Item 1

19th November 2026

Glasgow City Council

Education, Skills and Early Years Policy City Committee

Report by Executive Director of Education

Contact: Carole Campbell / Sonja Kerr

EDUCATION SERVICES: CARE EXPERIENCED LEARNERS

Purpose of Report:

To update the Committee on the performance of Glasgow's care experienced young people and the work of Glasgow Virtual School.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to note the performance of Glasgow's care experienced young people and the work of Glasgow Virtual School.

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

1 Glasgow Virtual School

Glasgow Virtual School was established to provide support to care experienced children and young people, including those at the edge of care, and disrupted learners whose education has been impacted through health reasons or other exceptional reasons. It also includes support for learning provided by the Hospital Education Service (HES) across two sites, Interrupted Learners Service (ILS), Enhanced Vocational Inclusion Programme (EVIP) and MCR Pathways Coordinators within Glasgow Secondary Schools. GVS supports the aims of our nurturing city approach and promotes the vision, values and aims of inclusion, always striving to achieve the best outcomes possible for our care experienced children and young people.

Within this paper the evaluative language from How Good is Our School 4 is used to consistently represent evidence of impact in that; all refers to 100% of children or young people, almost all means over 90%, most means 75-90%, the majority means 50-74% and less than half/minority means 15-49% with a few meaning up to 15%.

The – within the paper relates to less than 5 children and will ensure that children and young people are not identifiable.

2 Positive Outcomes

- A higher proportion of care experienced young people in Glasgow stay on at school to achieve qualifications as compared to the national figures.
- Trend analysis shows the numbers of care experienced pupils moving on to positive destinations remains consistently high
- Almost all Enhanced Vocational Inclusion Programme (EVIP) learners went on to a positive destination
- All young people attending the Blairvadach Programme engaged and sustained the programme with all of the young people attaining an Award

3 Policy Drivers

"Legislation, policy and practice are vital in assuring children's rights. Yet those rights do not exist in isolation but in the wider context of children's lives. They are experienced within caring relationships. They are realised by thoughtful, attentive caregivers (including teachers, foster carers, youth club workers, etc) who notice changes in health, behaviour or in educational attainment, and who help and support a child to lead a fulfilling life."[1]

The Promise, Page 26

[1]chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Promise.pdf

Within the National Improvement Policy[2] context Glasgow Virtual School (GVS) was established to support improved outcomes for care experienced learners (CEL) including those at the edge of care.

3.1 The Interrupted Learners' Service (ILS) attempts to ameliorate the effect of disruption to education that some children/young people can experience for a range of reasons such as health or other exceptional circumstances. ILS can be provided by a teacher from a Glasgow school or provision by a GVS teacher. Tuition can be either through digital learning or face-to-face. This support may be either one-to-one, in a small group setting or in one of the 5 Hubs. There continues to be a demand for this service.

3.2 In line with Glasgow City Council's All Learners, All Achieving Plan the aim of GVS is to deliver and support inclusive high quality education for all. Through a rights-based approach, they strive to ensure all learners are engaged in an appropriate learning pathway by supporting the continuity of their wellbeing and learning to improve outcomes. GVS link with the host school including when those schools may be in another Local Authority. Staff work closely with colleagues in the Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP), Glasgow Educational Psychology Service (GEPS) and alongside other partners to support Glasgow's children and young people. This work aligns with Education Services Grand Challenges.

Type of Establishment	Number of Establishments
Early Years (council managed)	110
Early Years (partner provided)	117
Primary	142
Secondary	30
ASN	20

Children's Houses in Glasgow	18

3.3 Grand Challenge - Wellbeing & Learning

The Blairvadach therapeutic outdoor education programme is a powerful intervention for care experienced young people who are struggling to sustain their school placements. Set within a nurturing and inspiring environment, the programme uses outdoor learning as a catalyst for transformation - rebuilding trust, restoring confidence, and reigniting a sense of purpose. The result is not only improved engagement, but measurable improvements in educational outcomes, wellbeing, and long-term aspirations. 100% of young people who attended achieved a unit/course.

Parent/Carer Feedback:

- *"From my perspective, he has learned to learn."*
- *"Thank you for your hard work and flexibility in helping Z attend the Blairvadach "residential" as day pupil. I think his time preparing with the Instructor and gaining*

[2] https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-improvement-framework-2026/

confidence in the outdoors really helped support his time there. This in turn, has encouraged him to try for Boys Brigade camp this year."

