



Glasgow City Council

Education, Skills and Early Years City Policy Committee

Report by Executive Director of Education Services

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EDUCATION SERVICES: PUPIL PARTICIPATION DEVELOPMENTS

Purpose of Report:

To update the committee on Education Services developments to support pupil voice in the city

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to note the update and Education Services work to support pupil voice, participation and engagement across our establishments.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

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1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 UNCRC is central to the key national and local policy drivers underpinning Glasgow's Education Services. These include Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), Curriculum for Excellence and Glasgow's Towards a Nurturing City. These rights are embedded in policy and practice across the policy landscape providing a means for children's rights to be realised.
- 1.2 The UNCRC Incorporation Bill came into law in July 2024, placing responsibility on all public services to ensure Children's Rights and Voices are heard and acted upon within those services. The previous work of Glasgow Education Services was reported on to this committee in January 2024.
- 1.3 Under Part 1, Section 2 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places a duty on listed public authorities to complete a children's rights report. Subsequently Listed Public Authorities must every 3 years report on the steps they have taken within their area of responsibility to secure better or further effect of the requirements of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- 1.4 Within Education Services, we have a dedicated Children's Rights Officer in the Education Improvement Service (EdIS). Our Children's Rights Officer is dedicated to ensuring schools and the service are delivering Children's Rights, promoting the UNCRC in all our schools and developing and engaging our children and young people in participation citywide.
- 1.5 This report seeks to update on the progress of work to ensure Children's Rights are central to our work and that the voice of young people in Glasgow schools is heard. This work is rooted firmly in Education Services strategic plan, All learners All Achieving.

2 GLASGOW SCHOOLS FORUM

- 2.1 The Glasgow Schools Forum is open to all schools across the city to send representation. The Forum in 2023/24 met in two separate groups: two Primary sessions, allowing up to 50 schools at each session to meet together and then the Broad General Education (BGE) group which is open to all Secondary schools and has representation from young people across S1-S3. The Forum meets monthly. This session our Primary Forum meet at one morning session. 60 – 70 schools attend this meeting currently.



- 2.2 In school session 2023/24 149 schools have attended at least one Forum. 33 Secondary schools and 4 ASL secondary schools, 88 Primary schools and 1 ASL Primary, 26 secondary and 3 ASL Secondary school regularly attended the forums.



- 2.3 Through activities at each Forum, the young people are directly involved in co-creating the agendas and focus for all future meetings. The Forums continue to be based on the Glasgow Children's Rights Framework. Agendas are responsive to the voice of Glasgow's young people.
- 2.4 Dialogue sessions at the forum over the last year have included: Outdoor education, international day of the girl, community, international plan, literacy, equity, city planning, Health and well-being and Glasgow 850
- 2.5 The Forum have worked with partners including Blairvadach, Neighbourhood Regeneration and Sustainability, Education Psychology, Young Scot, EDIS, Education Scotland and Financial Services.
- 2.6 Young people evaluations are positive

"As we can give our opinion to people that aren't in our school"

"Let's us take ideas back to our school & implement new things"

"We enjoyed the talks, contribution and collaborative learning"

"The Forum helped us see what we can do to improve our health and wellbeing"

"We found it useful because we got to see things happening in other schools"

"It will help our school grow and improve our pupil council"

3 SENIOR PHASE PARLIAMENT

- 3.1 The Senior Phase Parliament is an opportunity to listen to young people from the Senior Phase of Secondary School. The Senior Phase Parliament meets 4 times per school year. The views gathered of the young people here have been instrumental in creating the 'Manifesto for a Fairer Future'. Each meeting of the Parliament had a focus identified in the Manifesto, and also has a time set aside for questions they have posed to the Director of Education regarding key issues and concerns that they may have around their education.
- 3.2 The Senior Phase Parliament met in November to identify the next priorities for this session. Young people have volunteered to be part of sub groups that will lead to outcomes for this session. These are:
- Equalities – Young people keen to ensure a consistent approach to Equalities across the City, focusing on protected characteristics, not just race and gender.
 - Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) sub group – the young people prepared questions for the SQA and invited a representative from SQA to their session in March 2024 to challenge them directly.
 - In November 2024 young people were consulted on their use of the school library service and how this resource could be improved to support their learning.
 - In March 2025 young people will prepare a response to the SQA on the late changes made to the exam timetable and what they hope will be the changes introduced by Qualifications Scotland.

