



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
EDUCATION & CHILDRENS SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2026, 10:00am  
VIA HYBRID SYSTEM**

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**Committee Members Present:**

Councillor Bennett ®  
Councillor Cassini ®  
Councillor Dugdale – Convener  
Councillor Gilbert ®  
Councillor Hampshire  
Councillor McFarlane  
Councillor McIntosh  
Councillor Menzies ®  
Councillor Ritchie ®  
Councillor Yorkston ®  
Mr S Gilmour-Jack  
Rev D Hamilton ®  
Rev G Sheridan ®  
Rev K Mills

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**Council Officials Present:**

Ms L Brown – Depute Chief Executive, Children & Communities  
Ms N McDowell - Head of Education  
Ms L Ayton – Principal Officer, Equity & Inclusion  
Mr N Trussler – Quality Improvement Officer, Education  
Ms J Boyle – Quality Improvement Manager for Equity and Inclusion  
Ms A Cameron – Service Manager – Early Years and Childcare  
Ms A Harrison – Principal Education Psychologist  
Ms K Haspolat – Quality Improvement Officer  
M E Laverie – Youth Development Officer  
Ms F Ui Liannain – Education Support Officer – Inclusion & Wellbeing  
Mr D Reid – Education Support Officer – Digital Learning  
Ms J Allen – Team Leader – News & Media

**Teachers Present:**

Ms S Morgan – Head Teacher, Ormiston Primary School

**Clerk:**

Ms M Scott  
Ms E Barclay

**Other Elected Members present:**

N/A

**Apologies:**

Councillor Findlay

**Declarations of Interest:**

None

Prior to the commencement of business, the Clerk advised that the meeting was being held using the Council's hybrid system and that the meeting would be recorded and live streamed; and that it would be made available via the Council's website as a webcast, in order to allow public access to the democratic process in East Lothian. She stated that the Council is the data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018; that data collected as part of the recording would be retained in accordance with the Council's policy on record retention; and that the webcast of the meeting would be publicly available for up to five years from the date of the meeting.

The Clerk also made Members aware that we are in the pre-election period for the 2026 Scottish parliamentary election and reminded all members of the need to act in accordance with the Council's pre-election guidance and the code of recommended practise on local authority publicity.

The Clerk recorded attendance of committee members by roll call.

Councillor Dugdale welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee, particularly Sarah Morgan, Head Teacher at Ormiston Primary School and Reverend Keith Mills, our newly appointed religious representative.

**1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON 18 NOVEMBER 2025**

The minutes of the Education Committee meeting of 18 November 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

**2. DIGITAL LEARNING & TEACHING STRATEGY UPDATE 2026**

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive, Children and Communities to highlight a considerable update to the existing Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy 2023 (appendix 1) alongside the Action Plan (appendix 2) that will capitalise on the progress made and realign aims and actions moving forward, into 2026 and beyond.

Mr David Reid, Education Support Officer – Digital Learning presented his report, he drew Members attention to the four key priorities; digital literacy of staff, digital infrastructure, digital learning and teaching and digital distance learning and provided an overview of the work going on behind each of the priorities.

There followed questions from Members relating to any links between this update and the petition to explore the use of personal mobile phones within classrooms, how teachers would undertake specific training on digital literacy and the time allocated to them to complete this. Mr Reid agreed to send on a report to Members from the Scottish Government that outlined the improvement of outcomes after digital investment and updated the Committee on the increased connection to all high schools from 100 megabytes per second to one gigabyte and all primary schools had been increased to 100 megabytes to support the large amount of devices in schools. He continued to answer questions relating to opportunities and pathways for young people into the technology field, where laptops can be stored safely within school to save

pupils taking them home each night, lightspeed technology and provided business continuity plans.

Officers also provided an update on the mobile phone consultation and confirmed the draft framework will be brought to Committee in June.

Members praised the continued work and investment into the improvement of the IT infrastructure within schools as well as the progress of improving security and safeguarding measures. Praise was also given to teachers for embracing the new ways of working and having to adapt to the move of digital learning. They also noted it was really helpful to hear about how these digital technologies could help overcome barriers for those children or young people who have additional support needs. The Convener thanked officers for their report.

The Convener then moved to a roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

### **Decision**

The Committee agreed to:

- Note the work undertaken to update the existing 2023 strategy with a new 2026 version aligned to the progress made, by the Digital Learning Team (appendix 1) and;
- Approve the updated Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy (appendix 1) and associated Action Plan (appendix 2)

### **3. RESERVING PLACES IN SCHOOLS FOR CATCHMENT PUPILS WHO MOVE INTO THE CATCHMENT AREA DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2026/27**

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive, Children and Communities to obtain approval for reserving places for incoming catchment pupils at the schools detailed in 2.1 for session 2026/27.

Following presentation by the Principal Officer, Equity and Inclusion, Leanne Ayton, she responded to questions from Members relating to how accurate the pupil forecast is and confirmed the final decision on how many reserved catchment spaces were approved came down to the Committee today, that over the last few years there had been no instances of a catchment pupil not gaining a space in their local school and that reserved spaces are held for the full academic year.

Members thanked staff for the complex work they do ensuring the correct number of catchment places are allocated to each school especially with the massive growth in population around East Lothian.

The Convener then moved to a roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

### **Decision**

The Committee agreed to:

- Hold in reserve places for incoming catchment pupils for session 2026/27 in the named primary and secondary schools.

### **4. ROLL CAPPING IN EAST LOTHIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS – SESSION 2026/27**

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive for Children and Communities to ask the Education and Children's Services Committee to approve the S1-S4 intake levels for East Lothian secondary schools for Session 2026/27.

Leanne Ayton, Principal Officer, Equity and Inclusion presented the report and explained capping supports appropriate and early organisation for schools to meet their pupils' needs for a high level of education and prevents detrimental impacts on pupils' education, ensures effective and efficient management of resources by the authority. She drew Members attention to section two of the report which provided proposed capping levels for each individual school within East Lothian.

Ms Ayton responded to questions and provided information on roll capping helps schools organise and prepare to meet learners needs including ensuring they have a number of suitable teachers and subject areas within the school to meet the learners needs as without the capping levels it would be very difficult for schools to timetable which would have a detrimental impact on a learners education.

Members welcomed the report and thanked officers for their hard work.

The Convener then moved to a roll call vote on the recommendations, which were approved unanimously.

### **Decision**

The Committee agreed to:

- Approve a maximum intake level in S1-S4 for session 2026/27 in the schools listed
- Delegate any changes to the maximum intake level in S1 – S4 to the Head of Education in consultation with the Education Convener, should the number of pupils requiring a place at the school significantly increase or decrease

### **5. HMIE INSPECTION OF ORMISTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive for Children and Communities to report to Committee on the outcomes of the November 2025 HMIE inspection of Ormiston Primary School and Early Learning and Childcare Class.

Nick Trussler, Quality Improvement Officer presented the report providing an overview of the evaluative gradings assigned against the focus quality indicators from the How Good Is Our School for and the quality improvement framework for early learning and child care quality frameworks which were good and satisfactory. Mr Trussler highlighted the key strengths noted during the inspection which included; children experienced a range of outdoor learning in the local area and wider community which helped to motivate and engage children in their learning. He also noted the areas for improvement.

Mr Trussler concluded by confirming his continued commitment to working with the head teacher and staff to provide professional advice, support and challenge in the identified areas for sustained improvement.

Mr Trussler and Ms Sarah Morgan, Head Teacher at Ormiston Primary School answered questions from Members relating to the improvements that had already been made within the school and what work was being done for continued improvement.

Members were impressed by the positive observations of the school including the range of outdoor learning and the professional learning that was on offer to early years staff. The Convener thanked Ms Morgan for attending Committee today and giving such detailed responses to Members questions.

### **Decision**

The Committee agreed to:

- Note the content of the HMIE letter (Appendix 1) published on 3rd February 2026 notifying parents and carers of the outcomes of inspection for the primary school
- Note the content of the HMIE letter (Appendix 2) published on 3rd February 2026 notifying parents and carers of the outcomes of inspection for the Early Learning and Childcare class
- Note the key strengths of the school and Early Learning and Childcare identified by the inspection team
- Note the Summary of Inspection Findings (Appendix 3) detailing strengths and recommended future developments for the primary school
- Note that because of the inspection findings, HMIE will not make a follow-up visit in connection with this inspection

## **6. UPDATE – DELIVERY OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE**

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive for Children and Communities to provide an update on the progress of the planned changes to the delivery of Early Learning and Childcare (EL&CC) from August 2026.

Following presentation from Ali Cameron, Service Manager – Early Years and Childcare, she answered questions regarding staffing levels within all services, the flexibility of the updated service and future plans to continue working with funded providers. She also confirmed it was currently the Council's legislative responsibility to ensure there are adequate early learning childcare places for children who are eligible two and up to the point of starting school, that as part of this review there had not been consideration to change the process of funded hours to start from when a child turns three instead of the term following their third birthday and funding had been secured to move forward with the eligible two programme from August 2026 and beyond. Ms Cameron also explained parents are asked to register their child for a place within a local authority nursery when they turn two, selecting their first, second and third choice of location as this allows staff to ensure they can meet demand across services. She added staff will always be open to discussing individual circumstances to offer the best support and provide information on year places, 38 week places and blended models with funded providers and made Members aware staff are taking onboard all feedback from parents for when they move onto the admissions criteria review. Ms Cameron also confirmed the only criteria for applying for a space within a Council nursery was age, but she was happy to continue the conversation offline to gain an understanding of any difficulties parents may be facing.

Members welcomed the report, noting it laid out why these changes will expand our capacity and allow delivery of really vital childcare for more young people and preschoolers and felt staff had done a brilliant job pulling this update together to ensure we deliver a quality service.

### **Decision**

The Committee agreed to:

- Note the updated Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA), together with proposed mitigation measures.
- Note the draft Early Learning and Childcare Sufficiency Statement for 2025–2030 setting out the balance of 38- and 48-week provision by locality, projected demand, and any identified risks to equitable access.
- Note that officers will review the criteria for admissions, taking into consideration feedback from families across the 7 affected settings by April 2026.
- Note the published summary detailing the strengthened engagement with affected families and providers “What We Heard /What We’re Doing”.
- Note the summary update on all actions undertaken to transition seven nurseries from a full year to a school year delivery model.

## **7. GENDER STATEMENT – SUPPORTING TRANSGENDER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCHOOLS**

A report was submitted by the Depute Chief Executive for Children and Communities to outline to the Committee, East Lothian’s Gender Statement - Supporting Transgender Children and Young People in Schools statement and rationale for this.

Ms Fiona Ui Liannain, Education Support Officer – Inclusion & Wellbeing presented her report, drawing Members attention to the consultation which took place across schools in East Lothian where surveys and a focus group enabled information to be gathered about how confident and informed school staff felt in supporting transgender children and young people. Staff were asked to identify key themes in which further guidance would be helpful in building up knowledge and strengthening good practise and staff across all schools and wider learning communities were invited to provide feedback in the final version of the gender statement. Children and young people were also consulted on the production of the statement through a focus group and they worked together to share their opinions and ideas about why having a gender statement was important and what kinds of information could be included that would be helpful for staff to know. The statement was also shared with wider partners including Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) who stated that East Lothian was taking a positive and proactive approach in devising a statement at local authority level. Ms Ui Liannain added that following today's Committee the next step was to share the final guidance with all schools to implement within their own context and support to embed the gender statement will come through in due course.

