



West Lothian  
Council

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

West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
LIVINGSTON  
EH54 6FF

11 May 2016

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 17 May 2016 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 Tuesday 22 March 2016 (herewith).
5. Supporting Children with Personal Care Needs - Report by Head of Education (Development) (herewith)
6. School Session Dates 2017/18 - Report by Head of Education (Development) (herewith)
7. Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs - Report by Head of Education (Quality Assurance) (herewith)
8. Parental Engagement Framework - Report by Head of Education (Quality Assurance) (herewith)

DATA LABEL: Public

9. Home Education Policy - Report by Head of Education (Quality Assurance) (herewith)
10. Timetable of Meetings 2016-2017 (herewith)
11. Workplan 2015-16 (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 22 MARCH 2016.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), David Dodds, Stuart Borrowman, John McGinty, Andrew Miller and Jim Walker; Appointed Representatives John MacKinnon, Lynne McEwen, Myra Macpherson and Margaret Russell.

Apologies – Appointed Representative Elsie Aitken and Parent Council Representative Eric Lumsden.

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 February 2016 as being a correct record. The Chair thereafter signed the minute.

3. SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF SELF-HARM

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Quality Assurance) providing details of the multi-agency work carried out to develop guidance for staff working with children and young people who self-harmed. A copy of the Supporting Children and Young People at Risk of Self-Harm: West Lothian Multi-Agency Guidance was attached as an appendix to the report. The document provides a succinct, accessible and user friendly guide for professionals working across a range of professions to assist them in their work with children and young people for whom self-harm was a concern.

The report advised that in response to the growing concerns raised by professional groups working with children and young people in the area who self-harmed, the Health Improvement Team provided general awareness raising training. As part of the development of the training it was identified that there was a potential gap in provision of more detailed guidance as a follow-up to the awareness raising training and as self-harm was the second highest reason for referral to the multi-agency Mental Health/Mental Well Being Screening Group in 2015 it was agreed that a multi-agency planning group be established to consider how best to further support professional groups.

The Principal Educational Psychologist advised the Panel that the multi-agency working group developed a document to complement the training and provide additional support to professionals working with children and

young people who self-harmed and/or who were at risk of self-harming behaviours. The document was written to be generic across service areas and had some specific guidance for how it could be used to support staff working in West Lothian schools. The training to support the document was also adapted to include colleagues from health and social policy.

The Panel was advised that the launch event for the document was planned to be held on 27 April 2016 at Howden Park Centre. The document was designed to be used as part of a wider training strategy and as part of the development of wider support mechanisms within organisations to ensure greater support for staff as well as pupils.

The Panel was asked to note the contents of the guidance and the plans for training and development work across multi-agency teams.

#### Decision

Noted the contents of the report.

#### 4. NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Heads of Education advising that the National Improvement Framework was launched by the Scottish Government on 6 January 2016. Reports on the draft and final Framework were considered by the Education PDSP at previous meetings held and it was agreed that further reports would be considered when more information was available, particularly in relation to assessment and reporting arrangements.

An Interim Framework Report of collated assessment data provided by most local authorities was published by the Scottish Government which provided a national picture of recorded attainment from early years to the end of the Broad General Education. Local authorities also provided information on their current practice for recording teacher judgements on pupils' achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels in reading, writing and numeracy.

The Head of Education (Quality Assurance) advised the Panel that the Scottish Government would collect data in August 2016 on Teacher Professional Judgement on attainment in CfE levels for P1, P4, P7 and S3 pupils from all primary, secondary and special schools. Education Services gathers assessment data in all primary stages and in secondary 2 by using on-line adaptive tests supplied by the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring's (CEM) Performance Indicators. Adaptive testing forms part of this quality assurance process and it was recommended that this should remain in place for all primary stages and secondary year 2 for school year 2016/17.

The Panel was asked to:

- Note the update and note that further reports would be submitted as more information became available; and

- Recommend to Education Executive that schools continue to administer adaptive tests in school year 2016/17.

Decision

Noted the contents of the report and agreed that a report be forwarded to the Education Executive for approval.

5. WORKPLAN

The Panel considered the contents of the workplan (copies of which had been circulated).

Decision

Noted the contents of the workplan.





**EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH PERSONAL CARE NEEDS**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (DEVELOPMENT)**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform members of proposed changes to the Supporting Children with Personal Care Needs Policy and Procedure.

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

To recommend to the Education Executive approval of the revised Supporting Children with Personal Care Needs Policy and Procedure.

**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>	The revised Supporting Children with Personal Care Needs Policy and Procedure is consistent with Child Protection procedures.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	None
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	None
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	None
<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	Underway
<b>VIII Other consultations</b>	Service Child Protection Officer; Development Officers – Early Years

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

Staff working in early years setting have raised with the council, through their trades union representatives, the perceived risk of complaint where they undertook personal care tasks on an individual basis.

In order to reassure staff, and to provide an appropriate balance of care to both staff and pupils, a review of the existing Supporting Children with Personal Care Needs Policy and Procedure was undertaken.

Two new paragraphs were inserted as follows:-

- Within agreed staffing levels of early learning and childcare establishments, and in order to maintain adequate supervision of other children, it is not expected that two members of staff leave the floor of the establishment. The staff member must inform colleagues that he/she is going to change a child, and where reasonably practicable there should be another member of staff available with earshot.
- Provision of personal care may give rise to complaint against a member of staff. In all circumstances, the matter must be treated seriously and the response must be prompt. All allegations against employees must be dealt with transparently but with considerable sensitivity to the management of information. It is important that the employee is treated fairly and that his/her rights are respected during the investigative process. Following robust procedures will afford maximum protection to both children and staff.

These paragraphs are consistent with Child protection procedures, and are also intended to provide reassurance to parents and staff that robust procedures will afford maximum protection to both children and staff.

The opportunity was taken to review and revise other content in the policy and procedure in line with developing local best practice and national guidance.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Members are asked to approve the revised policy and procedure in order to provide reassurance to parents and staff that robust procedures will afford maximum protection to both children and staff, and to take account of developing local best practice and national guidance.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

None

Appendices/Attachments: Supporting Children with Personal Care Needs Policy and Procedure.

Contact Person: Andrew Sneddon, Service Manager – Policy and Performance  
Andrew.sneddon@westlothian.gov.uk

**Donna McMaster**  
**Head of Education (Development)**

Date of meeting: 17 May 2016



## **Supporting Children with Personal Care Needs**

### **Policy and Procedure**

#### **Policy**

West Lothian Council has a duty to provide an early learning and childcare (ELC) place to all qualifying 2 year olds, and 3 and 4 year olds whose parents/carers request it.

The extension of early learning and childcare to qualifying two year olds has increased the number of children who take up an early learning and childcare place before becoming fully toilet trained.

Children should be sensitively supported to feel safe, confident and independent in their dressing and personal hygiene skills.

Prior to the start date Early Learning and Childcare establishments with the support of their Health Visitor will discuss plan and support parents to enable a desired level of progress in toilet training for their child as appropriate.

Parents/carers should not be discouraged from accessing their full entitlement of ELC hours as a result of their child not being fully toilet trained. It is the responsibility of staff to support parents/carers and ensure children's care, health and wellbeing are met at all times.

Parents/carers must be made aware of the policy and procedure for changing wet/soiled children.

Parents/carers must be made aware of the Council's child protection procedures.

Within agreed staffing levels of early learning and childcare establishments, and in order to maintain adequate supervision of other children, it is not expected that two members of staff leave the floor of the establishment. The staff member must inform colleagues that he/she is going to change a child, and where reasonably practicable there should be another member of staff available with earshot.

Provision of personal care may give rise to complaint against a member of staff. In all circumstances, the matter must be treated seriously and the response must be prompt. All allegations against employees must be dealt with transparently. but with considerable sensitivity to the management of information. It is important that the employee is treated fairly and that his/her rights are respected during the investigative process. Following robust procedures will afford maximum protection to both children and staff.

Staff must keep a record of changing children which will detail the staff member, date and time of changing the child. In every case parents/carers will be informed and sign the record.

## **Procedure —Managing Infection Control**

Staff, as part of induction, should be made aware of the procedures to be followed in case of wetting or soiling, including dealing with body spills, cleaning and disinfecting, and manual handling. Staff should refer to *Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Settings) 2015*, Appendix 8. Written instructions should be available in each area where changing will take place.

No student or volunteer should be involved in changing a child including dealing with body spills, cleaning and disinfecting, and manual handling.

The child should, where reasonably practicable, be changed in a designated area that provides sufficient space, heating and ventilation to ensure safety, privacy and comfort. This area should have a sink, where reasonably practicable.

Gloves, baby wipes and disposable aprons should be provided and accessible.

Supplies of suitable cleaning materials (approved by West Lothian Council) should be provided for cleaning and disinfecting changing surfaces.

Fresh clothing should be at hand so that the child is not left unattended.

In the case of wetting, the child should be encouraged to deal with as much of the routine as possible, with an adult in attendance, in order to encourage independence.

Staff should respect the personal dignity of children whilst supporting and reinforcing toileting skills. When wetting or soiling occurs, these incidents should be treated with sensitivity, patience and positivity towards children's progress, as children are more likely to make progress when praised for their successes.

## **Resources**

Designated changing area that provides sufficient space, heating and ventilation to ensure safety, privacy and comfort. This area should have a sink, where reasonably practicable.

Changing table/mat, where reasonably practicable.

Non-latex disposable gloves and aprons.

Non-allergenic baby wipes.

Plastic bags for disposable waste.

Plastic bags for sending home soiled clothes.

Disinfectant and cleaning materials (as approved by West Lothian Council).

A supply of clothes e.g. underwear, trousers, socks etc. in a variety of appropriate sizes.

Separate bucket and mop designated for the task.

Nappies (to be provided by parent/carer if required).

Bin with a lid for sealed waste bags.

Refer to current guidance: **Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings (Day Care and Childminding Settings)** which can be accessed on the WL Early Years Glow SharePoint.



**EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**SCHOOL SESSION DATES 2017/18**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (DEVELOPMENT)**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To invite the Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel to consider the proposed Session Dates for 2017/18

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

To recommend approval of Session Dates for 2017/18 to the 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; 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>	The proposal conforms to Council practice regarding local holidays. There is a statutory requirement for schools to provide 190 teaching days.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	The timing of school holidays is a factor in successful examination preparation and therefore may impact on Council attainment performance indicators.
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	The timing of school holidays is a factor in successful examination preparation and therefore may impact on attainment performance indicators in the Single Outcome Agreement.
<b>VI Resources - (Financial,</b>	None

## **Staffing and Property)**

<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	Underway
<b>VIII Other consultations</b>	West Lothian Parent Council Forum, Parent Councils, Headteachers, LNCT

### **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

Appendix 1 lists the proposed school session dates for 2017/18. Appendix 2 shows these dates in a calendar format for ease of reference.

The proposed session dates include a fixed Spring Break starting on the last Monday of March, as agreed by the Education Executive at its meeting of 10 June 2014, following consultation with Parent Councils, Headteachers and the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers.

The proposed session dates do not include a week off in February, as is the case in some other authorities. This matter has previously been considered during previous consultations on session dates, and the Council has agreed not to include a week off in February for the following reasons:-

- A week's break in February would impact adversely on secondary attainment.
- Many parents do not want children to have a holiday in February when it is cold and dark, and children have less opportunity for outdoor activities.

Appendix 3 shows the proposed session dates in neighbouring authorities. Members should note that these dates differ from each other, and so it will not be possible to set holiday which coincide with all neighbouring authorities. Some authorities have not yet published their dates for 2017/18. Members should also note that some other authorities are also consulting on their proposed dates and so the information in this appendix may be subject to change.

Consultation has taken place with the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers, Headteachers and Parent Councils. The draft dates presented take account of one minor amendment proposed by LNCT, which was to hold the two day February holiday on 12 and 13 February 2018, and not 9 and 12 February 2018.

Fewer responses were received than for previous consultations. This may be because the timing of Easter and the day of the week on which Christmas and New Year fall has resulted in a pattern of holidays with the October, Christmas, Spring and Summer holiday starting on a Monday and finishing on a Friday.

St Paul's PS Parent Council commented that it would like to see a week holiday in February, with one week less in the Summer Holiday. One parent from the Broxburn Area made similar points in correspondence with elected members which was passed to Education Services.

The proposed Session Dates for 2017/18 take account of the comments received during consultation with Parent Councils, Headteachers and the Local Negotiating Committee with Teaching Staff by moving the Spring Break so that it encompasses Easter, and including an additional day holiday in February.

### **E. CONCLUSION**

The Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel is invited to consider the proposed Session Dates for 2017/18.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Education Executive of 10 June 2014.

Appendices/Attachments:

1. Proposed Session Dates 2017/18
2. Proposed Session Dates 2017/18 Calendar Format
3. Neighbouring Authorities

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**Donna McMaster**  
**Head of Education (Development)**

Date of meeting: 17 May 2016





# DRAFT SCHOOL SESSION DATES 2017/2018

			STAFF WORKING DAYS	TEACHING DAYS
TERM 1				
<u>Return after Summer</u>	Staff resume Pupils resume	* Monday, 21 August 2017 Tuesday, 22 August 2017	20	19
<u>September Holiday</u>	All break Staff resume Pupils resume	Friday, 15 September 2017 * Tuesday, 19 September 2017 Wednesday, 20 September 2017	19	18
<u>October Holiday</u>	All break Staff resume Pupils resume	Friday, 13 October 2017 * Monday, 23 October 2017 Tuesday, 24 October 2017	45	44
<u>Last day of term</u>	All break	Friday, 22 December 2017	84	81
TERM 2				
<u>Return after Christmas</u>	Staff resume Pupils resume	* Monday, 8 January 2018 Tuesday, 9 January 2018	25	24
<u>February Holiday</u>	All break All resume	Friday, 9 February 2018 Wednesday, 14 February 2018	28	28
<u>Last day of term</u>	All break	Friday, 23 March 2018	53	52
<b>Good Friday</b>	All off	30 March 2018		
<b>Easter Monday</b>	All off	2 April 2018		
TERM 3				
<u>Return after Easter</u>	All resume	Monday, 9 April 2018	20	20
<u>May Holiday</u>	All break	Friday, 4 May 2018		
<b>May Public Holiday</b>	All off Staff resume Pupils resume	Monday, 7 May 2018 * Tuesday, 8 May 2018 Wednesday, 9 May 2018	38	37
1 day local holiday as detailed below #				
<u>Last day of term</u>		Friday, 29 June 2018	58	57





**(Appendix 2)****2017/2018 School Calendar**

August 2017						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	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 2017						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				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 2017						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
						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 2017						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		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 2017						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				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 2018						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
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 2018						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
			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 2018						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
			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 2018						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
						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 2018						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	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 2018						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				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 2018						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
						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					



= pupils on holiday



= pupils on holiday &amp; staff in-service



= public holiday - everybody off



= Linlithgow Marches (Linlithgow Schools only)



= Victoria Day



= Newlands Day (Bathgate Schools only)



## Neighbouring Authority Session Dates 2017/18 (Pupils)

<b>Council</b>	<b>Start of Session</b>	<b>September Mid-Term</b>	<b>October Holiday</b>	<b>Christmas Holiday</b>	<b>February Mid-Term</b>	<b>Easter Holiday</b>	<b>End of Session</b>
Falkirk	Not published						
Scottish Borders	15/08/17	n/a	09/10/17-13/10/17	22/12/17-05/01/18	09/02/18-13/02/18	30/03/18-13/04/18	27/06/18
Edinburgh	16/08/17	18/09/17	16/10/17-20/10/17	22/12/17-05/01/18	12/02/18-16/02/18	30/03/18-16/04/18	29/06/18
Mid Lothian	Not published						
North Lanarkshire	Not published						
South Lanarkshire	Not published						
West Lothian Council	22/08/17	18/09/17-19/09/17	16/10/17-23/10/17	22/12/17-08/01/18	09/02/18-12/02/18	26/03/18-07/04/18	29/06/18





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

### **MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

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

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

The purpose of this report is to inform the PDSP of the progress of the ongoing Additional Support Needs review and the developments in supporting the building of capacity to meet the needs of all children and young people across all West Lothian.

##### **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Panel note progress to date and the intended work programme for school year 2016/17.

##### **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 (Part 4) Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, Standards in Scotland's Schools Act (2000) Equality Relevance Assessment Completed.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None.
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed; are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities.
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	Implementation of the activities contained within this report will support the achievement of raised attainment as reflected in the Single Outcome Agreement.
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Within existing resources in line with Updated Revenue Budget Strategy, (Council Executive 25/08/16)

## **VII Consideration at PDSP**

Education PDSP 17/05/16

## **VIII Other consultations**

Secondary and ASN Headteachers, Teaching and Support Staff (Burnhouse School), LNCT, Trade Unions

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D1. BACKGROUND**

In 2014 Education Services carried out a strategic review which highlighted the need to ensure equitable, high quality and sustainable educational provision for pupils with additional support needs.

#### **Phase One**

The first phase of implementing the outcome of the review required a restructuring of specialist provision across the authority in relation to primary Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs (SEBN) provision and primary and secondary Severe and Complex provision. This phase was completed during academic year 2014-2015.

#### **Phase Two**

Education Services are currently in the second phase of implementation from the 2014 review. This phase involves ensuring that our mainstream schools are equipped to the best of our ability and within our available resources to deliver appropriate learning experiences across the curriculum in every context and setting, enabling all pupils to achieve at their highest level.

This is in line with the legislative requirements relating to the presumption of mainstream education for all children and young people as outlined in Section 15 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act (2000). The Act states that "the education of all children should be provided in mainstream schools unless certain specified exceptions apply." In order to equip our mainstream schools to support this right of every pupil, the council requires to ensure that staff in all schools are appropriately skilled in meeting additional support needs and have access to appropriate Additional Support Needs (ASN) services to support the needs of complex learners within mainstream learning environment.

### **D2. CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

This presumption of mainstream approach has very much informed and directed the second phase of the ASN Review. Education Services consider that the presumption of mainstream education for the majority of learners requires three elements in order to be as successful as possible.

- an inclusive and shared ethos
- effective skills and
- appropriate resources

In order to support this, the following activities have been undertaken:

#### **The Inclusion and Wellbeing Forum**

The introduction of the Inclusion and Wellbeing Forum (IWF) has provided opportunities for professional dialogue to assist in developing a shared understanding of inclusion. It is also facilitating swifter access to educational support

services for schools. Over time, the IWF will also enable more strategic delivery of training across schools.

The IWF consists of representatives from Literacy and Language outreach services, Educational Psychology and schools. Head Teachers are invited to attend the meeting to discuss pupils who require additional planning and support. Schools are able to access the full range of education based supports through the one Forum discussion. Thus reducing the need for multiple referrals.

Initial feedback from those attending has been extremely positive. The Forum continues to develop and strategic analysis of the issues raised will enable more effective planning for service development over time.

Education Services has developed a “Transition Assessment Tool” which has been employed by schools in partnership with parents/carers and multi-agency partners to assess the additional support needs requirements for early years children and pupils at school transition stages (entering into nursery, P1 and S1). The transition tool has been very useful in focussing child’s planning meetings for transition stages on wellbeing indicators in line with the national Getting It Right For Every Child agenda. It has also provided a structured approach for the IWF to determine support requirement for successful transition to the next stages of our pupils’ educational mainstream and specialist educational provision journeys. This comprehensive assessment mechanism, implemented this academic year, has enabled Education Services to determine specialist provision requirements for next academic session and indications at this point in time are that the specialist nursery provision within Beatlie School Campus will require a two class structure compared with the three class structure in previous years. All other specialist provision will require to operate at existing capacity.

### **Review of the Secondary West Lothian Behaviour Support Service**

A recent review of the Secondary West Lothian Behaviour Support Service has led to a proposed model of support delivery that: enables greater support to be re-distributed to mainstream schools to assist in meeting the needs of young people with social, emotional and behavioural needs (SEBN) within the mainstream setting; and enhances the special school based support service which currently exists.