4 UNCRC WORKING GROUP

- 4.1 The UNCRC working group, comprised of Deputy Head Teachers and Senior Teachers from early years, primary, secondary and ASN, meets quarterly to discuss how to support our schools. The group are devising resources and case studies for use in all establishments.

5 RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL AWARDS (RRSA)

- 5.1 Pupil Voice is a key aspect of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Rights Respecting School Awards (RRSA). At all levels schools and young people are asked about their views and to give examples of when and how they are being listened to.

RRSA Evaluation statements for Pupil Voice at Silver Level in Glasgow school include:

“We do make a difference – because of our ideas at Pupil Forum, we now can get cake in the dinner school. All schools in Glasgow get cake now because of us!”

“Our pupil groups allow us to make changes in specific areas of our learning, school, community or world.”

“bring their voices to school and use them in a meaningful way. We talk to the children about being true agents of change.”

Pupil voice is also noted in recent HMI Inspection Reports.

“Effective partnerships enhance young people’s opportunities to express their views at events as part of a Glasgow-wide pupil voice group.”

“Children give their views to help shape the life and work of the school community.”

“Young people are provided with a range of opportunities to lead their own learning through their involvement in the pupil council and assemblies.”

“Young people on this group appreciate the way senior leaders empower them to plan and lead activities in the school.”

“The pupil council consulted effectively with stakeholders across the school community when updating the school’s vision and values.”

“Most children feel their views are listened to and are confident to share their ideas with staff using a ‘you said, we did’ approach. Children see themselves as effective agents of change who can make a difference in their school and community.”

- 5.2 In August 2021, the Children’s Rights Education Officer began working with schools across the city, developing the understanding and implementation of Children’s Rights in all establishments. The table below shows the increase in active schools engaging with the award from September 2021 to December 2024.

RRSA Awards at	20/09/2021	05/12/2023	27/06/2024	04/12/2024
Gold	2	6	5	9
Silver	2	18	42	47
Bronze	16	61	65	62
Registered	16	28	17	21
Active (within 3 years)	36	113	129	139

RRSA Position in Glasgow School Sept 21 to December 2024. (Award level is valid for 3 years)

- 5.3 In promoting and developing engagement with the UNCRC, the Lead Officer has developed an extensive CLPL offer for all establishments, delivering to 394 practitioners from August 23 to July 24
- 5.4 Education Services have worked very closely with UNICEF to train our RRSA assessors and trainers for the city. We now have a trained team of 4 and this will increase annually to ensure sustainability.
- 5.5 Further mutual learning from UNICEF has taken place as part of the Children and Young People's Eurocities Working Group which is supporting our networked learning organisation work.

6 GIRLS 4 EQUALITY

- 6.1 Girls4Equality is a legacy from the Girls@COP26 - the Solutions are Feminist initiative. Girls4Equality met on International Day of the Girl on 11 October 2023. The young women were consulted about how they use the City, specifically parks, shopping, and culture building on the "Place and "Cultural heritage" themes " (SDG 11 Sustainable Cities & Communities) they first began exploring in November 2021 through a feminist lens. There were inputs from NRS about City Planning and SWG3 and the participants were re-familiarised with the Place Standard Tool which has been further developed into a children and young people's version.
- 6.2 In March 2024, young men from across our school were invited to join the girls on International Women's Day as allies in line with former Irish President Mary Robinson's, whose words inspired the initiative and spoke at the final "Wo-mentoring theme day during Girls@COP26 and urged the young women to make their male classmates and others feminists too. Revisiting the Girls@COP26 "Health" theme (SDG 3 Good Health & Wellbeing), issues common to females such as period dignity, pregnancy and even menopause were discussed, whilst cross cutting issues like exercise and body image were also explored.
- 6.3 In October 2024, the young women were once again engaged to support NRS in their consultation on Custom House Quay and Carlton Place. The lens of gender provided a valuable insight into how this area could be developed. In addition, the young women made a valued contribution of the development of Sophie's Stop, the video produced by GCC in partnership with the Glasgow Girls Club for the Carter project.
- 6.4 March 2025 is the final meeting of the Girls4Equality. At this graduation, the young women will have a look back at what has been achieved since their initial sessions during 2021 in Glasgow Caledonian University at COP26. They will also lay the foundations for the next cohort of young women, a group that will be developed as a legacy of Glasgow 850, building on the international award winning initiative pioneered by young women who will now be independently

entering the adult world empowered by the initiative in line with SDG 5 aim to “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”.