Ms Ui Liannain answered questions from Members relating to the systems schools need to have in place and the process they need to follow to ensure consistent information is recorded, is accurate and relevant to each young person, the processes in place to support pupils and staff when a young person feels they may not be accepted by their own family and confirmed the terminology used within the guidance was derived from Scottish Government guidance which was then revised based on the Supreme Court ruling. She also made Members aware schools would be equipped with spaces for a young person to use if they did not want to use a sex, based on the biological definition of sex, toilet or changing facility.

Members welcomed the report, noting it was forward-looking and gave reassurance that we see everyone and are making everyone feel welcome within school settings. They also found it heartening young people were involved in pulling the guidance together and welcomed the engagement with TIE who stated this was one of the best local authority statements they had ever read.

**Decision**

The Committee agreed to:

- Note East Lothian's *Gender Statement - Supporting Transgender Children and Young People in Schools* guidance (Appendix 1), which is underpinned by Scottish Government guidance and Scots Law.

Signed .....

Councillor Fiona Dugdale  
Convener of the Education & Children's Services Committee

DRAFT



<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Education & Children's Services Committee
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	9 June 2026
<b>BY:</b>	Depute Chief Executive Children and Communities
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Raising Attainment Update and School Leaver Destination Return Report (SLDR)
<b>REPORT STATUS:</b>	Public

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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Committee on progress towards raising attainment for all learners and closing the poverty related attainment gap for the most disadvantaged children and young people
- 1.2 To update the Committee on the current School Leaver Destination Return report (SLDR) and Annual Participation Measure (APM).

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the progress and next steps identified towards raising attainment for all learners and closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- 2.2 Note the progress and proactive work underway to support improved outcomes for learners leading to positive destinations.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

### **Raising Attainment**

- 3.1.1 Consistent with the National Improvement Framework (NIF), East Lothian Council prioritises improving attainment for all, particularly in literacy and numeracy and closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.

- 3.1.2 To provide strategic direction and measurable outcomes and in line with Scottish Government expectations, stretch aims have been set as detailed in Excellence & Equity: Raising Attainment for All – Strategy 2023/24-2025/26.
- 3.1.3 Our approaches to tracking and monitoring learners are rigorous. Across primary and secondary sectors progress in literacy and numeracy data is captured within two tracking periods and central team officers work with schools individually and as Associated School Groups to monitor cohort progress.
- 3.1.4 The posts of Principal Teachers of Equity were created in session 2023-2024 and are now in year three across most secondaries, with Rosehill High School's Principal Teacher of Equity appointed in June 2025. Through a data-informed approach, these postholders track, monitor and identify interventions for young people impacted by poverty who are at risk of under-attaining.
- 3.1.5 Schools are provided with monthly Equity Trackers which focus on core and core plus measures. These data sets are used by schools, led by the Principal Teachers of Equity, to direct time and resource to supporting identified learners in the senior phase. Leading on, Principal Teachers of Equity are increasing a culture of equity and supporting young people to gain a meaningful set of qualifications. This approach is leading to impact in outcomes, and this is evidenced, in part, through the increase in 5 or more awards at level 1 or above.
- 3.1.6 All schools are in receipt of data support with the provision of a comprehensive in-year BGE and Senior Phase Attainment tracking tool. This tool has been designed for use by middle leaders and senior leadership teams to monitor learner progress and identify where interventions are required to improve learner outcomes. The support and challenge of officers in the central team also underpins this work.

## 3.2 **Monitoring and Review**

- 3.2.1 Data provided in relation to stretch aim measures in Appendix 1 highlight the continued progress in overall attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap (Q1 – Q5) in the following measures:
- 3.2.2 Curriculum for Excellence literacy and numeracy attainment measure P1- P4 - P7 (combined) in quintile 1 has increased by 2.5 percentage points and 1 percentage point respectively. Attainment in quintile 5 increased by 4.4 percentage points and 2.7 percentage points respectively. Whilst improvements were achieved in all SIMD measures, the poverty-related attainment gap between quintile 1 and quintile 5 in literacy stands at 24.4% and 21.5% in numeracy meaning it has widened.
- 3.3 At Level 5 or above, school leaver literacy levels increased by 2.6 percentage points. At Level 5 or above the quintile 1 school leavers measure increased by 7.6 percentage points and the quintile 5 school

leavers measure increased by 2.4 percentage points. The poverty-related attainment gap narrowed by 5.2 percentage points down to 31.7%.

- 3.4 At Level 5 or above, school leaver numeracy levels increased by 3 percentage points. At Level 5 or above the quintile 1 school leavers measure increased by 3 percentage points and the quintile 5 school leavers measure also increased by 3.8 percentage points. The poverty-related attainment gap increased by 0.9 percentage points.
- 3.5 The overall percentage of school leavers with 5 or more awards at level 1 or above increased by 5.3 percentage points. The percentage of learners in quintile 1 leaving with 5 qualifications increased by 8.1 percentage points and the poverty-related gap closed by 2.9 percentage points.
- 3.6 For learners leaving school with 1 or more awards at level 6 (A-C) or above, there was an increase of 2.9 percentage points in the overall figures. For learners in quintile 1 there was a decrease of 6.8 percentage points and for learners in quintile 5 there was an increase of 2 percentage points. This led to a widening of the poverty related attainment gap by 8.7 percentage points on 23-24, although the outcome measure of 51.9 percent is narrowly lower than 2022-23 and lower than 2021-22.
- 3.7 There are specific measures for leavers with care experience. The percentage of care-experienced school leavers to obtain 5 or more awards at level 1 or above increased 21.8 percentage points on the previous year and the gap for learners with care-experience decreased by 16.5 percentage points. This percentage rate change represents a cohort of 18 care-experienced learners in 2024-2025 with 14 learners obtaining 5 or more awards at level 1 or above.
- 3.8 Three years of data tracking this measure demonstrates that year on year statistical measures are expected fluctuate due to the small number of individuals being measured. However, the tracking and monitoring of care-experienced learners is a key measure within East Lothian's Equity Trackers. This work is supported by the Depute Head Teacher of Equity and Inclusion, and Principal Teachers of Equity are working closely with staff in schools to ensure care-experienced learners receive support.
- 3.9 East Lothian Council reports on its progress towards stretch aims through the Education Progress and Improvement Plan. This is published annually and submitted to the Scottish Government, Education Scotland and for approval at East Lothian Council Education & Children's Services Committee.
- 3.10 **School Leavers Destination and Participation Measure**
  - 3.10.1 A glossary has been created to explain the acronyms contained within this committee report (Appendix 2).

- 3.10.2 The initial destination of school leavers' data (SLDR) is used by schools and education authorities across Scotland to monitor progress in improving the proportion of school leavers into positive and sustained destinations.
- 3.10.3 The data for initial post school destinations (SLDR) referred to in this report is taken from the February 2026 release of the senior phase benchmarking tool, Insight. The data provides information on the outcomes for young people as recorded in October 2025, approximately three to ten months after leaving school.
- 3.10.4 The data on initial post-school destinations for 2024/25 was reported nationally and published by the Scottish Government on 24th February 2026:  
<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/statistics/2026/02/summary-statistics-for-attainment-and-initial-leaver-destinations-no-8-2026-edition/documents/summary-statistics-for-attainment-and-initial-leaver-destinations-no-8-2026-edition/summary-statistics-for-attainment-and-initial-leaver-destinations-no-8-2026-edition/govscot%3Adocument/Summary%2BStatistics%2Bfor%2BAttainment%2Band%2BInitial%2BLEaver%2BDestinations%252C%2BNo.%2B8%252C%2B2026%2Bedition.pdf>
- 3.10.5 This report compares East Lothian initial school leaver destinations (SLDR) with the Virtual Comparator and the National Establishment (i.e. national average). Figures are provided in most cases for both the national average and the Virtual Comparator; however, the Virtual Comparator is seen as the key benchmark for helping schools and authorities understand their strengths and areas for improvement. The Virtual Comparator takes the characteristics of each pupil in East Lothian and matches them to 10 similar pupils from schools in other local authorities across Scotland.
- 3.10.6 This report will explore how East Lothian has performed over the three-year period since 2022/23 to 2024/25, in relation to the national average and the Virtual Comparator. The main highlights for East Lothian in 2024/25 are provided below –

Summary of Results for East Lothian 2024-2025:

- Our initial Positive Destinations Report (SLDR) for the 2024/25 cohort was 97.9% (an increase of 3.4% on 2023/24) against a national picture of 95.7%. Initial positive destinations in East Lothian for 2023/24 was 94.5% (National 95.7), 2022/23 was 96.3% (National 95.9%). The 23/24 measure of 3.1% of leavers recorded as 'unemployed not seeking', which includes those unavailable due to ill health and those who are economically inactive has decreased to 0.3% in 24/25. In addition, the measure 'unemployed seeking' declined from 2.4% in 23/24 to 1.1% in 24/25. This reduced the overall negative destinations to 2.1% for 24/25. Changes elsewhere include a 2.9% increase in Higher Education, 2% increase in Training, 0.8% increase in Further Education and 1% reduction in Employment. Despite the slight reduction in employment,

East Lothian continues to maintain a much higher trend of young people moving into employment (5.6% higher) versus that of the virtual comparator and is above the national, South East region.

- Staff within East Lothian Works (ELW), in partnership with colleagues within Skills Development Scotland (SDS) have followed up with all leavers from the 2024/25 cohort. Publication of the follow up statistics is expected during August 2026. This relates to sustained destinations at a point 6 months beyond leaving school. Ongoing collaborative work between SDS, ELW and partners continues throughout the year to ensure that all young people are effectively followed up and supported into both initial and sustained destinations. East Lothian Works has implemented a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) system to support the triage of No One Left Behind school leaver referrals. Through this approach, ELW engaged with 135 summer leavers and 63 Christmas leavers during session 24/25. In addition, a case-conferencing system has been introduced between ELW and SDS to track engagement and progress across the employability landscape. Our current Annual Participation Measure (APM) measures the proportion of 16-19 year olds participating in education, training or employment. Currently the APM recorded in August 2025 is 94.8% an increase of 0.2% (94.6%) on the 2024 statistic. Whilst East Lothian remains above the national rate, which was 93.3%, the stretch aim for 2025/26 was revised to 95.7% to reflect more accurately the rate of progress. The interactive SDS Annual Participation Measure report can be found here <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/publications-statistics/statistics/annual-participation-measure>
- East Lothian is higher than the national average for age ranges 17-19;  
Age 16: ELC 98.4% National 99%;  
Age 17: ELC 95.5% National 95.3%;  
Age 18: ELC 92.7% National 91%;  
Age 19: 92.3% National 87.4%.

3.10.7 East Lothian Works continues to work in collaboration with all ELC secondary schools to deliver a range of certificated qualifications to senior phase young people, ranging from SQA Level 4 - Level 6 and across several vocational areas, including Foundation Apprenticeships, School to College Partnership and East Lothian Works Pre-Vocational courses. The Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) programme in session 2024/25 included Accountancy, Business, IT Software, Scientific Technologies and Social Services Children and Young People. These work-based pathways, delivered in partnership with schools, college, training providers and employers continued to be offered across ELC for both 1 and 2 academic year durations. By offering multiple delivery durations, these can be selected by young people across the entirety of the senior phase. Pupil numbers remain high from 2024/25, presenting around 140 young people across the various vocational areas, coupled with a further 140 students for session 2025-2026, and the introduction of a Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) in IT Hardware to the portfolio. The

FA qualification offers certification at SCQF Level 6, the equivalent to a Higher.

