

**Item 3**

12th March 2026



**Glasgow City Council**

**Education, Skills and Early Years City Policy Committee**

**Report by Interim Executive Director of Education Services**

**Contact: Sonja Kerr**

**EDUCATION SERVICES: GLASGOW VIRTUAL SCHOOL**

**Purpose of Report:**

To update the Committee on the work of Glasgow Virtual School.

**Recommendations:**

The Committee is asked to note the performance and ongoing 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 or other exceptional reasons. It also includes support for learning provided by the Hospital Education Service (HES), 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.

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**

- Almost all S4 and S5 pupils who received Children's House ILS actively engaged with the programme and achieved National 3 or National 4 qualifications in literacy and numeracy.
- In the Hospital Education Service (HES) children and young people made good progress in literacy and numeracy working at early level to level 3 in Broad General Education (BGE). In the senior phase, young people attained qualifications in literacy and numeracy from National 3 to Advanced Higher Levels.
- Most Enhanced Vocational Inclusion Programme (EVIP) learners completed the vocational course. Almost all learners achieved an English Course Award and the majority of learners achieve a Maths Course Award.

### **3.1 Children's House ILS**

#### **Aims**

Through the Interrupted Learner Service (ILS) at GVS, two specialist teachers provide tailored support to young people across our eighteen Children's Houses in Glasgow. The learners face significant barriers to regular school attendance and completion of national qualifications. There is a primary focus on supporting S4 pupils to achieve key outcomes in literacy and numeracy.

## **Actions**

Twenty-eight young people have been supported this academic year. The majority of referrals are concentrated in S3 (32.14%), followed by S4 (25.00%).

## **Reasons for Referrals:**

<b>Reason for Referral</b>	<b>Number of Referrals</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Dysregulated Behaviour</b>	10	35.71%
<b>Qualification Support</b>	11	39.29%
<b>Anxiety</b>	-	10.71%
<b>Non-attendance</b>	-	3.57%
<b>Mental Health</b>	-	3.57%
<b>Transition Support</b>	-	7.14%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Summary:**

The most common referral reasons are Qualification Support (39.29%) and Dysregulated Behaviour (35.71%), together making up over two-thirds of all referrals.

Feedback from pupils highlights the positive impact that tailored interventions and consistent support have had on their confidence, emotional regulation, and overall wellbeing. These outcomes suggest that the programme is successfully achieving its aims of fostering a supportive learning environment, encouraging engagement, and helping pupils build resilience as they work towards their goals.

## **Pupil Feedback:**

- *"I have a plan for the future."*
- *"I am more confident; if I am worried, I know to ask for help and where to get help."*
- *"I enjoy learning new things; I am more confident; I am feeling happier."*
- *"My favourite part of the programme is spending time with my tutor."*

## **Referrer:**

*"The tutor has been a positive introduction to all the young people who reside within X CH. She gives them all her undivided attention and they enjoy her company."*

## **Parent/Carer:**

*"...enjoys her time with the tutor and looks forward to meeting with her. X struggles with her self-esteem and lacks motivation to pursue tasks. The care team have noticed an improvement in her presentation and her ability to attempt educational tasks."*

*"... enjoys it. He hasn't been at school since 21st August, so it's his only source of communication he has with anyone outside his home and family life."*

*"... has a sense of achievement now, that he missed in his schoolwork prior to engaging with their tutor."*

**School:**

*“Extremely positive programme, one of the few interventions that has been successful and sustained by....”*

**3.2 ILS Hubs**

There are two ILS hubs in 2 areas of the city. Both ILS hubs have been set up to engage young people who are not currently accessing education due to emotionally based school non-attendance such as anxiety, ASD or similar reasons.

**Outcomes**

- 14 pupils are currently engaged in the programme within Pollock Hub.
- 13 pupils are currently engaged in the programme within Wellhouse Hub.
- All engaged pupils are undertaking literacy and numeracy work and doing the Heartstart Award. Most pupils have completed projects in cooking and baking.
- - pupils from Pollok Hub have restarted at school on a part time basis. - of these pupils has returned to school full time. A pupil has started on a course.
- - pupils from Wellhouse Hub have restarted at school on at least a part time basis.
- - pupil from wellhouse hub has gained a conditional offer at college starting in September and the pupil is motivated at the hub to gain her qualifications and attend this course. - other pupils from the wellhouse hub have applied for college and are awaiting news of application. - pupils from wellhouse hub will be applying for EVIP courses in S4.
- - pupils from Pollock hub have applied for college courses and are awaiting news of applications. - other pupil from pollock hub would like to increase his time in school with a view to possibly attending school full time from August 2026.

