

Report

Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 February 2023
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	Accessibility Strategy 2022 to 2025
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise of the development of the updated Accessibility Strategy for 2022 to 2025

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the updated Education Resources' Accessibility Strategy, attached as an appendix to this report, be noted and
- (2) that the arrangements to publish the Accessibility Strategy on the Council's website be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. The requirement for Education Resources to produce an Accessibility Strategy is included in the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 (The Act). The Strategy is also required to ensure we meet their duties under the Equality Act, 2010.
- 3.2. In line with guidance from the Scottish Government, the Strategy document outlines the current position, improvements made since the previous Accessibility Strategy and also the priorities for improvement, including an action plan.
- 3.3. The Strategy endorses the implementation of inclusive and integrated practice to promote equality of opportunity for all learners to reach their potential, taking account of their needs or protected characteristics. The Strategy is underpinned by the principles of the national programme "Getting It Right for Every Child" which promotes an integrated and common approach to developing children and young people's wellbeing.

4. Progress to date

- 4.1. A working group, drawn from all areas of education and representatives from Corporate Resources, Finance and IT and the trades unions, was established to revise and update the strategy, taking account of guidance from the Scottish Government, the implementation of "Getting it Right for Every Child", Curriculum for Excellence, the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation. Information was gathered from establishments and also from small groups of learners. The attached Accessibility Strategy 2022 to 25 is the combined work of the group.

4.2. The Strategy document provides an overall purpose and direction for the work of all establishments and services in relation to inclusion and equality. The Strategy covers all learners in education establishments. It acknowledges that learning is a life-long process. It emphasises the importance of working in partnership to improve outcomes for learners of all ages.

4.3. There are 3 areas of priority included in the strategy:-

Improving access to physical accommodation

- ◆ Schools' Modernisation
- ◆ Transport
- ◆ Extra-curricular clubs and groups
- ◆ Trips

Improving access to the curriculum

- ◆ Ensuring that all learners have an appropriate curriculum in place.
- ◆ Strategies in place to meet the range of needs.
- ◆ Continuing Professional Development required to ensure that needs are met.

Improving access to communication and school information

- ◆ ICT provision within establishments.
- ◆ Using ICT to enhance the learning of those with additional support needs.
- ◆ Promoting IT systems to support staff to meet the range of needs.

4.4. The Accessibility Strategy 2022 to 2025, attached as an appendix to the report, will be distributed to all services and establishments and an electronic version will be available on the South Lanarkshire Council website making it available to parents/carers and other stakeholders as well as allowing additional information to be accessed through links to relevant websites.

5. Employee Implications

5.1. All members of staff, as appropriate to their remit, require to become familiar with the Strategy. Training needs identified at establishment or whole authority level will be developed, as appropriate.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. There are minimal costs associated with printing and distribution and these will be met from within existing resources.

7. Other Implications

7.1. There are no direct risks or sustainability issues associated with this report as the Strategy is a revision of an existing strategy statement.

8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

8.1. Equality impact issues have been considered during the review process and a final impact assessment has been completed prior to dissemination to stakeholders.

8.2. The group which produced the strategy included representation from all sectors within Education Resources including Trade Union and professional association representatives. Views were also sought from a range of stakeholders during the consultation period. This included establishments, parent councils, children and young people. The consultation was also undertaken through the South Lanarkshire Council SWAY newsletter which is distributed widely across all Education Resources. Some minor changes were made to the final strategy document following

the consultation process. From the responses received, the majority were very positive.

Tony McDaid
Executive Director (Education Resources)

25 January 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ◆ Inspiring learners, transforming learning, strengthening partnerships

Previous References

- ◆ Education Resources Committee – 10 November 2015

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:- Anne Donaldson, Head of Education (Inclusion)

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