Staff Feedback:

- *"Participating in the Blairvadach programme changed this family's life. They didn't have the tools as a family to spend quality time together. The Instructor has taught them the skills they need to become closer and have fun together. It has changed the family dynamics, and the relationships between X and his mum. This has been hugely significant to this family."*
- *"The structure and staff of this programme are outstanding in nurturing positive relationships, understanding trauma, and selecting resources and experiences that will bring out the best in them."*

3.4 Grand Challenge - Engagement Participation & Inclusion

Glasgow City Council (GCC) continues to make progress in embedding the principles of *The Promise* across its education establishments. To date, 289 members of staff have completed the Train the Trainer Programme. 2,166 education staff have successfully gained the 'I Promise' Award, a further 130 members of staff from a wide range of teams and partner organisations have successfully achieved the 'I Promise' Award. Participants include colleagues from Towards Better Futures, PEPASS, Rangers Foundation Education Team, Early Years Support Service, Glasgow City Council's Family Learning Team, Continuing Care and Employment Service, Skills Development Scotland, Clyde College, Glasgow Dyslexia Support Service, and Glasgow's English as an Additional Language (EAL) Service, demonstrating a strong multi-agency commitment to improving outcomes for care experienced children and young people. A total of 67 establishments have successfully achieved the 'We Promise' Award, demonstrating their commitment to improving outcomes for care experienced children and young people and embedding the principles of *The Promise* within their practice. This includes 12 secondary schools, 30 primary schools and 25 early years establishments. Feedback from senior leaders indicates that the training and wider support offer are having a positive impact across establishments including the development of more inclusive and nurturing school cultures, increased staff understanding of the experiences and needs of care experienced children and young people, increased collaboration across establishments and sectors, with staff sharing effective practice and working together to improve outcomes for care experienced learners.

- *"Feedback from participants and senior leaders has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the impact of the training on both individual practice and whole-team approaches to supporting care experienced children and young people."*
- *"The training day was excellent. It really highlighted the positive impact practitioners have on the lives of our young people."*
- *"The staff were very reflective after this training and are now more mindful of the language they use when talking to or about children who are care experienced."*

3.5 Grand Challenge - Achievement & Progress

Through the Interrupted Learner Service (ILS) at Glasgow Virtual School (GVS), two specialist teachers provide tailored support to young people across our eighteen Children's Houses. The aim is to help learners re-engage with school or transition successfully to positive post-school destinations.

Thirty young people have been supported this academic year. This is an increase of 5% from last year.

Stage Breakdown

Sector	Number of Pupils	S4-S6
Secondary	28	11
Primary	-	
Total	**30**	

Almost all of this year's referrals were for secondary pupils. A large number of those referrals are concentrated in S4-S6, followed by S3. This academic year we have targeted learners in the Senior Phase to ensure they complete their Nat 3 and/or 4 literacy and numeracy qualifications.

Pupil Feedback:

- *"The tutoring support I got was excellent."*
- *"I always felt nurtured and supported by the adults running the sessions."*

Carers Feedback:

- *"Our young person's attendance at school has improved since taking part in Children's House ILS tutoring."*
- *"We would like more 1-1 tutoring in the house to support more of our young people."*

Two secondary wellbeing teachers offer targeted support to young people who are experiencing significant barriers to regular school attendance and active participation in learning. Nineteen pupils were identified across various secondary year groups, with most coming from S4. Young people achieved National 3 to National 4 qualifications in Literacy and Numeracy, demonstrating steady and positive progress in their learning journey.

Two young people achieved National 5 English at a Grade A and a Grade B, showcasing notable achievement.

These outcomes reflect the impact of tailored academic support and interventions in fostering progress and improving attainment for current care-experienced learners.

A total of 80 qualifications were gained through ILS sessions from August to May:

Subject and Level	Total number of young people attaining
Nat 3 Literacy	4
Nat 4 Literacy	7
Nat 5 Literacy	5
Nat 3 Numeracy	-
Nat 4 Numeracy	-
Nat 5 Numeracy	-
Nat 3 English	12
Nat 4 English	8
Nat 5 English	-
Nat 3 Maths	15
Nat 4 Maths	13
Nat 4 Application of Maths	-
Nat 3 Art	-
Nat 4 Admin	-
Nat 4 History	-
Total	**80**

Glasgow Virtual School provides a dedicated tuition programme for Care Experienced Learners (CEL) from Primary 1 through to Secondary 6. The number of children and young people being tutored has more than doubled compared to the previous session. Nearly 300 tutoring Care Experienced Children and Young People were tutored during session 2025 to 2026 for Literacy and Numeracy as well as subject specific attainment support for Senior Phase pupils.

