

Report

Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	1 June 2021
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	Supporting Learning Recovery and Renewal
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ provide an outline of the proposals to support learning recovery, ensuring that our children and young people continue to be provided with learning pathways which will enable them to progress, develop their skills and enhance their wellbeing through interaction with their peers

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) the proposals to support learning recovery, including the temporary recruitment of an additional 204.6 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers and 39.2 FTE school support assistants for session 2021/2022, be noted;
- (2) that a further update is provided to the Education Resources Committee early in school session 2021/2022.

3. Background

- 3.1. All schools in Scotland were closed to the majority of pupils from 20 March to 26 June 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic.
- 3.2. During academic session 2020/21, learning activities for many of our pupils have been disrupted due public health protocols that, for example, may have required them and some members of staff to self-isolate away from school for varying periods of time. In January 2021, a further national lockdown took place until March 2021 and this meant the re-introduction of remote learning for the majority of children and young people.
- 3.3. Schools and early years establishments returned to full face to face learning at the start of the current summer term with enhanced mitigations, including the use of face coverings for all secondary age pupils and 2 metre distancing, coupled with ongoing public health measures in place across all establishments.
- 3.4. Evidence based research is now confirming some of the impact the global COVID-19 pandemic has had on children, young people and families and there is emerging evidence in areas such as social isolation, anxiety and learning.

4. Impact on Learning

- 4.1. While the situation continues to evolve, a UK study by the Education Endowment Foundation highlighted that, following the disruption to schooling in the 2020 spring and summer terms, there was an overall impact on pupils' progress in learning and it was likely that there was a greater impact on the most disadvantaged learners, which would be exacerbated by further school closures.
- 4.2. It is important to note that we have seen many children and young people being very well supported by their family, teachers and school during both periods of lockdown. Many children and young people have shown significant resilience during this time and this has helped them to move back to school smoothly. However, there are a number who, for a variety of reasons, require some additional support.

5. Priorities for Session 2021/2022

- 5.1. Given the ongoing nature of the pandemic, it is necessary for Education Resources to focus on continuing to deliver learning and teaching in safe environments. We will also have a strong focus on wellbeing and learning, concentrate our efforts on minimising the impact of any disruption to learning and realigning priorities and resources in order to do so. This is reflected in the reduced number of improvement priorities for our schools and establishments for session 2021/2022, which are focussed on:

- wellbeing;
- continuity of learning; and
- equity.

- 5.2. Education Resources propose the introduction of supports both within and beyond the school day that are universal in nature and provide increased opportunity for pupils; as well as developing an offer of targeted support that deals with the specific issues that some children and young people will face in their learning. This may range from providing additional support for specific areas of learning, increasing opportunity to participate in activities that raise achievement and impact positively on attainment and strengthening the wellbeing of learners.

- 5.3. The overall objectives will be to:

- build trust and promote positive relationships;
- support an attachment led approach to wellbeing;
- promote family/community involvement;
- target identified areas of learning recovery and renewal;
- narrow the attainment gap between identified pupils and their peers;
- boost confidence;
- raise aspirations for children from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- enhance existing transition arrangements; and
- gain valuable data and information to inform planning.

- 5.4. It is also important for our nurseries, schools and services to continue to support high aspirations for learners and recognise the achievements of children and young people in order to build confidence and self-esteem as we recognise that it has been a worrying time for many families.

6. Resourcing

- 6.1. Education Resources' revenue budget for 2021/2022 is just over £350 million pounds and this is used to support the delivery of our priorities. Schools also have direct access to £1.963 million through the Scottish Attainment Challenge Schools'

Programme and £10.943 million Pupil Equity Funding including 2020/2021 carry forward balances.

- 6.2. As part of the Council's overall 2021/22 budget strategy, it was agreed that £2.245 million would be allocated to support educational recovery. This was additional funding in recognition of the challenges that children and young people have faced during the period of the pandemic and the essential role schools and establishments play in supporting recovery activity.
- 6.3. Since this allocation of Council funding, further acknowledgement nationally of the scale of the challenge has resulted in the Scottish Government providing £13.355 million to support recovery, with much of this funding allocated for specific purposes such as the cost of additional staff, logistics and developing a summer programme.