- 3.10.8 We continue to expand our place-based delivery with Edinburgh College from within the Construction Skills Academy at Wallyford Learning Campus. During session 24/25, 15 young people achieved a SCQF Level 4 Construction Crafts Qualification. A further 13 achieved a qualification in Future Skills, comprising of Automotive, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. For young people transitioning post-school, Edinburgh College delivered an Edinburgh College certificated 'Introduction to Construction Course' for 16 young people, and a SCQF Level 5 Construction Crafts to a further 16 East Lothian post-school young people. Ongoing committed delivery to an Access to Fabrication and Welding course for post-school groups resulted in 15 young people achieving the award with a high number moving into industry apprenticeships and a new partnership established with Had Fab Ltd. Wider partnerships with The Ridge resulted in an additional 13 young people achieving an award in Level 4 Construction, and 24 young people achieving an award in Level 5 construction.
- 3.10.9 A further 10 young people achieved a National Progression Award (NPA) Level 5 in Long Hair and Make Up supported by Edinburgh College. This full award offers an immersive insight into the Hair and Beauty industry. These opportunities provide a pathway and qualification for school leavers into growth market industries or guaranteed progression into other Edinburgh College Full Time courses. For 2025 – 2026 we have further commitment to deliver Skills for Work Early Learning and Childcare and Skills for Work Health and Social Care. For next session the East Lothian DYW School Coordinators are engaging with the wider East Lothian Works and college colleagues to identify employer experiences to bring the curriculum to life and to highlight pathways from college and FAs to post-school destinations. Of the 23/24 FA cohort initial leavers destinations data indicates that 23 young people went on to industry related Higher Education courses, 5 into industry related Further Education courses and 10 into industry related Modern Apprenticeships. Of this year's FA Scientific Technology cohort 17 are expected to enter industry related Higher Education courses, with 5 seeking modern apprenticeship opportunities, with one young person having already secured employment with their East Lothian placement provider.
- 3.10.10 Our ongoing delivery of Employability+, an employability programme for senior phase pupils with ASN who were approaching their school leaving date, has over the course of the year engaged 111 young people. Of these, 60 young people achieved Level 6 Emergency First Aid at Work and First Aid for Mental Health Awareness at Level 4 another 180 young people engaged in a First Aid taster session. Another 48 young people achieved units in Employability and Wellbeing. The caseworker directly supported 21 young people into No One Left Behind funded services.

- 3.10.11 In partnership with Edinburgh College, over 180 East Lothian senior phase pupils attained qualifications from the School to College Partnership (SCP) offer during 2024-2025. Attending courses on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons within Edinburgh College campuses. East Lothian students successfully engaged in a variety of certified courses from Level 2/3 to Level 6 including, Higher Psychology, Automotive, Professional Cookery, Criminology, Early Learning and Childcare, Health and Social Care, Film, Media and Sound Production, Intro to College, and Games Development Design. In response to increased demand to support young people into a sustained post-school college destination, East Lothian Works delivered a pack of support to 32 young people. This represented an increase from the 18 young people supported during session 23-24.
- 3.11 East Lothian Works (ELW) has also allocated funding to employers through:
- UKSPF ERI (Employer Recruitment Incentive) £88,708.04 was allocated in 2025/26, which created 21 opportunities.
  - Parental ERI (Employer Recruitment Incentive) created 8 opportunities in 2025/26 totalling £36,887.10. For 2026/26 £40,000 (indicative) is available to create new job opportunities.
- 3.12 The Parental Employability (PES) Team worked with 193 parents in 25/26 to support their progress towards and into employment. As part of this work, the team supported 35 parents to undertake Paid Work Experience placements in the following areas and job roles within ELC. These roles included school Business Administrator, Classroom Assistant, ASN Auxiliary, Facilities Management as well as the roles of Cleaner, Catering Assistant and Infrastructure – Refuse Loader. Parents working with staff gained 65 accredited qualifications and an additional 46 unaccredited training courses to further their skills and employment prospects. There were 51 job outcomes in 25/26 from parents engaging with the PES Team.
- 3.13 During 25/26, the Income Maximisation service for East Lothian Works received 101 referrals, 73 of whom were parents. 78% of all clients supported this year had a financial gain after accessing the service. The continued demand for 'Better off in Work' calculations was very high, with 147 assessments this year, which is an increase of 38% on last year's total. This is a vital tool in supporting parents to make informed choices about returning to work. Financial gains for parents amounted to £127,041 for the year.
- 3.14 **Next Steps**
- 3.14.1 Plans for the 2026/27 session are progressing, with continued commitment from Edinburgh College to sustain all courses delivered during 2024/25. This includes further expansion of Level 4 Construction and the introduction of a place-based Level 5 Early Learning and Childcare programme, designed to strengthen the progression pathway

into the Foundation Apprenticeship. In response to increasing demand from young people in East Lothian, Edinburgh College, in partnership with East Lothian Works, will also deliver an industry-recognised Beauty qualification at SCQF Level 5, exclusively for East Lothian pupils in the coming session. This provision will be aligned with post-school entry requirements to support and maximise positive destinations. Recognising growth and demand within key labour market sectors across East Lothian and the South East Scotland region, partners will continue to work collaboratively to identify and develop further opportunities for joint delivery of qualifications and pathways. Priority areas under consideration include green skills, construction, and health and social care.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct policy implications associated with this report.

#### **5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Financial: – All school-age activities are predicated upon the continuation of existing core funding being allocated to East Lothian Works. Any reduction in funding will lead to a decrease in capacity and therefore a drop in the service’s ability to continue with existing activities and interventions. All post-school activity is reliant upon external grant funding and therefore parameters of activity are dictated by strict grant conditions. External funding fluctuates on an annual basis.
- 5.2 Human Resources: - Is reliant upon maintenance of existing budget allocations, both core and external.
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT) – None
- 5.4 Risk: None

#### **6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an ‘X’ in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council’s role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.



**or**

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:



Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

*[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]*

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality\\_and\\_diversity/12014/integrated\\_impact\\_assessments](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments)

## 7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix 1 - Raising Attainment Data
- 7.2 Appendix 2 - Glossary
- 7.3 Appendix 3 - School Leaver Destinations 2023/24

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 10 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

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<b>Name</b>	Alistair Stewart
<b>Date</b>	16.4.2026

**Head of Service Approval**

<b>Name</b>	Nicola McDowell
<b>Designation</b>	Head of Education
<b>Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed</b>	Yes
<b>Approval Date</b>	21/5/2026

## Appendix 1

P1, 4 & 7 Literacy (Combined)				
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22 %	Achieving in 2022-23 %	Achieving in 2023-24	Achieving in 2024-25
All	62.8	66.3	69.8	74.5
Q1	42.6	50.3	54.7	57.2
Q2	50.9	56.0	62.5	66.3
Q3	67.7	68.5	68.6	75.2
Q4	68.9	74.2	76.8	80.4
Q5	72.7	73.5	77.2	81.6
Q1-Q5 Gap	30.1	23.2	22.5	24.4
Q2-Q5 Gap	21.8	17.5	14.7	15.3

P1, 4 & 7 Numeracy (Combined)				
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22 %	Achieving in 2022-23 %	Achieving in 2023-24	Achieving in 2024-25
All	72.4	73.8	75.3	79.3
Q1	56.1	56.3	63.7	64.7
Q2	65.4	64.8	68.8	69.6
Q3	75.3	77.0	75.9	82.1
Q4	76.8	80.6	79.2	84.5
Q5	78.3	79.9	83.5	86.2
Q1-Q5 Gap	22.2	23.6	19.8	21.5
Q2-Q5 Gap	12.9	15.1	14.7	16.6

School Leavers, Level 5 Literacy (Or Above)				
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22 %	Achieving in 2022-23 %	Achieving in 2023-24	Achieving in 2024-25
All	78.3	78.5	77.0	79.6
Q1	53.6	60.3	52.7	60.3
Q2	65.1	68.2	66.8	66.4
Q3	81.7	77.3	72.8	78.9
Q4	85.0	87.8	84.9	87.0
Q5	90.0	87.9	89.6	92.0
Q1-Q5 Gap	36.4	27.7	36.9	31.7
Q2-Q5 Gap	24.9	19.7	22.9	25.6

School Leavers, Level 5 Numeracy (Or Above)				
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22 %	Achieving in 2022-23 %	Achieving in 2023-24	Achieving in 2024-25
All	66.1	65.8	67.3	70.3
Q1	41.1	39.7	41.8	44.8
Q2	52.7	54.3	52.6	51.8
Q3	66.8	65.7	67.7	75.5
Q4	71.1	73.0	75.4	77.2
Q5	83.1	81.0	81.9	85.7
Q1-Q5 Gap	42.0	41.3	40.0	40.9

Q2-Q5 Gap	30.4	26.7	29.3	33.9
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School Leavers, 5 or more Awards at Level 1 (Or Above)				
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22 %	Achieving in 2022-23 %	Achieving in 2023-24	Achieving in 2024-25
All	89.4	87.0	87.0	92.3
Q1	67.9	78.1	76.4	84.5
Q2	86.6	82.7	82.4	89.4
Q3	89.8	83.3	85.1	92.8
Q4	91.5	91.6	90.8	92.2
Q5	95.4	94.0	92.2	97.5
Q1-Q5 Gap	27.6	15.9	15.9	13.0
Q2-Q5 Gap	8.9	11.2	9.9	8.1

School Leavers, 1 or more Awards at Level 6 (A-C)				
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22 %	Achieving in 2022-23 %	Achieving in 2023-24	Achieving in 2024-25
All	55.7	55.4	55.9	58.8
Q1	19.6	21.9	30.9	24.1
Q2	37.3	38.9	36.4	39.5
Q3	58.3	55.0	52.3	61.2
Q4	64.6	67.6	69.2	69.1
Q5	75.3	74.1	74.1	76.1
Q1-Q5 Gap	55.7	52.2	43.2	51.9
Q2-Q5 Gap	38.1	35.2	37.7	36.5

Care Experienced School Leavers, 5 or more Awards at Level 1 (Or Above)				
Cohort Quintile	% Achieving in 2021-22 %	Achieving in 2022-23 %	Achieving in 2023-24	Achieving in 2024-25
Care exp	65.2	86.2	56.0	77.8
All Leavers	89.4	87.0	87.0	92.3
Care Exp v All Leavers Gap	24.2	0.8	31.0	14.5

## Appendix 2

### Glossary:

School Leaver Destination Return (SLDR) – Published by Scottish Government, information collated by SDS which relates to school leavers (S4 S6) and their initial destination upon leaving school.

Annual Participation Measure (APM) – Report published by SDS focuses on the education and employment activity of 16-19 year olds over one calendar year, April – March.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) – Is the national skills agency for Scotland, supporting people and businesses of Scotland to develop and apply their skills. Education Scotland – Is a Scottish Government executive agency responsible for supporting quality and improvement in Scottish Education.

Curriculum for Excellence (CFE) – Developed over the course of several years to improve and transform Scotland's Education systems, by a more flexible and coherent curriculum from 3-18 years.