Almost all tutors report a positive impact from tutoring with the most significant impacts being improvements in literacy, confidence, wellbeing and relationships with staff. Most tutors report a high level of engagement from young people. *"T's reading level has increased from Level 2 to Level 6." "Young person's attendance improved from January 2026 (57%) to March (95%)". "I am very happy with the 1-to-1 tutoring." "The tutor is fantastic and has made the sessions stimulating and fun for my child."*

3.6 MCR Pathways provides a platform for young people to build resilience and self belief. Almost all young people report that their mentor empowers them to achieve their personal best subsequently, mentoring has a positive effect on young people's wellbeing. In the last academic year, 1290 young people had a trusted adult volunteer mentor meet with them in secondary schools in Glasgow. 39 young people built confidence and resilience at Blairvadach, 224 explored future careers and 165 built leadership skills on the Young Persons Voice Project. As a result of MCR Pathways, almost all young people said that over time they had built trusting relationships, mentors were good role models, mentors helped them to build confidence and helped them to identify goals. *"Having a mentor gave me a person to talk to about anything and quite frankly having a mentor has benefited my mental health. Just having him come in once a week has made a positive change to my attitude about school." 99% of pupils said 'My mentor is a good role model' whilst 95% noted that 'Having a mentor has helped me believe in myself more.'*

3.7 Led by the Care Experienced Lead and greatly supported by the Social Work Service Manager (0.5), three Area Lead Officers work closely with staff in Early Years, Primary, Secondary and children's houses to support children and young people. The Social Work Service Manager's remit also includes the HSCP Central Continuing Care and Aftercare team. In line with The Promise, GVS staff have been diligent in increasing the profile of CEL, ensuring Designated Managers (DM) are aware of the individual and collective needs of our CEL. In terms of building capacity, one of the fundamental roles of GVS is plan and implement training programmes for staff.

3.8 Establishment Support Visits and Training

Below is the number of training sessions delivered over the course of the year.

Number of Training Sessions	Number of Attendees
23	488

3.9 Glasgow Care Experienced (Looked After) Children and Young People – 2025-26

	ASL	ELC	Primary	Secondary	Total
Number of care experienced children and young people	94	43	643	974	**1754**

It should be noted that the national data and data recorded on SEEMIS only includes children and young people legally 'looked after', however, GVS support all children and young people described as 'care experienced', including those previously looked after, informally cared for, and on the edge of care.

3.10 Referrals to GVS from education establishments for consultation and advice to support individual children and young people

Consultation is a key operational area for GVS, based on nurturing principles and embedding The Promise principles in their actions, support and advice.

In addition, a member of the GVS team attends the Glasgow Intensive Family Support Services (GIFSS) weekly screening meetings in order to support early intervention for children and young people on the edge of care. As can be seen from the number of referrals below, the area with the most need in terms of Care Experienced Learners in 2025-26 was the North East of the City, followed by the South and then the North West. In terms of Glasgow Intensive Family Support Service Referrals, the area that required most support was the South, followed by the North East and lastly, the North West.

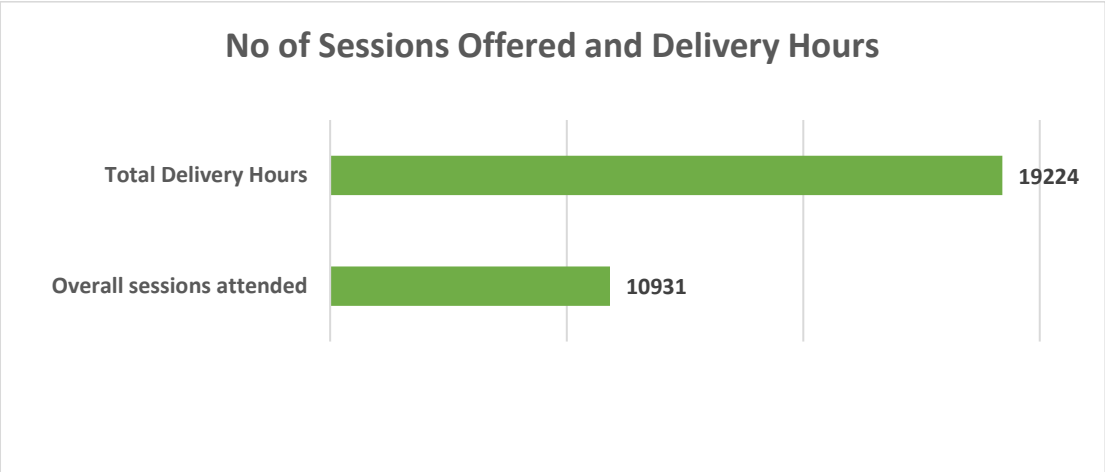
Area	Number of CEL referrals	Number of GIFSS referrals (HSCP) (age 12 +)	Total
South	Pri:29 Sec:15 **Total: 44**	68	112
NW	EY: - Pri:16 Sec:21 **Total: 38**	36	74
NE	Pri:26 Sec:24 **Total: 50**	52	102
Out of Local Authority (OLA)	Pri: - Sec 10 **Total: 12**	15	27
Total	**CEL Referrals: 144**	**GIFSS: 171**	**TOTAL: 315**

