

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEETING TIMETABLE

REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Council Executive approval for the cancellation of the Education Quality Assurance Committee scheduled for 8 March and 26 April 2022.

B. RECOMMENDATION

The Council Executive is asked to agree to the cancellation of the Education Quality Assurance Committee, scheduled for 8 March and 26 April 2022, in light of the postponement of individual school scrutiny and inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; Being honest, open and accountable; 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)	Education (Scotland) Act 1980 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2014
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Education Scotland quality indicators are used to measure the performance of schools – How Good Is Our School?4 (HGIOS?4).
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Positive inspection reports are used as a key outcome measure in the Single Outcome Agreement. Positive is measured by satisfactory or better in the quality indicators used by Education Scotland.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None
VII Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII Other consultations	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

The Education (Quality Assurance) Committee carries out a scrutiny role in relation to internal and external schools' assessment and inspection reports. It provides a dedicated and specialised forum for scrutiny of performance and inspection outcomes for schools and educational establishments.

D2 Impact of Covid-19 on school inspections and Validated Self-Evaluation Programme

Since March 2020, following the first national lockdown and period of school closure, Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE), which provide the national scrutiny body, postponed all individual school inspection activities.

At its meeting on 2nd November 2021, members of the Education Quality Assurance Committee were informed of HMIE's intention to resume its programme of individual school scrutiny in January 2022.

A further update was provided Education Quality Assurance Committee at its meeting on 11th January 2022 informing committee that in line with public health guidance, and local circumstances related to the pandemic, the intended return to inspections had been reviewed and amended by HMIE. In considering the views of stakeholders, along with the ongoing challenges settings and schools are facing in dealing with COVID-19, HMIE have taken the decision **not to resume** the routine school and early learning and childcare school inspection programme as had been previously outlined.

It is now HMIE's intention that following the mid-term February break, if COVID-19 conditions allow, HM Inspectors will carry out 'recovery visits' to a selection of early learning and childcare settings and schools.

The council's Quality Improvement Team has engaged in alternative methods for ensuring ongoing improvements in West Lothian schools and regular updates are provided to Education PDSP.

E. CONCLUSION

Education (Quality Assurance) Committee's scrutiny role, in relation to internal and external schools' assessment and inspection reports, has been impacted due to the postponement of HMIE inspections and therefore will have no business to scrutinise at the committee meetings scheduled for 8 March and 26 April 2022.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

EQAC Paper (11.01.22)- HMIE Scrutiny Programme Update
<https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/viewDoc.asp?c=e%97%9Di%92q%80%8B>

Appendices/Attachments: None
Contact: elaine.cook@westlothian.gov.
Elaine Cook
Depute Chief Executive
8 February 2022