



West Lothian  
Council

## ***Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel***

West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
LIVINGSTON  
EH54 6FF

3 December 2014

A meeting of the **Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel** of West Lothian Council will be held within **Council Chambers, West Lothian Civic Centre**, on **Tuesday 9 December 2014 at 10:00 a.m.**

For Chief Executive

### **BUSINESS**

#### **Public Session**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business
3. Declarations of Interest - Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.
4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel held on Monday 27 October 2014 (herewith).
5. Audit Scotland Report on School Education
  - (a) Presentation by Audit Scotland
  - (b) Report by Head of Schools with Education Support (herewith)
6. Primary School Accommodation - Kirknewton Primary School - Report by Head of Schools with Education Support (herewith)

DATA LABEL: Public

7. Early Learning and Childcare - Plan to Increase Flexible Provision - Report by Head of Schools with Education Support (herewith)
8. Study Support in West Lothian - Report by Head of Education (Quality Assurance) (herewith)
9. Implementation of New Highers in Secondary Schools - Report by Head of Education (Quality Assurance) (herewith)
10. Support for Playgroups Across West Lothian - Report by Head of Schools with Education Support (herewith)
11. Workplan 2014-2015 (herewith)

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NOTE      **For further information please contact Elaine Dow on 01506 281594 or email [elaine.dow@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:elaine.dow@westlothian.gov.uk)**

MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE on 27 OCTOBER 2014.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), David Dodds, Stuart Borrowman and John McGinty; Appointed Representatives Elsie Aitken, Eric Lumsden, Myra MacPherson and Lynne McEwen.

Apologies – Councillor Jim Walker, Appointed Representative John Hendrie and Senior People's Forum Representative Maureen Finlay

Absent – Councillor Andrew Miller

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

2. MINUTE

The Panel confirmed the Minute of the meeting held on 9 September 2014 as being a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the Minute.

3. SCHOOL ESTATE ACCOMMODATION FEASIBILITY STUDIES UPDATE

The Panel considered a joint report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Estates and the Head of Schools with Education Support providing details of the feasibilities undertaken to consider potential hall extensions at Peel, Carmondean and Broxburn Primary Schools to facilitate the delivery of higher volumes of free school meals and the requirements for two hours effective physical education. Appendix 1 to the report provided details of the new hall proposals at Peel Primary School; appendix 2 provided details of the new hall proposals at Carmondean Primary School and appendix 3 provided details of the hall extension proposals at Broxburn Primary School.

The report recalled that following the announcement by the Scottish Government on 7 January 2014 that all Scottish Primary 1 to Primary 3 pupils would be entitled to receive a free school meal from January 2015 the Education PDSP, at its meeting held on 24 February 2014, noted that a report would be presented to a future meeting of the Panel on the performance of the school estate which would contain further details of the feasibility studies undertaken at Peel, Carmondean and Broxburn Primary Schools. These feasibilities were to consider the suitability of the existing accommodation to deliver the increased demand for free school meals, the provision of physical education (PE) and the potential for improved community utilisation. As the feasibilities primarily related to the need to deliver the Scottish Governments free school meal statutory requirements, officers agreed that a separate report outlining the

outcomes of the feasibilities be presented in advance of the annual school estate performance report. The report went on to outline the feasibilities undertaken for each school and provided the estimated cost of the proposals. The provision of new halls and extension as outlined in the feasibilities would facilitate the delivery of increased free school meal requirements whilst also improving physical education provision.

The Head of Schools with Education Support then advised the Panel that the capital cost implications of the requirement to increase the provision of free school meals through extensions at Peel, Carmondean and Broxburn Primary Schools were outlined in the report to Council Executive dated 10 June 2014. Initial estimates highlighted an approximate cost of between £3m and £3.6m. However, following more detailed investigations and value engineering of proposals the total cost of the improvements to deliver additional free school meals for Peel, Carmondean and Broxburn Primary Schools was approximately £2.8m, which was reported to the Scottish Government for determination.

The Head of Schools with Education Support went on to advise that there was no funding allocated for these projects within the general services capital programme. Officers have been liaising with the Scottish Government on the potential for funding to be provided by them. A formal decision would be announced following determination by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) distribution group. The Panel was advised that once a decision had been notified to the council it was proposed that a further report would be submitted to the Council Executive.

The Panel was asked to note the outcome of the feasibilities and the costs associated for Peel, Carmondean and Broxburn Primary Schools.

#### Decision

Noted the contents of the report.

#### 4. HOME EDUCATED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) providing details of the outcome of a review of the Home Educated Children and Young People Policy. The Scottish Government Guidance on Home Education was attached at appendix 1; the Home Educated Children and Young People Policy at appendix 2; practice in other local authorities at appendix 3 and comments of parents at appendix 4 to the report.

The report explained that the Home Educated Children and Young People Policy was previously updated in October 2013. This update was undertaken following an investigation by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) following a complaint from the parent of a home educated child. The findings of the investigation by the SPSO were that information provided to the parent by West Lothian Council had been inconsistent and unclear. As a result of this West Lothian Council was

asked to develop written guidelines regarding access to Community Schools in relation to home education. The Education Executive, at its meeting held on 1st October 2013, approved the amendments to the Home Educated Children and Young People Policy and recommended that a review of the policy be carried out during 2014.

The report went on to outline the four areas which the review focussed on as follows:

1. Compatibility with Scottish Government Guidance;
2. Practice in other Local Authority Areas;
3. Outcomes for West Lothian home educated children and young people; and
4. Minor revisions to further increase clarity.

The Customer and Performance Manager then advised the Panel that the Home Educated Children and Young People Policy updated in October 2014 was compatible with Scottish Government guidance and offered a greater level of flexibility to the parents of home educated children and young people.

During the question and answer session the Panel recommended that a typographical correction be made to recommendation 2(ii) of the report and that the role of the Additional Support Needs Manager in the process flow diagram on pages 13 and 23 of the policy (appendix 2) be clarified.

The Panel was asked to note the outcome of the review of the Home Educated Children and Young People Policy and agree that the report be referred to the Education Executive for consideration subject to the amendments highlighted above.

#### Decision

1. Noted the contents of the report; and
2. Agreed that the report be referred to the Education Executive subject to the amendments highlighted above being carried out.

#### 5. SCHOOL EXCURSION POLICY

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Schools with Education Support providing details of the additions to the School Excursion Policy which clarified the national context within which it should be interpreted and applied. The School Excursion Policy dated October 2014 was attached as an appendix to the report.

The report explained that the School Excursion Policy was designed to ensure that risks arising from trips and excursions were minimised so that the safety and wellbeing of pupils was protected. West Lothian Council's

local policy was implemented within the framework of the national Scottish Government Guidance which stated that:

- The focus should be on how the real risks arising from school trips and outdoor learning activities were managed rather than a focus on paperwork; and
- There is a need for a proportionate and sensible approach for planning and organising off-site activities.