7. Consultation and Engagement

- 7.1. Any support for learners should be well-considered and involve meaningful discussion and engagement with our schools and establishments, children and young people as well as the wider community. However, it is important to move promptly to address areas of obvious need.
- 7.2. A consultation is currently being undertaken to gauge the opinions of school leaders, staff, learners and parents. While the results of these questionnaires will be gathered and analysed over the summer term, discussions have taken place with a range of key stakeholders to help shape our initial strategic approach. It has been possible to take into consideration national initiatives and evolving practice across other local authority areas in developing our ideas. Learning from our Covid-19 experiences shows us that there is ongoing need to be flexible and dynamic and to adapt our direction based on the views of our community and local circumstance.
- 7.3. The West Partnership Regional Improvement Collaborative priorities focus on supporting each local authority and our schools and establishments on the recovery process. We will benefit from specific collaboration in areas such as digital learning, school partnerships and learning networks.

8. The South Lanarkshire Council Approach

- 8.1. The impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic has changed the complexion of education throughout Scotland. More than ever, we need to be ready and agile to deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of individual learners.
- 8.2. As part of our horizon scanning in partnership with NHSL Public Health we are conscious of the fact that the corona virus is a long term consideration and we must, therefore, be prepared to respond effectively should there be further public health considerations.
- 8.3. While our approach will offer a range of opportunities, some groups and key stages will be prioritised. For example, a particular focus will include support for transition points such as the move from early years to primary, primary to secondary school or Senior Phase to beyond school. We will also provide specific support for targeted groups including care experienced children and young people.

9. Additional staffing to Support Learning

- 9.1. Central to our learning recovery and renewal plan is a proposal for additional staffing to support learning where the need is greatest.

- 9.2. Having flexibility within staffing structures which enhances each school's capacity for working directly with children and young people will be the most effective way to ensure that additional funding remains closest to the needs of individual schools.
- 9.3. Each school will be asked to appoint a "Recovery Champion" to lead the work on learning, teaching and assessment. An enhanced focus will be placed on ensuring schools are delivering high-quality Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategies with the aim of addressing any identified gaps in learning and improving attainment for all. An enhanced staffing complement will allow for prioritisation of this work.
- 9.4. The Council's current recruitment process is still currently taking place. However, it is anticipated that additional 204.6FTE teachers and 39.2FTE school support assistants will be recruited for session 2021/22. This does not take into account any additional staffing that schools have available through their use of the Pupil Equity Fund and Scottish Attainment Challenge finance.

	SSA FTE	Primary FTE	Secondary FTE
Continuation of teachers and school support staffing level from session 2020/21	12.5	56.4	21.0
New offers (NQTs)	-	83.2	30.0
Further SSA & Teachers	26.7	14.0	-
	39.2	153.6	51.0

- 9.5. There is a need to build on the work undertaken by recovery staff deployed to establishments in 2020/2021. These additional staff for 2021/2022 will support the delivery of the objectives outlined in 5.3. by undertaking a range of activities which may include:-
- Use of assessment and analysis of data to identify any learning loss and to inform interventions;
 - Working directly with groups and individuals;
 - Release of school staff to lead and develop school recovery strategy and to participate in training and networking events;
 - Additional Literacy and Numeracy interventions;
 - Health and Wellbeing strategy and interventions;
 - Family Engagement;
 - Support enhanced transition;
 - Focus on nurture and in delivering the Attachment Strategy; and
 - Cover for absent staff (due to illness or self-isolation).
- 9.6. Through the School Improvement Planning process, schools have already been asked to clearly identify and plan for their recovery priorities under the key headings of Continuity of Learning, Health and Wellbeing and Equity. School leaders will use clear outcomes and measures based on qualitative and quantitative data to track effectiveness of planned interventions. Schools will report through their Standards and Quality/Improvement Plan to ensure accountability and this will include reporting on the impact of their enhanced staffing quota for 2021/2022.
- 9.7. The Education Resource Plan for 2021/2022 has also set out the drivers which we will focus on over the coming academic school year and which form a core part of this learning and renewal plan. Progress on the measures and actions in our Resource

Plan will also be reported to the Education Resources Committee at quarter 2 and quarter 4.