The outcome of the review highlighted the need to redesign the secondary SEBN service to ensure:

- Proactive approach to presumption of mainstream to ensure that all young people are given equity of opportunity and experience. It is proposed that this can be achieved by disaggregating skilled resources from the existing SEBN service to all mainstream schools in a hub model. This would both provide support for young people with SEBN in their mainstream schools and also effect the building of capacity to meet social, emotional and behavioural needs throughout the mainstream secondary sector.
- The development of an enhanced educational/ therapeutic resource within the Burnhouse School building for those young people who require more intensive intervention for short term bespoke packages as part of a crisis response approach.

Alongside this proposed redesign of service, all schools will be supported by a robust, SEBN framework of training and guidance based on Education Scotland’s “Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour” strategy.

The proposed design, following consultation with all stakeholders will include:

A core group of the staff delivering therapeutic intervention in a small group teaching environment based within the Burnhouse school building. This core group of staff will work in collaboration with Educational Psychology Service and multi-agency partners. The staff team will consist of:

Depute Head Teacher  
Principal Teacher Curriculum  
Principal Teacher (Health & Wellbeing)  
Class Teachers (1.27 FTE)  
Vocational Manager  
5 Support Staff  
Administrative Team

It is envisaged that the number attending this provision will be 12 pupils although the service will have the flexibility to adjust to demand.

Implementation of Hub Model:

Hub 1: (Broxburn Academy, Bathgate Academy, Inveralmond Community High School, Deans Community High School) - 3.5 class teachers and 3 Support Staff

Hub 2: (Armadale Academy, Linlithgow Academy, St Kentigern's Academy, Whitburn Academy) - 3 class teachers and 3 Support Staff

Hub 3: (St Margaret's Academy, West Calder High School, The James Young High School) - 2 class teachers and 3 Support staff

Both the Hub Model and Burnhouse School will be line managed by the Head Teacher (Inclusion & Wellbeing Service) yet to be appointed. This Head Teacher post will replace the existing Headteacher post of Burnhouse School and Connolly Campus. This Head Teacher post will also include responsibility for all Education outreach services.

The staff teams in the Hub Model will be based within a mainstream school within the Hub. The specific schools will be identified in conjunction with the Secondary Head Teachers.

An implementation group will plan for the young people remaining in Burnhouse. The implementation group will determine individual packages for all pupils currently receiving support from the Secondary Behaviour Support Service.

### **D3. NEXT STEPS**

The next phase of implementation of the ASN review scheduled for academic session 2016-2017 will involve:

- a consultation on the extension of provision within Ogilvie School Campus to primary and secondary provision;
- following on from the success of the Cedarbank Annex within Deans CHS, a further review of secondary specialist provision for moderate learning difficulties and vulnerability.



**E. CONCLUSION**

Following a strategic review in 2014, a phased implementation programme has been established to ensure equitable, high quality and sustainable educational provision for pupils with additional support needs.

Education Services are currently implementing the next phase of the programme which focuses on ensuring that our mainstream schools are equipped to the best of our ability and within available resources to deliver appropriate learning experiences across the curriculum in every context and setting, enabling all pupils to achieve at their highest level.

The Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel will continue to be updated on progress to date.

**F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Standards in Scotland's Schools Act (2000)  
Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Part 4) Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

Appendices/Attachments: None

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**James Cameron, Head of Education (Quality Assurance), 01506 281680.**

Date of Meeting: 17 May 2016





**EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

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

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform members of the review of the Council's Parental Engagement Framework.

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

To recommend approval of the revised Parental Engagement Framework to the 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; 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>	The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 requires all Education Authorities to produce a "Strategy for Parental Involvement."
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	The Framework will support the achievement of raised attainment as reflected in current performance indicators. A new suite of performance indicators has been developed to support the draft Framework.
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	The Framework will support the achievement of raised attainment as reflected in the Single Outcome Agreement.
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Within existing school and central budgets.
<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	Underway

## **VIII Other consultations**

West Lothian Parent Council Forum  
Headteacher representatives  
Representatives of Social Policy, Adult Basic  
Education and Educational Psychologists

### **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 requires all Education Authorities to produce a “Strategy for Parental Involvement.”

This Strategy should describe how the education authority will fulfil its duty to:-

- Promote the involvement of parents in the education provided by the school to their child and to pupils generally at their child’s school.
- Give advice and information to parents.
- Promote the establishment of Parent Councils.
- Give advice and information to Parent Councils and support their operation.
- Take account of the needs of Looked after Children.
- Consider how the Strategy will promote equal opportunities.
- Establish a complaints procedure in respect of the authority’s functions under the act.

The existing Parental Involvement Strategy was approved by the Education Executive on 7 April 2009. It has been reviewed in light of progress made in promoting parental involvement and engagement, and to refocus it on those areas still requiring most development.

A team led by an Education Officer and involving the Service Manager - Policy and Performance, representatives from the primary, secondary, special and pre-school sectors, representatives from the West Lothian Parent Council Forum and representatives of other council services including Social Policy and Adult Basic Education undertook this review

The review took account of the national Parents as Partners in their Children’s Learning Toolkit. It also capitalised on the opportunities presented by:-

- the Council project to further develop school websites as an interactive tool to be used by parents and pupils.
- developments in pupil profiling and reporting.
- developments in support for parents of early year children.
- corporate membership of the Scottish Parent Teacher Council and the National Parent Forum for Scotland.
- forthcoming new national policy framework on parent involvement/engagement

The draft revised Parental Engagement Framework and action plan recognise that the most important area for further development will be supporting parents to become involved in the learning of their individual children. The Raising Attainment Strategy recognises parental engagement as one of the key building blocks of improved attainment. Parental engagement is also one of the key drivers in the National Improvement Framework.

Developments in Parental Engagement will continue, in particular the development of new national guidance, and the development and implementation of opportunities for family learning. It is intended that the revised draft Framework will run for a year before further review to take account of these national developments. It is considered important, however, that the revised draft Framework is implemented in the next session so that parents, pupils and schools can benefit from implementation of the new action plan.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

The revised draft Parental Engagement Framework will bring benefits to parents, pupils and schools and will contribute to raising attainment in line with the Raising Attainment Strategy. The Framework will be further revised in line with national developments in parental engagement and family learning.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Parental Involvement Strategy 2009  
Parents as Partners in their Children's Learning  
Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 Guidance  
Raising Attainment Strategy

Appendices/Attachments: Draft revised Parental Engagement Framework

Contact Person: Jan Ingram, Education Officer

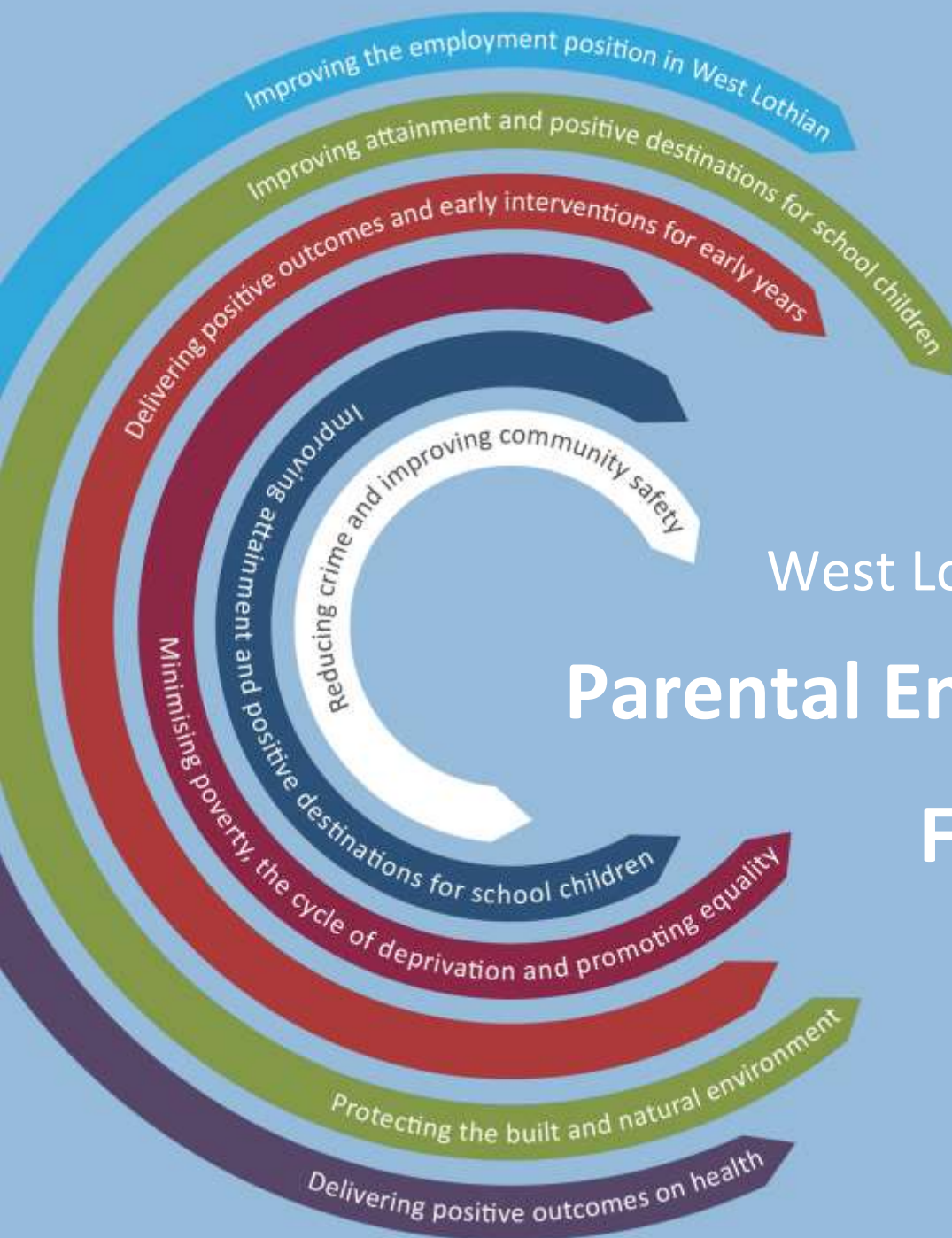
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**James Cameron, Head of Education (Quality Assurance)**

Date of meeting: 17 May 2016





West Lothian Council

# Parental Engagement Framework

2016/17

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# 1 Overview

## 1.1 Foreword

West Lothian Council is committed to delivering the best possible outcomes for children and young people. West Lothian Council will deliver on the Single Outcome Agreement objectives that ***our children will make the best possible start in life and be ready to succeed***, and that ***we are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities***.