Broad General Education (BGE) – Begins in early learning and childcare until the end of S3 (the third year of secondary school).

Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) - Foundation Apprenticeships at SCQF Level 6 provide work-based learning opportunities for learners in their senior phase of secondary education (S4 – S6). The delivery of the qualification is a mixture of classroom and work based learning with employer and forms part of the pupil's timetable alongside their other qualifications such as National 5 and Highers.

No One Left Behind (NOLB) – Is Scottish Government's Employability Strategy to transform employment support in Scotland.

Modern Apprenticeships (MA's) - Is a job which lets people earn a wage and gain an industry-recognised qualification.

Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) – forming part of the NOLB strategy, this fund is collaboratively managed by Scottish and Local Government, providing dedicated support for low-income families. Taking a holistic Key Worker approach parents are supported to upskill and/or re-train, increasing family income, lifting themselves and their families out of poverty. For 2024/25 this activity will form part of the No One Left Behind employability funding for local authorities.

### Appendix 3 School Leavers Destinations

School 2023/24	% Employed	% Further Education	% Higher Education	% Voluntary Work	% Personal Skills Development	% Training	% Unemployed Not Seeking	% Unemployed Seeking	% Unknown
East Lothian Council	28.75	19.54	42.51	0.53	2.45	4.12	0.70	1.14	0.26
Virtual Comparator for East Lothian Council	23.13	22.80	45.43	0.63	0.85	3.48	1.13	2.00	0.56
Dunbar Grammar School	30.30	15.66	50.51	0.51	1.01	1.52			0.51
Virtual Comparator for Dunbar Grammar School	24.04	17.42	53.08	0.40	0.45	2.02	0.86	1.16	0.56
Knox Academy	26.71	17.81	45.21	1.37	4.79	0.68	0.68	2.05	0.68
Virtual Comparator for Knox Academy	22.67	23.15	44.32	0.96	0.89	3.22	1.71	2.60	0.48
Musselburgh Grammar School	29.11	24.41	34.74		4.23	4.69	0.47	1.88	0.47
Virtual Comparator for Musselburgh Grammar School	23.66	26.01	39.81	0.56	1.31	4.55	0.85	2.49	0.75
North Berwick High School	18.89	10.00	67.78	0.56	0.56	1.67	0.56		
Virtual Comparator for North Berwick High School	18.61	11.78	65.44	0.72	0.50	1.17	0.61	1.00	0.17
Preston Lodge High School	33.71	21.35	32.02		1.69	7.87	2.25	1.12	
Virtual Comparator for Preston Lodge High School	23.76	28.31	37.13	0.79	0.84	4.94	1.29	1.97	0.96
Rosehill High School*	30.00	25.00			5.00	25.00		15.00	
Virtual Comparator for Rosehill High School	37.00	41.50	3.00	1.00	1.50	8.00	3.00	4.00	1.00
Ross High School	32.52	25.73	32.04	0.97	2.43	5.34	0.49	0.49	
Virtual Comparator for Ross High School	24.08	27.43	38.45	0.44	0.97	4.27	1.41	2.57	0.39

\*Note: Rosehill High School leavers 24-25 cohort was comprised of S4 leavers only, and the percentage figure is made up of 20 individuals. As a result, the percentage figures do not represent reliable comparison to other ELC schools.

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Education & Children’s Services Committee
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	9 June 2026
<b>BY:</b>	Depute Chief Executive Children and Communities
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	HMIE Inspection of Preston Lodge High School
<b>REPORT STATUS:</b>	Public

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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report to Committee on the outcomes of the HMIE revisit inspection of Preston Lodge High School

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the content of the HMIE letter (Appendix 1)
- 2.2 Note the key strengths identified by the Inspection Team and progress made since the inspection.
- 2.3 Note that HMIE will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 12 months of the publication of the letter.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

### **3.1 Inspection Model**

The inspection team used the How Good Is Our School 4? (HGIOS4?) quality indicators to evaluate the quality of provision at Preston Lodge High School.

The focus of the revisit inspection was to evaluate the progress made by the school against the areas for improvement identified in the initial Education Scotland inspection report published in January 2025 (Appendix 2). These were:

- I. The headteacher should lead and develop a clear overview of all areas of the school. He needs to put in place effective methods for gathering evidence to identify the school's own strengths and areas for improvement. This should lead to clear priorities for improving the school and these should be agreed with staff, parents and young people.
- II. Senior leaders should ensure a whole school focus on providing tasks and activities which are set at the right level of difficulty for all young people. This should help ensure all young people's learning needs are met more effectively. All staff should work together to raise attainment for all young people from S1 to S6.
- III. Senior leaders should review the programmes of learning from S1 to S3 to ensure that young people access their full entitlements.
- IV. Senior leaders need to develop a clearer overview of the purposes and effectiveness of existing support provisions. This includes improving attendance at school for identified young people.

### 3.2 National Improvement Framework

As part of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, the reporting procedures for the National Improvement Framework (NIF) have been placed on a statutory footing. The evaluations of QIs 2.3 and 3.2 feed directly into the evidence base for the NIF to demonstrate progress with the NIF priorities and drivers for improvement. This progress is reported annually by the Scottish Government.

### 3.3 Inspection Findings

The Education Scotland letter to parents, published on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026 (Appendix 1) provides a detailed report of the progress made against each of the areas for improvement (outlined in 3.1 above). A summary of these improvements is outlined below:

- I. **The headteacher should lead and develop a clear overview of all areas of the school** – Senior leaders have initiated positive changes which are not yet embedded well enough to demonstrate sufficient progress in this area.
- II. **Senior leaders should ensure a whole school focus on providing tasks and activities which are set at the right level of difficulty for all young people. All staff should work together to raise attainment for all young people from S1 to S6** – The school has made progress in establishing a framework to develop tasks and activities set at the right level for young people. Staff have had insufficient time to develop and embed these approaches to demonstrate that they are making a positive

impact on young people. There remains a need to raise attainment across the school, and this continues to be an important area which requires significant improvement.

- III. **Senior leaders should review the programmes of learning from S1 to S3 to ensure that young people access their full entitlements** – Senior leaders have made progress with aspects of this area for improvement. They should continue with their plans to review the curriculum and make appropriate changes.
- IV. **Senior leaders need to develop a clearer overview of the purposes and effectiveness of existing support provisions** - Staff have made positive progress in this area for improvement and should continue to enhance universal supports for young people.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Not applicable

#### **5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Finance: None
- 5.2 Human Resources: None
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None
- 5.4 Risk: None

#### **6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.



or

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:



Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

*[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]*

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality\\_and\\_diversity/12014/integrated\\_impact\\_assessments](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments)

## 7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 – The HMIE letter to parents published on 5 May 2026

Appendix 2 – The Education Scotland letter to parents, published on 21 January 2025

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None

## 9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

Report Author(s)

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<b>Date</b>	05.05.2026

#### Head of Service Approval

<b>Name</b>	Nicola McDowell
<b>Designation</b>	Head of Education
<b>Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed</b>	Yes
<b>Approval Date</b>	21/5/2026



5 May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In January 2025, HM Inspectors published a letter on Preston Lodge High School. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which we agreed with the school and East Lothian Council. Recently, as you may know, we visited the school again. During our visit, we talked to young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff. We heard from the headteacher and other staff about the steps the school has taken to improve. We looked at particular areas that had been identified in the original inspection. As a result, we were able to find out about the progress the school has made and how well this is supporting young people's learning and achievements. This letter sets out what we found.

**The headteacher should lead and develop a clear overview of all areas of the school. He needs to put in place effective methods for gathering evidence to identify the school's own strengths and areas for improvement. This should lead to clear priorities for improving the school and these should be agreed with staff, parents and young people.**

Senior leaders have initiated positive changes which are not yet embedded well enough to demonstrate sufficient progress in this area.

The headteacher has worked well with senior leaders to lead the development of more effective processes to improve learners' experiences and outcomes. This includes clarifying how senior leaders carry out their roles and responsibilities. Middle leaders are motivated to lead improvements in their curricular areas. Senior leaders should continue to develop the capacity of staff, parents and young people to lead appropriate aspects of school improvement.

Senior leaders have implemented a more structured and well-planned approach to gather self-evaluation evidence. At present, the focus of self-evaluation activities is too broad and not always targeted towards identifying or reviewing specific improvement priorities.

Senior leaders have refined the school improvement planning processes. Most priorities identified in the whole school and curricular area improvement plans are now clearer with more measurable targets.

Senior leaders strengthened recently processes for gathering stakeholder views. The Parent Council is considering how to capture a greater range of parent views. Senior leaders and staff should continue to develop further their methods of capturing all young people and parents' views. They should continue to ensure that stakeholders are aware of how their views inform ongoing school improvement.



**Senior leaders should ensure a whole school focus on providing tasks and activities which are set at the right level of difficulty for all young people. This should help ensure all young people's learning needs are met more effectively. All staff should work together to raise attainment for all young people from S1 to S6.**

The school has made progress in establishing a framework to develop tasks and activities set at the right level for young people. Staff have had insufficient time to develop and embed these approaches to demonstrate that they are making a positive impact on young people. There remains a need to raise attainment across the school and this continues to be an important area which requires significant improvement.

Senior leaders and staff have worked well to refine and agree a consistent approach to learning and teaching across the school. They have introduced the Preston Lodge Learning Promise, which staff are beginning to use to frame lessons. This work is leading to a more consistent approach in how teachers structure lessons.

In almost all lessons, young people behave well and participate in learning activities. The pace of learning is overly led by the teacher and too slow for the majority of young people. Most staff need to use information about young people's additional support needs more effectively to plan appropriate learning experiences.

Senior leaders have put in place new processes and supports for teachers to reduce the number of young people who request to change the level of the courses they are following. This has led to increases in the percentage of young people presented for a greater number of courses from S4 to S6.

Overall, data for young people who left school in 2023/24 indicates a slight improvement in literacy and numeracy attainment. However, attainment for cohorts of young people in the senior phase needs to improve. Senior leaders need to focus on what will make the biggest difference to improving attainment for this group of young people and maximise young people's attainment across the senior phase.

**Senior leaders should review the programmes of learning from S1 to S3 to ensure that young people access their full entitlements.**

Senior leaders have made progress with aspects of this area for improvement. They should continue with their plans to review the curriculum and make appropriate changes.

Senior leaders, in consultation with parents and young people, reviewed the curricular provision from S1 to S3. They made amendments to the structure of the curriculum for session 2025/26. This now allows young people in S1 to access content from all curricular areas across S1 to S3. However, young people are not able to access their full entitlement in line with the Scottish Government's 1+2 languages policy. Senior leaders should ensure they address this. Senior leaders should continue to monitor the impact of changes, particularly with regard to the time allocated and subsequent progression in learning and attainment. They should ensure this provides clear progression routes into and through the senior phase. They



should also ensure that content delivered across S1 builds progressively on young people's learning and attainment from primary school. Senior leaders are developing stronger whole-school approaches to measure progress across S1-3. These approaches are currently focused on literacy and numeracy and should be extended to include all curricular areas.

Senior leaders recognise the need to embed Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) principles and practice more fully into classroom practice. Senior leaders should identify and share areas of good practice linked to DYW and the Career Education Standard more widely across the school to help young people recognise and develop important skills for learning, life and work.

