



Education Executive

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

23 March 2017

A meeting of the **Education Executive** of West Lothian Council will be held within **Council Chambers, West Lothian Civic Centre** on **Tuesday 28 March 2017** at **10:00 a.m.**

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1. Apologies for Absence
2. 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.
3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business and declarations of interest in any urgent business
4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Education Executive held on Tuesday 28 February 2017 (herewith).

Public Items for Decision

5. Attendance at School: Policy and Operational Procedures - Report by Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources) (herewith)
6. Youth Music Initiative Year 15 Proposed Programme - Report by Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources) (herewith)
7. Out of School Care Consultation and Plan - Report by Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources) (herewith)

Public Items for Information

8. ERASMUS Plus Project: PRACTICE - Report by Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources) (herewith)
9. Holiday Lunch and Activity Clubs - Expansion of Provision - Report by Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources) (herewith)
10. Raising Attainment in Early Years' Literacy and Numeracy - Report by Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) (herewith)
11. Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) - 1140 Hours Expansion - Report by Head of Education (Learning Policy and Resources) (herewith)

NOTE **For further information please contact Elaine Dow on 01506 281594 or email elaine.dow@westlothian.gov.uk**

MINUTE of MEETING of the EDUCATION EXECUTIVE of WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LoTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 28 FEBRUARY 2017.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), David Dodds, Stuart Borrowman, Tony Boyle, Harry Cartmill, Tom Conn, Alexander Davidson, Jim Dixon, Carl John, Dave King, Sarah King, Anne McMillan, John McGinty, Andrew Miller, George Paul, Frank Toner and Jim Walker; Appointed Representatives Elsie Aitken, Myra Macpherson, Margaret Russell and Parent Council Representative Eric Lumsden.

Apologies – Councillor Danny Logue; Appointed Representatives John MacKinnon and Lynne McEwen.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Dodds declared a non-financial interest arising from his son being employed as a teacher at Inveralmond Community High School.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS, INCLUDING NOTICE OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair ruled under SO7 (Urgent Business) that an additional item – Raising Attainment – Local Government Benchmarking Framework, be included following agenda item 6 – Parental Engagement in West Lothian Council Schools, to give members the opportunity to consider this item of business.

3. MINUTE

The Education Executive approved the minute of the meeting held on 17 January 2017 as being a correct record. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. PROFILING IN WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL SCHOOLS

The Education Executive was provided with a presentation by Catrina Hatch, Senior Development Officer, Suzanne Young, Head Teacher and Stuart Sharp, Teacher from Inveralmond Community High School and three pupils from Inveralmond CHS, on the development of profiling in schools.

The Education Executive was advised that profiling in West Lothian schools allowed children to keep a summary of their learning progress and achievements. Learners were able to take ownership of their profiling which helped them to gain self-awareness of the skills they were developing.

The Head Teacher stated that a hub approach between Inveralmond

CHS, Bathgate Academy, Broxburn Academy and Deans CHS was undertaken to develop the use of the profiling tool, Didbook. Pupils engaged in the process and found the tool to be beneficial. Progress tracking and monitoring allowed staff to monitor the children's progress during the year. Pupils were also able to access the Didbook at home or by mobile networks and able to share their experiences with their parents and carers.

The pupils then provided the Education Executive with details of their experiences using Didbook. They were able to reflect on tasks or assessments in class and consider what their strengths and areas for development would be rating their learning by using the red, amber or green approach.

Following the conclusion of the presentation a series of questions were asked by the Education Executive. The Depute Chief Executive confirmed that Didbook was being used in all secondary schools in West Lothian.

The Education Executive then thanked staff and pupils for their presentation and acknowledged the excellent work carried out in developing the use of profiling in West Lothian schools.

The Education Executive then noted the report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing details of the development of profiling and the contribution that it would make to raising attainment and developing confident individuals.

The report explained that in planning the process of profiling schools aimed to ensure young people acquired the skills to reflect on their learning and to develop the skills for life and work, to enable them to develop positive attitudes about themselves and to provide opportunities for dialogue between pupil and peer; teacher and pupil; teacher, pupil and parent/guardian. Schools across West Lothian were in a strong position to continue to improve their work in this area, supported by Moving Forward in Learning and Secondary Hub activity and therefore to meet the purposes of profiling.

The Education Executive was asked to note the development of profiling and the contribution that it would make to raising attainment and developing confident individuals.

Decision

1. Noted the presentation; and
2. Noted the contents of the report.

5. PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL SCHOOLS

The Education Executive was provided with a presentation by Catrina Hatch, Senior Development Officer, Jacqueline Stewart, Head Teacher

and Emily Sinclair, Support for Learning Teacher at Bankton Primary School and Karen Russell, parent of children attending Bankton Primary School, on Building a Family Learning Community within the school.

One of the key drivers of The National Improvement Framework (NIF) is parental engagement. A key area for development has been ongoing improvements in schools in how they support parents to become involved in their children's learning. Significant research was carried out into Parental Engagement and Family Learning, creating opportunities for parental engagement across West Lothian. A West Lothian conference entitled 'Parental Engagement in Children and Young People's Learning' was scheduled to be held on 24 March 2017, aimed at driving forward a commitment among leaders to parental and family engagement and celebrating and sharing success of current practice.

The Head Teacher then stated that the main aim of building a family learning community was to strengthen relationships for family learning, building an ethos of trust and supporting parents to become involved in their children's learning. Members of staff within the cluster had taken part in professional learning groups, working with partners in the community to support families. A number of Support for Learning (SFL) programmes were being held within the cluster collaboration which included bite-size sessions and SFL tutorials for parents and their children to support families to secure better outcomes. A successful SFL numeracy festival was held recently and feedback from parents was that the event was excellent and that a larger venue should be used for the next event. Support booklets were also available for parents on the school BLOGs.

The Support for Learning Teacher advised that a number of family learning events across all areas of school improvement were held, which included Emotion Works, Rights Respecting Schools and Scottish Book Trust Read Write Count Gifting Events, which were found to be successful.

Bankton Primary School was also invited to attend the National Strategic Conference on family learning and shared in the key messages which helped to shape the Review of Family Learning. Bankton Primary – Building Capacity in Parents Exemplar was included on the National Improvement hub (Education Scotland) which included Challenge Questions/Benchmarking Tools and Impact Statements.

Karen Russell then confirmed that she attended family learning events and would encourage other parents to get involved. Parents were enjoying sharing in their children's learning experiences and were happy with the work being carried out by staff in Bankton Primary School.

Finally, the Head Teacher advised that staff would continue to listen to and value the views of parents supporting family learning to improve children's capacity to learn.

In response to questions from The Education Executive the Head Teacher advised that work was ongoing with secondary school staff to encourage

parents of children attending secondary schools to become more involved in their children's learning. Staff were also engaging with working parents to provide a flexible approach to parental engagement and ongoing work was being carried out with community partners to provide support for adult learners.

The Chair, on behalf of the Education Executive, thanked everyone involved for the excellent presentation and commended the commitment of teaching staff and parents in supporting parental engagement.

Following the conclusion of the presentation the Education Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) confirming that the work being undertaken by West Lothian Council to implement the Parental Engagement Framework and to improve and embed parental and family engagement and learning in school strategies was progressing well. Children and their families would be placed at the heart of decision making in order to ensure that the children and young people in West Lothian had the best possible start in life.

It was recommended that the Education Executive note the progress made in implementing the Parental Engagement Framework, and with improving and embedding parental and family engagement in school strategies, and to note that the Parental Engagement Framework would be kept under review in order to ensure that it continued to reflect best practice in supporting parents to become involved in their children's learning and in family learning.

Decision

1. To note the presentation; and
2. To note the contents of the report.

6. RAISING ATTAINMENT – LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

The Education Executive noted a presentation by the Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) providing details of the success of West Lothian Council in raising attainment during the period 2012 to 2016 as measured by the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

The data provided compared the ranking of West Lothian Council against 31 other local authorities. West Lothian Council was also part of a 'family group' of eight local authorities, judged to be similar in socio-economic characteristics, comprising Clackmannanshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Falkirk, Fife, Renfrewshire, South Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire. The Local Government Benchmarking Framework helped local authorities measure how well they were performing in relation to similar councils and ensured that standard information was provided to local communities on the services they received.

Chart 1 highlighted the datazones in each of the 32 council areas found to be in the 20% most deprived in Scotland. It was reported that West Lothian was 13th out of the 32 local authorities in terms of their share of the most deprived datazones.

The Head of Education then provided an overview of the attainment levels as measured by the four main measures of SCQF attainment contained in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework. It was noted, however, that Linlithgow Academy had not been included within the statistics provided as the curricular model of the school had been designed to allow pupils to by-pass National Five and proceed straight to Higher. Taking this into account West Lothian Council's percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more awards at Level 5 would be 66%, ranking West Lothian in 4th position.

West Lothian pupils attained more at both SCQF Level 5 and Level 6. Particular success was achieved in relation to the attainment of pupils from deprived areas, where West Lothian Council ranked third in Scotland at both SCQF Level 5 and Level 6 and exceeded the performance of other councils in its benchmarking family. This demonstrated a successful contribution in efforts to close the attainment gap.

Finally, in all measures West Lothian Council had improved its ranking relative to other Scottish local authorities and in relation to those with similar socio economic characteristics.

The Head of Education then responded to questions from the Education Executive. In response to a question from the Parent Council representative in relation to the gap in tariff scores between SIMD Quintiles 1 to 5, the Executive was advised that West Lothian was above the average tariff score for each of the 5 SIMD quintiles. The improvement of wider achievement amongst the most deprived 20% demonstrated a successful contribution to closing the attainment gap.

The Education Executive noted the comments from Councillor Miller that he was happy to see attainment levels rising in West Lothian. His only concern was that increases in attainment levels in primary schools be maintained in order to reduce the deprivation related attainment gap.

Councillor McGinty commended education staff for achieving the excellent results in West Lothian compared to the national position, which illustrated the hard work undertaken by school staff and officers over the past five year period. He highlighted that the Education (Scotland) Bill had been delayed by the Scottish Government, which was disappointing and could potentially damage the achievements made in West Lothian.

The Education Executive acknowledged the excellent progress made in raising attainment and closing the attainment gap and thanked education staff for their commitment and hard work.

Following the conclusion of the presentation the Education Executive noted a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of

Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance) highlighting the success of West Lothian pupils in achieving improved results in the period 2012 to 2016.

The detailed benchmarking information on pupils' attainment and achievement at SCQF levels, in relation to average tariff score, and in relation to achievement of the expected CfE level, provided an additional source of information which would be used by head teachers, teachers in the classroom and by the Quality Improvement Team and the Performance Team in their work with individual schools to raise attainment in line with the Raising Attainment Strategy 2015/17.

It was recommended that the Education Executive notes the success of West Lothian pupils in achieving improved results in the period 2012 to 2016, and the increase in the ranking of West Lothian Council relative to other local authorities in the measures included in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF).

Decision

1. To note the presentation; and
2. To note the contents of the report.



EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: POLICY AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (LEARNING, POLICY AND RESOURCES)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Education Executive of the revision of Education Services, Attendance at School (with Guidelines) Policy (2010) to be incorporated into the Education Services policy, Attendance At School: Policy and Operational Procedures.

B. RECOMMENDATION

To approve the revised policy document Attendance at School: Policy and Operational Procedures (attached as Appendix 1).

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	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
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	<p>In 2007, the Government published national guidance, Included, Engaged and Involved: Part 1 – attendance in Scottish Schools which focuses on promoting attendance and managing absenteeism.</p> <p>An equality relevance assessment has been undertaken.</p>
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Performance indicators relating to attendance at school.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The revised policy can be implemented and delivered within existing resources
VII Consideration at PDSP	Underway
VIII Other consultations	The following to be consulted: Legal Services, Social Policy, Schools, Parents/carers.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

West Lothian Council is committed to working with all parents/carers, children/young people and its partner agencies to ensure that all children and young people receive an education that maximises the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Key to full engagement with education is the provision of motivating learning experiences and the removal of barriers to learning.

Non-attendance may be an indicator of issues or difficulties a child or young person is experiencing. It is recognised that children and young people may be absent from or late to school at some time in their school career. The impact of non-attendance and non-engagement with learning, however, significantly increases gaps in knowledge and understanding and the likelihood of young people leaving school without securing a positive destination. For some, life presents particular challenges which may impact negatively on attendance and engagement. Attendance at school therefore requires to be approached within the wider framework of inclusion and wellbeing, taking into account the holistic needs of the child/young person.

When assessment, planning and action are needed to support a child or young person's attendance, the Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) National Practice Model is used to provide a framework for structuring and analysing the child or young person's needs in the same way as for any other additional support need. Using the National Practice Model in a consistent way allows practitioners to construct, implement and review plans for children and young people to ensure the appropriate supports are in place.