As part of our council's strategy for raising attainment, we seek to improve parental, family and community engagement. West Lothian Council believes that parents are partners in their child's learning and parental engagement should be embedded in school and service strategies. The degree and quality of engagement that parents have with their child's learning is a critical factor in educational attainment.

We are committed to improving attainment for all within the framework of Curriculum for Excellence and an important element is involving parents effectively in all aspects of their child's learning experience.



**John McGinty**  
**Leader of the**  
**Council**



**Graham Hope**  
**Chief Executive**

## 1.2 Context

### The West Lothian Perspective

West Lothian Council recognises and reaffirms the key role of parents<sup>1</sup> as prime educators and carers of children. Effective parental engagement enhances parents' understanding of what and how their children are learning, how well they are doing and how they can support their learning in the home, school and community. West Lothian Council will support parents to ensure that children make the most of their opportunities in life, so that they become effective contributors to our local and wider communities. Improving educational attainment and qualifications will better support our children to develop the essential skills for learning, life and work and to have successful and productive lives.

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'parent' is used to mean all those with parental responsibility and the term 'child' or 'children' include young person and young people.

This Framework takes cognisance of and builds upon progress made since the previous Parental Involvement Strategy. We continue to promote parental involvement and engagement, focusing on those areas still requiring most development and further enhancing the scope of these activities.

The Framework will describe the features of effective parental engagement, against which schools will audit their practice. Improvement will be implemented through implementation of the action plan.

Progress has been made in the formation of Parent Councils, the West Lothian Council Parent Forum and in the provision of support both by council officers and through the Scottish Parent Teacher Council [SPTC]. Progress has also been made in the provision of advice and information to parents through the Council website and centrally based staff. West Lothian Council has arrangements in place to support looked after children and promote equality.

A key area for further development will be supporting parents to become involved in their children's learning. The Raising Attainment Strategy recognises parental engagement as one of the key building blocks of improved attainment, and the revised Parental Engagement Framework will contribute to this.

The Parental Involvement Act [2006] uses the definition of 'looked after' to refer to children who are accommodated by the local authority or are subject to one of the specified orders made under the Children [Scotland] Act 1995, including a child protection order, a parental responsibilities order or who are subject to a supervision requirement. West Lothian Council is committed to ensuring that children who are 'looked after' should have the same education and development opportunities as all other children.

Our Corporate Plan contains the following priorities:

- Delivering positive outcomes and early interventions for early years
- Improving attainment and positive destinations for school children
- Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality
- Delivering positive outcomes on health

### **The National Perspective**

It is essential that in West Lothian all partners involved in improving outcomes for children and their families are fully engaged with key national policies and guidance. The national framework, [\*Getting it Right for Every Child\*](#) [GIRFEC] charges everyone involved with children to collaborate and work together to ensure that children have their wellbeing needs met and therefore improving outcomes. This means working across organisational boundaries and putting children and their families at the heart of decision making and giving all our children and young people the best possible start in life.

One of the key drivers of [\*The National Improvement Framework\*](#) (NIF) is parental engagement. The framework states that '*we want to improve and increase ways in*

*which parents and families can engage with teachers and partners to support their children and increase the voice of parents in leading improvements with schools.'*

Parental and family engagement has been brought to the fore with the recent publication of the [\*How Good is our School? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)\*](#) (HGIOS4), in which there is a key quality indicator around family learning. This indicator focuses on increasing the positive impact of working with families to improve learning and achievement. The emphasis is on schools working in partnership with others in the community to support families to secure better outcomes through programmes which enable them to improve literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

Other relevant national policies and guidance include;

- [Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\)](#)
- [Early Years Framework](#)
- [Building the Ambition](#)
- [How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare? \(HGIOELC\)](#)
- [Early Years Collaborative/Raising Attainment for All](#)
- [Scottish Attainment Challenge](#)
- [Developing Scotland's Young Workforce](#)
- [Teaching Scotland's Future](#)
- [National Parenting Strategy](#)

### **Vision, Values and Ambition**

West Lothian Council Education Services, working with key partners, will:-

- promote the expectation that every child matters and has the capacity to learn
- intervene systematically to break the cycle of disadvantage at all stages and with an emphasis on the early years and subsequent sustained intervention.
- create a collaborative culture which enables strong leadership of learning and which values visionary leaders who are focused on improved outcomes for all learners
- expect and support the development of effective and reflective teachers and leaders through robust quality improvement
- expect and support the development of effective programmes which lead to improved learning and teaching in every classroom
- improve the quality of the evidence which demonstrates the link between learning and teaching and sustained life outcomes for school leavers.

- create effective performance management systems for all leaders and practitioners which draw on rich and robust data.

### 1.3 Framework Development

The West Lothian Council Parental Engagement Framework provides an increased strategic focus on engaging parents in their child's learning. The Framework was developed by a team that included staff from Education Services – early years, special, primary, secondary practitioners, representatives from the West Lothian Parent Council Forum and representatives from other council services, including Social Policy, Educational Psychology Services and Adult Learning. The Framework was developed taking account of the contributions of stakeholders, including a parental survey, and best practice in West Lothian schools.

### 1.4 Ownership and Scope of the Framework

The Head of Education [Quality Assurance] and Head of Education [Development] are responsible for the overall implementation of the Parental Engagement Framework.

Implementation of the actions necessary to involve parents is the responsibility of headteachers and centrally-based officers, as set out in this Framework and the action plan appended.

Performance indicators are monitored by the Education Senior Management Team, and by the Chief Executive's Scrutiny Panel through the West Lothian Assessment Model process.

Schools are also subject to independent scrutiny by Her Majesty's Inspectors (Education Scotland) which includes consideration of parental engagement and views.

Governance		
Group	Governance/Scrutiny Role	Reporting Frequency
Moving Forward in Learning – Early Years Workstream	Coordinating and supporting implementation of West Lothian developments within this Framework, including programmes to support family learning and parenting skills.	Every six weeks
Moving Forward in Learning – Assessment and Moderation Workstream	Coordinating and supporting implementation of West Lothian developments within this Framework, including reporting to parents.	Every six weeks
Moving Forward in Learning – Quality Improvement Workstream	Coordinating and supporting implementation of West Lothian developments within this Framework, including involving parents in self-evaluation activities.	Every six weeks

Moving Forward in Learning – Wellbeing Workstream	Coordinating and supporting implementation of West Lothian developments within this Framework, including involving parents improving young people's well-being.	Every six weeks
Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Scrutiny of the Framework.	As required
Education Quality Assurance Committee	Scrutiny of quality and performance of individual West Lothian schools.	Every six weeks

## 2 Council Priorities

The council has set 8 priorities in the current Corporate Plan (2013/17) in consultation with the local community, partners, stakeholders and our staff. These priorities, along with the 3 enablers themes, represent all the vital activities that the council will undertake in order to achieve better outcomes for West Lothian.

Figure 1 illustrates where the Parental Engagement Framework will directly contribute to a council priority or enabler.

Council Priorities	Name Framework
1. Improving the employment position in West Lothian	
2. Improving attainment and positive destinations for school children	✓
3. Delivering positive outcomes and early intervention for early years	✓
4. Improving the quality of life for older people	
5. Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	✓
6. Reducing crime and improving community safety	
7. Protecting the built and natural environment	
8. Delivering positive outcomes on health	✓
<b>Enablers</b>	
Financial planning	✓
Corporate governance and risk	✓
Modernisation and improvement	✓

Figure 1: Council priorities and Parental Engagement Framework

### 3 Framework Outcome:

## Enhanced Parental Engagement

#### **Purpose:**

Parents are supported to engage actively and meaningfully in their child's learning at home and school.

Progress has been made in the formation of Parent Councils and the West Lothian Council Parent Forum and in the provision of support both by council officers and through the Scottish Parent Teacher Council. There have been improvements in the provision of advice and information to parents through the council website and centrally based staff. The Council has in place arrangements to provide corporate parenting in order to support looked after children and promote equality.

The most important area for further development will be supporting parents to become engaged and involved in the learning of their child. The Raising Attainment Strategy recognises parental engagement as one of the key building blocks of improved attainment, and it is intended to ensure that the revised Parental Engagement Framework contributes to this.

#### **Activities:**

Five key activities underpin the outcome of the Parental Engagement Framework. All those involved in the education of children should promote this Framework. Parents are encouraged to be involved within the ambitions of the Framework.

The roles and responsibilities of parents, schools and the local authority are defined for each activity.

These activities are monitored locally and nationally through authority surveys, the West Lothian Parent Forum, Standards and Quality Reports and Validated Self Evaluation. At a national level, the independent Education Scotland inspection process may use quality indicators from HGIOS 4 and HGIOELC relevant to parental involvement.

The five key activities that will be undertaken by the education authority, schools and parents in the following areas in 2016-2017 to achieve this priority outcome are:

#### **Establishing effective practices and procedures for communication between school and home**

There is scope for improvements in channels of communication to more effectively supply parents with the type and volume of information they require at particular stages in their children's education. Parents have identified a clear need for more information on a more regular basis at all stages.

- West Lothian Council has a communication strategy entitled *The West Lothian Way* which provides a framework of effective channels of communication. The council will provide appropriate methods of communication including Groupcall and provision of websites to support schools. The council will provide advice on the appropriateness of channels of communication. Customer service training will be provided as required
- Schools will establish a framework of communication within *The West Lothian Way* following consultation with parents taking account of their needs. Schools should ensure that they keep their website up to date so that parents have access to relevant information.
- Parents should familiarise themselves with the school and council's policies and practice on communication, including electronic tools e.g. Glow and Groupcall. Parents should keep the school informed about important information concerning their child, e.g. change to health needs or family circumstances and up to date contact details.

