

Report to: **Equal Opportunities Forum**  
Date of Meeting: **14 June 2023**  
Report by: **Executive Director (Education Resources)**

Subject: **Annual Report on Mainstreaming Equalities and Diversity – Education Resources**

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ update the Equal Opportunities Forum of the strategic and operational work being undertaken and planned by Education Resources to meet the commitments within the “Mainstreaming Equalities Progress report 2019 to 2021 and Mainstreaming Equalities Report 2021 to 2025”

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Forum is asked to approve the following recommendation:-

- (1) that the work being undertaken by Education Resources in terms of mainstreaming equalities be noted.

## 3. Background

3.1. In April 2021, the Council published its “Mainstreaming Equalities Report 2021 to 2025”. There are 5 Equality Outcomes set for 2021 to 2025 with a focus on actions to produce results intended to achieve specific and identifiable improvements in people’s life chances. The 5 outcomes are:-

- ◆ Equality Outcome 1: Increase the number of people from minority ethnic backgrounds employed in the South Lanarkshire Council workforce to reflect the diversity of the South Lanarkshire population.
- ◆ Equality Outcome 2: Older people, those from vulnerable groups and individuals who live alone are protected from scams and nuisance calls and their wellbeing is improved through increased awareness and preventative action.
- ◆ Equality Outcome 3: ‘Counselling through schools’ service is accessible for all children/young people aged 10 and over.
- ◆ Equality Outcome 4: Prevent homelessness occurring and significantly reduce homelessness.
- ◆ Equality Outcome 5: Increase the number of affordable homes for rent.

Education Resources leads on Equality Outcome Three. This outcome is being progressed by the Education Psychological Service and a Quality Improvement Officer (Inclusive Education Service) and is attached as Appendix 1.

3.2. Education Resources continues to build on progress and remains committed to embedding Equalities work across all aspects of service provision. A Quality

Improvement Officer (Inclusive Education Service) contributes to the Corporate Equality and Diversity Working Group.

The progress and impact of activities undertaken is attached as Appendix 2.

- 3.3. Education Resources operates inclusive practice as detailed in the 'Framework for Inclusion and Equality' which brings together the key areas of practice of schools, establishments, and education services in delivering an inclusive service. It provides information on the policy and principles underpinning our inclusive approach and contains over 30 practice guides on a range of aspects of inclusive practice. Work has begun this year on updating this framework to take account of the most recent local and National Policies and a refreshed framework is scheduled to be completed during session 2023/2024.

#### **4. Equality Impact Assessments**

- 4.1. Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) assess the impact of new or revised policies practices or services against the requirements of the public sector equalities duty and help ensure the needs of service users are taken into account during their development and implementation.
- 4.2. This year the service has carried out 9 EQIAs.
- 4.3. The Resource follows corporate guidance for carrying out EQIAs. Training for new users of the EQIA system is being arranged and refresher training is also being provided as requested by Services.

#### **5. Education Resources Developments**

##### **5.1. Race equality and Anti-Racist Education**

The Scottish Government established an Anti-Racism in Education programme in response to the level of correspondence received by the First Minister in relation to the Black Lives Matter Movement and one of the recommendations of the Covid 19 Ethnicity Expert Group, seeking to include the teaching of Black History in the curriculum.

A Programme Board was set up with 4 workstreams:-

- ◆ Curriculum Reform
- ◆ Recording and reporting racist incidents
- ◆ Diversity in the teaching profession and Education Workforce
- ◆ Education leadership and professional learning

- 5.1.1. In March 2023, an Introduction to Race Equality was delivered to all South Lanarkshire Headteachers by an external presenter who was previously a lead inspector for HMIE and now works as a consultant for the Scottish Government. This covered local and national developments, curricular developments, and findings from a local authority investigation into racist incidents within educational establishments.
- 5.1.2. Following this, a Steering Group has been set up with two main tasks: refreshing South Lanarkshire guidelines on recording and reporting racist incidents and producing guidelines for schools on decolonising the curriculum. Further support sessions will be offered to schools following the First Minister's June launch of the Anti-Racist Principles in Education document.

5.1.3. To ensure this work is embedded at all levels within our establishments, the induction programme for probationer teachers will include input on anti-racist education from West of Scotland Development Education Centre (WOSDEC) Global Citizenship.

## **5.2. Supporting LGBT young people in School**

5.2.1. In March 2023, LGBT Youth Scotland published their education report: Life In Scotland 2023, which is based on information gathered from over 1200 young people. The report states that only 48% of young people who participated feel supported as an LGBT person in education and just 21% reported seeing LGBT representation in lessons within their educational setting.

5.2.2. In response to this, an LGBT Inclusive Education Showcase will be delivered in the session 2023/2024 by the Tie (Time For Inclusive Education) Charity. All schools will receive an invitation for one member of staff to attend.

5.2.3. LGBT Youth Scotland delivered training to representatives from ten schools and a representative from the Education Psychological Service also attended. The Inclusive Education Service supported Strathaven Academy to begin working towards the bronze LGBT Charter Award. Two schools have achieved their Silver Charter award; Lesmahagow High School and Duncanrig Secondary School and 4 schools have achieved or are working towards their bronze award.

