

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Officer: Supply, Distribution and Property****Council 23 March 2022**

Subject: Ventilation in Learning Establishments**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** This report provides an update for members on the approaches taken to ensure adequate ventilation across our learning estate.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that Council:

2.1.1 notes the contents of the report and agrees that no further action is required at present.

3.1 Background

At Council meeting on 22 December 2021 Councillor Mooney moved the following Motion:

Council agrees:-

- (a) to note the types of ventilation systems across the Council's learning estate;
- (b) to note the processes in place for monitoring levels of CO₂ present in learning and teaching spaces across the learning estate and with our partner providers;
- (c) to note that processes in place to escalate any area of concern and steps taken to improve ventilation; and
- (d) that a further report would come to Council with more detail on the adequacy of ventilation systems in schools and the costs of improving these.

- 3.2** The Motion was agreed by Council.

4 Main Issues

- 4.1** Following Council on 22 December 2021 officers were asked to provide updated report detailing the adequacy of ventilation systems in schools and any costs of improving the systems.

- 4.2** Throughout the Council's Learning Estate there is a variety of natural and mechanical ventilation systems. This depends on when the building was constructed and whether there has been any changes to the use of spaces since construction. Examples of systems and locations can be found in Appendix 1.
- 4.3** Our newer constructed buildings have a mix of both mechanical and natural ventilation throughout the building in learning and teaching spaces, gym halls, kitchen's and toilet areas.
- 4.4** Our older more traditional buildings are predominately naturally ventilated with window vents and mechanical ventilation mostly confined to kitchen areas or areas, which may have been refurbished since the original construction. Examples of where buildings may have been refurbished are as follows:-
- where an internal room not previously used as a teaching space changes to form a teaching space due to an increase in the school roll and requires mechanical ventilation to be installed.
 - refurbishment of toilets and a mechanical ventilation is installed as a requirement for building standards purposes.
- 4.5** The Council were proactive in measuring the levels of CO₂ prior to the HSE guidance. Towards the end of session 2020/21 the Council started a process of measuring levels of CO₂ present in teaching and learning spaces across the learning estate. This activity ran until November 2021 and gave base readings across all of our establishments.
- 4.6** By December 2021 following Scottish Government funding CO₂ monitoring devices were installed in all our buildings across the learning estate to cover learning and teaching spaces and other areas such as offices and staff rooms. In addition devices were distributed to partner providers.
- 4.7** As previously advised to Council in December 2021 our baseline readings showed that all of our learning and teaching spaces fell within an acceptable range of 400 -1,000 ppm levels of CO₂ concentration and therefore indicating that the current ventilation within the learning estate was more than adequate.
- 4.8** By end of January 2022 there had been 3 locations where we had incidents of raised levels. Investigations showed:-
- one device was poorly positioned with several people within 2 meters of the device and breathing towards it;
 - one was remedied by adjusting the ventilation in the room i.e. opening window/door; and

- one incident was where the monitors was inaccurate, reading 1,500 ppm in the middle of the night where there was no occupancy of the building. In this incident the monitors were recalibrated and correct readings were then achieved.

4.9 The Council received correspondence from Scottish Government on 28 January 2022 advising that an award of £84,000 had been allocated to further support ventilation requirements. Within the award letter it was advised that these funds could be used for installation of additional mechanical ventilation and/or adjustment of windows and doors.

4.10 As advised to Council on 22 December 2021 a working group has been established and will meet prior to 31 March 2022 in order that the return can be made to Scottish Government for use of the award money. It is envisaged that this will highlight any additional interventions, which may assist in more comfortable learning and teaching conditions. Improving ventilation has reduced temperatures in some spaces and improved heating for winter months may be required.

4.11 It is the conclusion following review of the learning estate that current ventilation is sufficient and compliant. In addition, no issues emerged as a result of the review with the current ventilation within the learning estate and this is demonstrated in the collected data to date. The review also considered the costs to install mechanical ventilation retrospectively and on the basis of recent new building installations this could be in the region of £290k per building. Nevertheless, the collected data does not support this as a requirement.

5 People Implications

5.1 There are no people implications arising from this report.

6 Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no financial or procurement implications arising from this report.

7 Risk Analysis

7.1 The current ventilation systems in place are adequate, compliant and sufficient, however should council fail to agree the recommendation, costs to introduce different mechanical systems would be significant.

8 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 An equalities screening has been carried out for this report and there are no equalities issues identified.

9 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

A Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the purposes of this report

10 Consultation

10.1 Consultation was undertaken with various officers across a number of services including Resources, Education Services, Corporate Health & Safety and Corporate Asset Management.

11 Strategic Assessment

11.1 The provision of adequate ventilation in learning and teaching spaces ensures healthy working and learning environments for our staff and children, assisting us in delivering the strategic priority of efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents.

Angela Wilson
Chief Officer, Supply, Distribution and Property
Date: 4 March 2022

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Appendices:	Appendix 1
Background Papers:	Council – 22 December 2021. Motion by Councillor John Mooney
Wards Affected:	All wards