**Evaluation:**

- Pupil comments have all been positive. They have said they like the small group working. One pupil said to her mum ‘if that was on every day, I would go to it’. This pupil does not attend school due to anxiety.
- Teachers have reported that new friendships have been formed amongst children that are not attending school and have not known each other beforehand. They are talking and supporting each other, and it is a positive learning environment.
- Pupils have exchanged phone numbers and formed friendships outside the hub. A positive development for pupils at risk of social isolation.

**Parent/Carer Feedback:**

‘It’s great – my daughter loves it, and I didn’t think she would and I never have any bother getting her here’

- ‘It’s so nice to get the positive news about xxx, he normally gets into trouble, and it is so good to hear he is doing well at something’.
- ‘I’m happy with this. She’s avoiding school but she comes to this so I’m happy. She says she likes it at home.’

- She’s thoroughly enjoying it and has no anxiety unlike school, I would like it to continue.’
- All parental responses that we have gained have been positive.

#### 4.1 Hospital Education Service (HES) Pupil Numbers 2024-25

During the period 2024-25, a total of 180 children and young people taught at Hospital Education Service between the 2 sites. Children and young people taught by HES staff were from 25 of the 32 local authorities in Scotland:

HES	Stobhill School	RHC	Total
Total Number of pupils	54	126	180

#### 4.2 HES Attainment and Achievement 2024-25

Children and young people have varying lengths of stay in hospital. All children and young people benefit from individualised lessons to meet their needs and support the continuation of learning from their base school. Despite barriers to learning (specific health issues) almost all young people timetabled for education attend well most of the time either in school or individually on wards. In the BGE, children and young people made good progress in literacy and numeracy working at early level to level 3. In the senior phase, young people attained qualifications in literacy and numeracy from National 3 to Advanced Higher Levels.

Most young people at Stobhill School also engaged in Wider Achievement opportunities including Duke of Edinburgh, Pupil Council, Relaxation Art, Enterprise and Impact Groups. Young people are supported by Skills Development Scotland (SDS). An SDS Work Coach works with young people when appropriate, giving advice and guidance on positive destination pathways. Young people leaving HES are therefore more aware of alternative positive destination options and are linked with an SDS Advisor within their locality.

#### 4.3 Engaging with Parents/Carers and Partners

Parents/carers are invited to school to see around the school when their young person is admitted and are kept informed of progress with monthly updates and invitations to attend open afternoons. Therefore, parents/carers feel more re-assured about the ongoing provision of education whilst their child/young person is unwell.

HES staff work with partners in order to develop creative and innovative approaches eg Enterprise Group, Christmas Fayres, Art Exhibitions and coffee mornings. As a result pupils benefit from developing skills for learning, life and work as appropriate.

## 5.1 EVIP (Enhanced Vocational Inclusion Programme) 2024-25

EVIP provides alternative education in various settings for young people who display a range of distressed behaviours.

EVIP delivered 5 vocational class groups across two Glasgow Regional Colleges.

College	Course
Glasgow Kelvin College	Construction
Glasgow Clyde College	Auto Construction
Glasgow Clyde College	Early Learning & Childcare
Glasgow Clyde College	Hair & Beauty
Glasgow Clyde College	Sport & Fitness

A member of EVIP staff and GVS Young Person Support Worker piloting a GVS allotment space with S2/S3 pupils in the Concrete Garden in Possil. This will allow the young people to be engaged in the plant to plate initiative as the fruits of their labour will be passed to our partners at the Clay Café in Possil to serve in the café.

GVS staff are currently working with Clyde College staff to develop an EVIP ESOL Course for 2026-27. This development is in line with one of Glasgow's Promise Priorities, "Our children and young people will not face unnecessary barriers to education due to their immigration status".

## 5.2 EVIP Attainment and Achievement 2024-25

Year	Offered	Completed	Percentage of young people completing
2023-24	53	41	77%
2024-25	50	41	82%

Year	English	Application of Maths/Maths	Employability Award	Wellbeing Award
	% Achieving	% Achieving	% Achieving	% Achieving
2023-24	88%	88%	95%	76%
2024-25	93%	71%	90%	78%

Feedback received from young people “I am treated with respect at EVIP”. “I like this better because there are less people in my class, and I can get help quick” “it’s just different from School” “I like that everyone calls each other their name”.

Feedback received from parents/carers “the staffing have been amazing and the help they have given my son has been unbelievable” “I like that the staff are helping my daughter in School too because that has been hard for her”.

## 6.1 GVS Specialist Family Support Service

Parents and carers have access to a range of therapeutic supports and interventions on an individual or group work basis.

The overarching aim of the service is to continually enhance emotional wellbeing for young people and their families within an educational setting.

Families can be referred as part of Care Experienced Learner Consultation through Glasgow Virtual School. If a request is deemed appropriate, a referral can then be made directly to the Specialist Family Support Service (SFSS) where an initial consultation would be arranged for the family.



