

## Vision for Schools in Edinburgh

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### Education, Children and Families

9 October 2012

#### Purpose of report

- 1 To inform Committee of the draft Children and Families' vision for schools in Edinburgh and request its engagement in developing the content.

#### Main report

- 2 The draft vision for schools in Edinburgh is proposed to cover the next five years and beyond, and has been developed in consultation with all head teachers in the city. It arose out of a desire to establish a longer term vision for schools in the city, and to do so in the context of significant changes that will take place over the period, particularly changes to the curriculum and ICT. It will also take account of the developing debates about the extent of management devolution to schools and the role of the local authority. It will be developed in consultation with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible.
- 3 Our vision is for all children and young people to enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential. Our ambition is for all children and young people in Edinburgh to:
  - Have the best start in life;
  - Be physically and emotionally healthy;
  - Be successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens making a positive contribution to their communities; and
  - Leave school into a positive destination with a motivation for lifelong learning.
- 4 In order to achieve these, Edinburgh is determined to: improve life chances for children in need; maximise its support for schools in challenging circumstances; ensure schools play a key role at the heart of their communities; strengthen support for the development of staff; strengthen pupil and parental engagement in schools; further develop and support strong leadership; and, make the best use of the resources it has available.
- 5 The vision encompasses the commitments made in the Capital Coalition Agreement to ensure that every child in Edinburgh has the best start in life. In particular, it references the commitments to increase support for vulnerable children, including help for families so that fewer go into care; hold the maximum P1 class size at 25 and seek to reduce class sizes in line with Scottish Government recommendations; draw up a long-term strategic plan to

tackle both over-crowding and under-use in schools; seek to ensure the smooth introduction of Curriculum for Excellence and that management structures within our schools support the new curriculum; and continue progress on all planned school developments and provide adequate investment in the fabric of all our schools.

- 6 As part of the vision for schools in Edinburgh, Children and Families is committed to introducing and taking forward a number of innovative changes in differing areas. For example, all children will have access to early learning and childcare and family support from the age of three (from birth in the case of vulnerable children). Head teachers may be rotated between schools so that they serve no more than five to seven years in a particular school. Also, co-operative learning and principles will be promoted and developed at all ages and stages. A 'Total Place' approach will be implemented for schools in challenging circumstances, and may include the trialling of all year round provision. Much stronger links and partnerships with tertiary education providers and employers will be built to improve opportunities for school leavers.
- 7 Appendix 1 is in draft form and for consultation. A process of wide engagement is planned in order to shape and develop our vision so that it is informed by the views of elected members, staff, parents, pupils, partners and communities. Consultation will take place between August 2012 and January 2013. This will involve circulating the consultation materials widely and also arranging face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders and forums. The face-to-face consultation will take place with: the Consultative Committee with Parents; Trade Unions; Pupil Councils and Youth Forums; representatives of the Education, Children and Families Committee; School Parent Councils; the Children's Partnership; a series of consultation events in local neighbourhoods; and staff in schools. A final draft will be ready to take to Education, Children and Families Committee in January 2013.

### **Financial Implications**

- 8 There are no financial implications.

### **Equalities Impact**

- 9 The vision highlights the determination to continue to improve life chances for children in need.

### **Environmental Impact**

- 10 There is no environmental impact.

### **Recommendations**

- 11 Committee is asked to:
  - a) Consider the vision set out in Appendix 1
  - b) Ask officers to develop appropriate consultation materials and consult widely on a vision for schools in Edinburgh
  - c) Contribute to the development of the Council's vision for schools as part of the consultation process.

Appendices	1. Vision for Schools in Edinburgh
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Wards affected	All
Single Outcome Agreement	Outcome 4: Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens Outcome 5: Our children have the best start in life Outcome 8: We have improved life chances for children, young people and families at risk.
Background Papers	None

Appendix 1

***Draft - for Consultation***

**CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL**

**Vision for Schools in Edinburgh**

**Our vision is for all children and young people to enjoy their childhood and achieve their potential**

Our ambition is for all children and young people in Edinburgh to:

- have the best start in life;
- be physically and emotionally healthy;
- be successful learners, confident individuals, and responsible citizens making a positive contribution to their communities; and
- leave school into a positive destination with a motivation for lifelong learning.

**Best Start in Life**

We have high quality early years provision in Edinburgh delivered through a combination of nursery schools, nursery classes, partner providers and Child and Family Centres. We are determined to strengthen our provision further so that all children have access to early learning & childcare and family support from the age of three and vulnerable children have this from birth.

