

Report

Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	31 August 2021
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources) Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Pathfinders Initiative: Care Experienced Children and Children on the Edges of Care
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ advise on the proposed extension of the Pathfinder initiative to support care experienced young people and children on the 'edges of care' together with proposed staffing arrangements and governance structure.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) the content of the report be noted;
- (2) that the extension of the Pathfinder initiative is approved with the posts at section 6 added to the establishment; and
- (3) that the research findings showing the impact and benefit of the Pathfinder Initiative at Appendix 1 be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. As part of the Learning Recovery report noted at the Education Resources Committee on 1 June 2021, a range of other programmes and activities were identified in order to support learners in their recovery, including the extension of the Pathfinders Initiative in secondary schools.
- 3.2. The Pathfinders pilot was established in the Cambuslang and Rutherglen locality in April 2019. The initiative was established following a series of meetings with representatives from Education (including Youth, Family and Community Learning Service and senior school staff), Social Work, and Finance and Corporate Resources, who agreed that a distinct piece of work was required to achieve better outcomes for children and their families living in this locality.
- 3.3. The aim of the project was to deliver support as early intervention in a non-statutory way. The initiative was delivered across 52 weeks to target critical periods such as points of transition and summer and spring break holiday periods where disengagement from school may become a significant issue for particular children and their families. Support was provided holistically across the settings of school, community and the home.

- 3.4. As a result, six Pathfinders Officers (YFCL Officers) were externally recruited to work across each of the three Cambuslang and Rutherglen High Schools (two deployed per school). The Pathfinder Officers were supported through existing management structures within Youth Family and Community Learning Service, where CPD and team development and support was provided, ensuring a Community Learning and Development approach was used throughout. Day to day line management was provided by the Head Teacher or an identified Depute.
- 3.5. A multi-agency steering group was established to support the development of the initiative and ensure that a whole system approach was provided to enable best possible practice. Chaired by the YFCL Locality Manager, representatives on the group included; three Head teachers; Senior Manager (Pupil Support); Social Work Manager; Educational Psychologist; and Youth Employability Worker. Further inputs were provided by other services and organisations as required.

4. Current Position

- 4.1. The Pathfinder Initiative has engaged with 238 young people and their families. Of these engagements, 99 are long term commitments. The referrals that are made through Joint Assessment Team (JAT) meetings (known as House meetings in Cathkin High School) are made for a variety of reasons that include: attendance; peer influence; poverty/financial concerns; offending in the community; anger management; use/impact of drugs and alcohol; and general health and wellbeing concerns.
- 4.2. Support is bespoke and provided through individual and group support. Home visits and parental engagement are key elements of the role. Pathfinder staff are well connected to key partners in the wider community to ensure appropriate referrals into and out of the provision. CLD approaches are utilised to ensure a non-judgemental and non- statutory engagement with service users. Staff training is a key part of the process and Pathfinders personnel undertake a wide range of training to ensure their 'tool box' remains relevant. Training for staff has included:
- Adverse Childhood Experience training
 - Nurture training
 - Psychological Services Attachment Strategy
 - Just Ask
 - Families Outside (of the shadows) parents/carers in custody
 - FAIR
 - Steps to Excellence and PX2 Personal Development Course facilitators training
 - Low Intensity Anxiety Management
- 4.3. Each locality delivers a mixed programme of group work, one-2-one, parental/family engagement and drop-in.
- Most of the group work sessions take place within school grounds, one-2-one can take place in school grounds, in home or external venue depending on individual circumstances, parental/family engagement is almost always in home setting.
- 4.4. Drop-in sessions occur during break or lunch period and offer the opportunity for development of relationships and trust between young people and staff. This is a crucial component for positive impact.

- 4.5. A variety of group work programmes are offered to enhance engagement, provide positive experience through achievement and instil a feeling of self-worth and value within young people.

These include:

- Street smart- issue based risk management workshops in partnership with Police Scotland.
- Family cooking- online based whole family programme around developing healthy meals.
- Bridges- personal development programme for senior pupils who have opted out of formal education, delivered outwith school settings.
- Volunteer programme- opportunity for young people to provide mentoring and support role to new students.

- 4.6. Successful outcomes are strongly influenced by the positive engagement with parents/carers. By building these strong relationships Pathfinders personnel are able to identify the hidden issues that have negative impact on young people and stagnate progression. Pathfinders Officers often offer a support/ advocacy role in engagement with housing, social work, benefits agencies etc.