### **Enabling parents to support their child's learning**

Parental engagement has an important and positive impact on children's learning. It is therefore a priority to identify interventions that are effective in supporting parental engagement, particularly for those parents who are either not significantly involved in their children's education or who are not involved at all. Schools will support family learning by working in partnership with others in the community to enable them to improve literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

- The local authority will monitor the consistency and effectiveness of schools' policies with regard to communication on progress, learning and achievement. They will, where possible, give advice and share good practice in web links and resources that help support parental engagement in learning. They will, where appropriate, provide schools with an infrastructure that helps parental engagement.
- Schools should consult with their parent body about the best ways of communicating on an ongoing basis about their child's progress and achievements. This might include: websites, blogs, homework, curriculum events, parents nights, profiling and reporting. From this consultation, schools should agree a policy that meets the parent body's needs. The purpose of this is to ensure consistency of practice that is fit for purpose. All parents should be made aware of these agreed arrangements.
- Parents are provided with ongoing information to allow them to fully engage with their child's learning, including online support for learning e.g. Glow and other web based learning resources. Parents are encouraged to attend school events which are arranged to facilitate and support their engagement. It is hoped that parents will use the information and support provided to fully engage with their child's learning.

Parents as Early Education Partners [PEEP] provides parents with a planned programme of experiences that enable them to confidently support their child's early learning and development.



## Overcoming barriers to parental engagement

There are a number of barriers which can lead to difficulties for parents in supporting their child's learning. These can be practical issues such as lack of time, not knowing how to get involved or experiencing challenges with parenting. Busy work schedules can also impact. Some parents may have had negative experiences, or lack of success, in their own education which can lead to a lack of confidence to engage. Language and communication are common barriers to parents being able to be involved. Parents who are not confident in literacy or communication, including those who speak English as a second or other language, may not feel able to engage effectively with the school. Sensitivity to cultural norms and expectations should be shown, and specific, detailed advice and guidance should be provided.

The local authority and schools will promote family learning by working with families and other agencies to help parents minimise the effect of poverty on our children. Needs are identified and reviewed in consultation with families, partners and stakeholders.

Many parents of looked after children retain their parental rights and responsibilities. Parents who do not live with their children may still wish to be involved in their education. There therefore needs to be a commitment to working in partnership with foster parents, and where possible, the natural parents, to encourage them to support the child or young person to maximise their educational potential. Care planning for looked after children should clarify who is taking responsibility for keeping in contact with the school and helping the child with their education. Careful planning and effective joint working between carers/social workers and teachers is of equal importance.

- The council shows a willingness to support parental engagement and will take into account factors that may act as barriers to parents' involvement in their child's education or to making contact with the school.

The council provides the *Parenting West Lothian* website which offers support, advice and information. The council provides a range of parenting programmes, support with family learning and health and wellbeing.

The Adult Learning Team can deliver support in literacy, numeracy and English as a second or other language.

The Children and Young People's Team provide a training course *Connecting with Parents' Motivations* for staff involved in supporting parents.

- Schools identify barriers to parental engagement where these exist and raise awareness of provision offered by the council to support parents. Schools also have many opportunities to manage barriers to parental engagement within the school setting by perhaps speaking to parents, rather than writing or being flexible with meeting times, providing translation services or simply encouraging parents to come into the school as individuals. Schools can sensitively signpost individual parents to available support and work in partnership with others to deliver this.



- Parents should be able to feel that they can seek support to allow schools and the authority to use a variety of creative ways of addressing barriers which may exist. The aim of this targeted support is to enable parents to provide help and encouragement for their children.

### **Raising awareness of systems for suggestions, feedback, compliments and complaints**

Feedback is important, in all its forms, as it gives the opportunity to parents to have their say and to help improve our service.

- The local authority will publicise the West Lothian Council feedback and complaints procedure through the council's website. The procedure will be issued on request in alternative formats. The council can provide customer service training for school office staff.
- Schools should put in place a procedure for parental communication and publicise it. Schools will share detail of and work within the West Lothian Council feedback and complaints procedure. Schools will consult with parents on the most effective methods of publicising these procedures and making them accessible to all parents. Schools should strive to create a welcoming environment and be open to accepting suggestions, feedback, comments and complaints as a contribution to school improvement.
- Parents are encouraged to use the channels of communication made available to them by the school, including, where appropriate, the West Lothian Council feedback and complaints procedure. Schools promote a climate of mutual respect based on Rights Respecting Schools and ask that parents follow similar principles in their communication.

### **Promoting and supporting parent councils**

It is recognised that parents play an important role both in their own child's learning and in the wider life of their school. Parent councils represent and promote the interests of the parent forum. Parent councils support school improvement, including helping parents become more actively and effectively involved in their children's learning.

- West Lothian Council will encourage parents to set up the parent council for the school. The local authority will provide support through corporate membership of the Scottish Parent Teacher Council [SPTC]. The SPTC provides advice and guidance to parent councils, as well as training and resources. The SPTC also provides insurance for parent councils. Advice and guidance is also available from centrally-based council officers and can be accessed through the education customer services team. The local authority can also provide training, e.g. training on selection and recruitment of senior staff. The council will support the West Lothian Parent Council Forum which allows parent councils to share good practice, experience and advice.

- The headteacher will attend meetings of the parent council in an advisory capacity. Schools will provide administrative support, e.g. circulating information, publicising meetings and making suitable accommodation available.
- All parents who have a child attending a West Lothian school are automatically members of the parent forum of the respective school. Parents may form the parent council for their school and are encouraged to do so. Parents are encouraged to engage with the parent council to allow it to fulfil its role in representing their views on whole school business. The parent council should provide information and feedback to the parent forum on their activities on an ongoing basis. Parent councils should consult with the parent forum on the most effective methods of publicising these activities

## Performance

The following performance indicators will be used to monitor progress in the outcome for the life span of the Framework:

Performance				
Performance Indicator Name	2016 Performance	2017 Target	Service	Responsible Officer
Percentage of schools providing parents with specific and detailed guidance on learning experiences and an overview of learning at each stage			Education (Development) and (Quality Improvement)	Quality Improvement Manager
Percentage of schools consulting with parents about the best ways of communicating and reviewing annually with Parent Council			Education (Development) and (Quality Assurance)	Quality Improvement Manager
Percentage of schools with a Parent Council			Education (Development)	Customer Services Manager
Percentages of schools with a School Web-Site			Education (Development)	Customer Services Manager
Total Number of Complaints received by Education Services			Education (Development)	Customer Services Manager
Complaints – Percentage of Education Services Complaints Upheld and Partially Upheld			Education (Development)	Customer Services Manager

## Appendix A

The Parental Engagement Framework seeks to guide the actions of schools, parents and the council. They all have responsibility for improvement by taking action as set out below.

The action column includes specific suggestions for action and examples of good practice [in italics] suggested by parents and schools during the development of the Framework.

These will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis in partnership with parents and schools.

Action Plan							
Activity	Description	Planned Outcome	Action	Owner	Start	End	Status (Planned, Active, Complete)
Establishing effective practices and procedures for communication between school and home	Local authority action	The council will provide appropriate methods of communication including Groupcall and provision of websites to support schools.	Provide a communication policy (The West Lothian Way)	Corporate Communications Manager	August 2016	June 2017	Complete
			Provide communication tools e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Groupcall</li><li>Websites</li></ul>	Web Services Project Manager/ Strategic Resource Manager			Planned
		The council will provide advice on the appropriateness of methods of communication.	Provide customer service training for school staff as required	Education Customer Services Manager			Planned
			Customer service training will be provided as required.				Maintain up to date and comprehensive information on the council website.

	School action	<p>A framework for communication is established following consultation with parents taking account of their needs.</p> <p>Schools' information will be up to date allowing parents to have access to relevant information.</p>	<p>Consult parents on preferred methods of communication.</p> <p>Develop a framework which uses a variety of methods of communication based on the consultation.</p> <p>Share the framework with parents.</p> <p>Review annually in consultation with parent council.</p> <p>Avoid use of jargon and acronyms.</p> <p>Consider the use of readability scoring websites for communications, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Readability Calculator</a></li> </ul> <p>Share the school calendar at the start of the year and ensure that, whenever possible, parents are given sufficient notice of any changes and deadlines.</p>	Headteachers	August 2016	June 2017	Planned
	Parent action	<p>Parents are familiar with the school and council policies and practice on communication.</p>	<p>Parents use agreed means of communication to keep informed about the school and their child's education.</p> <p>Parents should inform the school about important information concerning their child.</p>	All parents	August 2016	June 2017	Active

Enabling parents to support their child's learning	Local authority action	<p>All schools have parents as partners in their child's learning.</p> <p>All schools have an infrastructure that encourages and supports parental engagement.</p>	<p>Monitor parental engagement in learning through the validated self-evaluation programme.</p> <p>Support schools with the infrastructure for digital learning and communication.</p> <p>Promote Scottish Parent Teacher Council training to engage parents in their child's learning and the wider life of the school.</p>	<p>Quality Improvement Manager</p> <p>Web Services Project Manager</p> <p>Policy and Performance Manager</p>	August 2016	June 2017	Active
	School action	<p>Parents are supported as partners to actively and meaningfully engage in their child's learning and life at school.</p>	<p>Consult with parents about the best ways of communicating on an ongoing basis about their child's progress and achievements. This might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>websites</li> <li>blogs</li> <li>homework</li> <li>curriculum events</li> <li>classes to support parents with specific curricular areas</li> <li>parents' consultation meetings,</li> <li>profiling and reporting.</li> </ul> <p>Take account of the most recent national guidance from Education Scotland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Engaging Parents and Families, section 2: Learning at Home</a></li> </ul> <p>Provide parents with strategies and training to enable them to support their</p>		August 2016	June 2017	Planned