The Government's recent commitment to extend early learning and childcare to 600 hours per child per year will significantly strengthen early years provision for all young children and their families. The Capital Coalition has made a commitment to increasing affordable childcare through the development of Childcare Co-operatives. In addition to this, we recognise the need to strengthen support pre-birth and in early years for vulnerable children and families. The Government's commitment to early learning and child care for vulnerable 2 year olds and the Early Years Change Fund provide a real opportunity to do this.

We want to strengthen support for children in early years. This will be achieved by:

- developing more early years services linked to schools e.g. more schools to have a nursery or playgroup;
- developing integrated learning and childcare so parents have access to nursery education and wrap around childcare all year round;
- increasing the availability of affordable childcare, e.g. through the development of Childcare Co-operatives;
- early identification and support for children and families who need extra help;
- support for parents e.g. PEEP groups, Incredible Years, Mellow Parenting;
- strengthening health services particularly health visiting services;
- targeting support to areas of greatest need;
- improving support for early language and literacy; and
- effective transition from early years to school including nursery staff working in Primary 1 and vice versa.

## **Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors, Responsible Citizens**

Schools in Edinburgh already provide a high quality education for their pupils. Educational attainment at Highers and Advanced Highers is in the top quartile for Scotland. This is an especially impressive achievement given the high level of pupils in the independent sector at secondary level. We are ambitious for our educational service and for our pupils. We are determined to improve further from 'good' to 'excellent'.

There is full support for Curriculum for Excellence and its potential to make a real difference to outcomes for children and young people in Scotland. We need to ensure consistent and effective implementation in a way that secures:

- high quality teaching and learning in every classroom;
- a broad and balanced education;
- high standards of educational attainment which are internationally competitive;
- a strong focus on recognising children's wider achievements;
- strengthening support for literacy and numeracy; and
- effective progression and transition from early years through school to post school
- educational outcomes which equip young people for lifelong learning and work.

This will be achieved by:

- increasing confidence of parents and staff in CfE, including effective arrangements for reporting at all stages, arrangements for profiling at P7 and S3, and new national qualifications;
- improving arrangements for effective transition and progression;
- strengthening arrangements for self-evaluation, including monitoring quality of teaching;
- national benchmarks to assess progress in improving outcomes for children, particularly at primary and lower secondary and especially for literacy and numeracy and including 'added value' measures;
- ensuring a shared understanding of standards through effective arrangements for assessment, moderation and reporting to parents;
- strengthening support for staff so there are opportunities for sharing standards and good practice;
- considering delivery of Advanced Higher consortia arrangements, including use of technologies, shared campus model, involvement of universities;
- investing in opportunities for wider achievement including Active Schools, music, sports, outdoor education;
- holding the maximum P1 class size at 25 and seeking to reduce class sizes in line with government recommended actions; and
- improving engagement and communication with parents about Curriculum for Excellence.

## **Improved Life Chances for Children in Need**

We are determined to raise the attainment of the lowest achieving 20% of pupils and narrow the attainment gap between the highest and lowest achieving children. We recognise the important role of special schools. We also want to strengthen support for children with additional support needs, including those with emotional and behavioural

needs, within mainstream schools. We want to reduce the need for children to be excluded from school and reduce the number of children who are absent from schools.

This will be achieved by:

- strengthening support for children and families from pre-birth through childhood, e.g. including Family Nurse Partnership, Prepare, parenting;
- implementing CFE with the focus on personalised learning and skills for life;
- implementing Getting it Right for Every Child with its focus on early identification and intervention, single assessment, single plan and lead professional;
- strengthening the role of lead professional and key worker ensuring sufficient time for continuity of support and effective relationships between lead professional and child and family;
- ensuring that staff have the necessary skills to engage with pupils with emotional and behavioural needs including whole staff training;
- whole system prioritisation to tackle the issue of drug and alcohol misuse in parents and young people;
- strengthening support for children with emotional and behavioural needs in schools e.g. Audit hours, behaviour support teachers, in-school learning units, learning support assistants, nurture programmes, Improving Relationships programme, Growing Confidence, Rights Respecting Schools, Place 2 Be, solution focussed/restorative approaches;
- strengthening joint agency support for schools to meet children's needs e.g. support services working effectively around each school cluster so that each cluster has a social worker, youth worker, school nurse, health worker, welfare officer, psychologist, active schools co-ordinator, and police officers etc
- developing a directory of services in each cluster;
- ensuring a whole Council and joint agency approach to tackle poverty and inequalities in areas of deprivation e.g. Total Place initiative;
- protecting children from the adverse impact of benefits reform;
- strengthening multi-agency arrangement to improve school attendance including appropriate use of prosecution;
- developing more effective partnerships with health, housing, social work, voluntary sector;
- strengthening support for looked after children;
- increasing support for vulnerable children, including help for families so that fewer need to go into care;
- strengthening engagement with and support for parents, especially those who are hardly reached e.g. home school link workers; and
- targeting resources to children and schools in areas of greatest need, including strengthening support for positive action schools.