An audit of the application of the School Excursion Policy was carried out within West Lothian which found significant non-compliance. The Education Services Senior Management Team subsequently instructed that all schools must comply with the policy. In order to avoid any confusion about the paperwork necessary for audit purposes, a new section was inserted into the policy specifying the minimum requirements. The report went on to provide details of the documentation required.

The School Excursion Policy would ensure that schools take a sufficiently robust approach to planning and organising trips and excursions, while at the same time adopting a low bureaucracy, enabling approach to outdoor experience and off-site visits.

During the question and answer session members recommended that generic risk assessments be prepared to help schools in the risk assessment process. Members also recommended that the section on insurance be further clarified to provide more detail on when additional insurance was required. In addition, a recommendation was made to amend the sample code of conduct to clarify its application to pupils and parents.

The Panel was asked to consider the additions to the School Excursion Policy and recommend that the report be submitted to the Education Executive for approval.

#### Decision

- Noted the contents of the report;
- Agreed that the report be submitted to the Education Executive for approval subject to the amendments being made as recommended by the Panel.

## 6. STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2013/14

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) and Head of Schools with Education Support providing details of the performance of Education Services as set out in the Standards and Quality Report 2013/14.

The Head of Education (Quality Assurance) advised that the Standards and Quality Report 2013/14 set out the performance of the service, along

with the principal activities, key achievement and areas for improvement of the service.

The Head of Education (Quality Assurance) and Head of Schools with Education Support then responded to questions raised by members of the Panel and noted a typographical error on page 11 of the report.

The Panel was asked to note the contents of the report.

#### Decision

Noted the contents of the report.

### 7. THE USE OF THE INSIGHT TOOLKIT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND WEST Lothian's PERFORMANCE IN S4 NATIONAL QUALIFICATION IN 2014

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) providing details of the introduction of Insight, the new national tool for the assessment and analysis of National Qualifications.

The report explained that Insight has replaced STACs (Standard Tables and Charts) as the tool by which local authorities and schools would analyse attainment in the National Qualifications, taken by pupils in the Senior Phase (years S4 to S6). It was noted that STACs would continue to be available as a source of historical data. Insight went live on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2014. The aim of Insight was to support the key principles and purposes of Curriculum for Excellence by helping local authorities and schools to focus on understanding and reducing the gap between higher and lower attainers and on raising attainment for all. The report went on to outline the key features of Insight and its use within Quality Assurance Processes.

The Head of Education (Quality Assurance) advised the Panel that West Lothian schools were prepared for the use of Insight through the provision of training to key staff within each secondary school. Details were also provided on West Lothian's Performance in S4 National Qualifications 2014 using data from Insight.

In conclusion, the introduction of the new National Qualifications and the related analysis tool, Insight, provided both opportunities and challenges for schools and authorities. The National Qualifications would enable and encourage schools to provide curricula which would better meet the needs of the young people and prepare them for their roles in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Insight would continue to develop in order to capture attainment arising from a wider range of qualifications and learning programmes.

During the question and answer session the Parent Council Representative asked if training could be provided to Parent Councils on the use of the Insight tool.

The Panel was asked to note the contents of the report and the

implications for the use of and reporting on attainment data.

Decision

- Noted the contents of the report; and
- Noted the request for training to be provided to Parent Councils.

8. WORKPLAN 2014-15

The Panel considered the contents of the workplan (copies of which had been circulated) and the update provided by the Head of Schools with Education Support.

Decision

Noted the contents of the workplan and update provided.





West Lothian  
Council

**EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**AUDIT SCOTLAND REPORT ON SCHOOL EDUCATION**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF SCHOOLS WITH EDUCATION SUPPORT**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel with a summary of the School Education report published by Audit Scotland in June 2014.

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel note the key messages in the report and the elected members' self-assessment checklist supplementary to the report.

**C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I</b>	<b>Council Values</b>	Being honest, open and accountable Making the best use of our resources
<b>II</b>	<b>Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	The council has a statutory duty to consider Accounts Commission reports.
<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None.
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	Statutory Performance Indicators SOA Performance Indicators
<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.
<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	None

<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	Underway
<b>VIII Other consultations</b>	The Parent Forum and individual Parent Councils are consulted on an on-going basis in both secondary and primary attainment.

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

- D.1** The Accounts Commission audit assessed how efficiently and effectively councils are using their resources to maximise pupil achievement in schools. The audit examined how much councils spend on school education and what they spend it on, how effectively councils are driving forward improvements in pupil achievement, how efficiently councils are using their resources to maximise pupil achievement. The audit focused on primary and secondary school education in Scotland.

This audit provides an assessment of attainment over the last decade and identifies how effectively councils made improvements during this time.

### **D.2 The key messages in the Report**

- In 2012/13, councils spent £4.8 billion on education services, of which £3.8 billion was spent on primary and secondary education. Around two-thirds of this expenditure (68 per cent) was on staff costs. Councils' spending on education fell by five per cent in real terms between 2010/11 and 2012/13.
- Performance has improved against all ten of the attainment measures examined over the last decade. However, there is significant variation in attainment between individual councils, schools, and groups of pupils; and there is a considerable gap between Scotland and the top performing countries. Current measures at both national and council level focus on the attainment of secondary pupils at S4-S6 level. There are no comparable measures available at a council and national level on wider achievement, or the performance of pupils from P1-S3.
- Levels of deprivation have a large influence on attainment. Some schools have achieved better attainment results than their levels of deprivation would indicate, suggesting that the gap between the lowest and highest performing schools cannot be wholly attributed to different levels of deprivation. Closing the gap in performance between schools is likely to be critical to improving overall attainment levels.
- Councils that have made the most improvements have focused on areas such as developing leadership skills, and improving both teacher quality and systems for monitoring and tracking pupil data. Councils are starting to target resources to improve both attainment and wider achievement but there is scope to improve strategic planning and strengthen the role of elected members in holding education services to account.