3.11 Specific GVS Programmes

GVS continue to work in partnership with a wide variety of partners including the Volunteer Tutors Organisation (VTO), Blairvadach Outdoor Education Centre, Outdoor Resource Centre (ORC), MCR Pathways, First Steps Future Training and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to enable support such as tutoring, mentoring, enhanced learning opportunities, outdoor learning, counselling, transition support, wellbeing and improved positive destinations. The team continues to adopt an evaluation cycle whereby they plan, evaluate, listen, review and adapt according to need. A total of 458 children and young people were offered opportunities to participate in programmes during the reporting period August 2025 - May 2026. Nearly 300 children and young people were offered CEL Tuition this year.

Scale of Delivery

Programme delivery during the reporting period included:



The volume of delivery highlights the extensive reach and capacity of programmes to provide sustained interventions. Please see a sample of case studies in the Appendix.

4 Education Outcomes for Care Experienced Children and Young people

1.1 This section considers the educational attainment of care experienced children[3] who were attending a Glasgow City Council school in 2025/26. In addition, it takes account of school leavers' destinations, school attendance and school exclusion levels to provide a wider view of the school experience of care experienced children. To provide context for some of the data, we also consider the general population.

2. Background

2.1 Many children have experiences which result in the need for extra care, support or protection and in some cases, children may become 'looked after'. This means the local authority takes on some legal responsibility for the care and wellbeing of the child. A young person may become looked after for a number of reasons, including neglect, abuse and complex disabilities which require specialist care, or involvement in the youth justice system.

2.2 Care experienced children are one of the lowest performing groups in terms of educational outcomes. Their lives are often characterised by poverty, disrupted family life and changes to care placements and schools. As a result, regular school attendance can be a challenge for some care experienced children which impacts on their ability to attain educationally.

2.3 Glasgow has the largest proportion of care experienced children with responsibility for 15% of Scotland's care experienced children and young people[4]. We therefore recognise that we face significant challenges in terms of scale.

2.4 This section reports on proportions and some of the variance in the Glasgow care experienced population which can often be explained by cohort size. Given the small numbers of care experienced children in each year group a reduction or increase of a significant proportion may be attributed to a single child. The attainment data for S5 and S6 is calculated based on the S4 cohort numbers, not the S5 and S6 year group numbers.

---

[3] The term 'care experienced' refers to young people who are or have been Looked After by the local authority.

[4] Number of children looked after on 31 July 2025 https://www.gov.scot/publications/childrens-social-work-statistics-looked-after-children-2024-25/documents/

3. Outcomes

Attendance and Exclusions

3.1 Primary attendance for care experienced pupils in Glasgow fell from 86.3% in 2024/25 to 85.8% in 2025/26**.** Attendance for the total primary school population also decreased from 91.0% to 90.7%.

Table 1: Primary school attendance rates

	% Attendance – Primary	
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)
2021/22	90.5	87.3
2022/23	90.1	87.2
2023/24	90.4	86.9
2024/25	91.0	86.3
2025/26	90.7	85.8

(Source: SEEMIS Business Intelligence)

3.2 Secondary attendance for care experienced pupils in Glasgow decreased slightly from 75.8% in 2024/25 to 75.5% in 2025/26. Attendance for the total secondary school population also fell, from 86.8% to 86.1%, leaving a gap of 10.6 percentage points.

Table 2: Secondary school attendance rates

	% Attendance – Secondary	
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)
2021/22	87.8	80.7
2022/23	87.5	80.4
2023/24	87.1	78.9
2024/25	86.8	75.8
2025/26	86.1	75.5

(Source: SEEMIS Business Intelligence)

3.3 Primary exclusion rates for care experienced pupils in Glasgow reduced significantly from 31.5 per 1,000 pupils in 2024/25 to 14.4 in 2025/26. This is a substantial improvement, although the latest rate remained more than three times the total primary school population rate of 4.2 per 1,000.

Table 3: Primary school exclusion rates

	Primary exclusion rates (rates per 1000 pupils)	
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)
2021/22	1.8	9.0
2022/23	1.9	9.8
2023/24	3.0	11.5
2024/25	4.1	31.5
2025/26	4.2	14.4

(Source: SEEMIS Business Intelligence)

3.4 Secondary exclusion rates for care experienced pupils in Glasgow continue to fluctuate from year to year and remain higher than those for the total secondary school population. The five-year pattern shows that the disparity persists although the current rate is substantially lower than the 2022/23 peak.