**Senior leaders need to develop a clearer overview of the purposes and effectiveness of existing support provisions. This includes improving attendance at school for identified young people.**

Staff have made positive progress in this area for improvement and should continue to enhance universal supports for young people.

Senior leaders reviewed and clarified the purpose and use of support spaces within the school. Pupil support staff have also introduced a clearer pupil profile and shared with staff a document summarising this information. As a result of this, staff are more aware of how these spaces play an integral role in enabling young people to access their education. Pupil support staff also introduced a more detailed tracking and monitoring system to capture attendance, access to mainstream classes and wellbeing for identified young people who access support spaces.

Across the school staff have improved systems for tracking and monitoring attendance of all young people, including those who attend school on a part-time basis. This is leading to a greater understanding of some of the issues faced by young people who do not attend school as regularly as others. Senior leaders report that these new approaches are leading to an overall increased attendance rate across the school from 2023/24 to 2024/25. Staff need to understand better the reasons why young people attend school but either do not attend, or leave, classes. Senior leaders should expedite their plans to put in place more rigorous monitoring systems in order to reduce the number of young people who are regularly in school but not in class.



**HMIE**

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland  
Luchd-sgrùdaidh an Rìgh airson Foghlam ann an Alba

## What happens next?

The school has made some progress since the original inspection. We recognise that the school needs more time to continue to work on areas for improvement. We will liaise with East Lothian Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within 12 months of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with East Lothian Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents informing you of the progress the school has made.

Frances E. Graham  
HM Inspector

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland.

21 January 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

In October 2024, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Preston Lodge High School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Strong relationships between staff and young people create a calm learning culture where young people are proud of their school. Individual staff support young people well to achieve in many aspects of school life.
- Partners, together with pupil support staff work well to provide individualised provision for young people who require targeted support. This helps young people to improve their wellbeing and to feel included and engaged in school.
- Staff work well together to support almost all young people into positive destinations beyond school.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from East Lothian Council.

- The headteacher should lead and develop a clear overview of all areas of the school. He needs to put in place effective methods for gathering evidence to identify the school's own strengths and areas for improvement. This should lead to clear priorities for improving the school and these should be agreed with staff, parents and young people.
- Senior leaders should ensure a whole school focus on providing tasks and activities which are set at the right level of difficulty for all young people. This should help ensure all young people's learning needs are met more effectively. All staff should work together to raise attainment for all young people from S1 to S6.
- Senior leaders should review the programmes of learning from S1 to S3 to ensure that young people access their full entitlements.
- Senior leaders need to develop a clearer overview of the purposes and effectiveness of existing support provisions. This includes improving attendance at school for identified young people.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Preston Lodge High School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>weak</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>weak</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

[Preston Lodge High School | Inspection Report | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

As a result of our inspection findings we think that the school needs additional support and more time to make necessary improvements. We will liaise with East Lothian Council regarding the school's capacity to improve. We will return to carry out a further inspection of the school within one year of the publication of this letter. We will discuss with East Lothian Council the details of this inspection. When we return to inspect the school we will write to you as parents/carers informing you of the progress the school has made.

Frances E. Graham  
HM Inspector

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Education & Children’s Services Committee
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	9 June 2026
<b>BY:</b>	Depute Chief Executive Children and Communities
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	HMIE Inspection of Ross High School
<b>REPORT STATUS:</b>	Public

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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report to Committee on the outcomes of the March 2026 HMIE inspection of Ross High School.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the content of the HMIE letter (Appendix 1) published on the HMIE website notifying parents and carers of the outcomes of inspection for the school.
- 2.2 Note the key strengths of the school identified by the Inspection Team.
- 2.3 Note the Summary of Inspection Findings (Appendix 2) detailing strengths and recommended future developments for the school.
- 2.4 Note that because of the inspection findings, HMIE will not make a follow-up visit in connection with this inspection.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

### **3.1 Inspection Model**

The inspection team used the How Good Is Our School 4? (HGIOS4?) quality indicators for primary inspections to evaluate the quality of provision at Ross High School.

- 3.2 Evaluative judgements were recorded against a six-point scale (Excellent, Very Good, Good, Satisfactory, Weak, Unsatisfactory) using [How good is our school \(4th edition\) Appendix 3: The six-point scale](#).

The evaluations for Ross High School are:

Quality Indicator	Evaluation
2.1 Safeguarding and child protection	Not evaluated – reported directly to Headteacher and Local Authority
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	<b>Satisfactory</b>
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	<b>Satisfactory</b>

Further details regarding the evaluation of each quality indicator can be found in the Summary of Inspection Findings (Appendix 2).

### 3.3 NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

As part of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, the reporting procedures for the National Improvement Framework (NIF) have been placed on a statutory footing. The evaluations from inspection feed directly into the evidence base for the NIF to demonstrate progress with the NIF priorities and drivers for improvement. This progress is reported annually by the Scottish Government.

### 3.4 CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- Ross High School is a comprehensive secondary school serving the town of Tranent and the surrounding area. As of March 2026, the school roll stood at 1,202 young people. Just over 20% (one in five) of young people leave school at the end of S4.
- The headteacher has been in post for 13 years and is supported by four depute headteachers and a school business manager. The school community has recently experienced the development of a significant extension to the school building alongside the refurbishment of other school areas.
- Socio-economic indicators contextually relevant to the inspection include:
  - Free School Meals: In September 2024, 15.3% of young people were registered for free school meals.

- Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD): In September 2024, 10% of young people lived in the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.
- Additional Support Needs: In September 2024, the school reported that 52% of young people had an additional support need.
- Specialist Provision: The school hosts a specialist local authority provision ("Ross ASN") for young people with complex additional support needs, which currently serves 32 young people.
- Attendance: Improving attendance is an identified school priority, which has improved since 2022/23 and is now in line with the national average. Exclusions are also generally in line with the national average.

### 3.5 INSPECTION FINDINGS

3.5.1 The HMIE letter to parents, published on 2 June 2026 (Appendix 1) provides a summary of recognised strengths of the primary school and recommended focuses for continued improvement.

3.5.2 The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:

- i. **Compassionate Leadership:** The headteacher provides compassionate leadership to improve learners' experiences across the school community.
- ii. **Positive Climate for Learning:** Senior leaders and staff create a calm, purposeful, and inclusive learning environment for young people. This climate is underpinned by positive relationships between young people and staff.
- iii. **Effective Use of Learner Information:** Staff use information about young people and how to support them well, which helps ensure more young people are confident and successful in their learning.
- iv. **Partnership and Post-School Destinations:** Staff work effectively with partners to improve young people's engagement and post-school destinations, providing a range of effective supports to improve outcomes.
- v. **Exemplary ASN Provision:** The specialist 'Ross ASN' provision supports young people very effectively to learn, achieve, and participate well in the broader life of the school.
- vi. **Physical Education Entitlement:** Young people receive their entitlement to high-quality physical education.

3.6 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and representatives from East Lothian Council:

- i. Assessment Frameworks (S1–S3): Staff should use a wider range of approaches to assessment to make more reliable judgements about young people’s progress across S1 to S3 and use this data to inform their planning of learning, teaching, and assessment.
  - ii. Differentiated Pace and Challenge: Staff need to raise expectations of what young people can achieve, across all curricular areas. They should particularly focus on providing appropriate levels of challenge in learning for young people through S1 to S3.
  - iii. Nutritional Regulations compliance: Nutritional standards must be reviewed to ensure alignment with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties under The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. Several areas for improvement have been agreed with the school meals provider to enhance whole-school approaches to health and wellbeing through food.
- 3.7 HMIE are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Not applicable

#### **5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Finance: None

5.2 Human Resources: None

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None

5.4 Risk: None

#### **6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 ***Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an ‘X’ in the relevant box.***

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council’s role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

X
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or

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

*[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]*

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality\\_and\\_diversity/12014/integrated\\_impact\\_assessments](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments)

## **7 APPENDICES**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 - The HMIE letter to parents of the school, published on 2 June 2026.
- 7.2 Appendix 2 - The HMIE Summary of Inspection Findings for the school, published on 2 June 2026.

## **8 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 None

## **9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS**

**Report Author(s)**

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<b>Date</b>	25.05.2026

#### Head of Service Approval

<b>Name</b>	Nicola McDowell
<b>Designation</b>	Head of Education
<b>Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed</b>	Yes
<b>Approval Date</b>	26/5/2026

2 June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2026, a team of HM Inspectors of Education visited Ross High School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The headteacher provides compassionate leadership to improve learners' experiences across the school community. Senior leaders and staff create a calm, purposeful and inclusive learning environment for young people. This climate for learning is underpinned by positive relationships between young people and staff.
- Staff use information about young people and how to support them well. This is helping to ensure that more young people are confident and successful in their learning.
- Staff work effectively with partners to improve young people's engagement and post-school destinations. Together they provide a range of effective supports to improve outcomes for young people.
- The 'Ross ASN' provision supports very effectively young people to learn, achieve and participate well in the life of the school.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from East Lothian Council.

- Staff should use a wider range of approaches to assessment to make more reliable judgements about young people's progress in S1 to S3. They should use this information to inform their planning of learning, teaching and assessment.
- Staff need to raise the attainment of young people at each stage. They should particularly focus on providing appropriate levels of challenge in learning for young people through S1 to S3.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are HMIE's evaluations for Ross High School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	satisfactory
Raising attainment and achievement	satisfactory
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale.</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the HMIE website at: [Ross High School | Inspection Report | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. East Lothian Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Andrew Dingwall  
 HM Inspector

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland



**HMIE**

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland  
Luchd-sgrùdaidh an Rìgh airson Foghlam ann an Alba

# Summarised inspection findings

**Ross High School**

**East Lothian Council**

**2 June 2026**

## Key contextual information

School Name: Ross High School  
Council: East Lothian Council  
SEED number: 8223831  
Roll (March 2026): 1202

Ross High School is a comprehensive secondary school serving the town of Tranent and the surrounding area.

The headteacher has been in post for 13 years. He is supported by four depute headteachers and a school business manager. The school community has recently experienced the development of significant extension to the school building. This included the refurbishment of some other areas of the school. Just over one in five young people leave school at the end of S4.

The school hosts a specialist local authority provision for young people with complex additional support needs. Currently, thirty-two young people attend this provision.

Improving attendance is an identified school priority. Attendance has improved since 2022/23 and is now in line with the national average. Exclusions are generally in line with the national average.

In September 2024, 15.3% of young people were registered for free school meals.

In September 2024, 10% of young people live in 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.

In September 2024, the school reported that 52% of young people had additional support needs.