The purpose in revising the policy is to provide clarity on the collaborative, multi-agency approach and related procedures involved in:

- improving overall attendance and punctuality of all pupils at school;
- ensuring that engagement and attendance is a priority for pupils, parents/carers, staff and partner agencies to enable all pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors;
- ensuring consistency in dealing with all issues of attendance and absence: and
- ensuring the accurate recording of pupils' attendance and absence in accordance with Scottish Government guidance.

E. CONCLUSION

The Education Executive is asked to approve the revised policy and operational procedures involved in attendance at school.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- National guidance, Included, Engaged and Involved: Part 1 – attendance in Scottish Schools 2007

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Attendance at School: Policy and Operational Procedures

Contact Person: Alison Raeburn, Inclusion & Wellbeing Manager, alison.raeburn@westlothian.gov.uk

James Cameron, Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources)

Date of Meeting: 28 March 2017

Appendix 1



Author: Inclusion & Wellbeing Manager
Last Revised: March 2017
To Be reviewed: March 2018

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL: POLICY AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

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- 5. A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH**
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Appendix One – Operational Procedures for Absence From School

Appendix Two – Operational Procedures For Reducing Late Coming

Appendix Three – Operational Procedures for Authority Attendance
Group (AAG)

Appendix Four – Correspondence Templates

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1. INTRODUCTION

West Lothian Council is committed to working with all parents/carers, children/young people and its partner agencies to ensure that all children and young people receive an education that maximises the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Key to full engagement with education is the provision of motivating learning experiences and the removal of barriers to learning.

Non-attendance may be an indicator of issues or difficulties a child or young person is experiencing. The impact of non-attendance and non-engagement with learning significantly increases gaps in knowledge and understanding and the likelihood of young people leaving school without securing a positive destination. For some, life presents particular challenges which may impact negatively on attendance and engagement. Attendance at school therefore requires to be approached within the wider framework of inclusion and wellbeing, taking into account the holistic needs of the child/young person.

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Given the centrality of attendance at school to other areas of strategic and operational activity within the council, it is necessary also to consider this aspect of educational provision in conjunction with policy and procedure in relation to Corporate Parenting responsibilities, Children Missing from Education, the development of Positive Relationships, Transition Planning and rights of families to Home Educate children and young people.

Child Protection is of paramount importance and non-attendance at school may indicate a child is at risk. In this situation Child Protection takes precedence over the Attendance Policy and The Edinburgh and Lothian's Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures must be followed. <http://intranet.westlothian.gov.uk/article/6976/Child-Protection>

Education Authorities are under a duty in relation to pupils unable to attend a suitable educational establishment as a result of their prolonged ill-health. In such circumstances schools must make special arrangements for the pupil to receive appropriate education. Government guidance on the education of pupils absent from school through ill-health is provided through the following link <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/158331/0042883.pdf>

2. AIM

The aim of this policy and related procedures is to:

- improve overall attendance and punctuality of all pupils at school;
- ensure that engagement and attendance is a priority for pupils, parents/carers, staff and partner agencies to enable all pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors;
- ensure consistency in dealing with all issues of attendance and absence: and

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- ensure the accurate recording of pupils' attendance and absence in accordance with Scottish Government guidance.

3. DEFINITION OF ATTENDANCE

Attendance is defined as participation in a programme of educational activities which includes:

- attendance at school;
- learning outwith the school provided by a college, off-site unit or other learning provider while still on the roll of the school;
- educational visits, day and residential visits to outdoor centres;
- interviews and visits relating to further and higher education or careers events;
- debates, sports, musical or drama activities in conjunction with the school;
- study leave for pupils participating in national exams, if arranged by the school during the period of the national examination timetable;
- activities in connection with psychological services, learning or behaviour support (including attendance at the Authority Attendance Group);
- receiving tuition via hospital or outreach teaching services;
- work experience;
- participation in alternative educational programmes.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Under Section 30 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 parents/carers have a legal duty to secure an efficient education for any child of statutory school age for whom they are responsible. Most parents / carers seek to do this by enrolling the child in a Local Authority managed school.
- It is the Education Authority's legal duty to require the parent/carer to explain the reason for their child's absence from school (Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Section 36).
- Section 35 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that a parent/carer will be guilty of an offence for failure to secure regular attendance by his or her child at a public school.
- The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 provides for where a parent has parental rights and responsibilities they should be included in all matters relating to attendance unless there are legal reasons to the contrary. Both parents/carers should be included in all correspondence and invited to all meetings.
- Section 40 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, amended section 14 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 so that Education Authorities are under a duty in relation to pupils unable to attend a suitable educational establishment as a result of their prolonged ill-health. In such circumstances an education authority must make special arrangements for the pupil to receive education elsewhere than at an educational establishment.
- The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 places duties on local authorities, and other agencies, to provide educational support where needed to enable any child or young person to benefit from education. A very wide range of factors may lead to children and young people having a need for additional support. Additional support may be required for a child or young person who is not a regular attendee and therefore poor attendance must be seen as an additional support need.
- The Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 seeks to improve the way services work together to support children, young people and their families.

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5. A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Partnership with Parent/Carers and Pupils

There is a strong connection between attendance and achievement. All schools are required to promote good attendance to ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to achieve their potential. This can be achieved by raising the profile of attendance and absence around the school and in school documents such as school handbooks, newsletters, websites and Glow blogs and by linking rewards systems with good attendance. It is good practice to highlight the benefits of good attendance to all concerned e.g. in assemblies, awarding certificates or prizes, reward programmes and annual/term-time events celebrating individual, group and whole class achievement. Study Support programmes and Breakfast Clubs can also be useful in encouraging attendance and, in some cases, have been targeted towards those with attendance difficulties.

Attendance can dip towards the end of school terms. An understanding of the benefit of attending school for the full term can be supported through the consistent delivery of relevant, challenging and motivational learning activities. Such educational activities require to be planned for, and implemented, throughout the term, including the school days immediately prior to holiday breaks.

Schools should aim to promote in parents/carers positive attitudes to attendance. This includes raising the awareness of parents to the effects on attainment and access to life chances if children do not attend school regularly, or are persistently late. In discussing attendance with parents it is important to maintain a practical focus that recognises the challenges of parenting and modern family life.

Parents should be encouraged to motivate their child to attend school. Some parents may have particular concerns about their child attending school. In these circumstances positive and early communication between school and home is crucial to resolve matters promptly without adverse impact on attendance. Having a named contact within the school for parents to discuss pastoral care issues is important.

A welcoming school ethos will create an environment which avoids lateness developing into absence for the full day. Lateness should be dealt with respectfully and consideration given to any family difficulties. When the school becomes aware of any difficulties it should do what it can to help in partnership with other services.

Promotion of positive attitudes to attendance includes raising the awareness of pupils and parents/carers to the effects on attainment and access to life chances if pupils do not attend school regularly, or are persistently late. Any developments around attendance and punctuality issues should include consultation and involvement with pupils themselves. Asking them what they think about attendance and what ideas they have to encourage positive attendance will give them a greater sense of ownership.

Partnership with Other Services

As stated above, West Lothian Council is committed to working with its partner agencies to ensure that all children and young people receive an education that maximises the opportunity to achieve their full potential. It is recognised that non-attendance may be an indicator of a wide range of issues or difficulties a child or

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young person is experiencing. It is essential therefore that an early intervention multi-agency approach be considered when addressing attendance concerns.

The Attendance Improvement Management Services (AIMS) within The Children & Young People Team, Social Policy, was established specifically to support West Lothian Council's commitment to improving attendance at school. Every mainstream school has a designated AIMS worker. It is essential that good lines of communication are established and maintained between school and their designated AIMS worker. This is best facilitated through regular contact/scheduled meetings to ensure consistency in implementation of the council's Attendance Procedures. It is recognised that arrangements for such communication will be agreed at a local level. Given the catchment area for specialist schools is West Lothian wide, an AIMS Worker for any identified attendance concerns within special schools is organised directly with the AIMS Team Manager.

6. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

Operational procedures for the management of attendance and absence are outlined in the following appendices to this policy document:

Appendix One – Operational Procedures for Absence From School

- A. Absence Management Procedures for Primary and Secondary Schools
 - (a) Safe Arrivals: Dealing With Unexplained Absence On First Day Of Absence
 - (b) Safe Arrivals: Dealing with Unexplained Absence Second Day Of Absence Onwards
 - (c) Five Stage Intervention Process
 - (d) Exceptional Circumstances
 - (e) Transition to Another School and Holiday Periods
 - (f) Taking A Child Out Of School During The Normal School Day/Early Departures
- B. Absence Management Procedures for Pre-School Provision
 - (a) Safe Arrivals: Dealing With Unexplained Absence for Nursery Classes, Nursery Schools and Early Years Centres
 - (b) Two Stage Intervention Process
- C. Recording and Coding Information
 - (a) Authorised Absence
 - (b) Exceptional Domestic Circumstances
 - (c) Unauthorised Absence
 - (d) Extended Leave With Parental Consent
 - (e) Exclusion From School
 - (f) Family Holidays During Term Time
 - (g) Unacceptable Reasons for Absence and Course of Action
 - (h) Absences Awaiting Confirmation
 - (i) Truancy and Absence Occurring During The School Day
 - (j) Attendance/Off Site Provision as Part of a Learning Programme
- D. Information For Use in Website/Leaflet/Handbook/Newsletter

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Appendix Two – Operational Procedure For Reducing Late Coming

Appendix Three – Operational Procedures for Authority Attendance Group (AAG)

- A. Background
- B. Membership of the AAG
- C. Personnel in Attendance
- D. Referral Process and Administration of AAG
- E. Conducting the Meeting
- F. Possible Disposals by the AAG
- G. Re-referral to the AAG

Appendix Four – Correspondence Templates

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APPENDIX ONE: OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

A. ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

(a) SAFE ARRIVALS: DEALING WITH UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE ON FIRST DAY OF ABSENCE

The primary aim is to ascertain a reason for absence where one has not already been established. **On the first day** of absence an initial assessment must be carried out to determine the reason for non-attendance. The following procedure must be adhered to:

- schools are required to inform parents/carers of the need to contact the school as early as possible, and before **9.00 am** on the first day of absence, if their child is going to be absent from school;
- when a pupil has been recorded as absent, and no prior notification has been given of the absence by the parent/carer, the school shall attempt to contact the parent/carer, using the Group Call system, by **9.45 am** on the first day of absence;
- parents/carers will be responsible for providing and updating emergency contact information and for providing and updating contact telephone numbers for use by the Group Call system. Parents/carers will be responsible for responding promptly to contact from the school;
- where a parent/carer/emergency contact is informed of the unexplained absence of a child from school and acknowledges the notification from the school, the parent/carer/emergency contact will be responsible for taking appropriate action in conjunction with the school; and
- in cases where the parent/carer/emergency contact does not respond to the notification of absence and therefore there is still no explanation of absence, the Head Teacher will conduct a risk assessment by **10.00 am** on the morning of the first day of absence.

RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR FIRST DAY OF ABSENCE

The following process should be adhered to in order to establish the category of risk for the child/young person. There are 3 grades of risk:

High - The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child/young person is in danger through their own vulnerability or may be the victim of a serious crime

Medium - The risk posed is likely to place the child/young person in danger or they are a threat to themselves

Low - The apparent threat of danger to the child/young person is regarded as minimal.

On every occasion of first day absence without explanation, a risk grading requires to be undertaken. This applies even where the young person is a frequent absentee. The risk grading should never be regarded as fixed and there must be regular reviews throughout the day to ensure that the initial risk grading is still appropriate. The level of risk will be identified by answering the following questions in relation to vulnerability, influences and past behaviour:

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Vulnerability:

Is there an identified risk of suicide?

Is criminality suspected to be a factor?

Is the child/young person vulnerable?

What are the effects of failure to take medication if it is unavailable to the child/young person?

Does the child/young person suffer from medical or mental health conditions, physical illnesses or disabilities?

Can the child/young person interact safely with others when finding themselves in unfamiliar circumstances?

Is there a known dependency on drugs, alcohol, medication or other substance either by the child/young person or by a close relative?

Is the child/young person on the Child Protection Register?

Do the current weather conditions present an additional risk?

Influences:

Are there family/relationship problems or recent history of family conflict and/or abuse?

Has the child/young person been witness to or subject to domestic abuse?

Is there an ongoing personal issue linked to any racial, homophobic, sexual, the local community or cultural issue?

Has the child/young person been witness to, subject to or been involved in a recent violent and/or hate crime?

Are there any known problems in school?

Past Behaviour (Behaviour which is out of character is often a strong indicator of risk):

Are the circumstances different from 'normal' or out of character?

Is there a known reason for the child/young person to be not attending school?

Has the child/young person been missing before? Where were they found and did they come to harm?

The answers to the above questions enables the Head Teacher to decide whether the absent pupil should be categorised as High, Medium or Low Risk within the timescale stated above.