### **D.3 The recommendations in the report**

Audit Scotland recommend that councils should;

- ensure they fully understand why levels of attainment vary between their schools and different groups of pupils
- develop and implement strategies to reduce the gaps in performance between the highest and lowest performing schools
- continue to work with the Scottish Government and Education Scotland to develop a suite of agreed performance measures which would provide an overall picture of educational attainment and achievement across Scotland
- review the sufficiency of information provided to education committees on attainment at S4-S6, pupil performance between P1-S3 and wider achievement. They should also ensure committees have the time and support to adequately challenge and hold to account education services
- develop more coordinated approaches to gathering and recording information on the range of wider achievement activities offered in schools, including the levels of pupil participation and the outcomes they achieve. This will help councils to scrutinise performance and ensure resources are being used as efficiently as possible
- ensure education strategic documents contain clear priorities and actions that set out what is to be achieved in the short, medium and long term. Performance management arrangements should monitor outcomes and report regularly on delivery against strategic objectives, such as raising attainment among the lowest performing pupils
- consistently use the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework to compare their performance against other councils, and share good practice to improve educational attainment and wider achievement
- fully assess the potential long-term impact on attainment and wider achievement of budget reductions
- monitor and act on the impact of revised working practices and staff reductions across all affected groups on staff wellbeing by, for example, monitoring sickness absence levels, and through specific questions in staff surveys.

### **D.4 West Lothian position in relation to the key messages in the report**

Audit Scotland note in the report that West Lothian Council is one of only two Local Authorities to increase spend on school education in real terms between 2010/11 and 2012/13. Spend in West Lothian on education in 2011/12 was £167m increasing to £168m in 2012/13.

Performance in West Lothian Schools has increased in most benchmark measures at a greater rate than that nationally over the 10 year period considered in the report

Comparison of National and West Lothian improvements and rates of improvement in the benchmark attainment measures in the National Performance Framework from 2003/04 to 2012/13.

	West Lothian				National			
	2004	2013	% Improvement	% rate of Improvement	2004	2013	Improvement	% rate of Improvement
English Level 3	96	98	2	2.1	94	97	3	3.2
Maths Level 3	95	98	3	3.2	93	96	3	3.2
Eng & Maths Level 3	94	97	3	3.2	91	95	4	4.4
5 at Level 3	94	97	3	3.2	91	95	4	4.4
5 at Level 4	78	84	6	7.7	77	82	5	6.5
% at level 5	36	40	4	11.1	35	39	4	11.4
1+ Level 6	36	50	14	38.9	39	49	10	25.6
3+ Level 6	21	29	8	38.1	23	29	6	26.1
5+ Level 6	9	15	6	66.7	9	14	5	55.6
1+ Level 7	11	18	7	63.6	12	17	5	41.7

The variation in performance between schools in national examinations (% gaining 5 awards at Level 5/Credit Standard Grade) in West Lothian is 29%. This places West Lothian in 12th position of the 32 Authorities where 1st position represents the least variance between schools.

There is no national performance benchmark for Primary school attainment. West Lothian is one of an 18 Authority consortium using the same standardised tests, this allows for some benchmarking at Primary stages 1, 3, 5 and 7 with a significant proportion of the national cohorts. Education Services extended standardised testing to all Primary stages in 2013/14. Audit Scotland draw particular attention to the West Lothian approach to standardised tests in the report.

West Lothian's average tariff score (points per qualification) for the lowest 20% of attaining pupils in S4 is the highest in our comparator group of Local Authorities. Over the period 2005 to 2013 the average tariff score (points per qualification) for S4 attainment increased by 44% in West Lothian compared to 56% for the comparator group.

The council strengthened governance and scrutiny of education performance through the establishment of the Education Quality Assurance Committee in November 2014.

## **D.5 Summary of current actions relevant to the recommendations in the report**

- The council approved the Raising Attainment Strategy in May 2012.
- Education Services established an Education Performance Team to improve the quality of comparative data to support a more robust and challenging programme of monitoring attainment
- Time-limited investment funding was used to establish a Raising Attainment Team. The team has supported schools in raising attainment in literacy through improved curricular continuity in transition from primary into secondary school and will focus on improving numeracy skills using the remaining funding in 2014.
- A programme of Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) of school performance was established in 2013 and the school level outcomes are reported to the Education Quality Assurance Committee. The VSEs report on the Key Quality Indicators used in the National Performance Framework.
- Attainment in national examinations and standardised tests is reported to Education PDSP
- Education Services Tracking, Monitoring and Reporting (TMR) management information package enables schools to gather and record information on the range of wider achievement activities offered in schools, including the levels of pupil participation and the outcomes they achieve. TMR has now been adopted by the national education management information service, the SEEMiS Group, and will be available to schools in all 32 Authorities.
- Education Services has one overarching educational strategy, to raise attainment. The Corporate Plan Priority 3 is to improving attainment and positive destinations for school children. The outcomes of this strategy, including raising attainment of the lowest performing pupils, are reported in the council's performance management system. In addition to school attainment reviews carried out by the service the performance of schools is considered separately by a Schools Review Panel, operating in a similar way to the WLAM Review Panel, in order to ensure that effective scrutiny of the performance and quality of school education can take place.
- The council has a strategic approach to financial planning to meet the challenges of funding restrictions and spending pressures. The aim is to maximise the achievement of positive outcomes, including improving educational attainment.
- The council's People Strategy recognises its' ability to achieve positive outcomes depends on the skills and commitment of its employees. The Employee Engagement Framework includes an annual survey designed to improve understanding of employees' needs and development. Absences are monitored by the service. The number of days lost per employee for teachers 2012/13 was 4.9. This was the lowest teacher absence rate of all 32 Authorities.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

West Lothian Council has a very good record in the efficient use of resources and improving attainment and positive destinations for young people. The corporate plan and education service management plan prioritise improved educational outcomes. The Raising Attainment Strategy commits the council to reduce the attainment gap in performance between and within schools. Improved governance and scrutiny arrangements are in place so that elected members can be more effective in their role of holding education services and schools accountable for securing improvements in performance.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Audit Scotland, School Education June 2014  
Audit Scotland Statutory Performance Indicators 2012/13

Appendices/Attachments: Accounts Commission, School Education, June 2014 – Elected members self-assessment checklist

Contact Person: James Cameron, Head of Schools with Education Support,

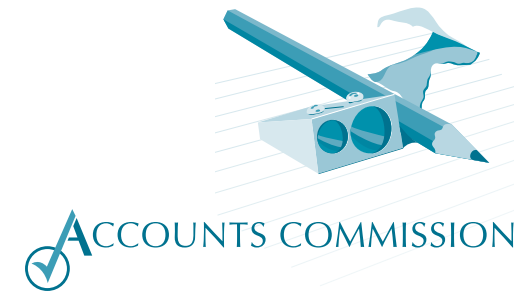
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James Cameron  
Head of Schools with Education Support


Date of meeting: 9 December 2014

# School education

## Self-assessment checklist for elected members



### Introduction

- 1.** The Accounts Commission published its national report, *School education*, on 19 June 2014. One of its key findings was that elected members could do more to scrutinise and challenge the performance of education services in delivering improved educational attainment and achievement.
- 2.** This self-assessment checklist is intended to support elected members to hold education services to account by setting out the key issues to be considered and asked of officers. While we recognise that the circumstances of individual councils are likely to be different, requiring specific questioning, we consider that the checklist captures the type of issues which are generic to every council.
- 3.** The checklist is likely to be of most use to members of committees with responsibility for education, although should be of general interest to all elected members. Elected members should consider each issue listed and decide which statement most accurately reflects their current situation. This approach will help enable them to identify what actions need to be taken in partnership with officers.
- 4.** Copies of the [national report \(PDF\)](#)  are available to download.