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Relationships between young people and staff are very positive in almost all lessons and around the school. In almost all classes, most young people reflect well the school values of positivity, respect, integrity and perseverance through their behaviours, engagement in learning and interactions. Almost all teachers promote consistently agreed basic expectations for all young people to be ready to learn through the school's 'expected standards – excellence for everyone' charter. This pledge, agreed by young people and teachers, contributes to creating a calm, purposeful and successful learning environment for all. Most staff respond sensitively and successfully when any young people become disengaged.
- In the majority of classes, teachers plan well to ensure young people have varied opportunities to work individually, in groups and in pairs. Most young people respond positively when learning approaches are varied and when planned learning provides opportunities to work with others. In a minority of subject areas, teachers create purposeful opportunities for young people to lead aspects of their learning. Across the broad general education (BGE), young people would benefit from more regular, planned opportunities to work with their peers. Staff should consider how to vary further approaches to learning and increase challenge appropriately. Overall, a significant minority of lessons are overly teacher-led. This leads to a few young people becoming disengaged in their learning. Senior leaders and teachers should continue to capitalise on examples of highly effective practice within and beyond the school. They should consider how to provide more consistently engaging and challenging learning experiences for all young people.
- Almost all teachers know young people's learning needs well. Across subject departments, teachers access up-to-date information on young people's needs and learning targets. This includes sharing strategies to support identified young people access their learning. In the majority of lessons, teachers skilfully implement these agreed strategies to ensure they meet well the needs of all young people. A significant minority of teachers plan learning that provides sufficient challenge and supports young people to achieve their best. All teachers should now provide rigorous challenge appropriate to young people's needs and abilities, especially in the BGE. Teachers, supported by senior and middle leaders, need to ensure the BGE provides consistent rigour and motivational learning experiences.
- In most lessons, teachers provide clear instructions and guidance for young people to complete tasks. A majority of teachers use skilled questioning to check for understanding and to promote higher-order thinking amongst learners. This helps to generate deep and meaningful

discussion and debate in lessons. This supports young people in these classes to become more confident in asking questions and encourages them to be more curious as learners. Senior and middle leaders should build on the well received programme of professional learning provided by staff within the school. They should capitalise on areas of highly effective practice to help all teachers gain a clearer understanding of how this can help to deepen learning.

- In a few classes, teachers use creative approaches to deliver learning using digital technologies. In a majority of subject areas, young people also benefit from regular, helpful feedback from teachers via online platforms. Teachers should continue to plan to maximise the use of digital technologies to deepen and vary learning experiences for young people.
- Teachers routinely create opportunities for young people to share their views and suggestions to improve their learning experiences. A few teachers have successfully adapted courses and topic areas of focus in response to pupil feedback. Young people have influenced the school's approach to improving learners' experiences in a few subject areas. In these subjects, learner voice has resulted in teachers designing courses and contexts that are clearly aligned to young people's interests and personal choices of what and how they prefer to learn. A next step is for all staff to share clearly with young people the impact of their voice in shaping learning experiences.
- All teachers make frequent use of summative assessment to measure young people's progress. In the majority of lessons, teachers employ formative assessment approaches and check for understanding through learning conversations. Teachers should continue to build a greater range and balance of effective summative and formative assessment approaches to monitor young people's progress. They should continue to develop approaches to using this information to inform future planning of learning, teaching and assessment.
- Teachers across all departments engage in a range of moderation activities within the school and with colleagues across the local authority. This is helping to develop further a detailed understanding of assessment standards. Senior and middle leaders should continue to support all teachers to moderate the planning of learning, teaching and assessment more consistently in the BGE. This should support teachers in making robust, holistic judgements and inform more effective planning for progression in learning.
- Teachers are increasingly confident in making judgements about the attainment of young people in the senior phase. A minority of teachers undertake additional responsibilities with Qualifications Scotland (QS). These teachers work across most subject areas to support understanding of national standards.
- Almost all teachers provide verbal feedback, and the majority also share comments in a written format to support young people to understand their progress. Staff are developing their use of personal learning plans (PLPs) as a format for sharing feedback and encouraging learners to reflect on their progress and next steps. This is supporting most young people to reflect on their performance in assessments. Young people would benefit from more consistent use of PLPs across their subject learning. The majority of young people in the BGE cannot yet articulate clearly how well they are progressing in learning or what they need to do to improve. Staff support most young people in the senior phase well through formal learning

conversations. They provide written feedback that helps young people understand how to improve in their learning.

- Teachers plan learning through the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes and assessment Benchmarks. Senior leaders have created a relevant policy on learning, teaching and assessment to support staff in understanding priorities in this area. Teachers' approaches to planning learning, teaching and assessment are not yet of a consistently high quality. As a next step, senior and middle leaders should support teachers in reviewing planning in the BGE, with a particular focus on ensuring appropriate challenge for progression.
- Almost all teachers are tracking the progress of young people in the BGE using progression pathways. Strengthened approaches to holistic judgements of achievement would help make this data more reliable. This would support senior leaders and teachers to monitor, and plan more accurately for, the progress of learners.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

## 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

### Attainment in literacy and numeracy

#### BGE

- Staff responsible for literacy and numeracy have recently developed more robust approaches to tracking progress. This is supporting the identification of young people for targeted intervention to support more learners to achieve expected levels of attainment.
- Between 2021/22 and 2024/25, almost all young people achieved CfE third level in literacy by the end of S3. The majority of young people achieved CfE fourth level in literacy by the end of S3 between 2022/23 and 2024/25. This improved from a minority in 2021/22. Performance in literacy is generally above local measures and in line with national averages. All learners in S1 and S2 benefit from dedicated time to participate in the Reading Schools initiative, which is supporting improvements in literacy attainment.
- Between 2021/22 and 2024/25, most young people achieved CfE third level in numeracy by the end of S3. This has been consistently in line with local and national averages. The percentage of young people achieving CfE fourth level increased from just under half of the S3 cohort in 2023/24 to the majority in 2024/25. In 2024/25, performance at this level increased to the highest level in five years. Staff are currently reviewing and adapting the curriculum within mathematics and numeracy with an aim of developing more effective progression to further improve outcomes through the BGE and beyond.

### Senior Phase

#### Leavers

- Between 2021/22 and 2024/25, most young people who left school achieved Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 5 or better in literacy. This has been in line with the virtual comparator (VC) from 2020/21 to 2024/25. Between 2020/21 and 2024/25, the percentage of young people leaving school, having achieved SCQF level 6 or better in literacy, remained in line with the VC. This steadily increased following a dip in 2021/22, with the majority of young people achieving this level in 2024/25.
- Between 2020/21 and 2024/25, the majority of young people left school with SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy. This is significantly lower than the VC over this period. Senior leaders and staff have developed approaches to ensure improvements in attainment for specific groups of young people in numeracy. Performance has steadily increased following a dip in 2021/22. Between 2020/21 and 2024/25, a minority of young people left school having achieved SCQF level 6 or better. Performance at this level decreased between 2020/21 and 2022/23 and was

significantly lower than the VC for two of those three years. Performance has improved between 2022/23 and 2024/25 and is in line with the VC in 2023/24 and 2024/25.

- Young people who require additional support attain similar levels of SCQF qualifications in literacy when compared to their peers nationally. Performance at SCQF level 5 in literacy has improved each year between 2020/21 and 2024/25. Young people who require additional support generally leave school with lower levels of SCQF qualifications in numeracy when compared to their peers across the country.

## Cohorts

### Literacy

- At S4, most young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in literacy in between 2023/24 and 2024/25. This increased from the majority achieving this level between 2020/21 and 2022/23. Performance at this level has improved steadily and is in line with VC between 2021/22 and 2024/25.
- By S5, based on the S5 roll, the majority of young people achieved SCQF level 6 in literacy between 2020/21 and 2024/25. Performance decreased between 2020/21 and 2023/24 and was in line with the VC. Performance increased in 2024/25 and is now significantly higher than the VC.
- By S6, based on the S6 roll, most young people achieved SCQF level 6 between 2020/21 and 2024/25. This is in line with the VC except for 2020/21 and 2022/23 when it was significantly higher.

### Numeracy

- At S4, between 2021/22 and 2023/24, a minority of young people achieved SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy. This was significantly lower than the VC in three out of four years. The percentage of learners achieving SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy increased between 2022/23 and 2024/25. In 2024/25, the majority of young people achieved this level, in line with the VC. Staff with responsibility for numeracy have recently implemented a plan for increasing further attainment at SCQF level 5. They should continue to evaluate carefully the impact of planned approaches on learner attainment.
- By S5, based on the S5 roll, and S6, based on the S6 roll, a minority of young people achieve SCQF level 6 in numeracy. There is no consistent pattern of attainment at this level. By S5, attainment was in line with the VC between 2020/21 and 2024/25 except for 2020/21 and 2023/24 when it was significantly lower.

## National Qualifications

- The percentage of young people presented at National 5 (N5) English is below national levels. Most young people attain a pass, above national levels. As planned, staff should increase the percentage of young people presented at N5 English in S4. The percentage of young people presented at Higher in English has increased and is in line with national levels. Pass rates are consistently above national levels between 2022/23 and 2024/25.
- Young people's presentation rates for N5 Mathematics and N5 Applications of Mathematics are below national levels. Pass rates are in line with national levels for applications of

mathematics but below for mathematics. Young people's presentation levels are in line with national levels at Higher for mathematics and applications of mathematics. Pass rates are in line with national levels for Higher Mathematics and above national levels for Higher Applications of Mathematics.

## Attendance

- Senior leaders and staff have had a focus on improving attendance at school. Attendance is improving and is now in line with the national average. Senior leaders recognise that absence is impacting on outcomes for young people. They identified that continuing to improve attendance, particularly for those young people with persistent absence, should remain a school priority. Around 40% of young people experience persistent absence with attendance below 90%. Staff monitor young people's attendance systematically and work well with parents to address barriers to regular attendance. Staff support well a few young people and families who experience challenges with attendance at school. This includes targeted work to develop young people's emotional resilience. This is leading to improvements in attendance for the majority of identified young people.
- Currently, too many young people attend school on agreed part-time arrangements. Staff should continue to work with young people and their families with a focus on supporting young people back into full-time learning as soon as possible. Staff should continue to ensure that arrangements for part-time learning are reviewed regularly, with outcomes and decisions recorded, to demonstrate progress being made over time.

## Attainment over time

### BGE

- Senior leaders have identified the need to increase appropriate levels of challenge within the BGE to maximise attainment and achievement for all young people. Most young people achieve CfE third level across their curriculum learning beyond literacy and numeracy by the end of S3. A majority achieve CfE fourth level. Senior leaders are aware of the need to support further teacher confidence in making judgements about young people's progress through CfE levels, particularly at CfE fourth level. Senior and middle leaders should now work with staff to review curriculum planning in the BGE. They should develop further the correlation between planning, challenge and appropriate progression to help improve attainment outcomes.

## Senior Phase

### Improving attainment for all

- Senior leaders are aware that in a minority of subjects, too few young people are being presented for National 5 qualifications in S4. They are taking steps to address this through earlier identification of individual young people who could attain at this level and supporting them to make appropriate course choices. It is too early to measure the impact of this approach. Senior leaders, with staff, have undertaken developments that are helping to ensure young people leaving school at the end of S4 are supported to attain a minimum suite of qualifications. As planned, they should now seek to maximise attainment for individual young people by securing qualifications at the highest level possible.

## Leavers

- The attainment of young people leaving school, using average complementary tariff points, is generally in line with the VC for the lowest attaining 20%, the middle 60% and the highest attaining 20% of young people. For the middle 60% and highest 20% of young people, performance fluctuates with no clear pattern of improvement.

## Cohorts

- At S4, using average complimentary tariff points, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% of young people was in line with the VC between 2020/21 and 2022/23. In 2023/24 and 2024/25 this fell to being significantly lower than the VC. The attainment of the middle attaining 60% and highest attaining 20% of young people was in line with the VC between 2020/21 and 2023/24. This decreased to being significantly lower than the VC in 2024/25.
- By S5, based on the S5 roll and S6, based on S6 roll, the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% of young people is in line with the VC between 2020/21 and 2024/25. The attainment of the middle attaining 60% and highest attaining 20% of young people is generally in line with the VC between 2020/21 and 2024/25. In 2024/25, the performance of the middle attaining 60% of young people in S5 increased to the highest level since 2021/22. There is no consistent pattern of improvement for these cohorts.