This decision will inform the most appropriate course of action. The options of next steps are either to:

- continue to monitor the level of risk throughout the day;
- where a child is known to have an allocated worker from Social Policy, inform the appropriate Social Policy team of the absence. The Social Policy team will then have the responsibility of contacting the family and establishing the whereabouts of the child/young person. In the event of the allocated worker being unavailable, their line manager or the Duty Manager will progress the matter;
- Call the Safe Arrival Duty Worker (telephone 01506 282947); or
- Call Police Scotland. Police Scotland would expect to be notified at the earliest opportunity with regards to a missing child/young person following on from the Safe Arrivals procedure as outlined above. Schools should in all cases, not hesitate to make immediate contact with the police if additional factors/information giving cause for suspicion or concern becomes available. To report a missing person, contact should be made to Police Scotland on 101. In an emergency, contact by means of the 999 system.

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(b) **SAFE ARRIVALS: DEALING WITH UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE SECOND DAY OF ABSENCE ONWARDS**

It is not appropriate procedure to contact the Safe Arrivals Duty Worker beyond the first day of absence. In the event of the outcome of the risk assessment on first day of absence being “to continue to monitor the level of risk throughout the day”, for each continued day of absence the risk assessment procedure requires to be undertaken as follows:

RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT DAYS OF ABSENCE

The following process should be adhered to in order to establish the category of risk for the child/young person. There are 3 grades of risk:

High - The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child/young person is in danger through their own vulnerability or may be the victim of a serious crime

Medium - The risk posed is likely to place the child/young person in danger or they are a threat to themselves

Low - The apparent threat of danger to the child/young person is regarded as minimal.

A risk grading requires to be undertaken on every day of absence without explanation. This applies even where the young person is a frequent absentee. The risk grading should never be regarded as fixed and there must be regular reviews throughout the day to ensure that the initial risk grading is still appropriate. The level of risk will be identified by answering the following questions in relation to vulnerability, influences and past behaviour:

Vulnerability:

Is there an identified risk of suicide?

Is criminality suspected to be a factor?

Is the child/young person vulnerable?

What are the effects of failure to take medication if it is unavailable to the child/young person?

Does the child/young person suffer from medical or mental health conditions, physical illnesses or disabilities?

Can the child/young person interact safely with others when finding themselves in unfamiliar circumstances?

Is there a known dependency on drugs, alcohol, medication or other substance either by the child/young person or by a close relative?

Is the child/young person on the Child Protection Register?

Do the current weather conditions present an additional risk?

Influences:

Are there family/relationship problems or recent history of family conflict and/or abuse?

Has the child/young person been witness to or subject to domestic abuse?

Is there an ongoing personal issue linked to any racial, homophobic, sexual, the local community or cultural issue?

Has the child/young person been witness to, subject to or been involved in a recent violent and/or hate crime?

Are there any known problems in school?

Past Behaviour (Behaviour which is out of character is often a strong indicator of

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risk):

Are the circumstances different from 'normal' or out of character?

Is there a known reason for the child/young person to be not attending school?

Has the child/young person been missing before? Where were they found and did they come to harm?

The answers to the above questions enables the Head Teacher to decide whether the absent pupil should be categorised as High, Medium or Low Risk within the timescale stated above.

This decision will inform the most appropriate course of action. The options of next steps are either to:

- continue to monitor the level of risk throughout the day;
- Call the local Duty Social Work Office; or
- Call Police Scotland.
To report a missing person, contact should be made to Police Scotland on 101. In an emergency, contact by means of the 999 system.

(c) **FIVE STAGE INTERVENTION PROCESS**

The five stage intervention approach, outlined below, provides a positive and supportive approach to improving attendance.

The rationale underpinning the following procedures is

- high quality pastoral care systems for early response to absence and signs of difficulty;
- effective approaches to assessment and planning for children and young people;
- multi-agency planning to ensure effective local child and family support. The council's Attendance Improvement Management Service (AIMS) is integral to achieving this;
- rigorous and timely implementation of attendance procedures; and
- appropriate measures for compulsory compliance by parents/carers or children/young people through Attendance Orders or referral to Children's Hearings.

These five stages dovetail with Education Services' Continuum of Support and, as such, a wellbeing concern will have been raised in relation to attendance prior to Stage 1.

Attendance falling below 90% triggers significant concern.

Summary Of Five Stage Intervention Approach

Stage 1

Following a wellbeing concern in relation to attendance at school, a letter to raise the awareness of the issue will be sent to parents/carers. In many cases this action will result in improved attendance at school.

Stage 2

Action to date has not resulted in improved attendance at school. A meeting will be held with parents/carers to discuss the issues and to investigate supports. The Assessment of Wellbeing approach will help focus on areas that may require support.

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In many cases this action will result in improved attendance. When increased attendance is not achieved, the school requires continuation of the Assessment of Wellbeing approach to determine next steps (including a decision on whether or not a request for service requires to be made to the Attendance Improvement Management Service (AIMS)).

Stage 3

Action to date has not resulted in improved attendance. A request for service is made to the Attendance Improvement Management Service (AIMS). Multi-agency collaborative planning is implemented to improve level of attendance. In many cases this action will result in improved attendance.

Stage 4

Action to date has not resulted in improved attendance. A child's planning meeting will be held to address wellbeing concerns and consider next steps. The planning meeting requires involvement of family members, the AIMS Team and all other relevant professionals.

Stage 5

Action to date has not resulted in improved attendance. A referral will be made to the AAG. The pupil will now be at level 3 of the Continuum of Support and Assessment of Wellbeing will be regularly reviewed. Child's planning meetings will continue to involve family members, the AIMS Team and all other professionals.

The five stages are further explained as follows.

Stage 1

Where a pupil's attendance has fallen below 90%, a letter should be sent to raise the awareness of the parent/carer to the level of absence and the impact it is having on the pupil's progress at school/nursery. (Template letter A1).

Exceptions to this would be where attendance has dropped below 90% only:

- as a result of the exceptional circumstances of an authorised parental holiday; or
- as a result of an exclusion; or
- where it is likely that a medical condition or domestic circumstance, known to the school, will regularly and repeatedly impact on a pupil's attendance or is sufficiently complex and significant to warrant discretion.

Stage 2

If in the next 4-week period, the pupil's attendance is still below 90% and there remains a concern about the level of attendance and/or the reason provided for the absence, a letter should be sent to parents/carers inviting them to attend a planning meeting with the school (Template letter A2).

This meeting should be supportive and should try to discover the reasons behind non-attendance. A plan should be agreed to improve attendance. A request for service may be made by the school to Community Child Health if/when medical issues are cited as reasons for repeated or prolonged absence without the school's prior knowledge of a medical condition serious enough to warrant such absence. The letter advises the parent/carer that a request for service will be made to the Attendance Improvement Management Service (AIMS) if they do not inform the school that they cannot attend the meeting.

If the Head Teacher considers that circumstances warrant attendance from the AIMS worker at this meeting for advice/consultation, this should be discussed prior to meeting being organised. Parents/carers should be notified if AIMS team are to

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be represented at this meeting.

If the parents/carers fail to attend the scheduled Stage 2 meeting or they do attend the meeting but this has no positive impact on the level of attendance then, following an Assessment of Wellbeing, the school may deem it necessary to progress to Stage 3 and a formal request for service would be made to AIMS.

Stage 3

A request for service is made to AIMS. Using **Template letter A3 or Template Letter A4** as appropriate, parents/carers are informed of a request for service to AIMS. AIMS require to receive the completed Assessment of Wellbeing in order for the Team Manager to facilitate appropriate support. Once allocated, the AIMS worker contributes to a collaborative Assessment of Wellbeing and a plan of work is agreed between the family, school and AIMS worker. This is regularly reviewed and collaborative meetings are organised as and when appropriate. Agreement to request a service from other agencies/professionals may be appropriate at this time.

Stage 4

If, after a 4 week period of support from the allocated AIMS worker, the pupil's attendance is not showing signs of significant improvement using monthly SEEMIS data, then following consultation between AIMS Worker and school representative, **Template letter A5** should be sent to parents/carers inviting them to attend a further child's planning meeting with appropriate professionals. This meeting should be supportive and be solution focussed. An action plan should be agreed and produced to improve attendance.

It should be noted that the attendance of the child at a child's planning meeting is encouraged but not mandatory depending on the age of the child and how appropriate it would be for him/her to attend the meeting. If it is deemed unsuitable for the child to attend a child's planning meeting, the child's views should be sought prior to the meeting.

The letter also advises the parent/carer that a referral may be made to the Authority Attendance Group if they do not inform the school that they cannot attend the child's planning meeting.

Stage 5

If the parents/carers fail to attend the scheduled stage 4 meeting, or they do attend the meeting but this has no positive impact on the level of attendance then, following an Assessment of Wellbeing, the school may deem it necessary to refer to the AAG. **Template letter A6 or Template Letter A7 as appropriate** should be used to inform the parents/carers of this referral.

Appendix Three provides further details on the operation of the AAG.

NB: All letters issued by schools should be generated from SEEMIS templates thus allowing the issuing of the letter to be recorded on the Pupil's Profile.

(d) EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

It is expected that, where the level of absence or disengagement is highly concerning, the Headteacher, or his/her representative, will, in discussion with their Attendance Improvement Management Service (AIMS) worker, move through each of the above stages quicker than the prescribed timescale until a level of

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intervention is reached which has an appropriate impact on the attendance of the young person. The appropriate template letters should be used.

If attendance improved to over 90% and subsequently deteriorated again, it would be at the Headteacher's discretion not to return to Stage 1 but to resume at whatever stage of the process is deemed appropriate in liaison with the AIMS worker.

(e) TRANSITION TO ANOTHER SCHOOL AND HOLIDAY PERIODS

Transition to another school or holiday periods should not prevent moving to the next stage of the five staged intervention process. Schools should not default to Stage 1 after the summer holiday periods or moving school if attendance issues persist.

(f) TAKING A CHILD OUT OF SCHOOL DURING THE NORMAL SCHOOL DAY / EARLY DEPARTURES

Parents/carers will be encouraged to make non-school appointments, where possible, outwith the normal school day.

Parents/carers who have to take a child out of school for an appointment should, where possible, notify the school in advance. If a parent/carer wishes the child to be released into the care of another adult then the parent must notify the school that this is the case. The school must appropriately log all such notifications.

Where the child is being collected, the parent / authorised adult will be required to sign the child out, indicating when the child will return.

The same basic process applies to children who have to be taken out of school during the school day because they are unwell.

B. ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES FOR PRE-SCHOOL PROVISION

(a) Safe Arrivals: Dealing with Unexplained Absence for Nursery Classes, Nursery Schools and Early Years Centres

The primary aim is to establish a reason for absence where one has not already been established. On the first day of absence an initial assessment must be carried out to determine the reason for non-attendance. The following procedure must be adhered to:

- Nursery Schools/Classes and Early Years Centres are required to inform parents/carers of the need to contact the school as early as possible, and within 30 minutes of the nursery session starting time on the first day of absence, if their child is going to be absent;
- when a pupil has been recorded as absent, and no prior notification has been given of the absence by the parents/carers, the school shall attempt to contact the parents/carers no later than 45 minutes into the session on the first day of absence;
- parents/carers will be responsible for providing and updating emergency contact information and for providing and updating contact telephone numbers. Parents/carers will be responsible for responding promptly to contacts from the

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- school;
- where a parent/carer/emergency contact is informed of the unexplained absence of a child from school and acknowledges the notification from the school, the parent/carer/emergency contact will be responsible for taking appropriate action in conjunction with the school;
- in cases where the parent/carer/emergency contact does not respond to the notification of absence and therefore there is still no explanation of an unexplained absence, the Head Teacher will conduct a risk assessment by one hour into the session on the first day of absence.

RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR FIRST DAY OF ABSENCE

The following process should be adhered to in order to establish the category of risk for the child. There are 3 grades of risk:

High - The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child is in danger through their own vulnerability or may be the victim of a serious crime

Medium - The risk posed is likely to place the child in danger or they are a threat to themselves

Low - The apparent threat of danger to the child is regarded as minimal.

A risk grading requires to be undertaken on every occasion of first day absence without explanation. This applies even where the child is a frequent absentee. The risk grading should never be regarded as fixed and there must be regular reviews throughout the day to ensure that the initial risk grading is still appropriate.

The level of risk will be identified by answering the following questions in relation to the child's and/or the family's vulnerability, influences and past behaviour. It is recognised that the answers to the following questions may be more applicable to the parent/carer:

Vulnerability:

Is there an identified risk of suicide?

Is criminality suspected to be a factor?

Is the child vulnerable?

What are the effects of failure to take medication if it is unavailable to the child?

Does the child suffer from medical or mental health conditions, physical illnesses or disabilities?

Can the child interact safely with others when finding themselves in unfamiliar circumstances?

Is there a known dependency on drugs, alcohol, medication or other substance either by the child or by a close relative?

Is the child on the Child Protection Register?

Do the current weather conditions present an additional risk?

Influences:

Are there family/relationship problems or recent history of family conflict and/or abuse?

Has the child been witness to or subject to domestic abuse?

Is there an ongoing personal issue linked to racial, homophobic, sexual, the local community or any cultural issue?

Has the child been witness to, subject to or been involved in a recent violent and/or hate crime?

Are there any known problems in school?