## Self-assessment checklist for elected members

The first set of questions are intended to allow elected members consider their understanding of the role of education services and their knowledge of the key issues affecting education in their council areas.

Questions for elected members to consider	Assessment				Further action required
	No action needed	No but action in hand	Yes but needs improving	Yes working well	
Do I have a good understanding of the council's education strategies and improvement plans, especially in relation to attainment and wider achievement?					
Do I have a good understanding of the changing education environment, including legislative changes and policy developments (such as Curriculum for Excellence), and how they affect my council?					
Do I have a good understanding of the impact of deprivation on educational attainment within my council? Do I know what other factors affect pupil performance in my council area and what the council is doing to address these?					
Do I have access to, and take up, appropriate education-related training and development opportunities?					



The second set of questions are intended to allow elected members to consider the planning and performance reporting of education services, and how they seek to learn from others.

Questions for elected members to consider	Assessment				Further action required
	No action needed	No but action in hand	Yes but needs improving	Yes working well	
Planning education services					
Does the council have a clear education strategy and improvement plan which clearly sets out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the most important priorities for improvement</li><li>specific actions to be taken to raise attainment levels</li><li>the intended outcomes for pupils and other stakeholders</li></ul>					
When considering future education budgets, is the committee with a remit for education provided with adequate information to allow it to consider the likely impact on attainment of proposals to increase or reduce education spend?					
Performance reporting					
Do I have access to, and take up, appropriate education-related training and development opportunities?					
Does the committee receive regular (at least annually) performance reports on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>pupil attainment during the senior phase (S4-S6) (ie, exam results)</li><li>pupil performance during the broad general education phase (P1-S3), for example standardised test results or the number of pupils meeting expected levels in literacy or numeracy through the CfE Framework</li><li>wider achievement, for example the types of awards and programmes being offered, including the level of participation and achievement?</li></ul>					
Cont.					

Questions for elected members to consider	Assessment				Further action required
	No action needed	No but action in hand	Yes but needs improving	Yes working well	
Do performance reports on pupils' attainment and wider achievement:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enable comparisons of performance to be made between individual schools and over time</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide commentary on performance against expectations and any resulting action to be taken?</li> </ul>					
Does the committee receive regular (at least annually) reports on education outcomes such as:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>progress against the council's own key performance measures for education</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>whether specific strategies and interventions to raise attainment and achievement have succeeded</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>whether wider achievement awards and programmes add value in terms of developing pupils skills for living and working in the wider world?</li> </ul>					
<b>Learning from others</b>					
Does the council make best use of the performance information available through SOLACE Benchmarking Framework to understand variation in practice and share learning?					
Does the council seek to share best practice and learn from others, for example are they involved in the School Improvement Partnership Programme?					



## **EDUCATION EXECUTIVE**

### **PRIMARY SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION – KIRKNEWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

#### **REPORT BY HEAD OF SCHOOLS WITH EDUCATION SUPPORT**

##### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval to decant the pupils at Kirknewton Primary School for the academic year 2015/16 to East Calder Primary School, in order to facilitate the refurbishment of the school building.

##### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

The Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

1. Note the options for decant contained within this report for consideration at Education Executive.

##### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	Education (Scotland) Act 1980 Standard's in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	The need to undertake an extension at the school and enter into a legal agreement for such will mean that the related planning application will not meet the statutory performance target
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	None
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Capital planned maintenance budget – Kirknewton Primary School - £ 1.35m (estimated transportation costs - £138K) – 2014/15 – 2016/17.

	Kirknewton Changing Pavilion - £352K – 2016/17.
<b>VII Consideration at Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	None
<b>VII Other consultations</b>	Consultations to be held with the Parent Councils, Head teachers, and Community Councils.

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D.1 Background**

Kirknewton Primary School was originally built in 1924 and has been extended since that date to provide additional class bases and a 30/30 nursery. The school is currently a seven class organisation (207 pupils) with a 30/30 nursery class.

The aim of the project to refurbish the school building at Kirknewton Primary School is to ensure that the building continues to meet with statutory requirements. The project was approved within the Council's five year capital programme in January 2012 for financial year 2016/17.

The scope of works agreed within the project include upgrade to the heating system, full re-wiring, asbestos removal and some internal re-configuration to the current accommodation.

Given the age of the building and the extent of the works required, it will be necessary to decant the pupils from Kirknewton Primary School for an academic year from August 2015 to enable the project to be completed.

### **D.2 Decant Proposals**

To enable the refurbishment of the Kirknewton Primary School building to take place the pupils and staff will require to be decanted. This is due to the extent/intrusive nature of the works. In addition the constraints with the current school site means it is not possible to provide temporary accommodation to decant into on the school site as the contractors will utilise the limited space for a site compound.

The proposal is that pupils will be transported to East Calder Primary School which currently has sufficient surplus accommodation for pupils (P1-P7) from Kirknewton. Separate temporary accommodation for the nursery pupils will be provided at the local recreation park in Kirknewton, as it would not be feasible to provide transportation for such young children. The accommodation at the park could potentially be utilised in the future as a changing pavilion.

East Calder Primary School is currently a 10 class organisation (243 pupils) with a 40/30 nursery (which is provided in a separate building on the school site). A project to provide new nursery accommodation was approved in 2013 and the project will be completed in October 2015.

The East Calder Primary School building has seven spare class bases which could be used to accommodate pupils from Kirknewton Primary School and once the new nursery accommodation is completed the old nursery building maybe retained to provide additional general purposes space for the duration of the decant period only.

### **D.3 Transport**

Transportation will be provided to take pupils from Kirknewton to East Calder each day, escorted by school support staff. The pick up and drop off points at each location will be agreed with both schools and transportation, along with a full risk assessment.

As school transport is currently provided from the village of Kirknewton for pupils attending Balerno High School, the safe sites currently used for pick/drop off could also be utilised for transportation to/from East Calder, as they would be thirty minutes apart. An additional pick/drop off point has also been identified close to Kirknewton Primary School.