## **5.3. Supporting children and young people with disability and autism**

5.3.1. All additional support needs (ASN) bases and standalone schools have a focus on developing pupil voice. Each establishment has an AAC (alternative and augmentative communication) resource pack which includes a range of low-tech and high-tech devices.

5.3.2. There is a joint project underway as part of the Children affected by Disability Strategy Group. Twelve schools are participating with representatives from across the Primary and Secondary Additional Support Needs sector. The project is focused on gaining the views of a range of pupils, some of whom will use AAC, around the services they would like in terms of Sports and Recreation, Respite Care and facilities for clubs and holiday activities.

5.3.3. In October 2022, all ASN Bases and schools received additional funding to purchase sensory/therapeutic curriculum resources to support them in building capacity to meet the developing needs of children and young people. This spend will be monitored and evaluated by end of session 2022/2023.

5.3.4. In November 2022, a Sharing Good Practice Event took place in Sanderson High School. There were several workshops and Allied Health Professionals from the Speech and Language and Occupational Health Services present to raise awareness in relation to resources/strategies that can be used to develop AAC. Following this event, a new SLC AAC Network has been established. This is aimed at supporting practitioners to share good practice more widely across the authority. The event will be repeated during session 2023/2024 for mainstream school staff.

## **5.4. Accessibility Strategy**

5.4.1. The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 places a legal requirement for education authorities to prepare and implement an accessibility strategy for all the schools for which they are responsible. This must detail strategies to improve pupil access to curriculum, access to physical environment of schools and improve communication with pupils with disabilities.

- 5.4.2. The Accessibility Strategy 2022 to 2025 has been approved by Education Resources Committee and will be implemented and monitored. This outlines South Lanarkshire Council's plans to deliver inclusive and quality education service to all pupils. Consultation exercises for pupils and staff, parents and carers took place. The pupil consultation was designed using Boardmaker symbols to ensure it was as widely accessible to pupils as possible.
- 5.4.3. All ASN schools have access to Boardmaker, a software programme which contains over 40,00 picture communication symbols to allow schools to create individualised content to support pupils with communication needs.
- 5.4.4. Since 2021 all SLC learners and staff have full access to text helps Read and Write Literacy Support Tool. Access to toolbar is available on all SLC managed devices including Chromebooks iPads, windows desktop, and laptops and can also be accessed by learners, free of charge, via their own device at home.
- 5.4.5. A well-established process is in place for schools to request physical adaptations to buildings where necessary, to ensure schools are physically accessible and meet learner's needs. During session 2022/2023, a number of projects were undertaken at a cost of £700,000.

## **5.5. Deaf Education and British Sign Language (BSL)**

- 5.5.1. Please see separate report.

## **5.6. Next steps and priorities**

- 5.6.1. During the next academic year, Education Resources will continue to work to embed equalities work across establishments. In order to achieve this aim:-
- ◆ An Equalities web resource will be available by August 2023 with resources, advice, and guidance for schools.
  - ◆ Hamilton Grammar school and Mount Cameron Primary will continue to pilot pupil Equality Ambassadors groups and working with the Inclusive Education Service to develop training materials for primary and secondary pupils.
  - ◆ We will work to ensure that all schools record incidents of bullying on the SEEMIS Bullying and Equalities Module which enables recording and monitoring of prejudice based bullying.
  - ◆ We will continue to progress work on anti-racist education, including the development of curricular guidelines for schools.
  - ◆ We will continue to build capacity in schools to enable staff to work effectively with pupils who have complex additional support needs. A new support pack will be piloted to assist teaching and support staff in developing their practice.
  - ◆ We will continue our commitment to staff training and development in relation to equality and diversity related issues.

## **6. Employee Implications**

- 6.1. Mainstreaming equalities are met from within existing employee resources.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

- 8.1. There are no climate change or environmental implications as a result of this report.

## **9. Other Implications**

9.1. There is a risk to the Council if the Resource does not comply with the relevant equalities duty and legislation.

## **10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy and, therefore, there is no requirement for an impact assessment to be carried out.

10.2. There was no requirement to undertake consultation in terms of the content of this report.

**Tony McDaid**  
**Executive Director (Education Resources)**

24 May 2023

### **Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes**

#### Values

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Working with and respecting others
- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient, and transparent
- ◆ Ambitious, self-aware, and improving
- ◆ Fair, open and sustainable
- ◆ Excellent employer

#### Priorities

- ◆ We will work to put people first and reduce inequality
- ◆ We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places
- ◆ We will work to recover, progress, and improve

#### Outcomes

- ◆ Our children and young people thrive
- ◆ Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live
- ◆ Thriving business, fair jobs and vibrant town centres
- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- ◆ People live the healthiest lives possible
- ◆ Inspiring learners, transforming learning, strengthening partnerships

### **Previous References**

- ◆ Equal Opportunities Forum – 24 November 2021

### **List of Background Papers**

- ◆ South Lanarkshire Working For You: Mainstreaming Equalities Progress Report 2019 to 2021 and Mainstreaming Equalities Report 2021 to 2025

**Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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