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Past Behaviour (Behaviour which is out of character is often a strong indicator of risk):

Are the circumstances different from 'normal' or out of character?

Is there a known reason for the child to be not attending school?

Has the child been missing before? Where were they found and did they come to harm?

The answers to the above questions enables the Head Teacher to decide whether the absent pupil should be categorised as High, Medium or Low Risk within the timescale stated above.

This decision will inform the most appropriate course of action. The options of next steps are either to:

- continue to monitor the level of risk throughout the session;
- where a child is known to have an allocated worker from Social Policy, inform the appropriate Social Policy team of the absence. The Social Policy team will then have the responsibility of contacting the family and establishing the whereabouts of the child. In the event of the allocated worker being unavailable, their line manager or the Duty Manager will progress the matter;
- call the relevant Health Visitor for the area. The Health Visitor will then have the responsibility of contacting the family and establishing the whereabouts of the child. In cases of staff absence or holiday, if messages are left on answering machines or similar, it cannot be assumed that they have been received and efforts to deliver an urgent message must continue; or
- call Police Scotland. Police Scotland would expect to be notified at the earliest opportunity with regards to a missing child following on from the Safe Arrivals procedure as outlined above. Schools should in all cases, not hesitate to make immediate contact with the police if additional factors/information giving cause for suspicion or concern becomes available. To report a missing person, contact should be made to Police Scotland on 101. In an emergency, contact by means of the 999 system.

(b) Two Stage Intervention Process

If a child does not attend pre-school regularly or is absent for more than two weeks without agreement from the pre-school establishment, the place may be withdrawn.

Before a place is withdrawn, the professionals involved with the child/family should decide whether this is an appropriate action taking account of the impact on the child of removing the place.

West Lothian Council operates a two stage intervention approach to managing the absence of children in pre-school provision. These stages dovetail with Education Services' Continuum of Support and, as such, a wellbeing concern will have been raised in relation to attendance prior to Stage 1. Attendance falling below 90% triggers significant concern. The non-attendance of nursery children at pre-school provision should follow stages of intervention as follows:

Stage 1

Where a pupil's attendance has fallen below 90%, a letter should be sent to raise the awareness of the parent/carer to the level of absence and the impact it is having on the pupil's progress at school/nursery. **Template Letter A1** should be used for

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this purpose.

(Exceptions to this would be where attendance has dropped below 90% **only** as a result of the exceptional circumstances of an authorised parental holiday or as a result of an exclusion or where it is likely that a medical condition or domestic circumstance, known to the school, will regularly and repeatedly impact on a pupil's attendance or is sufficiently significant and complex to warrant discretion.)

Stage 2

If in the next 4-week period, the pupil's attendance is still below 90% and there remains a concern about the level of attendance and/or the reason provided for the absence, a letter should be sent to parents/carers inviting them to attend a meeting with the school key persons (**Template Letter A8**).

This meeting should be supportive and should be solution focussed. A plan should be agreed to improve attendance. A request for service may be made to Community Child Health by the school if/when medical issues are cited as reasons for repeated or prolonged absence without the school's prior knowledge of a medical condition serious enough to warrant such absence.

C. RECORDING AND CODING INFORMATION

All schools are required to keep an attendance register of every pupil (The Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975). This information constitutes the certificate of attendance presented to the Authority Attendance Group (AAG) and subsequent court proceedings or the Reporter to the Children's Panel where it may be considered as evidence for compulsory measures of supervision or other action.

A pupil should normally be regarded as absent from school when he or she is not in attendance for a period greater than half of the morning or afternoon session.

Recording of absence should take place at least twice each day in primary school and period by period in secondary school to enable an accurate record of attendance to be kept. Codes for use when recording attendance/absence and lateness can be accessed direct from SEEMiS.

In line with Scottish Government guidance, for the purposes of national reporting, every absence is categorised as either authorised or unauthorised. Two additional categories have been established that fall outwith the normal categories of attendance and absence, these are:

- exclusion and
- extended leave with parental consent.

Schools should be able to evidence all meetings and interventions relating to attendance and late coming. Copies of all relevant notes, minutes, correspondence and referrals relating to time-keeping, trancies and non-attendance should be retained.

Further clarification is given below in relation to:

- (a) Authorised Absence
- (b) Exceptional Domestic Circumstances
- (c) Unauthorised Absence
- (d) Extended Leave With Parental Consent
- (e) Exclusion from school
- (f) Family Holidays During Term Time
- (g) Unacceptable Reasons for Absence and Course of Action
- (h) Absences Awaiting Confirmation

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- (i) Truancy and Absence occurring during the school day
- (j) Attendance/Off Site Provision as Part of a Learning Programme

(a) **Authorised Absence**

The category of authorised absence (the school is aware of the reason for the absence) includes absence deriving from reasons such as:

- sickness - where no special arrangements have been made or are necessary to receive education elsewhere
- medical and dental treatment
- bereavement
- short-term exceptional domestic circumstances
- religious observance
- authorised parental holiday
- arriving late after the mid point
- meetings prior to and in court
- attendance at or in connection with a Children's Hearing or Care Review
- weddings of immediate family
- participation in non-school debates, sports, musical or drama activities agreed by the school
- sanctioned extended absence in relation to children of travelling families.

(b) **Exceptional Domestic Circumstances**

Absences relating to exceptional domestic circumstances can be both authorised and unauthorised absence.

Authorised absence under this heading covers short term (not exceeding 27 consecutive openings) situations such as:

- the period immediately after an accident or illness
- a period of serious or critical illness of a close relative
- a domestic situation which causes serious disruption to the family home eg. domestic abuse, police involvement or
- the pupil acting as a young carer.

Education authorities (under section 40 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000) must ensure pupils within their catchment areas do not miss out on their entitlement to an education. A solution must be found for the long-term educational needs of pupils with care responsibilities. (Information on carers and young carers' entitlement to assessment can be found in the Health and Social Care Act 2001). If a pupil is unable to attend school due to such responsibilities, there is an expectation that additional support services will be accessed to support the pupil, and their absence from education will not be long-term and therefore categorised as authorised absence. However, where additional services have been offered but not accessed and care responsibilities become long-term (exceeding 27 consecutive openings), the absence should be categorised as unauthorised absence.

(c) **Unauthorised Absence**

Schools must record absence as unauthorised when there is no satisfactory reason for absence provided. Such absence is likely to include:

- most family holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances;
- parent-condoned absence where the school does not agree there is a satisfactory reason for absence;
- truancy, with or without the knowledge of the parent;
- during disputes relating to the return of a pupil after an exclusion;

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- unreasonable excuse, where a parent refuses to send their child to school following a dispute with the school or where reason is given by the parent/child and the school do not accept it as sufficient justification
- longer-term exceptional domestic carer circumstances where support has been offered;
- long-term exceptional domestic circumstances where additional support services have not been accessed to support the pupil
- all other unexplained absence is recorded as unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory explanation is subsequently provided.

(d) **Extended Leave With Parental Consent**

Where unauthorised family holidays will be recorded as unauthorised absence, extended leave with parental consent should not be considered the same as a family holiday. Extended leave with parental consent will be recorded separately outside the figures for attendance and absence and includes circumstances such as:

- extended overseas educational trips not organised by the school
- short-term parental placement abroad
- family weddings or funerals or other events and exceptional circumstances which may require children to travel (e.g. overseas) or participate in extended preparations, for cultural reasons
- leave in relation to children of travelling families.

NB: In some cultures, family weddings or funerals are major events which may require children/young people to travel (e.g. overseas) or participate in extended preparations. If this lasts for more than 4 weeks the school would normally have the right to remove the pupil from the roll in order not to be penalised in terms of its attendance record. However, in these circumstances, pupils may be considered as “Extended Leave With Parental Consent”, which allows them to remain on the school register ready for their return but without the school being penalised.

This section requires to be read in conjunction with the council's policy on Children Missing in Education.

(e) **Exclusion From School**

Exclusions are imposed by the school or by the authority and therefore there is a requirement to record and report these separately from other types of absence. Recording of attendance and absence should cease when a pupil is removed from the register of the school.

(f) **Family Holidays During Term Time**

West Lothian Council is clear that, except in the most exceptional of circumstances, children/young people should not be withdrawn from school for family holidays. Such absence is disruptive both to the education of the child withdrawn from school, and to his/her peers on his/her return to class.

The majority of family holidays taken during term time should be categorised as an unauthorised absence. It is acceptable, however, under exceptional circumstances, for schools to authorise a family holiday of not more than two weeks' duration, during term time. Such circumstances may include:

- a family holiday judged to be important to the wellbeing and cohesion of the family, following serious or terminal illness, bereavement or other traumatic events
- where evidence is provided by an employer that it cannot accommodate a

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child's parent/carer leave during school holidays.

A family holiday classified under the 'authorised absence' category will not include such reasons as:

- the availability of cheap holidays
- the availability of desired accommodation
- poor weather experienced during school holidays
- holidays which overlap the beginning or end of term
- parental difficulty obtaining leave except in the circumstances where satisfactory evidence is provided by an employer that it cannot accommodate a child's parent's leave during school holidays
- term dates not coinciding with those of other authorities.

It should be noted, however, that whether authorised or unauthorised, a parental holiday will still be recorded as an absence.

(Templates Letter A9 and A10 should be used accordingly)

It should be noted that for family holidays there is no requirement for schools to provide class work or homework to be undertaken by pupils during such absences.

Information contained in appendix 1D below should be used by schools for customisation into school parental information leaflets, website, newsletters as appropriate.

(g) **Unacceptable Reasons for Absence and Course of Action**

Where a parent/carer gives an explanation for an absence, but this reason is considered to be not acceptable, the school should send a letter to the parent/carer stating that the absence has been recorded as unauthorised (Template Letter A11).

(h) **Absences Awaiting Confirmation**

Verification of the reason for absence is required for every pupil for every absence. Schools must account for every absence and reason for it. Where a pupil is absent, the letter 'T' (to be confirmed) must be entered in the register, unless one of the absence verification codes has already been entered indicating that advance notice has been given of the absence and the reason for it. This 'T' code should be amended when confirmation of the reason has been received. Where no explanation is received this code should be changed to 'U' to show this absence is unacceptable. Any unexplained absence must be dealt with as soon as possible.

A letter generated by SEEMiS should be issued to parents/carers. (Template letter A12).

(i) **Truancy and Absence Occurring During The School Day**

Truancy is the unauthorised absence from school for any period as a result of pre meditated or spontaneous action on the part of the pupil, parent or both.

Truancy should be recorded as code 'U'. It should be normal practice to inform the parents/carers of the truancy as soon as the school become aware of the matter.

Parents/carers should be informed of truancy unless there is a genuine likelihood of abuse if the parents/carers are told. If this is the case, then action has to be taken under Child Protection Procedures.

In primary schools, the absence of a pupil during the school day will normally be picked up by the class teacher and reported to school management so that investigation can take place. Where an absence of this kind is discovered and

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confirmed, the recorded code should be changed from present, ie '-' to 'T', pending investigation. Parents/carers should also be alerted to the unexplained absence.

In secondary schools, a 'discrepancy' system is generally operated. At the beginning of each teaching period, the teacher matches the pupils in the teaching class against absentees, and immediately reports any discrepancy for investigation. Such systems pick up any pupils who have gone missing after being marked present at registration and also any who have arrived late and managed to bypass the late coming recording system. Where an unexplained absence of this kind is discovered and confirmed, the recorded code should be changed from present, ie "-" to "T", pending investigation or from "U" to "-" in tandem with late-coming procedures.

Each truancy investigation should be recorded in the Pupil's Pastoral Notes.

(j) **Attendance/Off Site Provision as Part of a Learning Programme**

Each school must ensure that it has in place robust procedures for maintaining accurate attendance information for pupils attending alternative or offsite provision as part of a learning programme. It is not sufficient to record OAT (other attendance out of school) and assume that the pupil has attended as arranged.

D. INFORMATION FOR USE IN WEBSITE /LEAFLET /HANDBOOK /NEWSLETTER

The following information should be considered by schools for customisation into school parental information leaflets, website, newsletters as appropriate.

"Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. They are also responsible for ensuring the safety of their children on their journeys to and from school.

Regular and punctual attendance is linked closely to achievement and attainment and school staff wish to work with parents/carers to ensure that children can reach their full potential. The school is required by law to maintain an accurate record of the attendance and absence of each pupil and parents are requested to assist in this process by keeping the school informed if their child is to be absent for any reason.

It is important to note that if a child does not arrive at school and there is no reasonable explanation provided for his/her absence then members of staff will be required to ascertain the whereabouts and safety of the individual child. In order to avoid causing unnecessary concern for parents/carers and staff, the importance of good communication between home and school cannot be over-emphasised.

Parents/carers are asked to assist school staff in the manner detailed below:

- if your child is unable to attend school through illness please telephone the school between 8.30 and 9.30 am on the first day of his/her absence*
- when you contact the school it would be helpful if an indication could be given as to the child's expected length of absence from school*

Planned Absence

Parents/carers are encouraged not to arrange family holidays during term time.