Kirknewton pupils would access East Calder Primary School from a drop off point on Langton Road which has direct pedestrian access to the school from the pavement, so that pupils do not require to be escorted across a main road.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

In order to progress the refurbishment works required at Kirknewton Primary School building it is necessary to decant the pupils to East Calder Primary School for the academic year from August 2015.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

None

Appendices/Attachments: None

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James Cameron,  
**Head of Schools with Education Support**

9 December 2014





**EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE – PLAN TO INCREASE FLEXIBLE PROVISION**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION SUPPORT**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel of the proposed Plan to Increase the Flexibility of Pre-School Provision, made in terms of Section 50 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

The panel are asked to recommend that the Education Executive endorse the further development of the proposed Plan to Increase the Flexibility of Pre-school Provision.

**C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and statutory guidance.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	The Plan to Increase the Flexibility of Pre-school Provision has the potential to increase the percentage of children placed within Council provision.
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	None
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	The pilot proposed in the Plan to Increase the Flexibility of Pre-School Provision can be delivered within existing resources.
<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	Underway

## **VIII Other consultations**

Working Group comprising pre-school professionals and representative of Financial Management Unit.  
Detailed discussion with HR and TUs on potential implementation has yet to take place.

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **Background – Statute and Guidance**

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires local authorities to secure 600 hours of pre-school provision (early learning and childcare) for each eligible young child residing in its area.

Under section 52 of the Act, education authorities must have regard to the desirability of ensuring that the method by which it makes early learning and childcare provision available is flexible enough to allow parents an appropriate degree of choice when deciding how to access the service.

The Act envisages that education authorities will provide patterns of hours of early learning and childcare provision which allow a degree of choice for parents to support their patterns and needs. This range should be established through consultation with representative populations of parents.

The Act recognises that the introduction of flexibility and choice, following consultation, will require significant reconfiguration of services by education authorities, and that this will be best achieved through year on year incremental change. It is expected that following the introduction of 600 hours of pre-school provision (early learning and childcare) in August 2014, further improvements to flexibility and choice are built up.

The statutory guidance associated with the Act states that appropriate choice is intended to be around models, and not individual providers.

### **Consultation**

The Education Executive, at its meeting of 4 February 2014, considered the outcome of the first consultation undertaken under the terms of Section 50 the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

The parents/carers of all known children eligible to be in pre-school provision in school year 2014/15 were invited to complete a survey in order to determine their priorities for the future of pre-school provision. A total of 525 responses were received. Parents/carers were asked to indicate how they would like to see nursery made more flexible in future. 307 parents/carers took advantage of this opportunity.

53 parents/carers (17% of those answering this question) would like to see attendance condensed into 2.5 full days. 27 of the parents making this suggestion were currently using partner providers for over 15 hours per week, indicating that this proposal could offer the opportunity to meet the needs of those currently choosing partner providers within Council provision. This proposal would be difficult to offer within the asymmetric week, however. As two 2.5 day sessions could not be offered within the 4.5 days available. This would reduce the use that could be made of available physical capacity.



Other significant responses to the question regarding increased flexibility included 36 parents/carers (12% of those answering this question) who stated that they would like extended access to partner providers, 28 parents/carers (9% of those answering the question) who favoured an extension of wraparound care, and 20 parents/carers (7% of those answering the question) who stated that they would wish to see childcare provided over the school holidays.

In addition, 14 parents/carers (6% of those answering the question) favoured extending the availability of part time places or shared places.

The Education Executive, at its meeting of 5 February 2014, agreed to consider the proposals to increase flexibility in future years, within available resources including annual incremental increases in funding envisaged by the Statutory Guidance accompanying the Act.

The proposal that follows is in line with the desire to see condensed attendance, the desire to see an extension of wraparound care, and the desire to see childcare in the school holidays. It is intended to provide an alternative to an increase in the number of partner provider places. As such it is based firmly on outcome of the consultation undertaken in terms of Section 50 the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Action has already been taken to extend availability of part-time places within available resources in the August 2014 and January 2015 pre-school intakes.

The next consultation in terms of Section 50 the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 will take place in the second half of 2015.

### **Plan to Increase Flexibility in Pre-School Provision.**

It is planned to increase flexibility and choice, following consultation, in school year 2015/16 by the introduction of a pilot provision at four establishments (Bonnytown Nursery, Linlithgow, Linlithgow Primary School Nursery Class, Glenvue Nursery, Dedridge and Knightsridge Early Years Centre) based on providing 600 hours of early learning and childcare across two days with attached wraparound care, so that the provision would be available from 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Thursday.

The provision of the 600 hours of early learning and childcare across two days avoids the reduction in capacity that would arise from providing it across 2.5 days.

The planned provision would consist of two 8 hour sessions of early learning and childcare lasting from 8.00am to 4.00pm, with the option of purchasing wraparound care from 4.00pm to 6.00pm. Parents be given the option of purchasing a packed lunch for £1.85 per day, or provide their own packed lunch, as is current practice in the Council's wraparound care service.

The planned provision would be delivered as follows:-

8am to 8.45am – Breakfast – Flexible Early Learning and Childcare

8.45am to 11.39am - Core Time

11.39am to 12.09am – Lunch – Flexible Early Learning and Childcare

12.09pm to 3.30pm – Core Time

3.30pm to 4pm – Flexible Early Learning and Childcare

This pattern of delivery provides for co-ordination of start and finish times with primary school hours. This pattern of delivery also minimises the need to alter existing staff contracts and working patterns.

In this planned provision core time does at times fall out with current teacher hours, with the result that children placed in this provision will receive less direct teacher contact than that provided by the current five morning or four afternoon model.

Wraparound provision could be made during school holidays subject to financial viability based on demand.

### **Staffing and Financial Issues**

The pilot provision will offer places above current levels of provision, as it is anticipated that it will be most attractive to parents who currently place their children in partner provider or other private nurseries.

The supervision ratio of the 8 hour sessions would remain 1:10 as is currently the case in pre-school provision. The supervision ratio for the additional wraparound care available for purchase by parents would be 1:8 as is currently the case in the Council's wraparound care service.

Additional staffing required, over and above that required by the current five morning or four afternoon model would be:-

- 2 pupil support workers employed 7.45am to 8.15am to provide the 1:10 supervision ratio before Nursery Nurses and Teachers arrived, and to allow set up in time for 8.00am opening.
- 2 pupil support workers employed for 1 hour at lunchtime, although the ability to make flexible use of existing staff and manage their time off the floor may reduce this requirement to 1 pupil support worker.
- Staff to provide wraparound care from 4.00pm (or 3.54pm) to 6.00pm, charged for on a cost recovery basis. The staff should include a 'team leader' post to take responsibility for the provision in the absence of the Headteacher, as is current practice in the Council's wraparound care service. .

It should be noted that if the planned provision is requested by, or offered to, children who would otherwise be placed at a partner provider establishment, a saving of £2154 per child would be achieved to offset any increases in cost.