5. Impact of Provision

- 5.1. Staff have provided positive feedback on the programme, reporting improved attendance and participation of those engaged.
- 5.2. Extensive independent research has been carried out to analyse the impacts and benefits of this project to young people and their families, and the key lessons to be considered in any effective roll out. Attached as Appendix 1 is the report detailing the research findings.
- 5.3. The Pathfinder Initiative has also had some unintended outcomes. As part of a national pilot, a further £10k was secured to deliver a programme that combatted 'Holiday Hunger'. Full details of the programme and review of the pilot programme can be found here:

<https://www.youthlinkscotland.org/news/november-2020/food-insecurity-pilot-demonstrates-youth-work-benefits-in-tackling-learning-loss/>

- 5.4. A further £18k of grant funding has been distributed directly to families through individualised support. This additional funding has come from agencies such as the Aberlour Trust and Buttle UK.
- 5.5. Through promotion of the programme and a consolidated reputation for delivering outcomes, the Pathfinders programme has also been supported by Inclusion as Prevention funding, to extend into two local primary schools on a short term trial basis, to enable earlier intervention and smoother transition for key families.

6. Moving Forward

- 6.1. Locality meetings were convened in June 2021 to inform secondary Head Teachers of the Pathfinders research. This input was provided by the researcher and a Head Teacher whose school community was a beneficiary of the programme. Successes and key features of the effective roll out were shared, as well as practical arrangements.

- 6.2. Attendees were invited to express an interest in taking the programme forward within their own schools, ensuring the integrity of the initiative was taken into consideration.
- 6.3. The programme, where scale allows, should have two Pathfinders per school. This ensures continuity of support over a 52 week period.
- 6.4. £380k of central funding will be provided and schools will also use PEF/SAC monies to augment provision.
- 6.5. Proposed structure
- 6.5.1. Pathfinders will continue to be governed by a multi-agency steering group to ensure the programme can continue to have maximum benefit that takes into account any demographic differences. This group would be chaired by the allocated YFCL Locality Manager who will continue to provide strategic support and direction, ensuring CLD methodology and approaches are deployed.
- 6.5.2. A further 10 Pathfinders (YFCL Officers) will be recruited to meet expressed demand. These posts will be offered as a secondment or on a temporary basis of 23 months.
- 6.5.3. The extension of the programme requires an additional YFCL Coordinator from current staffing, to provide CPD, team development and support. YFCL would meet additional costs to backfill such a post through 23-month secondment.
- 6.5.4. Day to day line management would be carried out by the Head Teacher, in line with agreed CLD parameters to ensure a holistic approach both within the school, the home and wider community.

7. Employee Implications

- 7.1. The following posts will be added to the Education Resources establishment for a fixed term period of 23 month as detailed below:

Post	Proposed Number of Posts (FTE)	Grade	SCP Range	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Gross Cost inc on costs 30.3%
YFCL Officer	10	Grade 3 Level 2	63 - 65	£18.08 - £18.60	£32, 994 - £33,943	£429,914 - £442,279
YFCL Team Leader	1.0	Grade 3 Level 4	72 – 74	£20.61 - £21.25	£37,611 - £38,779	£49,007 - £50,529
YFCL Co-Ordinator	1.0	Grade 3 Level 8	79 – 80	£22.89 - £23.24	£41,771 - £42,410	£54,428 - £55,261

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1. The continuation of the current programme will be funded from Learning Recovery funds and Care Experienced Attainment allocation. The programme extension will be funded at £0.380m from targeted learning recovery central funding and participating schools will commit PEF/SAC monies to augment provision.
- 8.2. Learning Recovery funding will be allocated to this initiative from October 21 to August 23 in line with the staffing requirements.
- 8.3. Total contributions for each period:

Central Funding			
Oct 21 – Mar 22	Apr 22 – Mar 23	Apr 23 – Aug 23	Total
94,920	205,655	79,100	379,675

PEF/SAC Funding			
Oct 21 – Mar 22	Apr 22 – Mar 23	Apr 23 – Aug 23	Total
94,920	205,655	79,100	379,675

9. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 9.1. There are no significant implications for climate change, sustainability and the environment arising from the recommendations in this report.

10. Other Implications

- 10.1. None

11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 11.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 11.2. Engagement with children, young people and families is a fundamental component of the Pathfinder initiative as is regular dialogue with school staff and partner agencies, including funding providers.

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Executive Director (Education Resources)

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

6 August 2021

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults.
- Deliver better health and social care outcomes for all.
- Support communities by tackling disadvantage and deprivation and supporting aspiration.
- Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning.
- Ensure schools and other places of learning are inspirational.
- Encourage participation in physical and cultural activities.

Previous References

None

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

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

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