10. Developing and extending opportunity

- 10.1. We have seen during the past year the vital role that education plays in the lives of our community and the difference our staff make on a day to day basis for individual children and young people.
- 10.2. A range other programmes and activities have been identified in order to support learners. More detailed information on these programmes are provided in Appendix 1. These activities are pivotal and will provide targeted support in a number of areas of need.
- 10.3. We will focus on:-
 - Enhancing the scope of our school support staff to support literacy and numeracy for pupils including virtual learning if the need arises;
 - Out of school hours study support programme;
 - South Lanarkshire Council tutoring programme;
 - Summer clubs;
 - Building on and improving our digital offer;
 - Expansion of the Pathfinder initiative;
 - GradU8 work experience pilot; and
 - Scottish mentoring and leadership programme.

11. Next steps

- 11.1. A finalised plan, based on the consultation exercise currently being undertaken with key stakeholders, will be completed during this school summer term. This will include a detailed outline on each area that has been developed.
- 11.2. The first stage of the programme will be the extension of the Summer Clubs and a paper outlining the Council's approach to the summer programme is included in today's Education Committee agenda.
- 11.3. Education Resources central staff will also work in partnership with schools and educational settings who may wish to supplement the core offer by using their own funding streams such as the Pupil Equity and Scottish Attainment Challenge funds.
- 11.4. A further update will be provided to the Education Resources Committee at the beginning of the next school session.

12. Employee Implications

- 12.1. As part of the learning recovery and renewal strategy, the following additional posts will be added on a temporary basis to support children and young people and learning and teaching. This position indicates the current levels projected from the start of the new session in August 2021 to March 2022, and may be subject to change following the final recruitment campaign for the new session from August 2021.

Post	Proposed Number of Posts(FTE) Temporary	Grade	SCP Range	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Gross Cost inc on costs 30.3% (34.03% teachers)
Primary Teachers	153.6	Teacher Main Grade Scale			£41,280	£8,498,227
Secondary Teachers	51.0	Teacher Main Grade Scale			£41,280	£2,821,677
School Support Assistant Term time	39.2 TT (50 staff)	Grade 1 Level 4	SCP 30 - SCP 31	£11.12 - £11.29	£18,071 - £18,347	£923,023 - £937,120

Staffing requirements for Summer Programmes will be via the Youth Family and Community Learning Service, sessional staff from June 2021 to August 2021 and through third sector provision.

13. Financial Implications

- 13.1. Funding has been provided for 2021/2022 that will support the ongoing costs of learning recovery and the new costs associated with the proposals outlined. This funding will cover both staffing costs; digital inclusion; loss of learning programmes; family support; transition and general recovery investment as well as logistics costs including enhanced cleaning regimes and health and hygiene requirements and summer programmes.
- 13.2. All known funding streams for Education Resources for 2021/2022, as at May 2021, are outlined in the table below:

	Scottish Government £m	SLC Recovery investment £m	Total £m
Learning Recovery	10.061	2.025	12.086
Digital Inclusion	-	0.220	0.220
Logistics	2.412	-	2.412
Summer Programme	0.882	-	0.882
	13.355	2.245	15.600

- 13.3. Commitments against the £15.6 million have been made with around £0.949 million still to be allocated.
- 13.4. It will also be important to work with schools and educational settings who may wish to supplement the 'core' offer by using their own funding streams such as the Pupil Equity and Scottish Attainment Challenge funds.

14. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 14.1. There are no climate change, sustainability and environmental issues arising from the recommendations in this report.

15. Other Implications

15.1. There are no risks arising from the recommendations in this report.

16. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

16.1. Consultations and engagement will take place with the trade unions, professional associations, school leaders and stakeholders as we move to implement the learning and renewal proposals in this report.

Tony McDaid

Executive Director (Education Resources Resources)

12 May 2021

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- Increase achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning
- Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults

Previous References

- Education Resources Committee - 16 March 2021

List of Background Papers

- Education Endowment Foundation

Contact for Further Information

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

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Planned programme to support learning and renewal plans for session 2021/22

Use of school support staff to support literacy and numeracy

Support staff developed and enhanced their skill set during lockdown to support pupils both with remote learning and also back in the classroom post lockdown.