### Stakeholder Response to the Intervention:

- 100% of respondents rated the intervention/consultation as 5 out of 5.
- 100% of respondents informed that the intervention and/or consultation enhanced their emotional wellbeing, resilience, coping skills and self confidence.

### Parent/Carer feedback:

“It has helped our communication skills with our son and our trust in this type of service. My wife enjoyed speaking to someone knowledgeable who wasn’t judgmental”.

“I feel so much more like my old self and understand what I need to help me cope with difficult situations and struggles we all have as a parent from time to time”.

“Having a safe space to share personal hardships I was facing with my child, discussing feelings, solutions and just gaining validation that it was ok to feel this way”.

“It has helped me trying to reframe my thinking during difficult times”.

**Staff feedback:**

“Gave me knowledge of how to support child’s mum when she was asking for support”.

“Being aware of the availability of the support and how it is provided is hugely beneficial for future practice. The GVS support as a multiagency approach has been pivotal in supporting the school, the children and the family”.

“The consultation with the FSP was extremely worthwhile for my practice in supporting care experienced families, as I feel very confident moving forward in supporting this family and young person within our establishment”.

A total of 88 staff across all 3 sectors took part in Enhancing Families Wellbeing Training with 100% of respondents rating the training as 5 out of 5.

## **6.2 Mellow Ability Training Offer**

Ten members of staff from the 3 areas of the city will be trained in the Mellow Ability Programme. School learning communities would prioritise those families who require this specialised support and intervention. This would allow parents and carers to link in and build on peer supports within their local areas during the intervention, as well as afterwards with the support and encouragement from staff within early years and primary education establishments.

A pilot has already been carried out with feedback as follows:

Overall, the programme received the highest possible rating for impact where 100% of respondents rated the intervention as 5 out of 5.

**Support and intervention helped to improve the following areas (5=Improved a lot. 1=Didn’t improve at all).**

- Emotional well-being: Average score of 5 out of 5 from all parent/carers
- Self-confidence: Average score of 5 out of 5 from all parent/carers
- Resilience: Average score of 4 out of 5 from all parent/carers
- Coping skills: Average score of 4 out of 5 from all parent/carers

**Parent/carer feedback on how the intervention improved any of the above areas in particular:**

- “I feel confident in continuing this group on further so I can share my experiences of parenting a child with additional support needs and more parents can gain support from each other”
- “Before this group I struggled to reach out to anyone for help and now I know it’s okay not to be okay sometimes”
- “I feel more empowered as a parent and even more so as my old self now....friends have even said they notice such a change in me”

100% of parent/carers responded Definitely that the intervention they received helped them to deal with the issues that arose within their families. There has been a great deal of interest in the Mellow Ability programme from colleagues in early years and primary sectors.

## **7 LIAM Programme (Let’s Introduce Anxiety Management)**

### **Aim**

LIAM is a cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) informed intervention, for anxiety in children and young people, aimed at treating mild-moderate anxiety symptoms in primary and secondary school aged children and young people aged 8 to 18 years. This includes those who have been unable to access psychological interventions because they do not meet the severity criteria for a tier 3 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). LIAM aims to help children to understand their anxiety in terms of how it affects their thoughts, body and actions and to teach children ways to cope with their anxiety using a range of strategies and tools. LIAM is delivered by a trained practitioner over eight 1-hour sessions in a one-to-one or group format.

### **Outcomes:**

88% attendance at the sessions, however this was impacted by various school activities due to the festive period.

50% of pupils rated the programme overall excellent

50% of pupils rated the programme overall good

75% of pupils said they felt more healthy 25% said they felt a bit more healthy

50% of pupils said their attendance had improved

Due to the success and impact of the LIAM programme on the Notre Dame pupils, the LIAM practitioners will continue their professional development by participating in Let’s Introduce Learning About (LILA). LILA is an adaptation of LIAM, designed to meet the needs of neurodivergent children and young people, for whom anxiety is often more frequent and intense.

### **Pupil Feedback:**

#### **Pupils highlighted that the programme:**

- Helps them feel safe and calm
- Gives them adults they can trust
- Helps them feel more confident

- Makes them feel included and accepted
- Supports them to feel ready for the future

**Young people consistently reported feelings of:**

- Emotionally safe
- Physically safe
- Supported when they feel worried or upset
- Confidence
- Feeling calmer and more positive

**Referrer Feedback:**

Referrers shared that the programme has helped children to feel more confident about school, attend more regularly and feel ready for the next stage of learning. Referrers noticed improvements in confidence, emotional wellbeing, physical health and activity and school attendance.

Overall, the programme received the highest possible rating for impact and referrers described the programme as “Fantastic”, “A great support”, “Brilliant”.