Except in cases of emergency, planned appointments for children to attend the dentist or doctor should be made outwith the school day

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Contact Details

Parents/carers are asked to ensure that telephone contact numbers (home, work and emergency contact(s)) are kept up-to-date and are numbers at which a response can be obtained in all normal circumstances."

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APPENDIX TWO: OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR REDUCING LATE COMING

Late-coming can significantly impact on attainment and achievement and can result in pupils missing out on the welcoming and informative start to a new working day. Poor timekeeping is disruptive to the individual pupil and to the learning of the class and may be an early warning of other difficulties.

Late-coming is defined as arriving in school after the start of the school day.

A pupil who arrives after the bell at the start of the school day but before the declared midpoint of a morning or of an afternoon should be recorded as 'J' irrespective of the reason for the late-coming.

A pupil arriving after the declared mid point is to be recorded using the code letter 'K'.

Each school should identify its declared midpoint by reference to a morning or afternoon interval or the beginning or end of a teaching period which occurs around the middle of the morning or afternoon.

Where a pupil's late-coming continues to be a concern despite contact with parents/carers, the school should consider the need for an Assessment of Wellbeing and subsequent action plan to meet the pupil's identified need. This process should be followed in line with the council's Continuum of Support.

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APPENDIX THREE: OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR AUTHORITY ATTENDANCE GROUP (AAG)

A. Background

West Lothian Council recognises the need for all children and young people to engage fully in the education process and has developed an approach for promoting attendance through positive and supportive interventions based on the implementation of Education Services' Continuum of Support in collaboration with our multi-agency partners. This is a framework that promotes early intervention and a positive partnership with parents/carers through a staged intervention approach. As part of the Continuum of Support, schools have the opportunity to proceed with a referral to the Authority Attendance Group (AAG).

The AAG is set up under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to facilitate West Lothian Council's statutory duties in terms of pupils in schools.

The overall duty of the AAG is to advise on the statutory responsibilities relating to attendance. This entails a meeting with parents/carers who are not carrying out the responsibilities assigned to them in terms of the legislation in relation to attendance at school.

The AAG is conducted in a formal manner, with the emphasis being on advice and encouragement to resolve the problem. The principal aim is to return the child to full-time education.

B. Membership of the AAG

The membership of the AAG is composed of:

- a Chairperson who is one of the Council's Heads of Service (Social Policy or Education Services). The Heads of Service may delegate this role to a senior officer within their service;
- two members drawn from a pool of senior officers from within Education Services and Social Policy.

Education Services carries out the administration involved in the operation of the AAG. The quorum of the AAG is two members.

C. Personnel in Attendance

The persons who should be present at a meeting of the AAG are not specified by law, but West Lothian Council specifies certain conditions and these are:

- the parent/carer named in the notice, although it is competent for business to proceed if a parent/carer does not respond to a notice requiring them to appear at a hearing;
- the pupil in question may also be present if the AAG feels that this is necessary (usually P4 and above);
- the Chairperson may sanction the attendance at a meeting of an appropriate person other than the members, officers, parents/carers and child, e.g. a relative, friend, Social worker, to support but not to replace the parents/carers;
- the referrer or a representative of the referrer.

D. Referral Process and Administration of AAG

Referral to the AAG is made by the Headteacher, after consultation with relevant staff and appropriate communication with parent/carers.

Documentation submitted for a referral to the AAG should be in line with the "Getting

Appendix 1

It Right For Every Child” (GIRFEC) framework, ie. Assessment of Wellbeing and child planning documentation.

The parent/carer will be served notice requiring him/her to appear, in accordance with the notice, before the AAG and explain the reason for the absence of the pupil from school. The notice will be given not less than 7 days and not more than 14 days before the hearing. The parent/carer has the option to submit written information rather than appearing at the meeting.

If the parent/carer fails to satisfy the AAG that he/she has a reasonable excuse in relation to the pupil's failure to attend school, the AAG may make the appropriate determination as to the disposal of the case.

E. Conducting The Meeting

In conducting the meeting, the following should be observed:

- all meetings must be held in private;
- venues for the meeting should be carefully considered in order to effect a positive outcome;
- meetings will be fixed and called, agenda arranged, minutes prepared, reports obtained and subsequent action taken by the Depute Chief Executive or delegated officer;
- agendas will be maintained as confidential documents, available only to members of the AAG;
- reports on the proceedings will be restricted to a statistical account together with a general description of the disposal of the case considered;
- all papers given out must be returned at the end of the meeting;
- if the AAG decides to interview a pupil, it must do so in the presence of the parent/carer and with the parent's/carer's permission.

When the parent/carer has been invited into the meeting, he/she should be asked to confirm that he/she is the parent/carer or guardian of the pupil concerned. The date of birth of the child should be checked. The Chairperson should then endeavour to establish whether reasonable excuse for non-attendance exists. The other members of the AAG may, through the Chairperson, ask such questions as they feel are relevant to the proper disposal of the case. The Chairperson should allow the referrer to have the opportunity of putting questions to the parent/carer.

The parent/carer and the referrer should be asked to withdraw while the AAG reaches a conclusion on the disposal of the case.

The AAG's determination will be intimated to the parent/carer at the meeting at the discretion of the AAG and will, in any event, be given in writing, following the meeting;

- should the disposal of the case involve a referral to either the Reporter for the Children's Panel and/or Community Child Health, all paperwork related to the case will be forwarded to the Reporter for the Children's Panel and/or Community Child Health as appropriate.

F. Possible Disposals by the AAG

The AAG can determine the following disposals:

- continue the case up to a maximum of 6 school weeks for a specified purpose which may be to monitor attendance or request additional information or reports;
- refer pupils for a statutory medical examination;
- make an attendance order;

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- refer to the Procurator Fiscal or take the case to the Sheriff Court for prosecution;
- refer the pupil to the Reporter for the Children's Panel;
- desert the case.

G. Re-referral to the AAG

If the attendance or punctuality of a pupil becomes unacceptable after having been deserted by the AAG, schools may decide it is appropriate to 'fast-track' the case back to the AAG. They would do this by picking up at Stage 4, in consultation with AIMS Worker, of the Five Stage Intervention Process.

Appendix 1

APPENDIX FOUR:

CORRESPONDENCE TEMPLATES

TEMPLATE LETTER A1 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of Parent/Carer)

(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

West Lothian Council is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers, children/young people and its partner agencies to ensure that all pupils benefit from an education that maximises the opportunity to achieve their full potential at school, in further education or employment.

School staff have a responsibility to monitor and record absence, interacting proactively with pupils and their families to promote good attendance and time keeping. In line with council policy. I am required to draw your attention to **(PUPIL'S NAME)**'s attendance as it has recently fallen below 90%. Whilst you may have notified the school that **(PUPIL'S NAME)** would be absent, I have a responsibility to impress upon you the impact of absence on achievement and attainment.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and supporting **(PUPIL'S NAME)**'s education. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you wish to discuss matters further.

Thank you for your support

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A2 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)
(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

I refer to my previous letter in which your attention was drawn to **(PUPIL NAME)**'s level of attendance. I have to report to you that **(PUPIL NAME)**'s attendance remains a concern.

West Lothian Council is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers, children/young people and its partner agencies to ensure that all pupils benefit from an education that maximises the opportunity to achieve their full potential at school, in further education or employment. I would therefore invite you to a meeting to discuss **(PUPIL NAME)'S** absence and agree strategies to help support **(PUPIL NAME)** achieve an improved level of attendance.

This meeting will be held on **(INSERT DATE)** at **(INSERT TIME)** in **(INSERT VENUE)**. If you are unable to attend, please call the school to reschedule.

In line with council policy, failure to inform the school that you cannot attend will result in a referral being made to the Attendance Improvement Management Service (AIMS) who will help us explore possible next steps in improving levels of attendance.

The remit of AIMS within The Children & Young People Team, Social Policy, is to specifically support West Lothian Council in improving attendance at school.

I look forward to meeting with you and thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A3 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)
(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

I refer to my previous letter in which I invited you to a meeting at the school with me to discuss the reasons for **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s absences and the effects these are having on **his/her** education.

In accordance with council policy, as you were unable to attend this meeting, a request for service will now be made to the Attendance Improvement Management Service (AIMS). The remit of the AIMS within The Children & Young People Team, Social Policy, is to specifically support West Lothian Council in improving attendance at school.

West Lothian Council is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers, children/young people and its partner agencies to ensure that all pupils benefit from an education that maximises the opportunity to achieve their full potential at school, in further education or employment.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you wish to discuss matters further.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A4 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)

(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

I refer to our meeting on <<INSERT DATE>> in relation to **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s absences and the effect on **his/her** education.

Unfortunately **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s level of absence remains a concern and I write to inform you that, in accordance with council policy, a request for service will now be made to the Attendance Improvement Management Service (AIMS). The remit of AIMS within The Children & Young People Team, Social Policy, is to specifically support West Lothian Council in improving attendance at school.

West Lothian Council is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers, children/young people and its partner agencies to ensure that all pupils benefit from an education that maximises the opportunity to achieve their full potential at school, in further education or employment.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you wish to discuss matters further.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A5 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)
(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

I refer to our previous communications regarding **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s level of attendance and can confirm that there has been no significant improvement.

In accordance with council policy, I am now obliged to move to the next stage of the Attendance at School Policy. This stage involves a child's planning meeting with you, school representatives and your allocated Attendance Improvement Management Service (AIMS) worker.

(Note to HT: Please reference any other agencies/professionals that will be invited to them meeting.)

This meeting will be held on **(INSERT DATE)** at **(INSERT TIME)** in **(INSERT VENUE)**. If you are unable to attend, please call the school to reschedule.

In line with council policy, failure to inform the school that you cannot attend will result in a referral being made to Authority Attendance Group (AAG). The AAG is set up under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to facilitate West Lothian Council's statutory duties in terms of pupils in schools.

I look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A6 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)
(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

I refer to our meeting on <<INSERT DATE>> in relation to **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s absences and the effect on **his/her** education.

Unfortunately **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s level of absence remains a concern and I write to inform you that, in accordance with council policy, a referral will now be made to the Authority Attendance Group (AAG). This is a statutory body which has provision to make the following decisions:

- To continue the case for up to a maximum of 6 weeks for a specified purpose which may be to monitor attendance or request additional information or reports.
- To desert the case.
- To refer **(CHILD'S NAME)** for medical examination.
- To make an Attendance Order.
- To refer to the Reporter to the Children's Panel
- To refer to the Procurator Fiscal so that prosecution may be considered.

I now, therefore, remind you of your parental obligations under the Education (Scotland) Act which states:

"Every parent or carer of a child of school-age has a duty to ensure that the child receives education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability."

This duty is fulfilled by the parent or carer by ensuring that the child attends school regularly. The Education Authority has a legal responsibility to enforce school attendance and can prosecute parents or carers whose children fail to attend school.

You will be contacted in due course informing you of the time/date/venue of the AAG hearing. Meantime, it is imperative that **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s attendance at school improves.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you wish to discuss matters further.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A7 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)
(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

I refer to my previous letter in which I invited you to a meeting at the school with me to discuss the reasons for **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s absences and the effects these are having on **his/her** education.

In accordance with council policy, as you were unable to attend this meeting, a referral will now be made to the Authority Attendance Group (AAG). This is a statutory body which has provision to make the following decisions:

- To continue the case for up to a maximum of 6 weeks for a specified purpose which may be to monitor attendance or request additional information or reports.
- To desert the case.
- To refer **(CHILD'S NAME)** for medical examination.
- To make an Attendance Order.
- To refer to the Reporter to the Children's Panel
- To refer to the Procurator Fiscal so that prosecution may be considered.

I now, therefore, remind you of your parental obligations under the Education (Scotland) Act which states:

"Every parent or carer of a child of school-age has a duty to ensure that the child receives education suitable to his/her age, aptitude and ability."

This duty is fulfilled by the parent or carer by ensuring that the child attends school regularly. The Education Authority has a legal responsibility to enforce school attendance and can prosecute parents or carers whose children fail to attend school.

You will be contacted in due course informing you of the time/date/venue of the AAG hearing. Meantime, it is imperative that **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s attendance at school improves.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you wish to discuss matters further.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A8 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)
(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

I refer to my previous letter in which your attention was drawn to **(PUPIL NAME)**'s level of attendance. I have to report to you that **(PUPIL NAME)**'s attendance remains a concern.

West Lothian Council is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers, children/young people and its partner agencies to ensure that all pupils benefit from an education that maximises the opportunity to achieve their full potential at school, in further education or employment. I would therefore invite you to a meeting to discuss **(PUPIL NAME)'S** absence and agree strategies to help support **(PUPIL NAME)** achieve an improved level of attendance.

This meeting will be held on **(INSERT DATE)** at **(INSERT TIME)** in **(INSERT VENUE)**. If you are unable to attend, please call the school to reschedule.

I look forward to meeting with you and thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A9 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)
(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Thank you for your application for leave of absence for **(CHILD'S NAME)** to go on holiday during term time.