Under the direction of the class teacher and after considering how 'real' classroom support could be safely and effectively developed and taken online, staff joined the virtual learning environment and provided a strategically enhanced and targeted focus in areas such as Catch Up Literacy and Numeracy, 5 minute box, and the development of IT skills to allow for nurture and creative online story telling, reading and writing groups, exercise, music and arts/craft sessions.

These enhanced skills, range of supports and new ways of connecting with children and families can be used by the Head Teacher to continue to target support to pupils with their learning, confidence building and promotion of wellbeing as we move through recovery.

Schools also have the flexibility of using additional staffing through their use of the Pupil Equity Fund and Scottish Attainment Challenge finance.

Out of school hours study support programme

A number of our secondary schools currently deliver a study support programme that involves supporting learning beyond the school day. Currently, this offer is focussed on the senior phase and National Qualifications. However, this model will be expanded to involve other year groups where appropriate. It will also be extended to primary schools to allow targeted activity to take place. This could include a range of curricular areas.

In conjunction with the Youth, Family and Community Learning Service, Active Schools and the Leisure Trust, schools will be able to extend opportunities in music, art, drama and sport for children and young people. There is scope for this to link into a wider community offer made between the Education Service, the Leisure Trust, third sector organisations and national partners, such as Sportscotland.

The Instrumental Music Service has an important role to play in providing quality instrumental music education in our schools. Learning to play a musical instrument can bring many benefits to pupils, including increased confidence and self-esteem.

Creativity and independent expression are central to Curriculum for Excellence, and these are also key aspects of learning to play a musical instrument.

During the period of the pandemic, the Council's policy on charging some pupils to access the Instrumental Music Service was paused. In order to boost musical opportunity for children and young people, it is intended to continue with this approach for session 2021/22 and promote opportunity for children and young people within the Instrumental Music Service and return to the Council policy position at the beginning of session 2022/23.

Tutoring programme

It is proposed that additional funding is allocated to support the introduction of a South Lanarkshire Tutoring Support Programme to provide additional support to help our most disadvantaged pupils, including care experienced young people, whose education has been most affected by school closures.

There is extensive evidence showing the positive impact of tutoring to support pupils who have fallen behind. However, access to tutoring is often limited to the parents that can most afford it.

Guided by clear criteria to target support to the most disadvantaged pupils, teachers and school leaders will decide which approach best fits their needs and which pupils will benefit most from additional tuition. There will be an initial focus on care experienced young people, ensuring we fulfil the Council's *Promise*.

We will explore opportunities to work with a range of existing partners as it may be possible to use trained mentors to provide support to pupils, allowing teachers in schools to focus on their day to day classroom activity.

This would involve a specific one to one or small group offer of tutoring for pupils and could be accessed as a digital offer.

Summer clubs

We will build on and extend our existing successful summer club programme to provide a range of opportunities for children and young people; prioritising those from backgrounds of deprivation.

Currently, our summer club programme takes place in a number of areas across the Council area. The clubs last for 4 hours on each weekday (Monday to Friday) and includes activities, ranging from various sports to arts and crafts. It also includes an element of reading for pleasure to maintain momentum in terms of attainment during the holiday period as well as accredited awards. Lunch is provided as part of the summer club and an approved budget of £0.377million supports this service delivery.

The Youth, Family and Community Learning Service will lead the programme in order to ensure appropriate support continues through the holiday period for children who require it. This year, the Scottish Government has provided additional finance of £0.882 million to introduce a summer support programme. The Scottish Government are due to publish guidance that supports local design and delivery of a targeted summer offer.

A further paper outlining the Council's approach to the summer programme is included in today's Education Committee agenda.

The priority for this investment is to improve the wellbeing of children and young people, providing opportunities for them to socialise and reconnect with peers during the summer through delivery of a range of activities, with food and family support integrated where needed within local communities. The intention is to address the negative impacts associated with extended periods of isolation and lack of participation in normal activities during the pandemic and improve readiness to learn on return.

The Scottish Government recognises that many local authorities and other local partners, including South Lanarkshire Council, deliver holiday programmes currently and that plans are being developed for this summer. The aim of this investment is to enhance our existing work, building on and learning from existing good practice.