It would be possible to offer Nursery Nurses the opportunity to work compressed hours over 4 days, with a resulting reduction in the additional staff hours required by the model.

### **Further Increases to Flexible Provision**

Dependant on an evaluation of the pilot, this model could be further extended to some other establishments within West Lothian.

Additional/future flexibility could include offering any vacant places in the 4-6pm wraparound care to nursery children in the afternoon session and/or P1-3 children at appropriate establishments.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

The proposed Plan to Increase Flexible Provision is in line Statutory Guidance, and addresses the issues raised in the consultation in terms of Section 50 the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Report to Education Executive 4 February 2014.

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Early Learning and Childcare Statutory Guidance.

Appendices/Attachments: None

Contact Person: Andrew Sneddon, Customer and Performance Manager

James Cameron, Head of Schools with Education Support

Date of meeting: 9 December 2014





**EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUNTINY PANEL**

**STUDY SUPPORT IN WEST LOTHIAN**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (QUALITY ASSURANCE)**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To detail the range of Study Support activities in West Lothian which support young peoples' attainment and achievement and which provide them with greater opportunities to move on to positive destinations once they leave school.

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Panel notes the contents of the report.

**C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; Being honest, open and accountable; Developing employees; Making best use of our resources; Working in partnership
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	None
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	HMI quality indicators are used to measure the performance of schools
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	Positive inspection reports are used as a key outcome measure in the Single Outcome Agreement. Positive is measured by satisfactory or better in the quality indicators used by Education Scotland.
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	West Lothian Council Financial
<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	Yes
<b>VIII Other consultations</b>	None

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D.1 Background**

In the last few years West Lothian secondary schools have carried out a wide range of Study Support activities. The purpose of these activities is to improve young people's motivation, build their self-esteem and help them to become more effective learners. Above all it aims to raise attainment and achievement.

### **D.2 Study Support Activities**

The Study Support activities delivered in West Lothian secondary schools offer new opportunities for learning and build on existing classroom activities. Perhaps the greatest testament to the activities is the response of the pupils. They value the activities and are attending them in greater numbers. The benefit of this is that it enhances their experience of school and has a positive impact on their approach to learning. For those pupils who attend Masterclass programmes in Higher English and Higher Mathematics there is a positive effect on their attainment.(Appendix 1 ' Study Support Masterclass Programme 2013 – 2104')

#### **Study Support – Masterclass Programme. 2013 – 2014**

The Study Support Masterclass Programme involved the following activities :

- Higher Mathematics tutorial sessions were offered in all West Lothian secondary school and took place on Friday afternoons from January 2014 to the final examination May 2014. The average weekly attendance was 240 pupils. A final revision day took place on Saturday 3 May 2014 and was attended by nearly 200 pupils
- Higher English Masterclass tutorial sessions took place on alternate Fridays in all West Lothian secondary schools between December 2013 and to the final examination in May 2014. The average weekly attendance was 225 pupils.
- A Higher English Conference took place on Friday 4 April 2014. The attendance was 130 pupils

At Heriot Watt University there was a one day session for Higher French on Saturday 8 March 2014. 40 pupils attended from West Lothian. Revision sessions in Higher Chemistry (attendance 70 pupils) and Higher Physics (attendance 66 pupils) were offered on Friday 9 May 2014 and Friday 16 May 2014 . Higher Biology (attendance 75 pupils) was offered on Saturday 10 May 2014. A Higher History Conference took place on the afternoon on Friday 7 March 2014. A total of 200 pupils were in attendance.

In July 2014, Higher Education Summer Schools were held in Edinburgh to encourage the new S5/6 groups whose families have not had a history of attending university to experience a week long summer school. Pupils who attended were given the opportunity to experience what it is to study at a university.

- Kickstart Edinburgh (Organised by University of Edinburgh – pupils attended activities in Napier University, Queen Margaret University and University of Edinburgh). On average 45 pupils attend each year.
- Brighter Watts (Heriot Watt University) this programme is targeted at pupils who have an interest in following careers in science, technology and computing. On average 20 pupils attend each year.

### D.3 Impact of Study Support

There was a significant impact of the Study Support programme on individual school results. In almost all schools, the average pass rate of those pupils from a particular school who studied Higher Maths and Higher English at the Study Support Masterclasses was higher than the average for the whole school cohort. In Higher Maths, the average pass rate of the school cohorts was 74.3% whilst the average for pupils attending Masterclasses was 80.9%. In English, the figures were 76.1% and 84.6% respectively (see table below).

School	Maths school cohort	Maths Masterclass cohort		English school cohort	English Masterclass cohort
1	53.1	58.3		71.4	83.3
2	74.1	78.6		74.2	90
3	79.5	88.2		79.3	78.9
4	78.3	90.9		71.8	78.9
5	70.7	93.3		93.9	100
6	67.4	67.3		51.7	70
7	95.7	89.7		81.9	93
8	75	75		83.6	77.8
9	63.2	84.6		77.2	100
10	80.8	80.3		73	73.2
11	79.2	84.2		78.6	85.7
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>80.9</b>		<b>76.1</b>	<b>84.6</b>

## E. CONCLUSION

In session 2013 – 2014 Study Support activities have made a positive impact on:.

- Raising attainment in National Examinations.
- Enhancing the ability to learn and develop higher order thinking skills.
- Accessing knowledge and expertise of others e.g. Homework clubs, Masterclasses.
- Providing opportunities for pupils whose parents/carers have not attended Higher Education with weeklong attendance at University Summer School.

West Lothian Materclasses will continue in session 2014/15.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

None

Appendices/Attachments: Study Support Masterclass Programme 2013 – 2014

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Tel 01506 281625

Elaine Cook, Head of Education (Quality Assurance).

Date of meeting: 9 December 2014



## Study Support Masterclass Programme 2013 – 2014

Below are details of the Study Support Masterclass Programme for session 2013 -2014.

- On Friday afternoons a number of Higher Mathematics tutorial sessions were offered in all West Lothian Secondary Schools (see separate sheet). These ran from the end of January 2014 until the final exam in May 2014. Average weekly attendance was 240 pupils.  
A final revision day took place on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at ICHS- nearly 200 students took part in this event.
- On alternate Friday afternoons Higher English tutorial sessions were also offered in all West Lothian Secondary Schools between December 2013 and the final exam in May 2014 ( see separate sheet ). The average weekly attendance for these tutorials was 225.
- Inveralmond Community High School hosted a Higher English Conference on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014- 130 pupils were in attendance.
- A final revision day was held at The James Young High School on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April – 230 pupils attended the session.
- At Heriot Watt University there was a one day session for Higher French on Saturday 8th March 2014. 40 pupils participated in this event.
- Revision sessions in Higher Chemistry and Higher Physics were offered on Friday 9th May and Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014 respectively in Armadale Academy and Higher Biology on Saturday 10th May 2014 in Inveralmond Community High School. The attendance was 70, 66 and 75 students respectively.
- Deans Community High School hosted a Higher History conference on the afternoon of Friday 7th March 2014 . 200 pupils were in attendance.





**EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW HIGHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (QUALITY ASSURANCE)**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel of the implementation of the new Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Higher courses in West Lothian Secondary Schools at the start of Session 2014/2015 and the support being given to teaching staff by the Development postholders.

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel note the ongoing support being given to West Lothian secondary schools to implement the new SQA Higher courses.

**C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I</b>	<b>Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
<b>II</b>	<b>Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	None
<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	Improved SQA Examination Results  Improved school leavers positive destinations statistics
<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	The raising of the number of young people entering and sustaining a positive destination on leaving school
<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Within existing resources

<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	Underway
<b>VIII Other consultations</b>	None

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D.1 Background**

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) introduced the new Higher Courses for use in schools and other educational establishments starting in Session 2014/2015 and allowed for an overlapping period of this Session where 'old' and 'new' Highers would run simultaneously. Course outlines and guidance were supplied by the SQA but the development of course materials, notes, exam-type questions and other teaching materials were left to individual schools and class teachers to adapt or create as appropriate

### **D.2 Implementation in West Lothian**

The majority of subjects in all West Lothian Schools, with the exception of Bathgate Academy, where pupils sat Standard Grade and Intermediate exams in S4 will continue with the appropriate progression to the 'old' Higher, are being offered as 'new' Highers. There are some subjects where, due to class composition, staffing issues or where new Higher specifications were particularly late or subject to changes after initial publication, the 'old' Higher is being continued this session but the new Higher will supersede this course in 2015/2016.

### **D.3 Supporting the Implementation of the New Highers**

Education Services have now appointed Development Postholders, initially for one school session, in 23 subject areas. These are line-managed by the Chair of the Secondary Timetablers' and Senior Attainment Raising Committee (TASAR). Each postholder has built up a network of colleagues who they meet with, on average, every 4 weeks to discuss implementation strategies. They also share materials, develop new materials and exam-type questions and seek clarification on points of contention within the courses.

The postholders and the Chair of TASAR meet every 6 weeks to review progress, deal with issues and clarify questions with the SQA Curriculum Support Manager for West Lothian. They also examine next steps regarding continuing to strive for increased attainment, achievement and quality assurance and to discuss areas of development, such as expansion of the 'Masterclass' Programme.

### **D.4 Use of the additional In-Service Day authorised by the Scottish Government**

Subject specific in-service opportunities were offered in 22 of the 23 subject areas on 28 October, held in 9 establishments across the authority and organised and led by the Development Postholders. These focused on Highers and on National 5 and progression to Higher. Many of these meetings had SQA representatives in attendance, speaking to or discussing with West Lothian teaching staff. Over 560 staff attended these morning sessions and, although formal feedback is still to be collected and collated, the indications are that these sessions were well received and were considered to be very useful and beneficial. A request to Secondary Head Teachers that the morning of the October 2015 In-Service Day be arranged along similar lines has already been approved.

## **D.5 Links with the SQA**

The Chair of TASAR has established an SQA Coordinators' Committee with at least one representative from each Secondary School and West Lothian Behaviour Outreach Service (Burnhouse) attending along with the SQA Curriculum for Excellence Support Manager for West Lothian and the SQA Regional Manager (Business Development and Customer Support). This group met on a monthly basis from October to June last session and followed up the external verification requests for materials from schools to the SQA with questions and comments schools had about course outlines and verification results. This was seen as a major new initiative and no other local authority has established such a group. It is being seen as a model of good practice which other authorities are looking to replicate. These meetings have commenced again this year and will follow a similar pattern, ensuring consistency of approach and allowing for the sharing of experiences and outcomes.

The Chair of TASAR now represents West Lothian Educational Services at SQA briefings and events.

## **D.6 Next Steps**

Development Postholders will continue to work with colleagues in their subject disciplines to assist in ensuring that all staff delivering the new SQA Higher courses are fully conversant with the revised standards, that teaching materials produced are of the highest quality, that resources are shared and used to best effect and that there is a constant and sustained focus on raising attainment.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Progress has been made within schools and across the authority to introduce the new SQA Higher courses. Teaching staff are being supported by initiatives to help ensure that these courses meet the required standards and allow pupils to achieve and attain to the best of their ability. Further work, however, is required to support courses, develop materials and resources and to maintain a firm focus on raising attainment.

This will be addressed through continuing work with SQA colleagues, using West Lothian staff who have undergone training as SQA verifiers, markers and setters and utilising resources to provide any additional in-service training and development will be used to assist with raising attainment at Higher Grade in all West Lothian secondary schools.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

None

Appendices/Attachments: None

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**Elaine Cook, Head of Education (Quality Assurance)**

Date: 9 December 2014





## **EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **SUPPORT FOR PLAYGROUPS ACROSS WEST LoTHIAN**

#### **REPORT BY HEAD OF SCHOOLS WITH EDUCATION SUPPORT**

#### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report provides an update to the report agreed at Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on 16 April 2013 in relation to the development of a new model of management for playgroups.

#### **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

1. Note the progress made in the implementation of the new arrangements.
2. Note the progress made in relation to the provision of places for eligible two year olds within a playgroup setting.

#### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I.</b>	<b>Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; Being honest, open and accountable; Providing equality of opportunities; Developing employees; Making best use of our resources Working in partnership.
<b>II</b>	<b>Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.
<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	n/a
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance indicators</b>	n/a
<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed;
<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Budget provision for playgroups in 2014/2015 is £55,000 and is currently allocated proportionately to all registered playgroups in West Lothian that meet set criteria regarding their governance.

£50,000 was allocated in financial year 2013/2014 from Early Years Change Fund to support the

implementation of the new model.

Playgroups in the main utilise council owned premises at no fee.

**VII Consideration at PDSP**

Underway.

**VIII Other Consultations**

Extensive consultation on the new model took place through a representative group of playgroup committee members from Sept 2011 to June 2012.

**D. TERMS OF REPORT**

**D.1 Background**

The preferred approach for playgroups, after consultation with playgroup committees, was to create a single organisation which will take responsibility for the governance and management of all playgroups. This model relieves parents from the onerous responsibility and liabilities of committee membership.

The first step in this process was the development of Bathgate Playgroup to become a lead organisation known as Community Playgroups. This lead organisation is managed by an Executive Board and has strengthened the relationship between the local authority, parents/carers and the third sector to deliver flexible playgroup services within local communities. The Executive Board of Community Playgroups will lead and manage all the playgroup services across West Lothian who wish to become part of the new model.