I write to confirm that, in accordance with council policy, permission for leave of absence for **(CHILD'S NAME)** is not granted. As a result, any absences on these days will be recorded as unauthorised.

It should be noted that for family holidays there is no requirement for schools to provide class work or homework to be undertaken by pupils.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A10 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)
(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Thank you for your application for leave of absence for **(CHILD'S NAME)** to go on holiday during term time.

Under the circumstances, I am willing to authorise absence. However, please be aware that **(CHILD'S NAME)** will still be marked absent for this period and this will impact on his/her overall attendance figure.

It should be noted that for family holidays there is no requirement for schools to provide class work or homework to be undertaken by pupils.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A11 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)

(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

I have to inform you that the reason supplied for **(CHILD'S NAME)'s** recent absence from school is unacceptable and I am required to record this absence as unauthorised.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you wish to discuss matters further.

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER A12 – TO BE ISSUED ON SCHOOL HEADED PAPER

(Name and Address of parent/carer)
(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

(NAME OF PUPIL) (CLASS OF PUPIL) (DATE OF BIRTH): ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

It is the responsibility of parents/carers, if a pupil is absent, to inform the school by telephone of the reason or to supply a written note of explanation when the pupil returns to school.

(CHILD'S NAME) has unexplained absences for the date(s) <<insert date(s)>>

Please complete the reply slip below and return it to the school as soon as possible. In this way, **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s record of attendance can be updated accordingly. Alternatively, if you find it easier, please contact me on the telephone number above.

Should you fail to respond, in line with council policy, **(CHILD'S NAME)**'s absence will be recorded as "Truancy or Unexplained" and further investigation will take place.

Thank you for your support

Yours sincerely

HEADTEACHER

.....
.....

(CHILD'S NAME) was absent on _____ for the following reason:

Signed: _____

Parent/Carer of **(CHILD'S NAME)**

Date: _____



EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

YOUTH MUSIC INITIATIVE YEAR 15 PROPOSED PROGRAMME

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (LEARNING, POLICY AND RESOURCES)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the Education Executive of the Youth Music Initiative (YMI) Year 15 application to Creative Scotland who grant the funding for YMI and to seek approval for the submission of the application.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Education Executive approves the application for submission to Creative Scotland.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	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.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Procurement of YMI projects have been undertaken in line with council policy.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Enables West Lothian Council to meet the Scottish Government target that "all school children in Scotland should have access to 12 hours free music tuition by the time they reach Primary 6".
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	SOA1: Our children have the best start in Life and are ready to succeed. SOA2: We are better educated and have the access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	External funding from Creative Scotland, Youth Music Initiative Formula Funding, £220,896

subject to approval.

VII Consideration at PDSP

This report was considered at Education PDSP on 9 February 2016. The PDSP noted the report and recommended the proposal to Council Executive for approval.

VIII Other consultations

Financial Management Unit and Education.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

YMI funding enables schools to meet the Scottish Government target that “all school children in Scotland should have access to 12 hours free tuition by the time they reach primary 6”. This target is met by commissioning specialist individuals and organisations to deliver a range of music education projects to pupils in West Lothian.

Community Arts successfully applied to Creative Scotland for Year 14 funding for the YMI programme for 2016/17 and received the maximum award available: £246,228. This years’ programme will run from August 2017 to June 2018 and will include 14 projects plus investment in management, promotion and evaluation. Creative Scotland confirmed in January 2017 that the Youth Music Initiative Fund would be reduced by 10% in 2017/18. This has resulted in an overall reduction of £25,332 for West Lothian and means the maximum grant available is £220,896.

The outline cost for each project is as follows:

Project 1	Band! In-school	£30,249
Project 2	Band! After-school	£12,775
Project 3	Saturday Strings	£25,000
Project 4	The Big Ocarina Play Along	£11,342
Project 5	Voice Rocks	£12,427
Project 6	Band! Showcase	£13,317
Project 7	African and Afro Peruvian Refreshers	£7,488
Project 8	Curriculum for Excellence, Active Learning	£8,990
Project 9	Go for Bronze	£51,415
Project10	Music in Schools	£4,465
Project 11	Native American Drumming	£16,566
Project 12	Jazzamatazz	£7,200
Project 13	Travelling by Tuba	£6,420
Project 14	Wee Story, Big Sound	£7,740
	Management, promotion, evaluation	£5,502
	Total	£220,896

All contracts have been advertised through Quick Quote. Contracts for the delivery of the projects outlined in the application will be awarded following confirmation of funding. Subject to Council Executive approval, the Year 15 application will be submitted to Creative Scotland by the deadline date of 31 March 2017.

The projects outlined in the YMI application will be extremely beneficial to the young people who will participate, providing opportunities for them to work closely with professional musicians, creating performance opportunities and developing their listening, creative and critical thinking skills. They will develop increased self-confidence and self-esteem as well as having an enjoyable experience. The projects will make a significant contribution to enabling the participants to embrace the principles and capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. The programme will also be of benefit to teachers as the associated CLPL is designed to enhance teaching practice in the classroom and develop skills in using music as a tool for interdisciplinary learning across the curriculum.

The report was considered by Education PDSP on 21 March 2017. The PDSP agreed to refer the report to Education Executive with a recommendation that the funding application be approved for submission to Creative Scotland.

E. CONCLUSION

Community Arts will deliver and manage the 2017/18 YMI programme which will make a significant contribution to enabling the participants to embrace the principles and capacities of Curriculum for Excellence through a high quality programme of music-making activities.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

A copy of the YMI Year 15 application is available from Fiona Low, Senior Arts Officer, Community Arts, Education

Appendices/Attachments: None.

Contact Person: Fiona Low, Senior Arts Officer, Community Arts, Tel: 01506 773873, fiona.low@westlothian.gov.uk

James Cameron

Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources)

Date of meeting: 28 March 2017



EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

OUT OF SCHOOL CARE CONSULTATION AND PLAN

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (LEARNING, POLICY AND RESOURCES)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To invite the Education Executive to note the results of the consultation on out of school care and approve the proposed plan to use the consultation results.

B. RECOMMENDATION

To note and consider the recommendations to adopt and approve the Plan to:-

- 1) use the consultation results to inform future resource allocation decisions in relation to non-statutory out of school care provision;
- 2) use the consultation results to inform discussions with partners in relation to opportunities to increase provision through partnership; and
- 3) share the consultation results with Social Policy in order to help inform provision for children defined as in need.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| I Council Values | Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership. |
| II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment) | <p>The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 require local authorities to consult representative populations of parents on whether discretionary day care and out of school care for children not in need under the Children (Scotland) 1995 Act, should be provided or supported. There is a requirement to publish a plan in response to the consultation every 2 years.</p> <p>An equality relevance assessment has been undertaken. No environmental assessment is required. No risk has been identified in relation to the consultation and proposed plan.</p> |
| III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers | None |
| IV Impact on performance and | None |

performance Indicators

V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Our Children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The Council has identified resources to meet the current level of out of school care. Any increase in provision would require appropriate budgetary provision to be identified.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	Underway
VIII	Other consultations	Consultation of parents/carers with children at West Lothian schools.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Provision of Out of School Care - Statutory Background and Current Provision

Under section 27(3) of the Children (Scotland) 1995 Act, local authorities are required to provide out of school care to school aged children defined as in need; and have powers to provide out of school care to those who are not defined as in need. Social Policy provides a range of appropriate services and supports to children defined as in need, and their families. The provision of out of school care for children who are not in need is discretionary. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 does not place any requirement on authorities to deliver services which are discretionary.

A range of out of school care for school aged children is currently provided by West Lothian Council to support parents. This includes breakfast clubs at all schools, holiday lunch and activity clubs provided in areas of deprivation, and wraparound care (accessible by P1-3 children). Out of school care for school age children is also available through childminders and out of school care clubs, including those operated by parents at individual schools, community education centres and Simply Play.

D.2 Requirement to Consult and Plan - Statutory Background and Methodology

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires local authorities to consult representative populations of parents on whether discretionary day care and out of school care for children not in need under the Children (Scotland) 1995 Act, should be provided or supported. There is a requirement to publish a plan in response to the consultation. This will require to be done every 2 years.

Non-statutory guidance encourages authorities to integrate and co-ordinate all consultation. It is intended that in future consultations relating to out of school care should be co-ordinated with consultations relating to early learning and childcare.

Consultation should include representative samples of the local population, such as working parents, minority ethnic populations, hard to reach parents, parents of children with a disability or additional support needs; and parents with support needs. Education authorities can also consult on a local area basis to determine local area based models of provision and flexibility.

A consultation of parents of school age children was undertaken in late 2016. The consultation used text messaging to inform parents/carers of an online consultation questionnaire, using the contact details supplied by parents/carers. This method covered the parents/carers of children both in need and not in need as defined by the 1995 Act, achieving the integration recommended in guidance, and also covered working parents, minority ethnic populations, hard to reach parents, parents of children with a disability or additional support needs; and parents with support needs. Parents were asked to complete an on-line survey, included as Appendix 1.

D.3 Consultation Results

Responses were received from 3256 parents/carers. Details of the respondents are included as Appendix 2. Details of the type of childcare used before and after school and during school holidays, and the number of hours used before and after school and during school holidays are included as Appendix 3. Details of the unmet need identified are covered in the following sections of this report.

D.4 Out of School Care - Before School

90.1% of respondents (2814 parents/carers) reported that they had no unmet childcare need before school.

9.9% (308 parents/carers) responded that they had unmet childcare need before school. Of these, 128 (42%) had an unmet need of 2 hours of less, 120 (39.5%) had an unmet need of 2-5 hours per week, 46 (15.1%) had an unmet need of 5-10 hours per week and 10 (3.3%) had an unmet need of 10 or more hours per week.

The percentage of parents/carers within each ward reporting unmet childcare need before school is as follows:-

Armadale and Blackburn Ward – 11.1%

Bathgate Ward – 11.0%

Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh Ward – 12.0%

East Livingston and East Calder Ward – 9.5%

Fauldhouse and Brierley Valley Ward – 16.1%

Linlithgow Ward – 8.2%

Livingston North Ward – 10.0%

Livingston South Ward – 8.2%

Whitburn and Blackburn Ward – 5.4%

The percentage of parents carers with specific characteristics reporting unmet childcare need before school is as follows:-

Parent/carer of child with additional support needs – 13.2%

Parent/carer with disability – 11.3%

Parent/carer for whom English is not first language – 11.6%

Parent/carer with social work involvement in the family - 14.3%

D.5 Out of School Care – After School

83.5% of respondents (2568 parents/carers) reported that they had no unmet childcare need after school.

16.5% (509 parents/carers) responded that they had unmet childcare need after school. Of these, 80 (16.4%) had an unmet need of 2 hours of less, 183 (37.4%) had an unmet need of 2-5 hours per week, 130 (26.6%) had an unmet need of 5-10 hours per week, 78 (316%) had an unmet need of 10-20 hours per week, and 18 (3.7%) had an unmet need of 20 or more hours per week.

The percentage of parents/carers within each ward reporting unmet childcare need after school is as follows:-

Armadale and Blackburn Ward – 22.9%

Bathgate Ward – 16.0%

Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh Ward – 22.3%

East Livingston and East Calder Ward – 13.1%

Fauldhouse and Brierley Valley Ward – 26.5%

Linlithgow Ward – 10.6%

Livingston North Ward – 14.1%

Livingston South Ward – 15.0%

Whitburn and Blackburn Ward – 16.8%

The percentage of parents carers with specific characteristics reporting unmet childcare need after school is as follows:-

Parent/carer of child with additional support needs – 20.2%

Parent/carer with disability – 22.6%

Parent/carer for whom English is not first language – 19.5%

Parent/carer with social work involvement in the family – 19.1%

D.6 Out of School Care – School Holidays

78.6% of respondents (2362 parents/carers) reported that they had no unmet childcare need during the school holidays. 21.4% (645 parents/carers) responded that they had unmet childcare need during the school holidays. Of these, 58 (9.2%) had an unmet need of 2 hours of less, 117 (18.5%) had an unmet need of 2-5 hours per week, 213 (33.6%) had an unmet need of 5-10 hours per week, 113 (17.9%) had an unmet need of 10-20 hours per week, and 132 (20.9%) had an unmet need of 20 or more hours per week.