Table 4: Secondary school exclusion rates

	Secondary exclusion rates (rates per 1000 pupils)	
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)
2021/22	15.2	58.6
2022/23	16.9	69.2
2023/24	15.4	52.9
2024/25	15.4	37.5
2025/26	17.2	39.6

(Source: SEEMIS Business Intelligence)

Destinations

3.5 In 2025, 88.9% of care experienced school leavers in Glasgow entered a positive destination. This was broadly stable compared with 89.1% in 2024 and remained above the national care experienced figure of 86.8%. The gap with the total Glasgow school-leaver population was 6.0 percentage points.

Across the five-year period, positive destination rates for care experienced leavers in Glasgow have remained consistently high and above the national comparator. Continued monitoring and targeted support remain important to sustain progress.

Table **5**: Percentage of School Leavers in a Positive Destination

	% of school leavers in a positive destination		
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)
2021	96.2	91.3	87.9
2022	97.0	96.5	86.0
2023	97.7	95.9	88.1
2024	95.7	89.1	87.2
2025	94.9	88.9	86.8

(Source: Insight National Benchmarking Measure: Leaver Initial Destinations)

Literacy and Numeracy

4.1 In Literacy, most care experienced pupils in Glasgow attained SCQF Level 3 by the end of S5 in 2025/26. At SCQF Level 4, attainment fell from 66.7% to 60.0%, compared with 67.7% nationally.

4.2 In Numeracy, attainment among care experienced pupils in Glasgow improved at SCQF Level 3, rising from 77.0% in 2024/25 to 79.2% in 2025/26**.** At SCQF Level 4, attainment decreased from 61.1% to 56.7%, compared with 65.3% nationally.

4.3 Across Literacy and Numeracy, care experienced pupils continue to attain below the total Glasgow school population at SCQF Levels 3 and 4. Year-on-year movement is variable, reflecting the small cohort sizes, but the 2025/26 figures show that gaps remain, particularly at Level 4.

Table **6**: Attainment in Literacy by the end of S5

	% of candidates attaining SCQF Level 3 by the end of S5			% of candidates attaining SCQF Level 4 by the end of S5		
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)
2021/22	93.6	82.9	83.3	89.5	69.4	72.6
2022/23	93.3	81.2	83.8	89.9	68.8	75.0
2023/24	93.3	74.1	82.9	90.2	66.7	73.3
2024/25	93.4	81.0	79.7	89.2	66.7	66.2
2025/26	94.1	76.7	81.9	90.3	60.0	67.7

(Source: Insight – Based on pupils' cumulative attainment and the S4 cohort)

Table **7**: Attainment in Numeracy by the end of S5

	% of candidates attaining SCQF Level 3 by the end of S5			% of candidates attaining SCQF Level 4 by the end of S5		
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)
2021/22	92.4	79.8	82.9	83.7	58.0	64.9
2022/23	93.3	81.8	84.6	85.5	61.0	66.6
2023/24	92.0	72.2	82.9	86.4	65.7	67.5
2024/25	92.6	77.0	81.3	85.9	61.1	63.8
2025/26	95.1	79.2	82.8	88.5	56.7	65.3

(Source: Insight – Based on pupils' cumulative attainment and the S4 cohort)

4.4 At SCQF Level 4, the percentage of care experienced pupils in Glasgow attaining both Literacy and Numeracy by the end of S5 decreased from 57.1% in 2024/25 to 50.0% in 2025/26.

4.5 At SCQF Level 5, attainment among care experienced pupils in Glasgow decreased slightly from 23.8% in 2024/25 to 22.5% in 2025/26. This was below the national figure of 24.6%**.**

4.6 By the end of S6, 56.6% of care experienced pupils in Glasgow attained both Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 4 in 2025/26, down from 64.2% in 2024/25 but broadly in line with the national figure of 56.3%. At Level 5, attainment fell from 35.9% to 22.1%, below the national figure of 25.4%.

4.7 The latest results underline the volatility that can arise from small care experienced cohorts. Although Glasgow remained marginally above the national care experienced figure at Level 4**.**

Table **8**: Attainment in Literacy & Numeracy by the end of S5

	% of candidates attaining SCQF Level 4 by the end of S5			% of candidates attaining SCQF Level 5 by the end of S5		
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)
2021/22	81.2	51.3	59.0	56.4	18.1	20.9
2022/23	83.2	55.8	61.8	59.8	24.7	25.0
2023/24	83.7	60.2	61.6	60.9	33.3	27.1
2024/25	82.9	57.1	55.6	61.5	23.8	25.0
2025/26	85.4	50.0	57.8	63.4	22.5	24.6

(Source: Insight – Based on pupils' cumulative attainment and the S4 cohort)

Table **9**: Attainment in Literacy & Numeracy by the end of S6

	% of candidates attaining SCQF Level 4 by the end of S6			% of candidates attaining SCQF Level 5 by the end of S6		
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)
2021/22	84.8	58.5	58.3	60.6	22.2	24.1
2022/23	82.6	54.2	59.4	59.7	22.1	22.5
2023/24	84.4	56.3	61.6	62.7	27.2	26.3
2024/25	84.9	64.2	62.2	64.1	35.9	27.4
2025/26	83.7	56.6	56.3	64.1	22.1	25.4

(Source: Insight – Based on pupils' cumulative attainment and the S4 cohort)

Breadth and Depth

4.8 The proportion of care experienced pupils in Glasgow staying on from S4 to S5 was 70.0% in 2025/26, compared with 71.4% in 2024/25 and 66.4% nationally. Glasgow has remained above the national rate throughout the five-year period, although the latest figure is the lowest in the series and 9.9 percentage points below the 2022/23 peak.