Community Playgroups (Charity Number : SC012049) was formed in April 2013 and are now a Scottish Registered Charitable Organisation (SCIO) which is a new form of legal entity introduced by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) in April 2011.

**D.2 Progress to date**

Over the last eighteen months, Community Playgroups have successfully transferred three playgroups into the organisation – Armadale, Livingston Village and West Calder. This has taken considerable time and resources to achieve, particularly as the playgroups based in Armadale and West Calder have required to be re-established following closure of the previous groups.

The setting based in Armadale Community Centre has now been successfully re-registered with the Care Inspectorate and offer four sessions per week. The setting based in West Calder Community Centre is currently offering taster sessions two days per week and will be seeking registration with the Care Inspectorate in 2015.

The Council have supported Community Playgroups with the above, utilising the funding allocated from the Early Years Change Fund along with support from officers. Challenges have included recruitment of staff, promoting the group, upgrading premises to meet Care Inspectorate standards.

Community Playgroups are currently in discussion with two other playgroups with the aim for the groups to join the organisation in 2015 and are also considering how to best develop a setting in the Boghall area of Bathgate.



### **D.3 Eligible 2 Year Olds**

In January 2014, Scottish Government announced that there will be provision for secondary legislation in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act for two year olds in 'workless' households from August 2014. This entitles all two year old children living in eligible households to 600 hours of early learning and childcare from the start of the forthcoming term following their second birthday. Provision of early learning and childcare for these children has two aims – to aid child development and also to assist parents to access employment.

Should the parents/carers of two year olds from eligible households apply for places, the anticipated intakes (70%) across West Lothian are expected to be around 136 in August 2014, 91 in January 2015 and 45 in April 2015 – total 272.

An application procedure has been put in place which asks the parents/carers to identify the area or areas in West Lothian where they want to receive their 600 hours provision. They are asked whether they would prefer provision at a Childminder, Council Nursery, or Playgroup/Other Provider where places are available. Parents/carers have been advised that not every option will be available in every area of the Council, and that they should therefore provide more than one choice.

To date 110 applications have been received by Education Services' Pupil Placement Section based in the Civic Centre (80% of those expected to be eligible from August – December 2014).

46 places have been granted to date, with 25 places granted with playgroups. 15 places granted in West Lothian Council run establishments and 6 places have been granted with local childminders. A further 14 applications have been received requesting places at a playgroup with the applications awaiting proof of eligibility to be provided to enable the place to be granted.

### **D.4 Funding**

Playgroups currently receive grant support of £55,000 per annum through the Voluntary Organisation Budget which is shared out on a proportionate basis to the individual playgroups.

It was previously proposed that this grant be directed to support the delivery of playgroups across West Lothian through the lead organisation, Community Playgroups, to distribute the grant appropriately. However, until Community Playgroups have grown to an entity covering at least six sites the allocation of funding will continue to be allocated by officers as indicated above.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Playgroups recognise that if changes are not made at this time, many of the current playgroups in operation may close in two to five years due to a variety of regulatory, governance and financial pressures placed upon parent committees.

The new model strengthens governance and viability and provide greater universal accessibility to early learning and play experiences. It will enable these services to be delivered by Third Sector organisations to provide targeted early years intervention and improved outcomes for children.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Education PDSP Report – Playgroup Provision 16 November 2010  
Education PDSP Report – Playgroup Update 25 February 2011  
Education PDSP Report – Playgroup Update 16 April 2013

Community Playgroups Business Plan  
Community Playgroups Transition Plan  
Community Playgroups Transition Summary

Appendices/Attachments: None

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James Cameron, Head of Schools with Education Support

Date: 9 December 2014

## EDUCATION PDSP WORKPLAN 2014-15

Title	Purpose	Lead Officer	Frequency	PDSP	Referral to Education Executive
Raising Attainment – Study Support	To inform members of Study Support provided in schools to held raise attainment	Elaine Cook	One Off	09/12/2014	No
Playgroup Update	To inform members on Playgroup situation in West Lothian	Donna Adam	One Off	09/12/2014	No
Implementation of the New Highers	To update members on the implementation of the New Highers	Elaine Cook	One off	09/12/2014	No
Audit Scotland Report on School Education	To inform members of the recommendations provided in the Audit Scotland Report on School Education	James Cameron	One Off	09/12/2014	No
Kirknewton Refurbishment arrangements	To inform members of proposal for education provision continuity during the refurbishment of Kirknewton PS	Donna Adam	One Off	09/12/2014	16/12/2014
Early Learning and Childcare – Plan to increase flexible provision	To inform members of the proposed plan to increase flexibility in Pre-school Provision.	James Cameron	One Off	09/12/2014	16/12/2014
Falla Hill – Tobacco DVD presentation plus report to accompany presentation	To provide members with a presentation by award winning Falla Hill pupils	James Cameron	One Off	n/a	16/12/2014
WCHS new build (from HoS P&ED)	To inform members of the proposed new building to replace West Calder High School	Craig McCorriston	One Off	n/a	16/12/2014
Attainment of Looked After Children	To update members on attainment achieved by Looked After children	John Tease	Yearly	03/02/2015	No
Base School Forecasts – Update	To inform members as per PDSP 25/02/14 Action Note	David McKinney	One off	03/02/2015	24/03/2015
School Transport Policy	To inform members of proposed changes to the School Transport policy	Andrew Sneddon	One Off	03/02/2015	24/03/2015
Attendance Policy	To inform members of proposed changes to the Attendance Policy	Stuart Forrester	One Off	03/02/2015	24/03/2015
Session Dates 2016-17	To inform members of planned session dates for 2016-17	Andrew Sneddon	Yearly	17/03/2015	24/03/2015
Medication In Schools Policy	To seek approval for changes to the Policy Document	Alison Raeburn	One Off	April/May 2015	Yes

Title	Purpose	Lead Officer	Frequency	PDSP	Referral to Education Executive
Education Support for Looked After Children	To inform members on Education Support for Looked after Children	Alan Millar	One off	TBC 2015 (awaiting ES update)	
Work Experience Pilot - Evaluation	To update members on an evaluation of the Work Experience Pilot	Michelle Robertson	One Off	TBC 2015	
Wood report recommendations update	To update members on the joint planning to implement Wood report recommendations	Paul Durkin	One Off	TBC 2015	
Primary Accommodation – Bathgate	To inform members of need for increased primary capacity in Bathgate	James Cameron	One Off	TBC 2015	
Nurture Groups	To update members on the nurturing framework	Jennyfer McNiven	One Off	TBC 2015	