The percentage of parents/carers within each ward reporting unmet childcare need during the school holidays is as follows:-

Armadale and Blackburn Ward – 23.8%

Bathgate Ward – 21.9%

Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh Ward – 28.2%

East Livingston and East Calder Ward – 17.6%

Fauldhouse and Brierley Valley Ward – 33.6%

Linlithgow Ward – 18.1%

Livingston North Ward – 18.7%

Livingston South Ward – 18.8%

Whitburn and Blackburn Ward – 22.3%

The percentage of parents carers with specific characteristics reporting unmet childcare need after school is as follows:-

Parent/carer of child with additional support needs – 23.2%

Parent/carer with disability – 23.8%

Parent/carer for whom English is not first language – 24.9%

Parent/carer with social work involvement in the family – 26.9%

D.7 Out of School Care – Additional Comments

The consultation allowed respondents to make additional comments. 522 respondents took the opportunity to do so. Comments were wide ranging, although a number of common themes emerged. The most common subjects that were raised by parents are as follows:-

- There is a requirement for Out of School Care club at all schools, or a particular named school - 117
- Breakfast Clubs should open earlier (with times requested between 7.30am and 8.00am) – 74
- Available childcare is too expensive, with a negative impact on families - 66
- There is a lack of provision for secondary aged children - 47
- There is a requirement for holiday provision at all schools, or particular named schools – 27
- Out of School Care clubs should open later – 13
- Wraparound Care should be extended to P3-7 - 9

D.8 Out of School Care – Summary and Plan

The majority of parents/carers in West Lothian report no unmet childcare need in relation to childcare before school (90.1%), after school (83.5%) and during the school holidays (78.6%).

Unmet need is greatest during the school holidays (21.4%) and after school (16.5%), compared with before school (9.9%).

Unmet need varies from ward to ward. Parents/carers in the Fauldhouse and Brieche Valley Ward report the highest unmet need before and after school and during the school holidays. Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh Ward reports the next highest level of unmet need before and after school and during the school holidays, followed by Armadale and Blackburn Ward.

Unmet need is higher than average before and after school and during the school holidays for parents/carers of children with additional support needs, parents/carers with a disability, parents/carers for whom English is not their first language, and parents/carers with social work involvement in their families, although none of these groups has a consistently higher need than the others. The divergence from the average amongst these groups is less than the highest divergence resulting from geographical area.

The Council has identified resources to meet the current level of out of school care. Any increase in provision would require appropriate budgetary provision to be identified.

Based on the results of the consultation, it is recommended that a plan should be adopted to:-

1. use the consultation results to inform future resource allocation decisions in relation to non-statutory out-of school care provision;
2. use the consultation results to inform discussions with partners in relation to opportunities to increase provision through partnership; and
3. share the consultation results with Social Policy in order to help inform provision for children defined as in need.

E. CONCLUSION

The majority of parents/carers in West Lothian report no unmet childcare need. Unmet need is greatest during the school holidays and after school, compared with before school. Unmet need varies from ward to ward, and is highest in Fauldhouse and Brieche Valley Ward, Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh Ward, and Armadale and Blackburn Ward. Unmet need is higher than average for parents/carers of children with additional support needs, parents/carers with a disability, parents/carers for whom English is not their first language, and parents/carers with social work involvement in their families.

Based on the results of the consultation, it is recommended that a plan should be adopted to use the consultation results to inform future resource allocation decisions in relation to non-statutory out-of school care provision; use the consultation results to inform discussions with partners in relation to opportunities to increase provision through partnership; and share the consultation results with Social Policy in order to help inform provision for children defined as in need.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 - Consultation Questions

Appendix 2 – Residence, Personal Circumstances and Characteristics of Respondent

Appendix 3 - Type of Out of School Care and Number of Hours Currently Used by Respondents

Contact Person: Andrew Sneddon, Service Manager – Policy and Performance

andrew.sneddon@westlothian.gov.uk

James Cameron

Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources)

Date of Meeting: 28 March 2017

West Lothian Council Provision of Out of School Care Survey

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires Local Authorities to consult on the provision of out of school care for school aged children (aged 5-16). Please complete the attached survey to inform us of the needs of West Lothian parents and carers.

Information about your family

Where do you live?

Do any of your children have an additional support need?

Do you have a disability?

Is English your first language?

Do you have social work involvement in your family?

Who currently looks after your child/children before school? (Parent/Carer; Breakfast Club; Friend/Relative/Neighbour; Childminder; Other – Please specify)

How many hours of childcare before school do you use for each child each week?

Do you have childcare needs before school that are not currently being met?

If yes, how many hours of childcare before school are not being met for each child each week?

Who looks after your child/children after school? (Parent/Carer; Friend/Relative/Neighbour; Childminder; Out of School Care Club; Other – Please specify)

How many hours of childcare after school do you use for each child each week?

Do you have childcare needs after school that are not currently being met?

If yes, how many hours of childcare after school are not being met for each child each week?

Who looks after your children during the school holidays? (Parent/Carer; Friend/Relative/Neighbour; Childminder; Out of School Care Club; Other – Please specify)

How many hours of childcare during the school holidays do you use for each child each week?

Do you have childcare needs during the school holidays that are not currently being met?

If yes, how many hours of childcare after school are not being met for each child each week?

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about in relation to your current or future need for out of school childcare?

Residence of Respondents

Armadale and Blackburn Ward - 256 (7.9%)
Bathgate Ward - 443 (13.6%)
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh Ward - 344 (10.6%)
East Livingston and East Calder Ward - 201 (6.2%)
Fauldhouse and Brierley Valley Ward - 150 (4.6%)
Linlithgow Ward - 379 (11.7%)
Livingston North Ward - 559 (17.2%)
Livingston South Ward - 387 (11.9%)
Whitburn and Blackburn Ward - 211 (6.5%)

Personal Circumstances and Characteristics of Respondents

Parents/carers of children with an additional support need - 387 (11.9%)
Parents/carers with a disability - 141 (4.3%)
Parents/carers for whom English is not their first language - 284 (8.7%)
Parents/carers who have social work involvement in their family - 104 (3.2%)

Type of Out of School Care and Number of Hours Currently Used by Respondents

Before School

2,261 parents/carers (72.4%) responded that they looked after their own children before school. 866 (27.7 %) responded that their children attended breakfast clubs. 321 (10.3%) responded that their children were looked after by a friend, relative or neighbour. 177 (5.7%) responded that their children attended a childminder. 127 (4.1%) responded that they had other childcare arrangements, including out of school clubs, private nurseries and a combination of arrangements.

1911 parents/carers (61.3%) responded that they did not use any hours of childcare before school. 422 parents/carers (14.3%) used 2 or fewer hours of childcare per week before school. 478 (15.3%) used 2-5 hours of childcare before school per week. 196 (6.3%) used 5-10 hours of childcare before school per week. 86 (2.7%) used more than 10 hours of childcare before school per week.

After School

2,010 parents/carers (65.3%) responded that they looked after their own children after school. 837 (27.2 %) responded that their children were looked after by a friend, relative or neighbour. 290 (9.4%) responded that their children attended a childminder. 542 (17.6%) responded that their child attended an out of school care club. 154 (5%) responded that they had other childcare arrangements, including private nurseries and a combination of arrangements.

1582 parents/carers (51.4%) responded that they did not use any hours of childcare after school. 162 parents/carers (5.3%) used 2 or fewer hours of childcare per week after school. 416 (13.5%) used 2-5 hours of childcare after school per week. 477 (15.5%) used 5-10 hours of childcare after school per week. 329 (10.7%) used 10-20 hours of childcare after school per week. 110 (3.6%) used more than 20 hours of childcare after school per week.

School Holidays

2,207 parents/carers (73.4%) responded that they looked after their own children during school holidays. 1240 (41.2%) responded that their children were looked after by a friend, relative or neighbour. 256 (8.5%) responded that their children attended a childminder. 479 (15.9%) responded that their child attended an out of school care club. 199 (6.6%) responded that they had other childcare arrangements, including summer activity programmes, private nurseries and a combination of arrangements.

1,497 parents/carers (50.4%) responded that they did not use any hours of childcare during the school holidays. 44 parents/carers (1.5%) used 2 or fewer hours of childcare per week during the school holidays. 174 (5.9%) used 2-5 hours of childcare per week during the school holidays. 651 (21.9%) used 5-10 hours of childcare per week during the school holidays. 242 (8.1%) used 10-20 hours of childcare per week during the school holidays. 365 (12.3%) used more than 20 hours of childcare per week during the school holidays.



EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

ERASMUS PLUS PROJECT: PRACTICE

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (LEARNING, POLICY AND RESOURCES)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Education Executive about the progress of the ERASMUS Plus Project PRACTICE between West Lothian Council, Cooperative Education Trust Scotland (CETS), West Lothian College and partners in Hochsauerlandkreis in Germany.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Education Executive note the sharing of good practice between all of the partners and the joint working to give both staff and students new opportunities to learn.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	<p>Young people leaving school will have additional skills and experience which will help them to move into a positive destination.</p> <p>Staff involved in the programme will increase their knowledge of methods to support young people into positive destinations.</p>
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The young people will have experienced working life in another country bringing which will increase the quality of their learning experience and help to make them successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors

	The staff involved will expand their experiences and be able to introduce this to their classroom practice.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Funding has been obtained from the European Union for the entire project
VII Consideration at PDSP	
VIII Other consultations	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

Hochsauerlandkreis is twinned with West Lothian and has worked cooperatively through youth exchanges, partnership working and council visits for a number of years. After visits to Hochsauerlandkreis by West Lothian staff and to West Lothian by Hochsauerlandkreis staff it was agreed that it would be beneficial to both groups to apply for ERASMUS Plus funding to undertake a project to share good practice between both countries, undertake joint staff development activities and exchange students.

The aim of UK partners for the project is to support young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN), and staff from Pinewood and Cedarbank Schools. The German partners wish to focus on young people who have Social Emotional and Behavioural Needs (SEBN).

Over the next 2 years West Lothian Council hope to trial a range of vocational opportunities for S5/6 ASN pupils which will result in more choices being made available to them when they leave school.

D.2 Key Points

- The project was officially approved by the European Union in 2016 and started in October 2016 with a management meeting of both sets of partners in West Lothian in November 2016.
- The contracts were signed in February 2017 between all those involved agreeing the dates and locations of all meetings and mobility's.
- An internet portal has been established to share documentation to reduce the need for numerous emails with large file attachments and to allow all the information for the project to be stored in one place.
- Two staff from Pinewood School and three from West Lothian College will visit Hochsauerlandkreis between 19th March and 24th March 2017 to job shadow colleagues in Germany and learn about the procedures and resources available to support young people in German Special Schools.
- There is an additional meeting in June 2017 to assess the progress so far of the project and plan the next steps for the session 2017/18.
- To provide a transnational experience for ASN pupils from Pinewood School and German SEBN pupils. This will take place in March 2018.

- Share best practice between Germany and West Lothian (the focus is secondary school aged young people who are SEBN and ASN)
- The project will facilitate CPD for Pinewood School staff, West Lothian College staff and CETS including a transnational work shadowing.
- There will be an opportunity to pilot alternative vocational experiences for ASN pupils in West Lothian.
- The young people involved will be involved in additional college experiences and potentially accredited.
- The project will provide a range of work inspiration activities for our ASN pupils such as visits, extended placements etc.

E. CONCLUSION

This project allows staff and young people from both countries to meet, share ideas, exchange good practice and experience each other's cultures.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: None

Contact Person: Michelle Robertson Education for Work Officer
 Email: Michelle.Robertson@westlothian.gov.uk,
 Tel: 01506 281941

James Cameron
 Head of Education (Learning Policy & Resources)

Date of Meeting: 28 March 2017



EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

HOLIDAY LUNCH AND ACTIVITY CLUBS – EXPANSION OF PROVISION

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (LEARNING, POLICY AND RESOURCES)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Education Executive of the implementation of Holiday Lunch and Activity Clubs.

B. RECOMMENDATION

To note the expansion of holiday lunch and activity clubs, and plans for further expansion, utilising the additional funding granted in the 2017/18 Revenue Budget.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| I Council Values | Focusing on our customers' needs
Providing equality of opportunities
Working in partnership |
| II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment) | Local Authorities have a statutory duty to provide free school meals (Education (Scotland) Act 1980).
Provision will support the Anti-poverty Strategy
An Equality Relevance Assessment has been undertaken.
Provision will support the Council's health objectives.
Risk has been considered in the planning of provision. |
| III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers | None |
| IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators | Provision is measured by a Covalent Performance Indicator. The provision is expected to contribute positively to health, poverty and attainment indicators. |
| V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement | Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.

We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and |

	employment opportunities.
	People at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances.
	We live longer, healthier lives and have decreased health inequalities.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	£200,000 per year in financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18. Additional £200,000 in financial year 2017/18. Staffing provided from existing staff and additional casual staff. Administration provided by existing staff.
VII Consideration at PDSP	Not applicable.
VIII Other consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Pilot Provision – Summer and October 2016

West Lothian Council, at its meeting of 23 February 2016, agreed to introduce school holiday lunch and activity provision, and agreed a budget of £200,000 per year to support this activity in financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The provision of both food and activities is in line with academic research showing that pupils experience a learning loss during the summer holidays, and that this is most significant in pupils from low socio-economic status backgrounds.

The aim of the provision was to deliver nutritious meals and holiday activities to those most in need of this support during the school holidays. In summer 2016 provision was made directly by Sport and Outdoor Education coaching staff at five schools, and at a further two schools in partnership with existing community groups. Direct provision was made at Kightridgie PS, Murrayfield PS, St Joseph's PS, Whitburn, St Mary's PS, Polbeth and St Ninian's PS. Provision was made in partnership at Boghall PS and Riverside PS.