4.9 The proportion staying on from S4 to S6 fell from 42.5% in 2024/25 to 27.9% in 2025/26. The latest Glasgow figure remained above the national rate of 25.2%, but the margin narrowed to 2.7 percentage points. This represents a marked reversal of the improvement recorded in the previous year.

Overall, the 2025/26 data shows that Glasgow continued to retain a higher proportion of care experienced pupils than the national average at both S5 and S6. However, the decline in staying on to S6 warrants close monitoring because sustained participation in the senior phase supports opportunities to gain further qualifications.

Table 10: Staying on to S5

	% of candidates in S4 staying on to S5 care experienced pupils (Glasgow)			% of candidates in S4 staying on to S5 care experienced pupils (National)		
	S4 Cohort	Number staying to S5	% staying to S5	S4 Cohort	Number staying to S5	% staying to S5
2021/22	193	141	73.1%	1156	789	68.3%
2022/23	154	123	79.9%	1052	721	68.5%
2023/24	108	81	75.0%	1059	713	67.3%
2024/25	126	90	71.4%	1091	720	66.0%
2025/26	120	84	70.0%	1039	690	66.4%

(Source: Insight Breadth and Depth All Candidates: S5 based on S4 roll and S5 based on S5 roll)

Table 11: Staying on to S6

	% of candidates in S4 staying on to S6 care experienced pupils (Glasgow)			% of candidates in S4 staying on to S6 care experienced pupils (National)		
	S4 Cohort	Number staying to S6	% staying to S6	S4 Cohort	Number staying to S6	% staying to S6
2021/22	171	69	40.4%	1221	342	28.0%
2022/23	190	59	31.1%	1146	314	27.4%
2023/24	151	61	40.4%	1046	298	28.5%
2024/25	106	45	42.5%	1055	315	29.9%
2025/26	122	34	27.9%	1081	272	25.2%

(Source: Insight Breadth and Depth All Candidates: S6 based on S4 roll and S6 based on S6 roll)

4.10 In 2025/26, the majority of care experienced pupils in Glasgow achieved at least one award at SCQF Level 5 by the end of S5. This was an increase from 50.0% in 2024/25 and remained above the national figure.

4.11 For three or more awards at SCQF Level 5, the Glasgow care experienced rate was unchanged at 33.3% in 2025/26.

4.12 The five-year series shows considerable year-on-year variation for the care experienced cohort. In 2025/26, care experienced pupils were slightly above the national rate for one or more Level 5 awards but slightly below it for three or more awards.

Table **12**: Attainment at SCQF Level 5 by the end of S5

	1 or more awards at SCQF Level 5 by the end of S5			3 or more awards at SCQF Level 5 by the end of S5		
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)
2021/22	83.9	50.8	49.3	69.7	29.0	31.0
2022/23	85.3	59.1	55.1	71.9	32.5	32.9
2023/24	84.7	52.8	50.3	71.8	38.0	33.5
2024/25	84.5	50.0	49.9	73.1	33.3	31.4
2025/26	84.5	52.5	50.3	73.7	33.3	34.1

(Source: Insight – Based on pupils' cumulative attainment and the S4 cohort)

4.13 In 2025/26, 24.6% of care experienced pupils in Glasgow achieved at least one award at SCQF Level 6 by the end of S6. This was down from 30.2% in 2024/25 and almost identical to the national figure of 24.5%.

4.14 For three or more awards at SCQF Level 6, the Glasgow care experienced rate fell from 14.2% in 2024/25 to 11.5% in 2025/26. This was broadly in line with the national figure of 11.7%**.**

4.15 In the latest year, Glasgow's care experienced cohort was closely aligned with the national care experienced figures on both Level 6

measures. However, the gaps with the total school population show that progression to higher-level awards remains a key area for improvement.