**Feedback from DHT:**

“The LIAM programme is fantastic - it was organised and led perfectly. The young people felt seen, heard and included and, for the most part, the attendance of almost all young people has improved. The young people look forward to it every week. I think the programme was great - schools are crying out for more groups like this. We could have filled the group several times over!”

**8 Young Person Support Worker (YPSW)**

During 2024-25, the YPSW worked with 104 children at a variety of stages across 3 primary schools.

The group sessions provided a safe space where children could talk openly about their thoughts, worries and feelings towards upcoming transitions or changes within their life. Activities include guided discussions, storytelling, solution-focused tasks, and play-based scenarios that help pupils name emotions, recognise common feelings among peers and develop strategies for coping with change. These groups help normalise feelings of anxiety, reduce isolation and build confidence.

**Feedback from a Primary Principal Teacher Inclusion:**

*“Over the last year, Wellbeing Wednesday has become one of the most valued and impactful aspects of our Inclusion Base in Cadder Primary”.*

**9.1 Pupil Feedback – Programmes Term 1-2 (2025–2026)**

Programme evaluations evidence the positive impact of programmes GVS offered during Term 1 & 2 of session 2025–2026. The findings demonstrate clear alignment

with HGIOS (4) Quality Indicators, GIRFEC wellbeing principles, and the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, highlighting the effectiveness in promoting wellbeing, inclusion, learner voice, and positive outcomes.

## **Impact on Learners – HGIOS (4)**

### **QI 1.3 Leadership of Change**

The programmes reflect a clear commitment to improvement through:

- Responsive planning informed by pupil voice
- Staff modelling trauma-informed, nurturing approaches
- Ongoing reflection to adapt provision to learner need

Young people's feedback demonstrates that they experience the programmes as purposeful, supportive and responsive.

### **QI 2.2 Curriculum**

Participants reported high levels of engagement and relevance, indicating that:

- Learning experiences are flexible and personalised
- Activities support re-engagement and skills development
- Learners feel supported to progress towards future pathways
- This supports curriculum for learners who require alternative or enhanced provision

### **QI 2.4 Personalised Support**

The strongest outcomes sit within this indicator:

- 97% of learners felt nurtured and supported by adults
- 96% felt respected and listened to
- 92% felt included and a sense of belonging

This demonstrates highly effective relational practice and consistency of care.

### **QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion**

The programme provides a safe and inclusive environment with 91% reporting improved health and wellbeing.

## **GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators**

The programmes show positive impact across all **SHANARRI** indicators, with particularly strong evidence in:

- **Safe:** Learners feel emotionally and physically secure
- **Nurtured:** Strong, trusting adult relationships
- **Included:** Reduced isolation and improved peer connections

- **Respected:** Learner voice embedded in practice
- **Achieving:** Progress towards personal goals and aspirations

The consistent focus on strengths-based support aligns well with GIRFEC national practice guidance.

### **UNCRC Alignment**

The programmes actively support children’s rights, including:

- **Article 3:** Best interests of the child as a primary consideration
- **Article 12:** Right to be heard and taken seriously
- **Article 19:** Right to protection and safety
- **Article 28:** Right to education, including appropriate alternative provision

Young people report feeling valued, listened to, and supported to succeed.

### **Conclusion**

The evaluations provide strong evidence that the programmes are delivering high-quality, rights-respecting, trauma-informed support that positively impacts wellbeing, engagement and learner confidence. They represent an effective model of inclusive practice and make a meaningful contribution to improved outcomes for children and young people.

## **9.2 Referrer Feedback – Programmes Term 1-2 (2025–2026)**

### **Quality and Impact (HGIOS4)**

Referrer feedback provides strong evidence against key HGIOS4 Quality Indicators, particularly:

#### **QI 2.2 – Curriculum**

- Programmes offer flexible, relevant learning experiences tailored to individual needs.
- Activities promote wellbeing, engagement, and positive attitudes to learning.

#### **QI 2.3 – Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

- Staff build strong, trusting relationships with children and young people.
- Learning experiences are engaging, supportive, and responsive.

#### **QI 2.4 – Personalised Support**

- High levels of inclusion and improved attendance demonstrate effective targeted support.
- Referrers feel their pupils’ needs are understood and met.

#### **QI 3.1 – Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion**

- 98% of referrers rated the programme as helpful or better.
- Children feel safe, included, and supported, with no negative feedback reported.

### **What Referrers Valued Most**

- Improved confidence and emotional wellbeing
- Positive relationships with staff and peers
- Increased motivation and engagement with learning
- A nurturing, inclusive environment where children feel understood

Many referrers described the programmes as a positive turning point for their pupil. This feedback will continue to inform improvements and ensure the programmes meet the needs of children, young people, and referrers.

## **10 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

**11 Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to note the performance and ongoing work of Glasgow Virtual School.