			<p>child's learning, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Promote the Scottish Parent Teacher Council <a href="#">website</a> to support parents to engage in their child's learning</i></li> <li>• <i>Support and advise on how to help with homework</i></li> <li>• <i>Arrange bitesize workshops</i></li> <li>• <i>Signpost national websites, e.g. <a href="#">BBC Bitesize Revision</a></i></li> </ul> <p>Encourage families to learn together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Share specific fun activities for children and parents to do at home</i></li> <li>• <i>Family learning activities</i></li> </ul> <p>Provide parents with specific and detailed guidance on learning experiences and an overview of learning at each stage. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide information to parents on what is being taught in school and suggest activities to support this at home</i></li> <li>• <i>Leaflet on rationale for the curriculum</i></li> <li>• <i>Information on what success at a level looks like.</i></li> <li>• <i>Discuss with parents and children the activities they undertake at home so that these can be built into learning in school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide lending library of resources</i></li> <li>• <i>Arrange reading club for children and parents</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide coaching sessions in building learning power</i></li> </ul>				
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			<p>Create an agreed policy on homework and home learning and ensure that this is understood by all.</p> <p>Use creative approaches to engage families with learning. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Engaging Parents and Families</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Guardian - Top tips for teachers on engaging parents in learning</a></li> <li>• <i>Arrange a learning festival run by pupils to share approaches and resources used in school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Set up stay and play / stay and learn sessions</i></li> <li>• Share <a href="#">Read, Write, Count</a> and <a href="#">PlayTalkRead</a> initiatives.</li> </ul> <p>Be aware of parents' skills and expertise and how these could support <i>Curriculum for Excellence</i>.</p> <p>Involve parents in school improvement through ongoing self-evaluation activities. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>school handbook review</i></li> <li>• <i>school improvement plan</i></li> <li>• <i>policies and procedures</i></li> <li>• <i>validated self-evaluation</i></li> <li>• <i>focus groups</i></li> </ul>				
	Parent action	Parents are fully engaged with their child's learning,	Parents use a range of information provided by the school, to support and improve their child's learning	All parents	August 2016	June 2017	Active

			<p>e.g. <i>feedback and next steps</i>.</p> <p>Parents access useful information on how to support children's learning, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Parentzone</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Scottish Parent Teacher Council</a></li> </ul> <p>Parents as Early Education Partners [PEEP] programme provides a variety of experiences to enable parents to confidently support their child's early learning and development.</p>	Individual parents			
<b>Overcoming barriers to parental engagement</b>	Local authority action	<p>A range of parenting programmes is provided.</p> <p>The council shows a willingness to support parental engagement and will take into account factors that may act as barriers to parents' involvement in their child's education or to making contact with the school.</p>	<p><a href="#">Parenting West Lothian</a> website which provides support, advice and information.</p> <p>The Children and Young People's Team provide a training course <i>Connecting with Parents' Motivations</i> for staff involved in supporting parents</p> <p><a href="#">Adult Learning</a> will deliver support in literacy, numeracy and English as a second or other language.</p>	<p>Social Policy Information Team</p> <p>Children and Young People's Team Manager</p> <p>Adult Learning Manager</p>	August 2016	June 2017	Active
	School action	<p>A parent-friendly culture exists in school.</p> <p>Barriers, which hinder individual parents'</p>	<p>Use available data, analysis and intelligence gathering to inform understanding of community and individual family's needs and to ensure appropriate timely interventions.</p>	Headteachers	August 2016	June 2017	Active



		<p>engagement with their child's learning are identified and addressed.</p> <p>Be aware of the factors causing child poverty within the community.</p> <p>Schools create a parent-friendly culture which reflects the diversity of parents and their needs. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>signage – reception</i></li> <li>• <i>welcoming staff</i></li> <li>• <i>multi-language signage</i></li> <li>• <i>links to translation services</i></li> <li>• <i>consider alternative media for communication other than writing</i></li> <li>• <i>clear leaflets at reception</i></li> </ul> <p>Take account of most recent national guidance from Education Scotland, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Engaging Parents and Families: Section 1: Involving all parents</u></a></li> </ul> <p>Raise awareness of <a href="#"><u>Parenting West Lothian</u></a> site offered by the council to support parents:</p> <p>Sensitively signpost parents to available support. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Children and Families Service</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Adult Learning</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Sure Start</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Out of School Care</u></a></li> </ul> <p>Work with partners to support parents. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Children and Young People's Team.</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Adult Learning</u></a></li> </ul>				
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			<p>Be aware of the needs of different cultures and influences on family life, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland [<a href="#">BEMIS</a>]</li> </ul> <p>Be aware of the needs of the wide diversity of parents e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Foster carers</i></li> <li><i>Travellers/Gypsies</i></li> <li><i>Asylum seekers</i></li> <li><i>Parents with disabilities</i></li> <li><i>Members of LGBT</i></li> <li><i>Parents located at a distance from the school</i></li> <li><i>Parents with transport difficulties</i></li> </ul> <p>Have a system in place to support parents who are not living with their child. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Separated</i></li> <li><i>In prison</i></li> <li><i>Working elsewhere [in armed forces]</i></li> </ul>				
	Parent action	<p>Parents are confident to approach the school to seek support and advice regarding their child's learning.</p> <p>Parents confidently support their child's learning.</p>	<p>Parents contact the school to find out the range of support for their needs.</p> <p>Parents access this support and advice.</p>	All parents	August 2016	June 2017	Active

Raising awareness of systems for suggestions, feedback, comments and complaints	Local authority action	<p>Feedback and complaints procedures are accessible on the council website.</p> <p>Appropriate training and advice to raise standard of customer service is available to school based staff.</p>	<p>Provide advice and support to headteachers and school staff on complaints handling and customer service.</p> <p>Provide central customer service, advice and information to the public.</p> <p>Provide central complaints service to the public.</p>	Education Customer Services Manager	August 2016	June 2017	Active
	School action	<p>There is a welcoming ethos in all schools.</p> <p>Procedures for communication with parents are agreed and publicised.</p> <p>Suggestions, feedback, comments and complaints contribute to school improvement.</p>	<p>Consult parents on preferred methods of parental communication to allow them to make appointments and raise issues efficiently.</p> <p>Develop a framework based on the consultation.</p> <p>Share the framework with parents.</p> <p>Ensure all school staff are aware of agreed channels of communication and timescales.</p> <p>Ensure procedures are in place to manage telephone calls, emails and visitors appropriately. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check school email inbox and answering machine regularly.</li> <li>Ensure that messages are passed</li> </ul>	Headteachers	August 2016	June 2017	Planned

			<p><i>promptly to the appropriate person.</i></p> <p>Review arrangements annually in consultation with parent council.</p> <p>Undertake customer service training following audit, e.g. using Customer Service Excellence Framework.</p>				
	Parent action	<p>Parents use agreed channels of communication.</p> <p>A climate of mutual respect exists between home and school.</p> <p>Communication is based on the principles of <a href="#">Rights Respecting Schools</a>.</p>	<p>Participate in consultation to agree channels of communication and appropriate timescales for response.</p> <p>Access when appropriate: <a href="#">West Lothian Education Customer Services</a></p>	All parents	August 2016	June 2017	Active
<b>Promoting and supporting parent councils</b>	Local authority action	The establishment of parent councils in all schools is encouraged and their ongoing operation assisted and supported.	<p>Encourage parents to set up a parent council for their school.</p> <p>Provide membership of the Scottish Parent Teacher Council for all parent councils.</p> <p>Provide training for parent council members for recruitment and selection of senior staff.</p> <p>Support West Lothian Parent Forum.</p>	Policy and Performance Manager	August 2016	June 2017	Active

	School action	Partnership working exists between the school and the parent council. .	<p>Adopt an advisory role to the parent council.</p> <p>Provide a formal report, at least annually, on whole school business including the school fund.</p> <p>Provide administrative support to the parent council.</p> <p>Signpost information for parents, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Scottish Parent Teacher Council</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">National Parent Forum for Scotland</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Parentzone</a></li> </ul>	Headteachers	August 2016	June 2017	Active
	Parent action	Every school has a parent council that supports its work with pupils and represents the views of all parents.	<p>The parent forum should engage with the parent council to allow it to fulfil its role in representing their views on school business.</p> <p>The parent council provides information and feedback to the parent forum regularly.</p> <p>The parent council consults with the parent forum on the most effective methods of publicising activities.</p>	All parents	August 2016	June 2017	Active

**West Lothian Council**

# **Parental Engagement Framework**

## **2016/17**

**James Cameron**

**Head of Education (Quality Assurance)**

**Donna McMaster**

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**August 2016**

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

### **HOME EDUCATION POLICY**

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

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

To advise the Panel of the proposed revised Home Education Policy.

#### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Panel authorise Education Services to present the revised Home Education policy to the Education Executive for approval.

#### **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>	Education (Scotland) Act 1980. Government Guidance on Home Education (2007) Equality Relevance Assessment Completed.
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	None
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	None
<b>VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Entry of home educated children and young people into specific classes or courses may have some resource implications for the authority. It should be noted, however, that should the children/young people opt to enter a local authority school full time, the authority is obliged to make provision for them.
<b>VII Consideration at PDSP</b>	17 May 2016.
<b>VIII Other consultations</b>	Legal Services, Schoolhouse.

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D.1 Background**

In November 2014 Education Executive agreed to review the existing Home Education policy in consultation with Schoolhouse, Scotland's national home education support charity. The aim of the review was to ensure:

- transparent compliance with legislation
- consider line management responsibility and use of appropriate officers in implementing the policy; and more specifically,
- clarification on difference between Home School and Flexi-Schooling.

Schoolhouse is a well established and respected source of independent information for parents, carers and young people who are starting out on the home education path, families who may be thinking about educating their children outside the classroom, and those who just want to know more about how home education works. School house provide free independent information and support to families and the wider home educating community.

Consultation with Schoolhouse is ongoing.

### **D.2 Home Education**

Every child has a right to an education and the responsibility for a child's education rests with their parent. Whilst most parents fulfil this responsibility by sending their children to school, others may choose to provide home-based education.

Education Services recognises that home education is a key aspect of parental choice and is an equally valid choice alongside the option to send a child to school.

Home education is a right conditional upon the parents providing an efficient education suitable to the age, ability and aptitude of the child. Choosing the option of Home Education does not in itself require permission from the local authority. Permission from the local authority is required, however, to withdraw a child/young person from a local authority school.

