1

Decision making
The decision to exclude is never taken lightly. Heads of establishments should ask themselves and relevant staff key questions before excluding.
These are:

- *what interventions/learning will be affected?*

- *is exclusion a last resort?*

- *what will exclusion achieve?*

- *would an alternative be possible?*

- *what could this alternative be?*

- *what is the likely impact upon the learner, and their wider circumstances?*

- *what impact will exclusion have on the learner's emotional well-being?*

Parental partnerships

Maintaining positive parental partnerships is essential to securing and understanding of learners' needs and establishing a way forward for a child or young person. It is important that parent's feel valued as part of this process and not perceived as observers of the process. They need to be fully involved in a situation which will have a huge impact on their child's life.

Additional Support Needs

- Where exclusion is being considered for a learner with additional support needs, establishments should seek to balance the case for the exclusion with the need to fulfil statutory duties (Education ASL Act 2004, 2009) and the authority's statutory duty to take all reasonable steps to ensure that appropriate provision is made for a learner's additional support needs.

- In considering the exclusion of a learner who receives additional support, school staff should take account of the potential impact of the loss to both their learning and support provision. Learners should be allowed to continue to access any therapeutic support such as physiotherapy, speech and language therapy or occupational therapy as ongoing and necessary support and intervention.

- The authority expects that exclusion rates within all specialist establishments will be in line with or below the national average for this sector.

Learners on the Child Protection register and Looked After Learners
- The exclusion of a learner who is looked after or on the Child Protection register can mean that already very challenging circumstances are likely to be exacerbated.

- Heads of establishments should consider very seriously the decision to exclude a learner who is looked after or on the Child Protection register. Any decision to do so should be discussed with the relevant Head of Service and immediately involve Social Services.

- A Senior Manager of the educational establishment must always consult with the relevant social worker prior to exclusion of a learner who is looked after. The decision made should be fully informed by their views. This consultation must take place prior to taking a decision to exclude.

Duration of Exclusions

- Exclusions should be for as short a time as possible. This time should be used to plan for a successful return. Continually ask the question

  'Why would I need to exclude for more than 1 day?'

- All exclusions should be resolved prior to the end of a term.

Heads of Establishments have delegated authority to exclude for up to 10 days. Any exclusion which is longer than this can only be sanctioned by the appropriate Head of Service or their delegated senior manager.

- In the case of multiple exclusions which totals periods of exclusion in excess of 15 days in any school session, the case is sufficiently serious that it must be reported fully to the Head

of Service. The Head of Service will then arrange to meet the learner, his/her parents, the Head of establishment and if appropriate relevant external agencies.

- As a matter of good practice exclusions of more than 5 days should always be discussed with the appropriate Head of Service.

- In some circumstances, a learner's distressed behaviour or the occurrence of an incident may lead to exclusion around the time where a learner is due to be presented for examinations. Every effort should be made to ensure that the learner is able to sit their exams as planned, or within an alternative location in the school. Where this is not possible schools should make arrangements to enable the learner to sit their exams within another centre or location. Schools should contact the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) for advice and to progress any arrangements should this be required.

- Continuity of learning is essential. As soon as possible, following an exclusion, Educational Establishments should send work home for a learner to complete. At all times the educational establishment and authority have a duty to provide education for excluded learners.

- Occasionally it may be appropriate for continued learning during an exclusion to take place in another establishment.

Re-admission

- Prior to re-admission key staff involved should have undertaken a debrief of the incident leading to exclusion, to allow for a positive return to take place.

- Learners and parents need support to facilitate a successful return to an educational establishment.

- A restorative and solution focused meeting should take place as a matter of priority to facilitate the return to school. This meeting can be held by any member of SMT.

- The minute of this meeting should include key action points which will become the return to school agreement.

- This should be reviewed with an appropriate timescale with all relevant parties and agencies.

Recording exclusions/data collection

- Exclusions should be recorded within Seemis and educational establishments/authority should collate patterns and trends of exclusions on an annual basis

- On an annual basis education services will share exclusion data for the whole authority with all heads of establishment, and the relevant Head of Service and principal psychologist will undertake annual visits to establishments to share good practice, and support them in including, involving and engaging all learners.

- Regulation 10(1A) of the 1975 Regulations provides that, where a pupil's progress record contains information relating to a decision to exclude, certain other information is also to be recorded. Regulation 10(1A) requires any decision of an appeal committee to be recorded and also a requirement to inform the parent/young person of the terms of the entry. However, information about exclusion is not something which must be included on the record, although there are requirements where such information is included. It is therefore also possible to remove the record of exclusion from a learner's progress record, but any record of an appeal decision must also me removed.

