

Appendix 1: Education Delivery Plan 2024/25

2024/25
DELIVERY PLAN

EDUCATION



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1. Introduction

Education comprises a wide range of services covering: 29 Early Learning & Childcare Centres; 34 Primary Schools; 5 Secondary Schools; 7 Specialist Settings; Policy, Performance and Resources; Services for Children and Young People; Raising Attainment; Early Learning and Childcare; and Educational Psychology Service. It is one of seven strategic areas responsible for delivering the Council's Strategic Plan. Key actions to help achieve that are set out in this Delivery Plan, together with actions to address any performance issues and service priorities identified in the planning process.

The progress of this Plan will be monitored and managed by the Education Leadership Team and reported to Educational Services Committee twice yearly, at the mid-point and end of the academic year.

2. Performance Review

The Education Leadership Team completed a detailed review of 2023/24 performance, focusing on the following:

- 2023/24 Delivery Plan mid-year progress;
- National Improvement Framework report;
- Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) comparative data;
- Citizens' Panel feedback;
- Telephone Survey feedback;
- Complaints;
- Continuous Improvement; and
- West Partnership Critical Indicators.

This review highlighted our key achievements in 2023/24 as well as the challenges to be addressed in 2024/25. These are summarised below.

Key Achievements in 2023/24

- Developed our 'Strategy for Excellence and Equity (2023-2026)' which builds on the improvement programme delivered across all educational establishments 2015- 2023; and includes an improvement plan for 2023-2026 which aims to embed practice identified through research and evaluation as highly effective at delivering excellence and equity.
- Development and implementation of UNCRC Strategy, and Young Carers Strategy
- Participation in 'Visible Learning' Programme by all primary schools, and middle leaders in Secondary Schools.
- Expansion of literacy strategy, with development of 'Come Read with me @ WDC' programme
- Development of Assessment and Moderation framework
- Strengthened procedures to monitor and track progress with stretch aims
- Deployment of 'Parental and Family Engagement Strategy 3-18, with clear links to the Child Poverty Action Group's 'Cost of the School Day Toolkit'
- Support provided for parents/carers impacted by poverty, including families of young carers; families with experience of care; families on the edge of care; and families with children who have other additional support needs. In addition to supporting learning at home, we also offer parenting support programmes, family therapy, financial advice, employability support, a summer holiday programme, school attendance support and training to support the parents of children with a neuro-diverse profile.
- Support for 3 multi-agency whole family wellbeing hubs
- We now deliver, across all our Early learning and Childcare settings, up to 1140 hours to eligible 2 year olds and children aged from 3 to those not yet attending primary school. Places for children under the age of 2 are available in our partner settings for working families and in our council settings for those families who require some support.
- In the first six months of 2023, 11 Early Learning establishments were visited by the Care Inspectorate, with all achieving grades of 'good' or 'very good', with two establishments receiving 'excellent' for the quality of their staff teams.
- During session 2023-24, His Majesty's Inspectorate visited Knoxland, Linnvale, Levenvale and Clydebank High School, with all achieving 'good' or 'very good' reports.
- Reached financial close and commenced construction of the new Faifley Campus, due to open in 2025.
- West Dunbartonshire has a strong record of progress and performance against National Benchmarks and Quality Indicators for excellence and equity. We rank 9th out of the 32 local authorities for performance with narrowing the attainment gap in the Broad General Education; and in Senior Phase national qualifications rank 5th out of the 32 local authorities for the attainment of our young people versus deprivation.

- Targeted intervention of partners supporting young people at risk of entering a negative destination having great impact on School Leaver Destinations, giving us 95.3% of our young people leaving school and entering a positive destination, our highest ever achievement in this area.

Key Challenges from 2023/24

- Supporting ELC staff to provide inclusive practice for children with ASN.
- Monitoring wider impact of Deferred Entry policy
- Developing ASN provision at ELC for children with autism.
- The complexity of need and therefore support required arising from mental health and well-being concerns and increasing number of children and young people identified as having an Additional Support Need (ASN).
- Delivering on the ASN estate expansion to meet growth in requirements, and phase one of Faifley Campus
- Implementation of digital change programmes (School Funds, Parents Portal, Enrolment and Transport, Senior Phase course delivery)
- Managing implementation of Clerical Review
- Whilst strong progress has been made with outcomes and targets for excellence and equity there still remains a poverty related attainment gap and concerted efforts and resource are necessary to sustain the rates of progress and success achieved.
- Designing change programme for Senior Phase provision.