Expansion of the Pathfinder initiative

The Pathfinder initiative in Rutherglen/Cambuslang was established in 2019 following exploratory discussions between Education, Social Work and Finance and Corporate Resources on effective methods of improving outcomes for vulnerable young people who experience barriers to learning. Two Pathfinder officers were appointed in each of the three

secondary schools in the Cambuslang and Rutherglen areas, to pilot a creative intervention model using Community Learning and Development approaches.

The aim of the initiative was to explore effective ways to improve outcomes for vulnerable young people who experienced barriers to learning. The interim evaluation for the programme has highlighted the impact as follows:

- improved family engagement with school;
- improved pupil attendance and positive engagement with school and in the community;
- reduction in within-school behaviour referrals; and
- parents and young people reporting reduced stress and anxiety.

It will be possible to extend the Pathfinder model across other secondary schools (starting with the greatest need) in order to extend targeted support for our most vulnerable young people.

GradU8 work experience

As the recovery from Covid gathers pace it is expected that there could be a significant and potentially long-term impact on young people and youth employment.

From August 2021 it is anticipated that this will include an increasing number of young people returning to school given the challenging labour market conditions. For this diverse group of young people, who may have in previous years progressed to employment or Further Education and who may have become disengaged from learning during the past 12 months, it is essential that a flexible curriculum is available to meet their needs.

A GradU8 Work Experience programme will be developed to support young people in the senior phase to access long term work placements as part of a flexible curricular offer designed to develop skills, experiences and support progression to positive destinations. This programme builds on the successful Gradu8 programme to provide opportunities that will better meet the needs of young people who require an individualised work-based experience.

Increase the digital offer

In session 2020/21, the Council received a grant from the Scottish Government of £1.470 million and has now provided over 7,800 individual devices and over 840 connectivity solutions to identified children and young people.

Using some of the Council's funding, we will continue to offer digital devices and improved connectivity to identified children and young people. We will broaden the scope of providing more devices to individual learners and build on the digital learning that is taking place in our schools at the moment.

The Covid pandemic has introduced very different ways of working for staff and pupils in schools. While the Council has been in a strong position to deliver learning and teaching remotely because of the effective use of Glow and the additional devices provided to children and families, there have also been areas of challenge. These relate to connectivity and staff access to files, tools and resources from home including safe (GDPR compliant) access to sensitive data. There are also issues relating to external access to meetings, a lack of devices supporting video meetings, restricted functionality accessible only through our current CC4 servers and the resulting inability to access some of the functionality included in our Microsoft license fee. It is proposed that investment be made in our digital infrastructure and operating environment to:

- ◆ improve anytime, anywhere access for staff and pupils, taking advantage of the momentum for delivering learning and teaching in new ways, regardless of location.
- ◆ maximise Education's investment in Microsoft licensing, taking advantage of the range of resources available on the Cloud.

This will improve the current digital offer and will ensure readiness for increasing not only the number but also the effectiveness of additional devices for pupils and staff. It will also support flexible working for staff by allowing laptop access, functionality and security to be supported and managed on a large scale, in the same way that we are able to manage chrome books. This also gives capacity to maximise the use of video conferencing facilities to support curriculum delivery across a wider geographical area, also an area for further investment.

Scottish mentoring and leadership programme

The Scottish Government have committed to invest £19.4 million investment over a six year period with a target reach of 15,000 young people who are predominantly care experienced and for others who may be experiencing significant challenges in their lives. The intervention will utilise the MCR Pathways model and infrastructure aligned with Columba 1400 Young People's Leadership Academies to act as a catalyst for immediate education recovery and a wider and lasting transformation of public services.

The ambition is to build on learning to date and roll out The MCR Young Scottish Talent Mentoring Programme to 300 schools over the next six years. This will also include an opportunity to participate in the Columba 1400 Young People's Leadership Academy (YPLA). This integrated approach will provide care experienced young people with personalised support and aligns well with The Promise. Working closely with DYW and Skills Development Scotland, it will also help deliver on the Young Persons' Guarantee, providing life changing help into positive, sustained destinations.

MCR Pathways currently works in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council and we will explore opportunities to engage further with the Scottish Mentoring and Leadership programme.