'I hate going home when the school puts me out'   **Sara P7**

Terminology
Historically the terms 'temporary exclusion' and 'permanent exclusion' are used by some establishments. **The legislation does not make such a distinction. In legislative terms, a pupil is merely excluded.** Terms used to describe the exclusion have included 'temporary exclusion' 'suspension', 'informal exclusion', 'cooling off period' and 'sending a pupil home'. **All such instances are forms of exclusion and must be recorded as such.**

Removal from the register
Previous terms used to describe the above have included 'permanent exclusion' and 'expulsion'. Establishments should no longer use these terms. The term 'exclusion/removal from the register' should be used in the ScotXed documentation when a pupil is excluded from a school, the pupil's name is removed from the school register and the education authority having decided that the pupil should not return to that school. This action will only be taken in very extreme circumstances.

Exclusion (Care Experienced)

Considering exclusions for care experienced young people in Inverclyde
Before considering exclusion it is expected that all educational establishments will have actively sought support for the pupil, it is also expected that appropriate wellbeing assessment and planning will have taken place. Within the context of the Inverclyde GIRFEC pathway the emphasis is on the universal level of support which involves school based supports/interventions being utilised to support all children and young people including Joint Support Teams (JSTs).
Beyond this in relation to the GIRFEC pathway there are a number of wider supports that can be accessed across the local authority for those young people who may be at risk of exclusion. These include; ICOS, Educational Psychology, Corporate Parenting Team, Barnardos, Additional Support Needs (ASN) Forum, Action for Children, Virtual Schools Head Teacher (care experienced), Social Work Services. This list is not exhaustive.
There is an expectation that before exclusion is considered that there will be evidence that educational establishments have exhausted all appropriate in-house and wider education supports.

> *Key questions to consider before exclusion*
>
> - *what interventions/learning will be affected?*
>
> - *is exclusion a last resort?*
>
> - *what will exclusion achieve?*
>
> - *would an alternative be possible?*
>
> - *what could this alternative be?*
>
> - *what is the likely impact upon the learner, and their wider circumstances?*
>
> - *what impact will exclusion have on the learner's emotional well-being?*
>
> *Pupil who are Care Experienced or have Additional Support Needs*
>
> *The questions highlighted above should be used when exclusion is discussed for all pupils. However, more specific questions should be asked in relation to pupils who are care experienced or have additional support needs, in consideration of their wider context and the additional impact exclusion could have.*

If, however, there is a significant incident within school it is expected that a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) would make immediate contact with the Head of Service and/or Education Officer (Inclusion) to seek advice on actions to be undertaken. If in the case of a care experienced child or young person the Virtual Schools Head Teacher should always be contacted.

Duration of Exclusion (Care Experienced)