Table **13**: Attainment at SCQF Level 6 by the end of S6

	1 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 by the end of S6			3 or more awards at SCQF Level 6 by the end of S6		
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)
2021/22	65.8	30.4	24.7	48.1	16.4	13.4
2022/23	64.0	27.4	25.0	47.0	12.6	12.7
2023/24	66.5	30.5	25.8	49.1	10.6	12.2
2024/25	64.9	30.2	26.3	48.6	14.2	12.0
2025/26	66.3	24.6	24.5	50.2	11.5	11.7

(Source: Insight – Based on pupils' cumulative attainment and the S4 cohort)

Leavers Attainment

4.1 In 2025, 57.9% of care experienced school leavers in Glasgow achieved at least one award at SCQF Level 5. This was 4.7 percentage points above the national care experienced figure of 53.2%.

4.2 At SCQF Level 6, 29.4% of care experienced leavers in Glasgow achieved at least one award in 2025, compared with 31.3% in 2024. Glasgow remained above the national care experienced figure of 27.8%. The latest data therefore shows continued advantage over the national comparator**.**

Table 14: Leavers Attainment at SCQF Level 5 and SCQF Level 6

	1 or more award at SCQF Level 5 on leaving school			1 or more award at SCQF Level 6 on leaving school		
	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)	Total School Population (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (Glasgow)	Care experienced Pupils (National)
2021	87.3	54.3	48.0	67.8	26.6	24.5
2022	85.9	64.9	58.2	63.9	32.2	28.3
2023	86.3	61.6	57.0	65.7	33.6	29.3
2024	85.8	60.2	53.6	65.2	31.3	25.8
2025	85.4	57.9	53.2	65.5	29.4	27.8

(Source: Insight – Breadth and Depth Leavers)

5 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial:	*Using existing core funding and funding from SG Care Experienced Budget*
Legal:	
Personnel:	
Procurement:	

Council Strategic Plan:

- Grand Challenge 1 – Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities.
- Mission 2: Meet the learning and care needs of children and their families before and through school.
- Grand Challenge 2 – Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens.
- Mission 3: Raise attainment amongst Glasgow's children and young people.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025-29? Please specify.	This proposal specifically addresses Outcome 14
What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?	Positive impact on health and wellbeing of young people
Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.	This proposal will help to address socio-economic disadvantage

Climate Impacts:

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

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Committee is asked to note the performance of Glasgow's care experienced young people and the work of Glasgow Virtual School along with the case studies in the Appendix.

Appendix

CARE EXPERIENCED LEARNER (CEL) CASE STUDIES

Case Study A - Forest School

The Glasgow Virtual School Forest School provision aims to increase wellbeing, engagement and attainment for care experienced learners across Glasgow. Through regular, planned outdoor learning experiences young people develop communication skills and build positive relationships in a safe, nurturing environment. Interactive and collaborative learning experiences help learners make important connections between the curriculum and their everyday life.

Current participants: 32

The data shows that most attendees came from the South, representing 40.6% of the total attendance. The North East had the second-highest attendance with 34.3%, followed by the North West with 21.8%. OLA had the lowest representation, contributing to 3.1%.

Looking at the stages, P3 had the highest participation with 25%. Stages P2 and P5 each had 18.7%, while P4 and P7 each recorded 12.5%. Overall, attendance was strongest from the South and most concentrated in P3.

Young Person Feedback:
Feedback on Forest School was very positive overall. The majority of participants rated the experience as excellent, while 23% described it as good and a further 23% said it was okay. In terms of school attendance, 38.4% of respondents reported an improvement following participation in Forest School, while 61.5% said their attendance remained unchanged.

Young Person Comments:
"I like helping build things like the swings"
"I love playing on the swings and pond dipping"
"I love the instructors - they are so fun!"
"I like eating the things that I made at forest school"

Young Person Comments - 'Even Better if'…
'Nothing!"
"I think more kids should be allowed to come"
"Finding more animals"

Parent/Carer/Referrer Feedback:

Feedback on the Forest School programme was overwhelmingly positive. All respondents rated the programme highly, with all scoring it either 4 or 5 on the Likert scale, where 5 represented "brilliant." Parents and carers also highlighted the supportive nature of the experience, with most reporting that their young person felt nurtured and supported at all times. The programme also appeared to have a strong impact on school attendance, as 88.8% of respondents reported improvements in

attendance, with only 11.1% noting that attendance remained the same. Overall, the findings demonstrate a highly valued and supportive programme with positive outcomes.

Parent/Carer/Referrer Comments:

- *"X has had a positive and engaging experience at Forest School. She has shown increasing confidence and curiosity while exploring the outdoor environment. X enjoys taking part in practical activities and is developing her teamwork and problem-solving skills. She is learning to take appropriate risks, use tools safely, and show care and respect for nature and others. X participates enthusiastically and is beginning to make independent choices in her learning. Overall, Forest School is supporting her personal and social development in a meaningful, hands-on way."*
- *"Z has been much more settled in school this year. We are being careful to ensure his needs continue to be met in the classroom and that he has nurturing and supportive adults at school to support his wellbeing/learning and attendance."*

Case Study B - King's Trust

The King's Trust Team Programme is a 12-week personal and social development programme designed to support care-experienced young people who face barriers to sustained engagement in education, employment, or training. The programme is underpinned by nurturing and inclusive practice, with a strong focus on wellbeing, participation, and equity.