## Breadth and Depth

- At S4, the majority of young people generally achieve one or more to three or more awards at SCQF level 5C. A minority achieve four or more to six or more awards. Between 2020/21 and 2023/24, this is in line with the VC. Performance at SCQF level 5A is inconsistent and has decreased from 2020/21 to 2024/25. Performance at this level and SCQF level C or better has fallen to being generally significantly lower than the VC in 2024/25.
- By S5, based on the S5 roll, between 2021/22 and 2024/25, for one or more to five or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better or 6A or better, performance is in line with the VC. The majority of young people achieve one or more awards at SCQF level 6C. A minority of young people achieve three or more to five or more awards at SCQF level C, except in 2023-24 when a few young people achieved five or more awards. Between 2020/21 and 2024/25, a minority of young people achieve one or more awards at SCQF level 6A or better. During the same period, the proportion of young people achieving three or more awards at this level decreased from a minority to a few. Between 2020/21 and 2024/25, a few young people achieve five or more awards at SCQF level 6A or better.
- By S6, based on the S6 roll, between 2020/21 and 2024/25, generally, most young people achieve one or more to two or more awards at SCQF level 6C or better. The majority of young people achieve three or more to four or more awards at this level. The majority of young people achieve one or more awards at SCQF level 6A or better. Between 2021/22 and 2024/25, a minority achieve two or more to three or more awards. This is in line with the VC.
- Senior leaders have identified a priority to improve the quality of passes achieved by more learners in national qualifications. They are working with middle leaders to identify more young people who may be supported to attain passes at SCQF level 5A and level 6A. Senior leaders should, as planned, continue to review the curriculum offer to ensure young people can maximise their attainment.

## Overall quality of learners' achievement

- Young people build skills and confidence through participation in a wide range of clubs and activities in school and their local communities. These include sports activities and opportunities within the creative arts. Most young people recognise and value the opportunities available for them. This is supporting a sense of community. Staff are ensuring young people receive accreditation, including Saltire Awards, to recognise and celebrate a wider range of achievements.
- Working with partners, a few senior students contribute positively to school life through a range of leadership roles, including, Young Ambassadors and Sports Captains. These young leaders are supporting a few young people in the BGE to develop their coaching and leadership skills as part of the school's Future Leaders programme. As a result of this positive work, the school has recently been awarded the Gold Sport Award by Sport Scotland.
- A few young people in S1-3 develop leadership skills and their confidence through their roles including pupil council and the Equality group. Young people in S6 contribute positively to school life through a range of leadership and volunteering roles. A few complete the Mentors in Violence Prevention training and deliver valuable learning to S2 pupils. A few young people achieve the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. As a result, young people further develop skills in communication, teamwork and organisation skills.
- Staff work effectively with a range of partners to provide targeted support for a few young people. This is enabling young people to build confidence and develop positive pathways, leading to a few young people re-engaging with learning.
- Staff celebrate young people's achievements well through newsletters, daily communications and pupil of the month displays. Senior leaders and staff deliver showcase and celebration events that are well received by young people and their families. These include community concerts, art exhibitions, celebration of success evenings and annual sports awards.
- Senior leaders have very recently begun to track skills and pupil achievements for all young people within and beyond school using the online profile through My World of Work. They are building on previous approaches that supported young people in S1 and S2 to record their participation in activities. Staff use this information to identify young people who do not take part in activities and support them to find opportunities to engage in experiences most relevant to them. This is leading to the majority of young people targeted for support now taking part in clubs. Senior leaders and staff should, as planned, support young people to continue to build their capabilities for future learning, work and life by linking participation with skill development.

## Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders and staff use effectively the data they gather to monitor carefully the attainment of young people who face barriers to success. This includes young people who benefit from additional support with learning, are in receipt of school meals or are care experienced. Senior and middle leaders use data very well to plan strategically their use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). This supports effectively improved attendance, wellbeing and engagement of identified groups of young people. Staff use this fund successfully to support individuals and specific groups, across the school, who require additional support to develop

appropriate literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, young people who are supported through these interventions demonstrate accelerated progress in these areas.

- All staff have a very strong awareness of the socio-economic context of all young people. They work very effectively with the local community to support sensitively young people and families. For example, staff discretely support young people to ensure they can attend educational excursions and provide vouchers to families for local community support organisations who provide uniform and outdoor clothing. Staff and young people provide a well attended and well received breakfast club, open to all. This is helping young people be ready to learn, reducing late coming and improving attendance.
- Young people are supported effectively through a range of approaches, including the Creative Learning Space (CLS). The CLS provides safe spaces for young people who find the mainstream school environment challenging. Staff provide a range of activities to support emotional regulation, the development of social skills and help to build positive relationships with others. This support, together with the Equity Interventions programme, is helping the majority of identified young people to reengage with learning. The majority of these young people in the senior phase attain appropriate National Qualifications as a result of this additional support.
- When compared using average complementary tariff scores, the attainment of young people who left school, and reside in SIMD deciles two, six and nine, is generally significantly lower or much lower than the national average between 2022/23 and 2024/25. Senior leaders identify that the attainment of a few young people who may experience socio-economic disadvantage requires further improvement. They should continue to develop and monitor the support available for this group to reduce all poverty-related attainment gaps in line with national expectations.
- Senior leaders and staff effectively use their extensive knowledge of the local context to prepare young people to transition successfully from school. Members of the school led 16+ Hub collaborate very effectively to ensure almost all young people are supported into positive destinations. A majority of young people progress successfully to higher education or further education on leaving school. Staff and partners support effectively any young people identified as being at risk of not progressing to a positive destination when leaving school. These highly impactful approaches result in almost all young people between 2020/21 and 2024/25 progressing to a positive destination on leaving school. This was significantly higher than the VC in 2024/25.

### Context

The Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision in Ross High School is a specialist local authority provision for young people with complex additional support needs. There are currently thirty-two young people attending the provision from S1-S6. The provision has five classrooms, a soft playroom, a sensory room, a life skills room, two nurture spaces and two music rooms. The facility is led by a depute headteacher, a 0.7 full time equivalent (FTE) principal teacher and a 0.3 FTE acting principal teacher. Over and above this, there are teachers and ASN auxiliary staff.

### QI 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

- Aply led by the depute headteacher, all staff within the specialist ASN provision have created a respectful, warm and welcoming culture grounded in the school's values and children's rights. Staff support young people to build positive relationships and friendships across all classes. All staff demonstrate a solid understanding of young people's individual needs and consistently provide effective support, for example through a movement break or sensory experience. As a result of immediate needs being met well, most young people return to tasks quickly and reengage with their learning.
- In most lessons, young people are appropriately challenged, and as a result, they enjoy learning that is matched to their needs. Staff should continue to build on current practice to ensure consistent approaches to differentiation. They should continue to ensure all young people are fully supported and extended in their learning.
- Staff structure lessons effectively to ensure routines and consistency across practice, for example by using the same symbol-supported communication tool. In most lessons, teacher's explanations are clear. This supports young people to understand what they are learning and going to be doing. Staff continually revisit and enhance total communication approaches, including the use of sign language, to support learners' understanding and expression. Staff should strengthen their consistency in the use of sign language to ensure all learners experience a coherent approach.
- All staff use digital technologies appropriately to enrich young people's learning. This includes supporting young people to complete end of topic online quizzes or to choose educational games to play.
- Young people access their learning within a wide range of creative spaces, for example a multi-sensory room, which helps them to feel secure and ready to learn. All young people engage in learning outdoors and staff, supported by partners, ensure young people have access to a range of motivating experiences. When preparing for cooking lessons, young people visit local shops to purchase ingredients as part of life skills learning. Staff should continue to build on their use of the school campus and wider community to support young people to learn in real-life contexts.
- Young people attend the provision following a multi-agency assessment process. Prior to attending, effective transition processes ensure young people settle well into the provision. Staff continue to build on young people's levels of social, emotional and academic need. Teachers use a range of assessments on an ongoing basis, including observation, experiential

assessment and learning conversations. As a result, teachers plan appropriate next steps for young people.

- Staff build their capacity well through regular BGE moderation. This includes collaboration with mainstream colleagues and with one another. Teachers value opportunities to work with colleagues from other schools. This supports a shared understanding of standards and expectations at both BGE and senior phase. Teachers should continue to build on this to further improve consistency and confidence in professional judgements.
- Teachers plan appropriately over different timescales. They use the CfE experiences and outcomes well to ensure young people experience learning across literacy, numeracy, health, and wellbeing. Each young person has a detailed profile plan, with individual targets and strategies of support that best help them succeed. Teachers plan areas of the curriculum within a topic each term. Young people value having choice in selecting the final topic of each academic session. Staff should continue to explore ways to build on pupil voice to further enhance learner engagement and participation.
- Teachers use tracking systems effectively to inform next steps in learning for young people. Staff have recently introduced a structured framework to plan and track progress in communication and emotional regulation. Staff should continue to develop confidence in using this framework to ensure a consistent approach across the setting.

### **QI 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement**

- Most young people in the BGE are making good progress in both literacy and numeracy. A few young people are making very good progress.
- Young people working at CfE early level are developing their communication and literacy skills well. A few of these young people use augmentative and alternative communication effectively to communicate their likes and dislikes. A minority of young people, who are working at CfE first level, listen to a short story and respond with relevant comments or questions. A few young people working at CfE second level write clearly and for different purposes, for example within science when writing about a completed experiment. A few young people who are working at CfE third level read and develop their understanding about a range of texts, including comic strips and stories. Teachers should continue to develop young people's communication and literacy skills across all curriculum areas.
- Within numeracy, young people are working at CfE early level to third level. At CfE early level, a few young people solve simple subtraction problems using concrete materials or pictures. A minority of young people, who are working at CfE first level, use Venn diagrams to sort and classify objects according to simple properties linked to topic work. They follow pictorial recipes involving multiple steps, for example when making soup. At CfE second level young people explore, name and discuss two-dimensional (2D) shapes and three-dimensional (3D) objects. At CfE third level, young people apply knowledge of time and measurement to real-life contexts. Teachers should continue to ensure young people experience numeracy in a range of contexts.
- At the senior phase, all young people are currently working towards National 1 or National 2 qualifications for literacy and numeracy. The majority of these young people have achieved awards at either the same level or above these levels within other curricular areas, for

example National 3 Media, National 3 Science in the Environment, SCQF Level 2 Self and Work, SCQF Level 4 Food Hygiene and National 3 Modern Languages. Staff continually explore pathways that support the interests and talents of young people.