In December 2007, after consultation with interested parties, the Scottish Government published revised statutory guidance on home education. This guidance outlines suggested good practice for local authorities in dealing with home education and Education Services is committed to the principles outlined in this document.

Scottish Government highlights the following two main principles:

- Authorities should have regard to the views of parents and the decisions that they make in relation to their child's education; and
- Authorities should seek to build relationships with parents and children that support them in the choices that they make by offering advice, information and resources where feasible.

Appendix 1 to this report provides the proposed revised Home Education policy.



## **E. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the revised policy is to provide clarity on the roles and responsibilities of West Lothian Council and parents/carers in relation to children and young people who are Home Educated. The aim is to develop positive relationships of trust and mutual respect to ensure an educational provision which is in the best interests of the individual child/young person.

The general legislative provisions relating to this policy are contained in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Education Scotland Act 1980  
Scottish Government Guidance on Home Education 2007

Appendices/Attachments: Policy: Home Education

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James Cameron, Head of Education (Quality Assurance)

Date of meeting: 17 May 2016





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## **A. Introduction**

Every child has a right to an education and the responsibility for a child's education rests with their parent. Whilst most parents fulfil this responsibility by sending their children to school, others may choose to provide home-based education.

West Lothian Council recognises that home education is a key aspect of parental choice and is an equally valid choice alongside the option to send a child to school.

Home education is a right conditional upon the parents providing an efficient education suitable to the age, ability and aptitude of the child. Choosing the option of Home Education does not in itself require permission from the local authority. Permission from the local authority is required, however, to withdraw a child/young person from a local authority school. This is further explained in Section B below.

In December 2007, after consultation with interested parties, the Scottish Government published revised statutory guidance on home education and this guidance can be accessed through the following link:-

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/12/17133313/8>.

This guidance outlines suggested good practice for local authorities in dealing with home education and West Lothian Council is committed to the principles outlined in this document.

The Scottish Government highlights the following two main principles:

- Authorities should have regard to the views of parents and the decisions that they make in relation to their child's education; and
- Authorities should seek to build relationships with parents and children that support them in the choices that they make by offering advice, information and resources where feasible.

## **B. Purpose of Document**

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity on the roles and responsibilities of West Lothian Council and parents/carers in relation to children and young people who are Home Educated. The aim is to develop positive relationships of trust and mutual respect to ensure an educational provision which is in the best interests of the individual child/young person.

The general legislative provisions relating to this policy are contained in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

## **C. Consent (Withdrawing a Child /Young Person From School)**

Parents of a child who has been attending a West Lothian Council school must seek West Lothian Council's consent before withdrawing their child from that school. The Council must not unreasonably withhold consent. For clarity, it should be noted that while consent is needed for withdrawal from school, consent is not needed to home educate in itself.

Consent to withdraw a child/young person from school is not needed in the following situations:

- The child has never attended a local authority school
- The child has never attended a West Lothian school
- The child is being withdrawn from an independent school
- The child has completed primary education but has not started secondary education
- The school the child has been attending has closed.

Whilst there is no statutory duty upon parents to inform the authority that they are home educating if consent to withdraw is not required, West Lothian Council would ask that home educators in their area, or moving into their area, contact them. In this way, positive relationships can be built and support provided where appropriate.

Parents choose to home educate their children for many different reasons. Parents do not have to give a reason when requesting to withdraw their child from school, but if they choose to do so, that reason should have no bearing on whether or not consent is given. West Lothian Council's interest lies in how the parents intend to educate their child, not their reason for doing so. The following examples are common but not exhaustive:

- The wish to follow a particular educational or ideological philosophy
- Dissatisfaction with the system
- Religious or cultural beliefs
- A child's reluctance to go to school
- A child's problems when at school, eg bullying
- Geographical – due to the remoteness or mobility for work or cultural reasons
- The wish to deal with a child's additional support needs in a particular way
- As a short term intervention for a particular reason.

When a parent offers an account of their dissatisfaction with the public system of education provision, West Lothian Council will investigate the situation and endeavor to use this information to improve its service if required.

#### **D. The Procedure (Withdrawing a Child /Young Person From School)**

The procedure for considering parents'/carers' requests to withdraw their child/young person from school requires to be fair, clear, consistent and without delay. This will provide a good foundation for the development of trusting relationships.

Home education is a key aspect of parental choice and consent to withdraw a child from school should not be unreasonably withheld. On the other hand, sufficient time should be allowed for the Council to take an informed decision on the important matter of withdrawal from school.

The procedure outlined below should be followed when dealing with a request from a parent/carer to withdraw their child/young person from school:

### **Step 1: Request for Consent to Withdraw Child Young Person From School**

Parent/Carer establishes whether consent is required to withdraw their child/young person from school. If consent is required, he or she should write to request such consent to:

Education Services  
Home Education  
Education Services  
West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden South Road  
Livingston, EH54 6FF

This request should, where reasonably practical:

- be submitted as early as possible and well in advance of the date the parent/carer wishes to withdraw their child/young person from school. This will avoid unsettling the child/young person unnecessarily as the child/ young person is required to attend school until consent to withdraw has been granted by the Council.
- include initial proposals as to how the parent/carer intends to provide an efficient and suitable education for their child (to assist in this process a template has been developed and can be found attached as Appendix Two to this document). It is recognised that at this early stage, parents' proposals may not be detailed and that they may not yet be in a position to demonstrate all of the characteristics of efficient and suitable education.

(It should be noted that parents are not required to indicate the reasons for their decisions but may do so if they choose.)

### **Step 2: Information Gathering**

On receipt of an application to withdraw a child from school, Education Services should acknowledge receipt within 3 working days;

- offer a meeting with relevant Education Services officers to discuss the parents' proposals or provision and provide an opportunity for the parents/carers to address any specific concerns which are raised about such provision. It is important that the meeting takes place in a mutually acceptable location. The child/young person should be given the opportunity to attend the meeting or otherwise be given an opportunity to express his or her views. The child/young person's attendance at such a meeting is not regarded as compulsory;
- ask the relevant school and all partner agencies if there is any existing evidence which indicates that there may be good reason to refuse consent. Partner agencies for this purpose include Social Policy, Police Scotland, Reporter to the Children's Panel and NHS Lothian.

### **Step 3: Determination of Decision**

Education Services will consider all relevant information in relation to the request to withdraw the child/young person from school.

This will result in one of the following determinations:

- there is no evidence of reasonable grounds to withhold consent to withdraw the child/young person from school and some indication from the parent/carer of their educational objectives and proposed resources.  
In this case consent will be granted as soon as administratively possible.
- there is evidence of reasonable grounds to withhold consent to withdraw the child/young person from school. It is important to note that previous irregular attendance is not of itself a sufficient reason to refuse consent.

Specific examples of such circumstances are:

- Where a child has been referred to Social Policy or the Police for child protection reasons and the matter is being investigated.
- Where a child is on the child protection register.
- Where a child has been referred to the reporter on care and protection grounds and the referral is being considered.
- Where the child is subject to a compulsory supervision order.

In this case consent to withdraw the child/young person from school will not be granted

- There is no evidence of reasonable grounds to withhold consent to withdraw the child/young person from school. There is, however, information which exists that casts doubt on whether an efficient and suitable education can be provided, or the parent/carer has failed to provide outline proposals on the proposed educational provision. In this case Education Services will seek to gather relevant information that will assist in reaching a decision. This will include seeking further information from the parent/carer about their proposed educational provision. Parents/carers will be given the opportunity to address any specific concerns identified by Education Services. The child/young person will also be given an opportunity to express his/her views.

In this case consent to withdraw the child/young person from school will only be granted when the Quality Improvement Manager is satisfied that an efficient and suitable education can be provided by the parent/carer.

### **Step 4: Communication of Decision**

The decision in relation to the request to withdraw the child/young person from school is communicated to the parent/carer in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable.

If the decision is to refuse to grant consent then the decision letter:

- will outline the reasons for such refusal
- provide a timescale within which parent/carers can address the grounds for refusal and resubmit their request for re-consideration

## **Step 5: Appeal Process**

There is no statutory right to appeal against a decision to withhold consent to withdraw a child from school. However, Education Services will internally review decisions to withhold consent on request. Decisions made by authorities under their statutory powers are also generally subject to external review by the Court of Session through the judicial review process.

Parents may make use of the independent mediation service (Common Ground Mediation Tel: 0131 664 9324) and/or may also make a complaint about a decision via the Education Services Complaints Procedure by contacting the following:

Customer Services Manager  
Education Services  
West Lothian Civic Centre  
Howden Road South  
Livingston.  
01506 281255.

Parents may also choose to pursue the matter with the Scottish Public Services Commissions (Ombudsman)

(Freephone 0800 377 7330 or call 0131 225 5300)

## **Step 6: Future Engagement with Families choosing to Home Educate**

Families choosing to home educate their child/young person are encouraged to make contact with the Education Services for support and advice at any time.

There is no statutory duty on West Lothian Council to investigate actively (ie monitor) ongoing home education provision. However, there is a legal duty that exists to serve a notice on any parent who West Lothian Council considers is not providing efficient education suitable to their child's age, ability and aptitude.

Following consultation with families who are known to be home educating their child/young person in the West Lothian area, Education Services will offer contact on an annual basis or more frequently if considered appropriate. The primary purpose of the contact is to satisfy the Council that suitable and efficient education is being provided. This can be done through a meeting at a mutually agreed location or through other means such as the submission of a written report. The important factor is whether the information can demonstrate that suitable and efficient education is being provided. There is no duty for parents choosing to home educate their child to engage in contact with the Council if they do not wish to do so.

Following the contact, Education Services will write to the family advising them of whether or not the educational provision was seen to be suitable and efficient. Where there are concerns about the efficiency and suitability of the education being provided, Education Services will write to the parents to clarify the nature of these concerns and provide support and guidance to address issues arising.



## **E. Legal Duty on West Lothian Council**

In circumstances in which the Education Services has reason to believe that a parent/carer is not providing an efficient and suitable education for a home educated child, it has a duty to intervene regardless of whether or not the child/young person has previously attended a local authority school.

