
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	30 August 2022
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/42/22/MR
Contact Officer:	Michael Roach	Contact No:	01475 712850
Subject:	Education Update		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 For Decision For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to ask members of the Education and Communities Committee to note updates relating to the Education Service both in terms of local development as well as national policy development.

1.3 The report includes updates on:

- Placing requests for August 2022
- Gaelic medium secondary education
- Report from the Education and Young People Committee on the Scottish Attainment Challenge
- Covid Education recovery Group
- Education and Qualifications reform
- Learning for Sustainability
- STEM
- PISA assessments

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members of the Education and Communities Committee are asked to note the content of the update report.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 UPDATES

3.1 Placing requests 2022/2023

The Pupil Placement Panel met on the 25/2/22, 11/3/22 & 17/3/22 to consider the allocation of placing requests to schools. Details of the placing requests considered at that time are detailed in appendix 1. It should be noted, that despite having an allocated time to submit placing requests, parents and carers can choose to submit placing requests at any time of the year. At the time of writing, parents and carers are still submitting placing requests for all year groups and there is a natural movement of families moving house or returning from abroad.

The Pupil Placement Panel considered 132 placing requests for primary schools in Inverclyde. 129 were granted and 3 refused. The refusals were: St John's Primary School

127 were considered for secondary schools 125 were granted and 2 refused. The refusals were: Clydeview Academy

If parents and carers are aggrieved by a decision of the Pupil Placement Panel to refuse a placing request then the parent/carer may refer the decision to the Education Appeal Committee administered by the Council's Head of Legal and Property Services. If the appeal is unsuccessful, then the matter may be referred to the Sheriff Court. Three appeals were subsequently heard and all were unsuccessful.

3.2 Update re Gaelic secondary education

In March 2022 the Education committee agreed that a Gaelic Advisory group be established to take forward a review of the options open to the council in relation to the provision of Gaelic secondary Education Inverclyde.

Since this time an advisory group has been established, chaired by the Head of Education, with membership includes reps from the Education Service HQ team, CLD, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Com na parent and the leadership team of Whinhill Primary School.

A terms of reference for the group has been agreed and the Education Service team are currently procuring an independent contact to carry out an options appraisal on the options open to the council.

It would be the intention of the Advisory group to bring a report based on this options appraisal to committee early in 2023 outlining the viable options identified.

A bid has been made to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for full funding for the options appraisal. It is hoped to hear the outcome of this soon. Even if not successful in full we hope to receive part funding for the appraisal process. The remaining cost will be found from within the service budget if required.

It is anticipated that as part of its manifesto commitment towards Gaelic Education, the Scottish Government will issue a consultation documents as to what needs to be undertaken to improve access to Gaelic education.

3.3 Report from the Education and Young People Committee on the Scottish Attainment Challenge

A report was published on 2 August 2002 setting out the findings of the enquiry by the Education and Young People Committee into the Scottish Government's policy commitment to closing the educational attainment gap. The full report can be accessed at the link below:

<https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdneq.azureedge.net/published/ECYP/2022/8/2/c33c7780-50fe-47d8-99fc-84807b85f2df/ECYPS62022R8.pdf>

The Corporate Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development was called to give evidence at the Committee as part of the West Regional Improvement Collaborative. Given the considerable decrease in the amount of money allocated to Inverclyde through the Attainment Challenge the report and findings will be of interest to members.

3.4 COVID-19 EDUCATION RECOVERY GROUP (CERG)

SCHOOL SAFETY

The Reducing Risks in schools guidance (updated on 31 May) reflects society-wide measures underpinned by advice from the Advisory Sub Group on Education and Children's Issues.

The Scottish Government will continue to review the guidance for all services that support children and young people and their families but both CERG and the Advisory Sub Group have been paused but can be reconvened by Ministers at any point as necessary.

3.5 Education and Qualifications reform

Professor Ken Muir's report, 'Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education', was published on 9 March, containing 21 recommendations.

In a Parliamentary Statement, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills gave the Scottish Government's response to the report. The Scottish Government accepted the recommendations as a starting point for an education reform programme, including the creation of the new qualifications body, the creation of a new national agency for Scottish education, and an independent inspectorate body. These will replace Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) and Education Scotland. More broadly, the Cabinet Secretary discussed the need for discussion and decisions about education reform to be informed by the widest possible range of stakeholder and practitioner views.

On 14 June the Education Secretary gave an update to Parliament on reform plans where she wants to encourage the most inclusive ever discussion on education in Scotland, with learners playing a key part in the decision making. The discussion will be co-convened by COSLA and the Scottish Government and will launch in the new term.

3.6 Learning for Sustainability (LFS)

The Scottish Government team has now commenced a focused engagement process in order to refresh and strengthen the national action plan on LfS. LfS covers global citizenship, climate education, rights education and outdoor learning. Engagement with education authorities is now taking place via the various LfS networks overseen by Education Scotland. In Inverclyde we will work alongside Education Scotland and continue to support school staff to increase their confidence in embedding learning for sustainability into the curriculum by working with partner agencies to organise opportunities to share practice.

Current practice in Inverclyde shows that there is a lot of work being undertaken on LfS including winning some national awards. Schools have linked up with local litter groups and Upstream Battle to take forward projects and volunteers for the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme volunteer with litter picks to keep communities litter free. Other practice includes:

- All schools, nurseries and Early Learning Centres are registered with the Eco Schools programme and some have achieved green flag status.
- Training has been delivered to staff by the West of Scotland Development Education Centre (WOSDEC) on embedding sustainability within the curriculum
- Majority of our clusters are participating in the dandelion project, where school children across Scotland are leading a major community growing programme – a huge nationwide experiment into how traditional growing methods could combine with 21st-century techniques to shape the food production of the future.
- A number of schools and early learning centres have outdoor space to support the development of the learning for sustainability curriculum – this includes gardens, allotments and bee hives for example.
- Our schools, often supported by parent councils, offer a uniform swap shop service, allowing parents to donate uniforms that are no longer needed for use by other families.

3.7 Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)

Scottish Government published a STEM Education and Training Strategy Refresh report on 26 May looking back at the implementation of the STEM strategy, and highlighting actions to be taken forward in the coming years, especially in respect of areas of work paused during the last two years due to the pandemic. Looking forward Scottish Government will invite stakeholders to join new governance bodies to ensure momentum is maintained.

3.8 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022

The PISA assessments will be taking place in up to 120 schools across Scotland in October and November 2022. This will involve around 3,000 15 year old pupils taking part in a three hour computer based assessment in schools.

Following the assessments, the results and analysis will be reported alongside the international results in December 2023.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO	N/A
Financial		X	
Legal/Risk		X	
Human Resources			X
Strategic (LOIP/Corporate Plan)		X	
Equalities & Fairer Scotland Duty		X	
Children & Young People's Rights & Wellbeing			X
Environmental & Sustainability			X
Data Protection			X

4.2 Finance

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

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

4.3 Legal/Risk

There are no legal implications.

4.4 Human Resources

N/A

4.5 Strategic

None.

4.6 Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 N/A

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.