- 6.5 This follows the recent recognition and esteem the initiative is held in by many locally and internationally. Bailie Annette Christie, who conceived the city’s feminist initiative, was asked to speak in February 2025 about the work at the premiere of “Mrs Robinson” documentary, which tells the inspirational story of change-maker Mary Robinson, Ireland’s first female President, and her lifetime work empowering women and girls.

7 YOUNG LEADERS PROJECT: WEST PARTNERSHIP

- 7.1 The Young Leaders of Learning Programme (YLL), is a programme which Scottish Government wants to use to engage with young people to listen to their views about how to improve Scottish Education. Schools participating in YLL programme are supporting their own self-evaluation and school improvement activities by involving learners in the process.
- 7.2 In 2023/24 Staff and up to 8 Young people from 16 Glasgow schools. (14 Primary, 3 secondary and 1 ASN Secondary) were trained by a Lead Officer and the West Partnership team using training materials from Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland (SPARQS), an organization that promotes student engagement in the quality of learning and teaching in Scotland’s universities, colleges, and schools. We chose Health and Wellbeing as the focus for the engagement.

Evidence so far suggests that YLLs develop confidence, communication skills and other Organisational ability.

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND SCHOOL CAPTAINS

- 8.1 The Executive Director of Education meets annually with the School captains across all Secondary and ASL schools in the city. This is an annual cycle and the young people have the opportunity to share their thoughts and questions with the Director directly in this forum, as well as the Director being able to give the young people a voice.

9 CIVIC PARTICIPATION

- 9.1 Education Services are focused on supporting children and young people to become compassionate, responsible, and effective citizens developing the skills, knowledge, and attributes for an equitable, just and sustainable world. Participation activities empower our children and young people to play an active role in our city. This session, our Schools Forum young people have been focusing on the City Charter.

- 9.2 The young people have been considering the City Charter from their perspective and in light of UNCRC. They have identified the priorities they have for the Council and the Services they engage with, and they are currently working on the development of a Children and Young People's City Charter. This work when completed, will be shared with elected members.

10 NEXT STEPS

- 10.1 The work in supporting and ensuring Children's Rights and Voice in Education continue to be developed and supported. The following initiatives are now being planned:

- Education Services and UNICEF have drafted an RRSA Action Plan. It is the aspiration of the Glasgow Education Services that all Glasgow schools will engage in UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools Award.
- Rights Respecting Schools Awards at Bronze and Silver are all now assessed by Glasgow trained staff allowing the programme to be more sustainable post March 2025 when the Government funding finishes.
- Children's Rights Working Group will continue to meet to design resources to support staff.
- Education Services will continue to support collaborative work and actions across services as a follow up to enactment of the UNCRC bill.
- Co-create a Young People's Charter with Glasgow City Council.
- Graduation of the Girls4Equality, this will be marked with a celebration of what they have achieved and how they will invite the next cohort of young women (legacy of 850) to continue the work on SDG5.
- Girls4Equality will be developed as a legacy of Glasgow 850; this will be aligned to the SDG 5 aim to "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls".

11 POLICY AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Any financial implications will be managed within Education Improvement Service budget.
<i>Legal:</i>	Future work on CRIA.
<i>Personnel:</i>	N/A
<i>Procurement:</i>	N/A

- Council Strategic Plan:**
- Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens (Mission 3 raise attainment amongst Glasgow's children and young people).

- Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow (Mission 2 become a net zero carbon city by 2030).
- Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities. (Mission 2 meet the learning and care needs of families before and through school (Mission 3 health and wellbeing of our local communities, Mission 4 support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant).
- Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities. (Mission 1 create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods, Mission 2 run an open well governed Council in partnership with all our communities).

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.

Yes

1. CLPL provision across outcomes.
2. Development of BAME networks linked to equalities developments across participation, engagement and inclusion approaches.
3. Inclusion of all young people.
4. Gender based violence and gender is a theme through this work.
5. Hate crime training.
6. Mental health and wellbeing focus, eg, Respect Me.
7. Equalities and discrimination are part of the Senior Phase Parliament manifesto.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

Positive impact.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

Yes, engagement in civic responsibility and accountability.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

Yes:

Theme 1: Communication & Community Empowerment.

Theme 2: Just and Inclusive Place.

Theme 4: Health and Wellbeing.

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

None.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

N/A

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report
Y/N

No.

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

12 Recommendations

- 12.1 That Committee note the report and promote engagement across the Council Family, Officers and Members.