If, from whatever source, the Education Services becomes aware of concerns about the home education of any child/young person, outwith the normal contact time, Education Services will gather the necessary information in order to form a view on whether those concerns are justified and whether the parent/carers are providing an efficient education suitable to the age, ability and aptitude of the child.

Learning takes place in a wide variety of environments and not simply in the home. Where the education is taking place in the home, Education Services may consider it desirable to have the opportunity to see the child in that learning environment, to observe the provision directly in order to make a decision as to whether suitable and efficient education is being provided. Education Services does not, however, have a right of access to the home and the child. Trusting relationships may need time to develop before a parent is willing to invite an Education officer to visit. Where a parent elects not to allow access to their home and the child, this does not in itself constitute a ground for concern about the education provision. Although it is recognised that the learning environment can have a bearing on the effectiveness of learning, Education Services will offer to discuss and evaluate the parents' educational provision by alternative means. Parents might prefer, for example, to write a report, provide samples of work, either in hard copy or electronically or provide evidence in some other appropriate form.

Where Education Services has concerns about the education provision which are not allayed by the presentation of written or alternative forms of evidence and ongoing dialogue, and the only way clarification as to whether suitable and efficient education is being provided is to seek access to the home environment, then a request to do so will be made to the parent/carer. Education Services will outline the grounds of concern to the parent when requesting access to the home. In these exceptional circumstances, if the parent refuses to allow access to the home, Education Services may reasonably conclude that they have insufficient information to satisfy themselves as to the efficiency and suitability of the education provision. At this point, the Council may serve a notice on the parent in terms of section 37 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980

## **F. Child Protection**

The welfare and protection of all children/young people, both those who attend school and those who are educated by other means, is a paramount concern and is the responsibility of the community as a whole. It is no more likely that child protection issues will arise in relation to home educated children than school educated children. However, if concerns do arise, they should be referred to the appropriate authorities using established protocols.

Parents may choose to employ other people to educate their child/young person though they themselves will continue to be responsible for the education provision. Parent/carers are also responsible for ensuring that those they engage are suitable persons to have access to children/young people. Parents/carers are advised to satisfy themselves for example by taking up appropriate references or requesting that

a disclosures check is carried. Further information about disclosure checks is available from Disclosure Scotland (info@disclosurescotland.co.uk tel: 0141 282 5000).

#### **G. Making an Attendance Order**

West Lothian Council should make an Attendance Order where the parent/carers, on whom notice has been properly served, fails to satisfy the Council that efficient education is being provided, suitable to the age, ability and aptitude of the children or that there is reasonable excuse for his or their failure to do so.

Only in extreme cases should a notice under section 37 be served. This would be issued where the education is clearly not efficient and suited to the age, ability and aptitude of the child and this situation is not likely to be resolved by further ongoing dialogue, or where the authority has made every effort to secure the information required to enable it to satisfy itself that the education is efficient and suited to the age, ability and aptitude of the child and that information has not been provided by the parent. A section 37 notice will allow between seven and fourteen days for the parent/carers to provide the Council with whatever information it requires to be satisfied that the education is efficient and suitable. The parent may choose to do this by meeting with Education Services Officers in person or by supplying the information in writing.

Once an Attendance Order has been made, the parent/carers has Fourteen days to appeal to the Sheriff, who may confirm, change or annul the order. The decision of the sheriff is final.

#### **H. Examinations and School Course Availability for Home Educated Children/Young People**

There is no legal requirement for children/young people to sit a particular set of examinations. If parents/carers want a child/young person to take a particular qualification, they should investigate thoroughly whether, and how easily, their child/young person will be able to access examination and assessment arrangements. The Council is not required to meet any costs associated with home educated candidates taking examinations or other qualifications. The Council will however, where circumstances allow, take a reasonable approach and make available any resources or support and give information about alternative qualifications and the arrangements needed for children/young people to take them, where applicable.

In all cases, pupils enrolled at a West Lothian school will have priority for course and examination provision over members of the community, including home educated children and young people.

#### **I. Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs)**

A home educated child/young person is eligible for EMAs, subject to the same criteria as set out for school educated children. EMAs are available to eligible young people who are undertaking full-time non-advanced level study by home education. The EMA programme is administered by the Council and applications should be made to:- [EducationCustomerServices@westlothian.gov.uk](mailto:EducationCustomerServices@westlothian.gov.uk).

Students applying for an EMA as a home educated student must have a history of

home education prior to reaching their official school leaving date. The Scottish Government publish updated guidance annually in March. Parents should refer to the latest guidance for more details.

#### **J. Flexi-Schooling**

On occasion requests are submitted to withdraw a child part-time from school, eg for the child to attend school only on certain days, or for certain subjects. The feasibility of each request will be considered on its own merit, while taking into consideration that under Section 28 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 “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”. This arrangement within West Lothian Council is known as Flexi-Schooling. Only where children do not attend any school, and where the education is provided predominantly by the parents, should the arrangement be considered to be home education.

#### **K. Children/Young People with Additional Support Needs**

A parent’s right to home educate a child/young person applies equally where that child has additional support needs. The fact that a child has additional support needs will not, in itself, be a reason to refuse an application for consent to withdraw a child/young person from school. It is reasonable, however, for West Lothian Council to ask parents to indicate how they propose to cater for their child/young person’s additional support needs at home.

When considering an application for consent, or considering whether the education is suitable, taking account the age, ability and aptitude of the child/young person, the Council will consider the environment in which a child with additional support needs is to be educated and its appropriateness for the individual child/young person. With the agreement of the parents, the child’s Educational Psychologist may be involved in assessing the proposed provision for a child/young person with additional support needs.

There is no statutory responsibility on West Lothian Council to provide financial or other support for the education of children/young people with additional support needs whose parents elect to home educate.

#### **L. Record Keeping**

Local authorities should keep a written record setting out any discussions, recommendations or agreements made with parents, and where relevant the reasons for them. Any written report should be copied to the parents, and where appropriate the child. In exceptional cases, where there is a reasonable concern that a passage in any written record might cause serious harm to the physical or mental health or condition of any person concerned, consideration should be given to withholding that part of it. The authority will be aware of the need to comply with data protection and freedom of information principals.

#### **M. Named Person**

Home education children and young people, from 31 August 2016, will be able to access the Named Person Service in West Lothian.

The Named Person Service will be available to listen, advise and help a home

educated child or young person and their parent/carer(s), provide direct support or help them access other services. The Named Person Service will only offer advice or support in response to a request from a child or parent, or when a wellbeing need is identified. The service can be accessed via the central email address and dedicated phone number from 31 August 2016: [namedpersonservice@westlothian.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:namedpersonservice@westlothian.gcsx.gov.uk)  
01506 282064

### EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL TIMETABLE – 2016-2017

<b>Deadline for Submission of Items for Agenda</b>	<b>Committee Issue Final Agenda</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>
<b><i>Tuesday 30 August 2016</i></b>	Wednesday 31 August 2016	<b>Tuesday 6 September 2016</b>	Council Chambers
<b><i>Tuesday 8 November 2016</i></b>	Wednesday 9 November 2016	<b>Tuesday 15 November 2016</b>	Council Chambers
<b><i>Tuesday 3 January 2017</i></b>	Wednesday 4 January 2017	<b>Tuesday 10 January 2017</b>	Council Chambers
<b><i>Tuesday 14 March 2017</i></b>	Wednesday 15 March 2017	<b>Tuesday 21 March 2017</b>	Council Chambers
<b><i>Tuesday 23 May 2017</i></b>	Wednesday 24 May 2017	<b>Tuesday 30 May 2017</b>	Council Chambers
<b>All meetings will be held at 10.00 am unless otherwise advised</b>			



## EDUCATION PDSP WORKPLAN 2015-16

Title	Purpose	Lead Officer	Frequency	PDSP	Referral to Education Executive
Supporting Children with Personal Care Needs (Guidelines for Staff)	To invite members to agree guidelines for supporting children with Personal Care Needs.	Andrew Sneddon	One Off	17/05/2016	7/06/2016
Session Dates 2017/18	To invite members to consider proposed session dates for session 2017/18	Andrew Sneddon	Annual	17/05/2016	7/06/2016
Meeting the Needs of Young People with Additional Support Needs	To update members on the proposals to enhance the capacity of mainstream schools and nurseries to meet additional support needs	Alison Raeburn	One Off	17/05/2016	No
Parental Engagement Framework	To inform members of the parental engagement framework	Jan Ingram	One-Off	17/05/2016	7/06/2016
Home Education Policy	To inform members of proposed changes to the Home Education Policy	Alison Raeburn	One Off	17/05/2016	7/06/2016
Education Services Management Plan	To inform members of planned session dates for 2016-17	James Cameron & Donna McMaster	Yearly	06/09/2016	No
Positive Relationships and Health and Wellbeing	To update members on Positive Relationships and Health and Wellbeing	Alison Raeburn	One Off	06/09/2016	25/10/2016
Active Schools Annual Report	To update members on the activities of the Active Schools unit	Matt Costello/Sheila McEwan	Annual	06/09/2016	No
Adaptive Testing	To inform members of performance in Adaptive Tests		Annual	06/09/2016	No

<b>Title</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>PDSP</b>	<b>Referral to Education Executive</b>
Nurture In Schools Year End Evaluation	To update members on the nurturing framework at the end of its first year of operation	Jennyfer McNiven	One Off	06/09/2016	No
Digital Learning	To inform members of the progress of Digital Learning and schools network infrastructure in West Lothian.	Donna McMaster	One Off	06/09/2016	No
Moving Forward in Learning	To inform members of the collaborative work-streams and quality improvement framework	James Cameron & Donna McMaster	One Off	06/09/2016	No
Attendance Policy	To inform members of the updated Attendance Policy	Alison Raeburn	One Off	06/09/2016	Yes
Transition Policy	To inform elected members of up to date guidance on key transitions	Jan Ingram/Phyllis Wood	One Off	TBC	Yes
Corporate Parenting	To inform members of the Children and Families Steering Group report on corporate parenting.	Children and Families Steering Group	One-Off	TBC	No