3. Strategic Assessment

The Education management team completed a strategic assessment to determine the major influences on service delivery and priorities in 2024/25 and beyond. These are summarised below.

Financial Challenges

The entire public sector is continuing to face significant financial challenges due to a range of factors including inflationary cost increases, pay awards not being fully funded by the Scottish Government and insufficient overall funding to support the delivery of front line and back office services. The Council are currently faced with an estimated cumulative funding gap in 2025/26 of £9.8m rising to £40.4m by 2028/29. We will continue to monitor the overall financial position of the Council and updates on estimated future budget gaps will be reported to Elected Members throughout 2024/25.

These challenges require further action to balance our budget and protect services for residents. This will mean available funding will be reduced over time and we will need to reconfigure how we work, what we do, where we work, and potentially reduce the number of people employed. In this context, we will aim to continue to provide a sustainable, quality service to internal clients and the public. In Education, this is always a significant area of challenge, as we are tasked with maintaining teacher numbers, which accounts for 57% of our annual spend.

Budget Sensitivity Analysis

In reviewing the service budget projections, consideration has been given to the sensitivity of these budgets, in particular for higher risk/ higher value budgets which may have a significant impact on budgetary control and future budget projections. The analysis has considered sensitivity around demand, costs and charges, and income levels. Two particular areas were identified as set out in the table below:

Budget Sensitivity Area	Rational
Teacher pay costs	Budget assumed 5% pay increase but actual award is 7.1%
Additional Support Needs residential placements	Given the high annual cost for such placements (an average £250k per annum) a small increase in the number of external placements can lead to a considerable overspend

National Improvement Framework (NIF)

Scottish Government revised the National Improvement Framework in 2022, to be formed around five priorities. To aid delivery and reporting, our Delivery Plan will continue to be structured according to these priorities.

In 2024/25 we will:

- Place the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education;
- Improve children and young people's health and wellbeing;
- Narrow the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;
- Improve skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people; and
- Improve attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Meeting Staffing Conditions Established by Scottish Government

Scottish Government expect local authorities to maintain teacher numbers at a pre-determined level. This is particularly challenging within the context of budget savings and school roll reductions.

In 2024/25 we will:

- Develop and implement employee life cycle plans in line with the People First Strategy to attract and retain the workforce.

Rise in the Number of Children with Additional Support Needs

Since the pandemic, we have seen a growth in the number of children with Additional Support Needs.

In 2024/25 we will:

- Place the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education; and
- Improve children and young people's health and wellbeing.

National Reform

In February 2022, Prof Ken Muir published his review into the national education agencies, recommending the formation or a replacement for Education Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority and the formation of an independent Inspectorate. Following a delay to implementation, these will be operational by 2025. In June 2023, Prof Louise Hayward published 'It's our Future – Independent Review of Qualification and Assessment'. We await confirmation of the plan to adopt recommendations, which will have significant impact on the shape and structure of the Senior Phase in our schools.

In 2024/25 we will:

- Develop and implement training plans and development opportunities to improve capabilities and resilience within the workforce;
- Improve attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy; and
- Improve skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is central to all that we do. The actions set out in this section, as well as those at an operational level not included in this Delivery Plan, demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement and take account of the wider Best Value focus on vision and leadership; governance and accountability; effective use of resources; partnerships and collaborative working; working with communities; sustainability; and fairness and equality.

Action Plan

The challenges identified in Section 2 and the key factors identified in Section 3 have informed Education priorities for 2024/25. Appendix 1 sets out the action plan to address them. While this shows the top level actions, there are a significant number of sub actions sitting below each.

The Plan also includes:

- performance indicators that will enable progress to be monitored and reported to stakeholders;
- strategic workforce actions to address workforce issues identified in the planning process;
- strategic and/or service risks.

In relation to the latter, strategic risks represent the potential for the Council to take advantage of opportunities or fail to meet stated strategic objectives and those that require strategic leadership. Service risks relate to service delivery and represent the potential for impact on individual services, or the experience of those who work within the services, i.e. employees, partners, contractors and volunteers or service users and clients in receipt of the services provided. In identifying the relevant risks for 2024/25 and actions to mitigate them, we aim to improve or maintain the current position (i.e. the current risk score) set out in the appendix.