Average daily attendance was 175, although the total number provided for was significantly greater as many children did not attend each day. Total number of registrations at school provision was 187, with an additional 146 registered at the partnership provisions, a total of 333.

Of those children who registered with school provisions, 41% of them received free school meals (of if in P1-3 school clothing grant). At Boghall Sunshine Club, 52% of those registered received free school meals. At Riverside Playscheme, 37% of those providing information received free school meals. In comparison, the West Lothian wide figure is 17.3%.

Feedback received was positive. All were positive about the sporting activities. The large majority said they would come back again if the provision ran again.

West Lothian Council provision can be benchmarked against that of Glasgow City Council which opened two schools, received 140 registrations and provided 90 places.

During the October holiday, nutritious meals and holiday activities were provided directly by Sport and Outdoor Education coaching staff and at a further one school in partnership with an existing community group. Direct provision was made at Knightsridge PS and Murrayfield PS. Provision was made in partnership at Boghall PS.

Both demand and uptake during the October holiday was much lower, with approximately 15 children attending daily at the two venues where direct provision was made. The service provided was scaled back from the level of summer provision based on indicated demand, and also based on limited availability of staff, and ability to recruit casual staff during the October holiday.

Expanded Pilot Provision – Easter and Summer 2017

The additional funding granted in the 2017/18 Revenue Budget will allow the expansion of the existing pilot, by increasing the number of venues at which direct provision, and provision in partnership can be offered, and the number of children who will receive nutritious meals and worthwhile, fun activities during school holidays.

It will also allow the extension of the pilot into a new phase, involving provision of nutritious meals, and worthwhile, fun activities at Community Education Centres, as well as schools.

Provision for Spring 2017 is planned at Armadale PS, Knightsridge PS, Murrayfield PS, Polkemmet PS, Riverside PS, St Mary's PS, Polbeth and St Ninian's PS. Schools will open from 11.00am to 1.00pm. For the first hour and a half, activities will be provided by Sport and Outdoor Education coaching staff. Activities will include football, athletics, dance, games, and basketball. This will be followed by a hot lunch drawn from the existing school meal menu provided by Operational Services staff.

Initial indications are that a daily attendance of approximately 25 can be anticipated at these seven venues, a daily total of around 175 children.

Partnership provision is planned at Boghall Primary School, with the Boghall Sunshine Club providing activities, and a hot lunch being provided by Operational Services staff. Daily attendance of at least 25 can be anticipated.

A new model of provision will be delivered at Livingston Station Community Education Centre, with activities provided by staff employed by the community education centre, in line with the activities typically provided during holiday programmes. Daily attendance of approximately 40 per day can be anticipated.

Overall, therefore, the expanded Spring holiday programme is expected to deliver nutritious meals and worthwhile, fun activities, to a greater number of children than ever before.

Planning for Summer 2017 will build on the lessons learned in implementing the pilot so far, with provision made at schools, in partnership with existing community organisations, and exploring the possibility of expanding the number of community education centres offering holiday lunches and activities.

E. CONCLUSION

The provision of holiday lunches and activities has been received positively by those making use of the service. The level of provision made by West Lothian Council compares favourably with provision by other local authorities across Scotland and the

United Kingdom.

The inclusion of an additional £200,000 in the 2017/18 revenue budget will allow further expansion of the existing pilot with provision at schools using , and support the introduction of a new model of provision at community education centres.

This expansion will support the health and well-being and educational attainment of children in less affluent communities.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: None

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

James Cameron

Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources)

Date of meeting: 28 March 2017



EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

RAISING ATTAINMENT IN EARLY YEARS' LITERACY AND NUMERACY

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (CURRICULUM, QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Education Executive of a planned programme of universal and targeted interventions to further raise literacy and numeracy attainment in the early years, utilising the additional funding identified in the 2017/2018 revenue budget.

B. RECOMMENDATION

To note the planned programme of interventions, and expected measures for impact in children's progress in literacy and numeracy.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	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.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	<p>The planned programme is in line with the Council's Raising Attainment Strategy.</p> <p>No Environmental, Equality, Health or Risk issues arise from this report.</p>
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	The planned programme is designed to raise educational attainment and to close the gap in educational outcomes in the early years, which are reflected in performance indicators.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Education attainment is reflected in Performance Indicators within the Single Outcome Agreement.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Literacy and numeracy programme - £500,000 additional funding identified in the 2017/18 revenue budget.
VII Consideration at PDSP	Not applicable

VIII Other consultations

There has been consultation with headteachers.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Background

West Lothian Council is committed to delivering the best possible outcomes for children and young people, in line with the Single Outcome Agreement outcome that our children will make the best possible start in life. The interventions outlined below have been planned to ensure a universal approach to raising attainment for all children, as well as a targeted approach to areas with the highest levels of deprivation, as determined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

This report provides detail of how the literacy and numeracy programme will be delivered and how the impact of children's progress and attainment will be measured.

Planned Interventions

Universal interventions have been planned to ensure that there remains a focus on raising the attainment and aspirations of all of our children. These interventions include the following:

- Early years' officer to co-ordinate the delivery of literacy and numeracy developments including staff training in all of our early years' settings, costing £41,000.
- A cluster network leader to ensure the consistency of effective moderation processes for literacy and numeracy at local level, and provide opportunities to share and enhance good practice for all early years' practitioners, building on national and local advice, costing £36,000.
- Two development posts to co-ordinate and support the effective implementation of the early years' Oral Literacy programme to develop listening and attention skills in young children, and Online Learners' Journeys across all early years' settings, which will also support transition into primary one, costing £7,000.
- A resource allocation for each early years' setting to implement a specified 'closing the vocabulary gap' initiative that is suitable for their own setting and context, costing £128,000.

The following targeted interventions have been planned to ensure equity of opportunity for our children in areas of highest deprivation based on the number of children placed in Quintile 1 using SIMD information:

- Early years' funding for all early years' establishments which have not directly benefited from the national pupil equity funding grant. To ensure favourable and measurable distribution of funding, a minimum of £2500 and a maximum of £20,000 per establishment has been set. Each establishment has been allocated funding of £700 per child based on the number of children placed within their setting at Quintile 1 using SIMD, totalling a cost of £180,100. The individual breakdown by establishment is provided in appendix 1.

- The six early years' settings with the highest levels of deprivation based on SIMD will be allocated with funding to provide a family support worker, costing £107,900. This will create further opportunities to involve and engage parents/carers in their child's development and learning.

Summary of costings for £500,000 additional funding identified in the 2017/18 revenue budget for Literacy and numeracy programme

Early Years' Officer	£41,000
Cluster Network Leaders	£36,000
Development Post Holders	£7,000
Resource allocation for specific literacy intervention	£128,000
Targeted Funding	£180,100
Family Support Workers	£107,900
Total	£500,000

E. CONCLUSION

The shared purpose of our work is to continuously raise attainment and achievement for all children in West Lothian, ensuring they get the best start and are ready to succeed. Establishing firm foundations in early literacy and numeracy is critical to breaking the cycle of educational inequality and to improving the wider life chances of our poorest and most disadvantaged children.

The report provides a planned programme of interventions delivered by highly skilled practitioners which will enhance the opportunities and experiences for all of our children in our early years' settings.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices: None

Contact Person: Greg Welsh, Quality Improvement Manager (Acting),
greg.welsh@westlothian.gov.uk, Tel: 01506 282279

Donna McMaster
 Head of Education (Curriculum, Quality Improvement and Performance)

Date of Meeting: 28 March 2017



EDUCATION EXECUTIVE

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE (ELC) – 1140 HOURS EXPANSION

REPORT BY HEAD OF EDUCATION (LEARNING POLICY AND RESOURCES)

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Education Executive of the new revenue funding allocation for 2017/18 for the initial phase towards the expansion 1140 hours by 2020 for Early Learning and Childcare (ELC).

B. RECOMMENDATION

To note the planned initial expansion programme for early learning and childcare.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	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.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	<p>Statutory Guidance on Pre-School Education issued in terms of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.</p> <p>No Environmental, Equality, Health or Risk issues arise from this report.</p>
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Increasing flexibility and choice will improve performance in terms of parental satisfaction.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Ensuring our young people have the best possible start in life.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	ELC 1140hrs expansion - £739,000 additional revenue funding in 2017/18.
VII Consideration at PDSP	Not applicable
VIII Other consultations	There has been consultation with headteachers and the authority's early years' working group.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Background

West Lothian Council is committed to delivering the best possible outcomes for children and young people, in line with the Single Outcome Agreement outcome that our children will have the best possible start in life.

This report outlines how the additional revenue funding will be used to invest in workforce development and to trial 1140 hours in at two new ELC settings.

1140hrs Expansion

The Scottish Government has allocated additional revenue and capital funding to all local authorities in 2017/18 to enable them to invest in workforce development and expansion for 1140hrs by 2020. The primary purpose of this funding is to enable local authorities to begin to increase the size of the workforce and to equip existing staff with new skills. The 2017/18 investment is to take account of the principles which underpin the Scottish Ministers' *Blueprint for 2020*: quality, flexibility, accessibility and affordability.

The funding allocated to West Lothian Council to be utilised in 2017/18 - £735,000 revenue will be applied for the following which complies with the criteria set out within the funding letter.

Early Years Officer

Budget to employ an Early Years Officer (EYO) will be allocated to all ELC establishments from the additional revenue funding provided. Where demand/capacity is greater than 100 pupils (50/50) these establishments will be allocated budget for two Early Years Officers for August 2017. This will provide seventy-seven additional EYO posts across the service. Recruitment will be ring-fenced to non-teaching staff (permanent and fixed term) with appropriate experience and qualifications.

Headteacher's still may decide to retain a full time teacher within their nursery should their school budget/pupil equity funding allow.

Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL)

The EYO role includes an element of leadership and management, under the direction of the school management team. Therefore, in order to develop leadership capacity amongst EYOs, staff will be required to undertake - SQA Unit Childhood Practice: Leadership and Management which will be funded centrally.

ELC staff will be encouraged to complete the BA degree in Childhood Practice (separate funding to be announced by the Scottish Government during 2017). Staff meantime can apply to Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) to fund the course with funding provided for backfill day release

Headteachers will also continue to build capacity in their ELC team, for example through allocating senior staff a leadership role and responsibility in relation to quality assurance for ELC and supporting distributed leadership opportunities for all ELC staff.

New ELC Settings

Two new nursery locations will be opened offering flexibility and potentially 1140hrs pilots:

- Deans Community High School Nursery – August 2017
- Boghall PS Nursery Class – January 2018

Non Contact Time

Non-contact time for EYO will be increased from 1hr 46 mins to 2 hrs 30 mins per week to provide time for management/leadership duties and paperwork.

Small Establishments

An additional 25hrs Pupil Support Worker post per week will be provided to 12 small nurseries (20/20) to assist with support & supervision to enable ELC staff to concentrate on learning & teaching activities.

Summary of costings for £739,000 additional revenue funding for 2017/18

Additional Early Years Officer posts	£252,000
New early years settings (Deans CHS nursery and Boghall PS NC)	£167,000
Additional 25 hrs PSW support in smaller nurseries (20/20)	£200,000
Early Years Development Officer posts (2 days)	£50,000
Workforce Development	£20,000
Furniture & Resources for new settings	£50,000
Total	£739,000

E CONCLUSION

The additional revenue and capital funding will enable the service to implement phase one of the planned programme for the expansion of ELC for 2020, including expanding the workforce and trials of 1140 hours.

F BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) – 1140hours Expansion 2017-17 Funding Allocations letter.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Allocation per establishment of targeted early years' funding

Contact Person: Donna Adam, Strategic Resources Manager
(donna.adam@westlothian.gov.uk)

James Cameron
Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources)

Date of Meeting: 28 March 2017

Appendix 1 – Allocation per establishment of targeted early years' funding

Early Learning and Childcare Establishment	Roll – Including children allocated place from 18/04/17 * FD – Full day provision	Targeted intervention funding for identified number of children within Quintile 1 (SIMD)
1. Bathgate West	AM 40, PM 40, 2FD 32	£11,900
2. BEYC	AM 60, PM 60	£11,200
3. Bonnytoun	AM 28, PM 30, 2 FD 48	£2,500
4. Eastertoun	AM 35, PM 35	£5,600
5. Glenvue	AM 20, PM 20, 2 FD 26	£9,100
6. Hopefield	AM 30, PM 30	£20,000
7. IEYC	AM 50, PM 37	£19,600
8. Ladywell	AM 40, PM 34	£20,000
9. Eliburn	AM 28, PM 30	£2,500
10. Kirkhill	AM 29, PM 26	£2,500
11. KEYC	AM 40, PM 30, 2FD 30	£20,000
12. Polbeth	AM 39, PM 24	£14,700
13. WEYC	AM 50, PM 40, 2FD 23	£20,000
14. Woodlands	AM 35, PM 35	£10,500
15. Dechmont NC	AM 16, No PM	£10,000
Total Cost		£180,100