



Glasgow City Council

Education, Skills & Early Years City Policy Committee

Report by Executive Director of Education Services

Contact: Dr Carole Campbell

EDUCATION SERVICES: GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Purpose of Report:
To update the committee on the ongoing work in relation to gender-based violence.

Recommendations:
The Committee is asked to note the progress of ESAS information sessions, evaluation findings and next steps; the expansion of MVP; and the development of whole-school approaches to preventing gender-based violence across Glasgow's schools.

Ward No(s): Citywide:
Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

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1. Introduction

Education Services continues to take forward work aligned to **Equally Safe**, Scotland's national strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. In 2025–26, this work included delivering Equally Safe at School (ESAS) information sessions, gathering school-level evaluation data, and supporting wider gender based violence (GBV) prevention through programmes such as **Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)** and local school initiatives on positive masculinity, relationships and gender equality. The Young Men's Minds Programme is discussed in the equalities paper in relation to religion or belief & sex (April 2026).

2. ESAS Information Sessions (January–February 2026)

In partnership with Rape Crisis Scotland, Education Services organised three ESAS information sharing sessions for secondary schools on 28 January, 3 February and 9 February 2026. The dates were scheduled across different weekdays to maximise access, and sessions were published on CPD Manager and the Glasgow Online calendar.

While initial sign-up was limited, targeted follow-up contact with schools resulted in 26 of Glasgow's 30 secondary schools attending at least one session. Several schools sent multiple staff.

Schools were notified that an evaluation form would follow to inform a national report for the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) meeting, in line with local authority commitments to the Scottish Government on ESAS implementation.

3. Evaluation Survey and Response Rates

An ESAS evaluation survey was circulated on 3 March 2026 to all staff who attended the sessions, allowing time for internal discussion of next steps. As of 30 March 2026, 19 responses had been received.

The survey included eight questions exploring current practice, learning from the session, surprise findings, and next steps.

4. Key Themes from School Responses

4.1 Current Approaches to Tackling GBV

Responses indicate considerable variation in school-level approaches, with most schools identifying that GBV is addressed through:

- **PSE lessons**
- **Assemblies**
- **Campus Police** inputs
- **Anti-bullying and safeguarding policies**

A number of schools reported strong engagement with Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP). Eight schools specifically highlighted MVP, with one noting:

“This has been so effective and we feel has had significant impact on senior pupils and their younger peers.”

MVP training will run again in May 2026, and schools not yet involved have been encouraged to participate.

Schools also described a range of innovative practices, including:

- Feminist Literature Group and SLT-led planning for a whole-school ESAS approach
- In-house *MENtors* programme for S2 and S6 boys and a well-established Gender and Sexual Alliance
- Strong Girls and Strong Boys Clubs
- Partnership work with FARE, youth workers, and programmes such as On The Edge and Young Men’s Minds Matter

Glasgow City Council remains the first Scottish authority to collaborate with Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) in sharing the Digital Discourse resource with almost 12,000 frontline staff, supporting understanding of online harms including technology-assisted GBV.

4.2 Key Learning from the ESAS Sessions

Staff highlighted several important learning points from the ESAS information sessions. They reported gaining a deeper understanding that gender-based violence encompasses a wide spectrum of behaviours, including sexual harassment, coercive control, image-based harm, online abuse, sexism and harmful sexual behaviours, rather than being limited to physical violence. Participants also noted increased awareness of how normalised some of these concerning behaviours have become within school settings. There was clear recognition of the need for a national, strategic approach, embedded within school improvement planning, to ensure consistency and impact. Staff also acknowledged that under-reporting remains a significant issue, with many young people reluctant to speak up for fear of being perceived as a “grass.” As a result, respondents emphasised the importance

of clear and accessible reporting systems and the need for a coherent, whole-school approach to addressing gender-based violence.

Respondents noted being particularly struck by several aspects of the information shared during the ESAS sessions. Many highlighted the noticeable increase in sexualised “banter” and gendered insults within school environments, alongside the harrowing national statistics on harassment and abuse experienced by young people. Staff were also concerned by the persistently low levels of pupil reporting and the significant proportion of pupils who do not feel able to approach staff for help or advice. The finding that only one-third of pupils would tell a member of staff if they witnessed gender-based violence-related behaviour was seen as especially troubling.

Some staff, particularly those already experienced in child protection or anti-misogyny work, reported that these findings were not surprising but nevertheless felt that the data strongly affirmed their existing concerns.

4.3 Planned Next Steps by Schools

Schools identified a range of next steps, including:

- Reviewing **policies, procedures and reporting systems**
- Auditing GBV content in **PSE curriculum**
- Delivering awareness sessions for all year groups
- Continuing or adopting the **MVP** programme
- Signing up staff to the ESAS online module
- Providing whole-staff **CLPL**
- Strengthening **pupil voice**

One school indicated it may require additional support to implement ESAS.

5. Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)

MVP is a bystander intervention programme forming part of Scotland’s **Equally Safe** strategy. It enables young people to take leadership roles in challenging GBV and explores issues such as:

- Sexting
- Controlling behaviour
- Sexual harassment
- Consent
- Respect in relationships

In Scotland, 87% of secondary schools have been trained in MVP since 2012. In Glasgow:

- 24 of 30 mainstream secondary schools have been MVP trained
- 17 mainstream plus 1 ASN secondary school are delivering the programme in 2025–26
- 2025–26 marks the first year an ASN secondary school has participated, supported by ASN-specific resources

The annual two-day MVP Mentor Training will take place on 27–28 May 2026, with 18 schools already enrolled. Two of these schools currently have no trained staff, representing growth in programme reach.

6 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial:

Legal:

Personnel:

Procurement:

Council Strategic Plan: Reducing poverty & inequality

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025-29? Please specify. Yes – reducing inequality

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.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify: No

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

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

Privacy and Data

Protection Impacts: No

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

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

7. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the progress of ESAS information sessions, evaluation findings and next steps; the expansion of MVP; and the development of whole-school approaches to preventing gender-based violence across Glasgow's schools.