4. Resources

Finance

The Finance team are currently creating the detailed service budgets to accurately reflect all savings, management adjustments and other budget adjustments agreed by Council on 6 March 2024. Once this is complete the service plans will be updated with each Service's Gross Expenditure, Gross Income and Net Revenue Expenditure Budgets.

Employees

Employee Numbers

The headcount and full time equivalent staff in each service area (as of 31st March 2024) are as follows:

Service Area – Support Staff	Headcount	FTE
Central ASN Support Service	35	24.45
Children and Young People	6	5.6
Early Years	495	381.67
Education Central Management	5	5
Education Development	17	15.5
Music Service	19	13
Performance and Improvement	6	6
Primary Schools	313	185.76
Psychological Services	13	10.8
Schools - Peripatetic	2	0
Secondary Schools	120	95.86
Special Schools and Units	129	91.33

Technician Services	22	17.6
Workforce CPD	12	9.6
Total – Support Staff	1192	862.17

Service Area – Teachers	Headcount	FTE
Central ASN Support Service	36	33.74
Primary Schools	475	391.20
Schools – Peripatetic	0	0
Secondary Schools	454	389.93
Special Schools and Units	75	69.31
Total – Teachers	1040	883.82
Grand Total	2232	1745.99

Employee Absence

The 2023/24 quarterly absence figures for Education are shown below, together with the Council average for the same periods for comparison.

Absence in 2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Annual FTE days lost per FTE employee
Education – Support Staff	3.96	2.99	5.16	5.51	15.80
Teachers	1.92	1.65	2.95	3.05	8.09
Council wide Total	3.64	3.36	4.67	5.01	13.74

Appendix 1: Action Plan

Please note, all 2024/25 targets will be finalised once year-end data for 2023/24 becomes available.

P	Our communities
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Ob	Our neighbourhoods are safe, resilient and inclusive
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Performance Indicator	2024/25	Owner
	Target	
Cases of exclusion per 1,000 school pupils		Claire Cusick
School Attendance Rates (per 100 pupils)	88.0%	Claire Cusick
School Attendance Rates for Looked After Children (per 100 Looked After Children)	88.2%	Claire Cusick
School Exclusion Rates (per 1000 pupils)	20.5%	Claire Cusick
School Exclusion Rates for Looked After Children (per 1000 looked after children)	66.9%	Claire Cusick

Action	Due Date	Owner
Place the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education	30-Jun-2025	Claire Cusick

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Failure to place the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education	This risk concerns the delivery of UNCRC and ensuring these are integral to the planning, experiences and supports we offer children, young people and their families.	 Likelihood Impact	 Likelihood Impact	Claire Cusick

Ob Our residents health and wellbeing remains a priority

Action	Due Date	Owner
Improve children and young people's health and wellbeing	30-Jun-2025	Claire Cusick

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Failure to improve children and young people's health and wellbeing	This risk concerns our ability to develop curriculum, opportunities and supports in collaboration with key stakeholders which will meet the wellbeing needs of our children, young people and families.	 Likelihood Impact	 Likelihood Impact	Claire Cusick; Alison Bowers

Ob Our residents are supported to increase life and learning skills

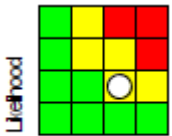
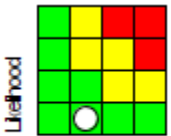
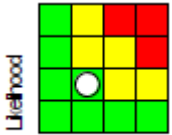
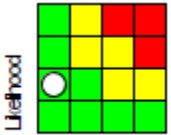
Performance Indicator	2024/25	Owner
	Target	
Percentage of children and young people achieving Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy & numeracy		Julie McGrogan

Performance Indicator	2024/25	Owner
	Target	
% of establishments delivering good or very good high-quality learning & teaching (Outcome of Improvement Framework)	100%	Julie McGrogan
Percentage of school attendance	89.4%	Claire Cusick
Percentage of children and young people with less than 80% attendance	13.5%	Claire Cusick
Percentage of 3 & 4 year old children at ELC achieving the benchmark in literacy and numeracy	72.3%	Alison Bowers
Percentage of ELC settings meeting the National Standard Criteria of good and above	97.3%	Alison Bowers
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 + awards at SCQF level 5		Andrew Brown
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 + awards at SCQF level 6		Andrew Brown
Percentage of S3 pupils achieving ACEL Third level+ in Literacy and numeracy		Julie McGrogan
Percentage of S3 pupils achieving ACEL Fourth in Literacy and numeracy		Julie McGrogan
Referrals and families engaged in family hubs		Claire Cusick
Percentage of educational establishments receiving positive inspection reports	100%	Julie McGrogan
% of pupils gaining 5 + awards at level 5	58%	Andrew Brown
% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6	29%	Andrew Brown
% pupils in 20% most deprived areas getting 5+ awards at level 5	48%	Andrew Brown
% pupils in 20% most deprived areas getting 5+ awards at level 6	21%	Andrew Brown
Overall Average Total Tariff	792	Andrew Brown
% of pupils being presented for 4+ awards in S4	92%	Andrew Brown