The programme provides a safe and supportive learning environment where learners are encouraged to build confidence, resilience, communication, leadership, and teamwork skills. Through a broad and experiential curriculum, young people are supported to develop independence, set aspirational goals, and plan positive pathways into further learning, training, or employment. Opportunities for wider achievement, alongside targeted literacy and numeracy support, are embedded throughout to help remove barriers to attainment and progression.

Working collaboratively with Kings Trust and staff from City of Glasgow College we have been able to offer three programmes annually to support care-experienced young people across the city. The accessible and supportive learning environment helps learners build positive relationships, improve attendance, and increase engagement. Over 3 terms 17 pupils have engaged with the programme.

Quantitative Outcomes:

70% improved attendance at school

80% engagement Possible Attendances **424** Actual Attendances **339**

87% achieved Qualifications: Personal Development & Employability Skills Award

Personal Development & Employability Skills Certificate

Evaluations

Pupil:

“Getting to do work experience and volunteering in the community”
“Meeting new people and trying new things like Snowcamp and learning to cook”

Staff:

“'I have witnessed a huge change in Pupil E for the positive. She has enjoyed her time on the programme. Although her attendance at times has been up and down, Pupil E has clearly grown in confidence and is motivated for her next step in life. Pupil E seems a lot happier in herself.”

Positive Destinations

All learners transitioned into a positive post-programme destination:

- **64%** secured places on college courses
- **18%** enrolled in further training programmes
- **12%** returned to school to complete national qualifications
- **6%** entered employment

Feedback from learners and stakeholders highlights the programme’s significant impact:

- **Most** participants rated the programme as *excellent*
- **Most** school staff rated the programme *excellent*, with **17%** rating it *good*
- **All** pupils and school staff felt the programme was *nurturing*
- **All** pupils felt *respected* during the programme

Case Study C – Glenburn Programme

The Glenburn Programme was developed as a bespoke, trauma-informed alternative curriculum for P6, P7, S1 and S2 learners referred by schools, social work, and partner agencies. The programme aimed to provide a nurturing environment which promoted positive relationships, emotional wellbeing, inclusion, confidence, resilience, independence, and learner voice through meaningful activity-based learning experiences.

A robust referral and information-sharing process ensured staff had a clear understanding of each learner’s background, strengths, and support needs. Personalised targets and outcomes were established to promote equity, progression, and engagement.

The programme delivered a broad and balanced curriculum aligned to the four capacities, including outdoor learning, cycling, cooking, mindfulness, Children’s Rights education, STEM, digital learning, and creative therapeutic activities. Sessions were designed to develop emotional regulation, resilience, communication, cooperation, and transferable life skills within a safe and nurturing environment.

Glenburn staff also incorporated Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) learning throughout the programme, supporting pupils to develop an understanding of Children's Rights, respect, inclusion, equality, and advocacy. Learners were encouraged to understand their rights and responsibilities and apply these within their relationships, decision-making, and participation in group activities.

Due to the success of the programme, a number of learners were also involved in additional 1:1 support sessions with bespoke interventions tailored to their individual needs. These sessions were significantly enhanced by the positive relationships already established through the main group programme, allowing staff to build on trust, familiarity, and emotional safety. This relational foundation enabled more meaningful engagement, deeper emotional work, and more effective personalised support.

Outcome

Over the academic year, good progress was observed by Glenburn staff, schools, and learners. Young people demonstrated increased confidence, improved relationships with peers and adults, greater engagement with learning, and enhanced emotional wellbeing. Improvements were also noted in attendance, behaviour, communication skills, resilience, and learner participation.

Learners developed a stronger sense of identity, inclusion, and belonging, alongside an increased understanding of Children's Rights, respect, and self-advocacy through RRSA learning.

The nurturing environment, predictable routines, and consistent emotional support contributed to reductions in peer conflict and increased empathy, inclusion, and positive participation within group activities and decision-making.

Quantitative Outcomes:

86% improved attendance at school.

82% engagement over 3 terms Possible Attendances **212** Actual Attendances **173**

Evaluations

Pupils
"Everything staff are nice, lots of things to do"
"I love my Thursdays"
"Meeting new people, doing different stuff from school"
"The staff doing sports, playing games learning in a fun way"

Staff
"As a school we have always found our pupils to engage well at Glenburn and speak very positively of their experiences there."
"I think Glenburn is an excellent programme and supports all children in an inclusive environment."