- Young people's achievements within and outwith school are helpfully tracked and accredited. Staff work effectively with partners to offer a wide range of experiences for young people where appropriate, including volunteer placements, out of school clubs, college courses and work experience. Recently, staff collaborated with local partner organisations to support young people within the senior phase to develop hospitality and employability skills. As a result, young people have held successful café events for families and the local community and gained accreditation within hospitality. Last session, a class group were awarded the Young Scot 2025 Equality and Diversity Award. This award recognised their creation of an impactful film highlighting accessibility and inclusion. Senior leaders and staff should continue to work with partners to further develop wider achievement for all young people.
- Staff offer a range of inclusive outdoor learning activities, working alongside partner agencies. Young people have achieved a range of certificates for challenging activities such as orienteering, hill walking, paddle boarding and canoeing. These experiences are celebrated and recognised through accreditation, for example the Duke of Edinburgh award. All young people within the provision are supported well to access the range of outdoor activities that lead to their Duke of Edinburgh's Award accreditation.
- All staff have a strong understanding of the additional support needs and the socio-economic context of all of the young people. They work diligently to remove any barriers to young people's participation in the life of the school.
- Staff work effectively with mainstream staff to ensure that learning takes place in mainstream classes for most young people, where this is appropriate to their level and needs. Staff, young people and families value how they are fully included within the life and community of the whole school. Over the last five years, all young people have moved on to positive destinations, including further education and employment.

## Other relevant evidence

- Young people receive their entitlement to high quality physical education. Not all young people receive their entitlement to 1+2 modern language learning after S2 or to Religious and Moral Education after S4.
- The school submitted information relating to compliance with the revised Nutritional Regulations 2020 and key duties as required by The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007. The Health and Nutrition Inspector (HNI) discussed this information with relevant staff and young people. In addition, the HNI examined documentation relating to the effectiveness of whole school approaches to improving the health and wellbeing of young people through food in school. Several areas for improvement have been agreed with the school meals provider.

## Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard HMIE terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.



<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Education & Children's Services
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	9 June 2026
<b>BY:</b>	Depute Chief Executive – Children and Communities
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Update – Delivery of Early Learning and Childcare
<b>REPORT STATUS:</b>	Public

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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the planned changes to the delivery of Early Learning and Childcare from August 2026.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are recommended to:
- i. Note the final update of the transition of seven nurseries from a full-year to a school-year delivery model.
  - ii. Note that officers will continue to review the criteria for admissions for Early Learning and Childcare by August 2026.
  - iii. Note that officers will continue to undertake a scoping exercise to assess the viability of introducing charging for extra hours in Council settings by August 2026.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 On 17 March 2026, Council was updated on the work underway to support families in transitioning seven Early Learning and Childcare (EL&CC) settings from a full-year model to a school-year model, effective from August 2026. The settings affected are Aberlady, East Linton, Law, Longniddry, Pinkie, Sandersons and Yester.
- 3.2 At this meeting, Councillors agreed to note all actions undertaken for this transition to date and requested a further update in June 2026. This report provides a final update on the work undertaken.

## **UPDATE ON ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Final Update on The Change of Delivery Models**

- 3.3 The staffing structures for the 7 nurseries have been agreed for August 2026. New contracts to formalise the change are in progress.
- 3.4 All school-based Early Learning and Childcare staff have been successfully supported to adopt working patterns that meet both their individual needs and the needs of the service. In parallel, central team staff have been successfully supported into redeployment opportunities following the completion of the service review, ensuring continuity of employment.
- 3.5 Further to the update provided to Committee on 7 March 2026, which outlined the support available to families, all those affected by the change in delivery model who requested assistance have been supported by the Early Years Central Team. They have been helped to understand the range of Early Learning and Childcare options available across the county, with all children offered their full entitlement to funded provision.
- 3.6 A small number of families may not have been able to access their first choice setting due to the revised delivery model now operating within their preferred setting. As families do not require to provide feedback on their childcare choices, it is not possible to determine how many families are in this position.
- 3.7 We continue to work with providers who wish to deliver funded Early Learning & Childcare (EL&CC) in East Lothian, supporting a diverse, sustainable and flexible local childcare sector. Expanding the funded provider network remains a priority to increase parental choice and strengthen our provider-neutral approach as required by the Scottish Government.

### **Review of the criteria for EL&CC admissions**

- 3.8 Officers have begun a review of the current Early Learning and Childcare (ELC&C) admissions criteria, with the rationale for this work grounded in capturing and responding to family voice. In line with Scottish Government policy, East Lothian continues to operate a “funding follows the child” model. Under this approach, catchment areas do not apply, and cross-boundary access remains essential to supporting parental choice and flexibility.
- 3.9 Officers will continue to review admissions criteria by looking both inwards and outwards, learning from the work of other local authorities and through our active participation in the Southeast Early Years Network, which includes East Lothian, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and Fife. While this work progresses, age-based eligibility remains a widely

used and equitable criterion across Scotland and will continue to inform our approach. EL&CC current admissions criteria can be found here:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210642/early\\_learning\\_and\\_childcare/12629/early\\_learning\\_and\\_childcare\\_in\\_east\\_lothian/9](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210642/early_learning_and_childcare/12629/early_learning_and_childcare_in_east_lothian/9)

- 3.10 Families choose childcare based on a broad range of personal and professional circumstances. To remain aligned with the funding follows the child policy intent, families are not required to evidence or justify “need” to access funded EL&CC.
- 3.11 Our Admissions Criteria review will be completed by August 2026, and a report will be shared at Education and Children’s Services Committee in November 2026 seeking approval of any changes.

### **Viability of Charging for Early Learning and Childcare in East Lothian Council Settings.**

- 3.12 In March 2026, Council agreed that officers should explore whether East Lothian Council settings could offer families additional paid hours.
- 3.13 This work is being taken forward jointly by Early Years and Finance to assess what may be feasible within existing operational, capital and revenue resources. While this remains a priority, progression is dependent on the outcome of a detailed viability and scoping exercise to ensure any new arrangements are deliverable, sustainable and compliant with statutory requirements. The outcome of this feasibility assessment including any recommendations for approval will be brought back to Education and Children’s Services committee in November 2026.

## **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Potential change to EL&CC Admissions Criteria following review.

## **5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Finance: None
- 5.2 Human Resources: None
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None
- 5.4 Risk: None

## 6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken, and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

**or**

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

The Integrated Impact Assessment and Children's Rights Wellbeing Impact Assessment relating to the Service Review has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality\\_and\\_diversity/12014/integrated\\_impact\\_assessments](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments)

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/35611/restructure\\_and\\_reorganisation\\_of\\_early\\_learning\\_and\\_childcare\\_services\\_in\\_east\\_lothian](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/35611/restructure_and_reorganisation_of_early_learning_and_childcare_services_in_east_lothian)

## 7 APPENDICES

7.1 None

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None

## 9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

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### Head of Service Approval

<b>Name</b>	Nicola McDowell
<b>Designation</b>	Head of Education
<b>Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed</b>	Yes
<b>Approval Date</b>	28 May 2026



**COMMITTEE:** Education & Children’s Services Committee  
**MEETING DATE:** 9 June 2026  
**BY:** Depute Chief Executive Children and Communities  
**REPORT TITLE:** Head Teacher Appointment  
**REPORT STATUS:** Public

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**6**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To seek Committee approval of the Head Teacher appointment made by the Appointments Sub-Committee.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

2.1 Note the undernoted Head Teacher appointment.

**3 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The following Head Teacher appointment is intimated:

School	Appointee	Commencement Date	Previous Post and School
Dunbar Primary School	Grant Gillies	To be confirmed	Head Teacher South Morningside Primary School

**4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None

**5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Finance: None

- 5.2 Human Resources: None
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None
- 5.4 Risk: None

## 6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

**or**

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

*[Enter information on impacts that have been identified]*

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality\\_and\\_diversity/12014/integrated\\_impact\\_assessments](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments)

## 7 APPENDICES

7.1 None

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None

## 9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

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### Head of Service Approval

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<b>Approval Date</b>	27 May 2026



<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Education & Children’s Services Committee
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	9 June 2026
<b>BY:</b>	Depute Chief Executive – Resources and Economy
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Education Appeals Committee Hearings – Session 2025/26
<b>REPORT STATUS:</b>	Public

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**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To make the Committee aware of the Education Appeals Committee hearings in session 2025/26.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report.

**3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 places a duty on local authorities to set up and maintain Education Appeals Committees to consider:
  - (i) appeals from parents who have had their placing requests for a specific school for their children refused; and
  - (ii) appeals from parents whose child has been excluded from school.
- 3.2 The Education Appeals Committee has a pool of volunteers who are independent chairs with experience of education, as well as a pool of volunteer parents who have a child or children attending East Lothian schools. The Committee is made up of an independent chair, a parent representative, and an administration Councillor who is a member of the Education & Children’s Services Committee. The Committee also has a Legal Adviser, who is a Council Solicitor with no prior involvement with any of the cases.
- 3.3 The Education Appeals Committee hears non-catchment placement appeals and exclusion appeals. Non-catchment placement appeals can

be heard at any time but are generally heard at the end of May each year for the academic year beginning in August. Exclusion appeals can be heard at any time throughout the school year. One non-catchment placement appeal was heard at the beginning of session 2025/26 and was refused.

### **Exclusion appeals**

- 3.4 In session 2025/26, the Education Appeals Committee heard three exclusion appeals: two for primary school pupils, and one for a secondary pupil. In all three instances, the Committee agreed to uphold the decision of the Education Authority to exclude the pupil from school.

### **Non-catchment placement appeals**

- 3.5 Placing requests are considered in the first instance by the Principal Officer – Equity & Inclusion, and, in certain circumstances, requests may be referred to the Head of Education. ‘Information for parents and carers about enrolling their child in an East Lothian Council School’ is a guidance document available on the Council’s website. Parents are required to enrol their child in their catchment primary or secondary school, or, alternatively, make a placing request to the Head of Education if they wish their child to be placed in a non-catchment school.
- 3.6 The non-catchment placing requests for admission to P1 in the coming academic year were considered by the Head of Education in March/April. More requests were received than there were places available and, once all places were filled, the decision was:
- i. to refuse the remaining non-catchment primary 1 placing requests on the grounds that admission would make it necessary for the education authority to take an additional teacher into employment.
  - ii. to form a waiting list in priority for the non-catchment pupils.
  - iii. to give the parents of the children who have been refused a place the right of appeal against the decision; and
  - iv. to offer the non-catchment pupils concerned places at their catchment schools or (for those families living outside East Lothian) to advise the parents to contact their own local authority.
- 3.7 The Education Appeals Committee heard eight non-catchment placement appeals over two hearings on 27 May and 1 June for P1 places at Letham Mains Primary School, Stoneyhill Primary School, and West Barns Primary School. The decision of the Education Authority to refuse the pupil a place at the non-catchment school was upheld by the Committee in all eight instances.
- 3.8 Where an appeal is refused the parents have a further right of appeal to the Sheriff Court which must be lodged within 28 days of receipt of the Committee’s decision.

#### 4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

#### 5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance: None

5.2 Human Resources: None

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None

5.4 Risk: None

#### 6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

**or**

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality\\_and\\_diversity/12014/integrated\\_impact\\_assessments](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments)

## 7 APPENDICES

7.1 None

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 School Enrolment and Placing Requests Booklet:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/33696/school\\_enrolment\\_and\\_placing\\_requests\\_booklet\\_-\\_nov\\_2025](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/33696/school_enrolment_and_placing_requests_booklet_-_nov_2025)

8.2 Preventing and Managing School Exclusions:

[https://www.ka-net.org.uk/files/preventing\\_and\\_managing\\_school\\_exclusions\\_june\\_2023.pdf](https://www.ka-net.org.uk/files/preventing_and_managing_school_exclusions_june_2023.pdf)

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### Head of Service Approval

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<b>Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed</b>	Confirmed
<b>Approval Date</b>	2 June 2026