Performance Indicator	2024/25	Owner
	Target	
% of pupils being presented for 4+ awards in S5	81%	Andrew Brown
% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy	73.5%	Julie McGrogan
% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy	80.2%	Julie McGrogan
Literacy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils	11.5%	Julie McGrogan
Numeracy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils	13.9%	Julie McGrogan
Percentage of pupils achieving expected levels in Writing by P7		Julie McGrogan
% of funded Early Years Provision which is graded good or better	100%	Alison Bowers

Action	Due Date	Owner
Narrow the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people	30-Jun-2025	Julie McGrogan
Improve attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy	30-Jun-2025	Julie McGrogan

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Failure to narrow the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people	<p>This risk concerns the delivery of the key areas within the Scottish Government Strategic Equity Fund.</p> <p>This risk concerns the delivery of approaches to address the equalities gap and those with protected characteristics.</p>			Claire Cusick

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
	<p>This risk concerns the delivery of approaches to address the poverty related equity gap in all sectors.</p> <p>This risk concerns our ability to work successfully to collaboratively plan with a range of partners for successful delivery.</p>			
<p>Failure to improve attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy</p>	<p>This risk concerns the successful implementation of the four dimensions of the revised West Dunbartonshire Improvement Framework; 1. Collaborative Improvement 2. Enhanced Support 3. Enhanced Scrutiny and Support 4. Leadership Development.</p> <p>This risk concerns our ability to develop of the literacy and numeracy curriculum, opportunities and supports in collaboration with key stakeholders which will meet the needs of our children, young people and families.</p>	 <p>Impact</p>	 <p>Impact</p>	<p>Julie McGrogan</p>
<p>Challenges in implementing broad-ranging school improvement to raise attainment and achievement</p>	<p>This risk concerns the delivery of excellence and equity for our young people to support them to attain and achieve at the highest level. In particular, it is aimed at bridging the attainment gap and breaking the cycle of disadvantage. This also includes the focus on intervention at early years to improve life chances at all points on the learning journey.</p> <p>A key national and local priority is to accelerate progress with the aspirations to deliver improved attainment, tackle the poverty related attainment gap and recover from any negative impact of the pandemic. Scottish Equity funding devolved to local authorities aims to deliver on priorities between 2023-26.</p>	 <p>Impact</p>	 <p>Impact</p>	<p>Julie McGrogan</p>

P	Our Economy
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Ob	Our residents are supported to access employment and training opportunities
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Performance Indicator	2024/25	Owner
	Target	
Percentage of young people entering a positive destination	95.3%	Andrew Brown
Participation Rate for 16-19 year olds (per 100)	93.0%	Andrew Brown

Action	Due Date	Owner
Improve skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people	30-Jun-2025	Andrew Brown

Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Failure to improve skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people	<p>This risk concerns the ability to expand course provision and revised learner pathways in the Senior Phase leading including for those young people with Additional Support Needs.</p> <p>This risk concerns our ability to work successfully to collaboratively plan with a range of partners for successful delivery.</p> <p>This risk concerns the development of a skills based approach to the curriculum within the BGE and Senior Phase.</p>			Andrew Brown; Julie McGrogan

 P	Our Council
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 Ob	Our workforce is resilient and skilled where digital technology supports service delivery for our residents
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Action	Due Date	Owner
Develop and implement wellbeing, employee engagement, equality and training plans to enable capabilities, improved resilience and promotion of a diverse workforce.	31-Mar-2025	Claire Cusick
Develop and implement employee life cycle plans in line with the People First Strategy to attract and retain the workforce.	31-Mar-2025	Andrew Brown
Implement service review process including role design, use of new technology and new ways of working to add resilience, address gaps, and establish opportunities for efficiencies	31-Mar-2025	Andrew Brown
Develop and implement training plans and development opportunities to improve capabilities and resilience within the workforce.	31-Mar-2025	Claire Cusick