Exclusion should be as short as possible, the purpose of the exclusion should have a clear link to planning for a successful return and the duration should reflect this.
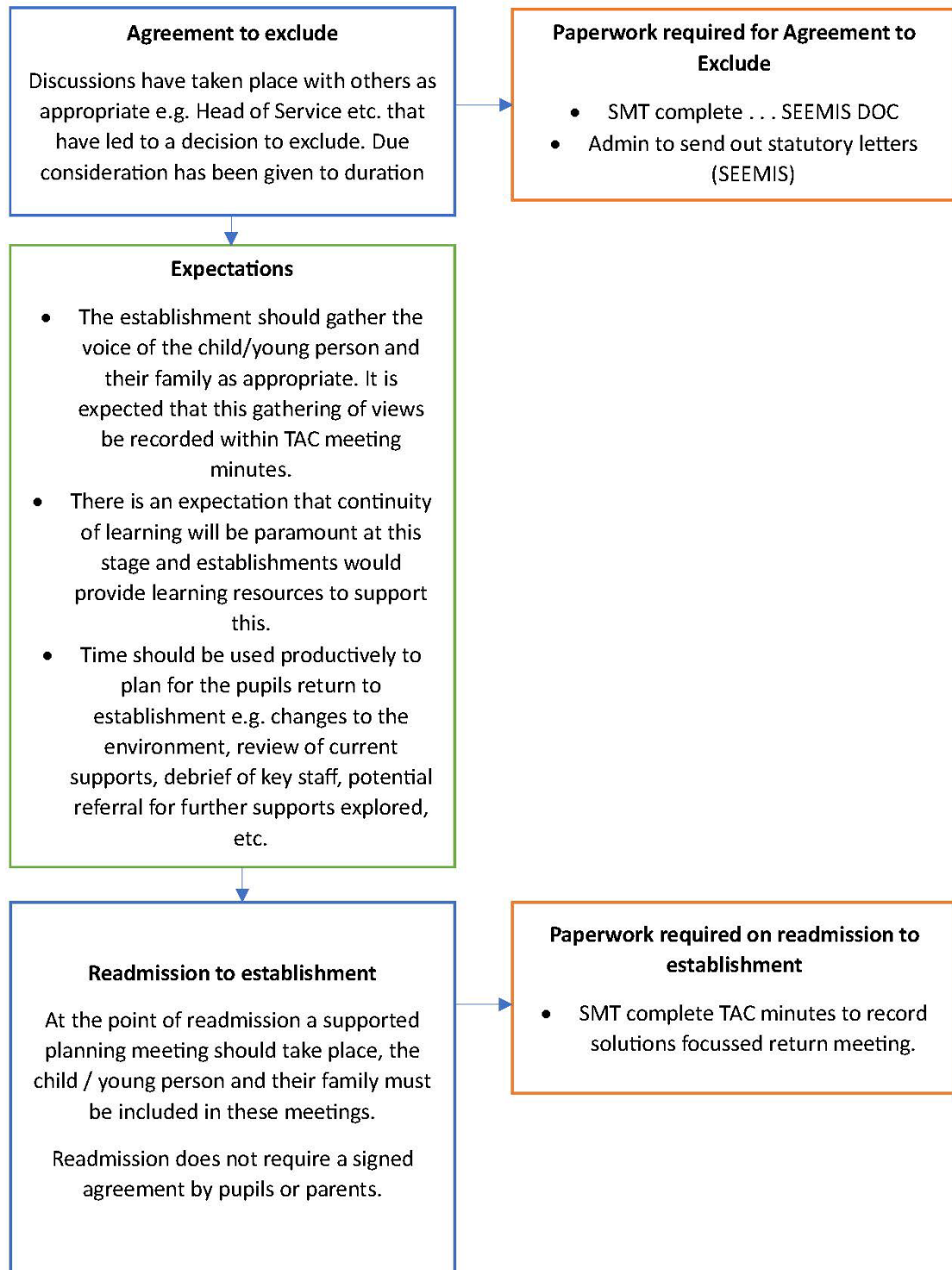
Agreement to exclude

Discussions have taken place with others as appropriate e.g. Head of Service etc. that have led to a decision to exclude. Due consideration has been given to duration

Paperwork required for Agreement to Exclude

- SMT complete . . . SEEMIS DOC
- Admin to send out statutory letters (SEEMIS)

Expectations

- The establishment should gather the voice of the child/young person and their family as appropriate. It is expected that this gathering of views be recorded within TAC meeting minutes.
- There is an expectation that continuity of learning will be paramount at this stage and establishments would provide learning resources to support this.
- Time should be used productively to plan for the pupils return to establishment e.g. changes to the environment, review of current supports, debrief of key staff, potential referral for further supports explored, etc.

Readmission to establishment

At the point of readmission a supported planning meeting should take place, the child / young person and their family must be included in these meetings.

Readmission does not require a signed agreement by pupils or parents.

Paperwork required on readmission to establishment

- SMT complete TAC minutes to record solutions focussed return meeting.

Figure 3: Duration of Exclusion CEx Flowchart

8.8 SINGLE AGENCY PLANNING

SINGLE AGENCY PLANNING / TAC MONITORING
ESTABLISHMENT

Name: Click or tap here to enter text. **Class:** Click or tap here to enter text.	**Teacher:** Click or tap here to enter text. **Pupil Support Assistant:** Click or tap here to enter text.	**Date of Meeting:** Click or tap here to enter text.

Present at Meeting: Click or tap here to enter text.	**Learner Information:** Click or tap here to enter text.

Purpose of Meeting: Click or tap here to enter text.

What is going well? Competencies / strengths / positive factors	**Issues:** Concerns / areas requiring support
• Click or tap here to enter text.	• Click or tap here to enter text.

Any relevant additional information?
• Click or tap here to enter text.

Wellbeing Indicators	Safe	Healthy	Active	Nurtured	Achieving	Respected	Responsible	Included

Action Plan				
Desired Outcomes		**Action Points**		**How will we know if we are making progress?**
	Who?	What? Actions / Interventions	When	

Views of the child / young person: (Article 12)
Click or tap here to enter text.

Views of the Parent / Carer:
Click or tap here to enter text.

Assessment Plans				
Wellbeing Assessment	Nurturing Me	Singla Agency Plan	Multi-Agency Plan	Child's Plan

Intervention level			
Universal	Enhanced Universal	Collaborative	Enhanced Collaborative

Copies to:	Date of Next Review:

Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Please review the meeting minutes and contact the school if you require any amendments within 5 days. Thereafter, permission to share with partners to this plan, as named above.	