### **Schools in Challenging Circumstances**

We are determined to maximise our support for schools in challenging circumstances by:

- targeting additional resources to those schools and communities;
- implementing a Total Place approach;
- managing school catchment areas to secure, as far as possible, comprehensive schools

- trial all year provision in areas of the city e.g. through summer/holiday provision including community based activities;
- trialing all year provision in areas of the city and
- trialling family/ vertical groupings in schools as a method of supporting positive behaviour and learning.

### **School Leavers**

We are determined to ensure that all young people in Edinburgh leave school into positive and sustained destinations in education, employment or training. We need to do more to ensure that education meets society's future needs e.g. economic development, skills for lifelong learning, future patterns of employment, and skills required by employers.

This will be achieved by:

- ensuring effective partnership working, particularly in the senior phase, including engagement with further and higher education, community learning and development and employers;
- leadership and resources at a Government and Council level to ensure that school leavers are prioritised for opportunities in further and higher education, employment and training;
- closer links between employers, colleges, universities and schools;
- learning from examples of good practice e.g. Edinburgh Guarantee;
- employers encouraged to support school leavers through jobs, internships, apprenticeships, work experience, mentoring;
- ensuring support for 16+ learning choices are more embedded within schools and across partner organisations; and
- improved information for young people about the opportunities available and for employers about how they can help.

### **Schools at the heart of their communities**

Schools have a key role to play at the heart of their communities. There is significant potential to:

- develop all schools as community schools providing learning opportunities and services for their community;
- develop and strengthen school clusters as the hubs for the delivery of a range of support services (link police officers, social workers, youth work, adult education, parenting, family support, health services, active schools etc);
- provide resources to clusters through DSM to encourage more partnership working;
- open up school facilities and resources for the benefit of their communities (playing fields, sport and leisure facilities, adult education);
- strengthen links between home and school e.g. family link workers, support for parents to achieve qualifications;
- review arrangements and funding for school lets; and
- strengthen community capacity building e.g. Time Bank initiative in West Edinburgh;
- strengthen links between schools and local employers.

## **Leadership**

Strong and effective leadership of schools is key to achieving our vision for schools and improving outcomes for our young people. We already have strong leadership of our schools but there is more that we can do to support our leaders further:

This will be achieved by:

- leadership based on partnership between senior officers centrally and head teachers as senior officers in their communities;
- Investing in effective recruitment and high quality, inspiring professional development;
- ensuring strong networks of support and challenge across schools, including opportunities for staff to move between schools;
- ensuring that leaders have access to work shadowing, coaching and mentoring including external mentors;
- strengthening succession planning for Heads and Deputes;
- ensuring regular and effective appraisals;
- strengthening the self-evaluation in schools based on good practice already in place across the Authority;
- building the capacity of school leaders at all levels; and
- ensuring that management structures support the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence.
- ensuring opportunities for rewarding staff for wider leadership roles;
- ensuring flexibility and career progression opportunities for all staff in schools e.g. learning support assistants, business managers.

## **Professional Development**

Staff are our most important resource and investment in their development is key. We want to strengthen support for development of staff including:

- rotation of head teachers so they serve no longer than five to seven years in a particular school;
- increased opportunities for all staff to move between schools to support wider professional development;
- greater use of para professionals alongside teachers bringing in a range of talent and skills;
- high quality professional development backed by research;
- improving initial training so failing students are not allowed to progress to probation;
- increased opportunities for learning between schools e.g. sharing good practice and developing innovative practice; and
- secondment of staff to work in each other's schools and at the centre.

## **Parental and Pupil Engagement**

We recognise that strong parental and pupil engagement in the life of the school has significant benefits in terms of the quality of education that we provide. We would like to strengthen parental and pupil engagement in schools.



This will be achieved by:

- regular feedback from parents and pupils;
- good quality information for parents and pupils;
- parental and pupil engagement in decision making at school, local and authority level;
- parents encouraged to share their skills with pupils, e.g. skills for work, knowledge about employment ; and
- strengthening arrangements for hardly reached parents and raising their ambitions for their children.

## **Resources**

Everyone understands that resources are constrained. The challenge is for the Council to make the best use of its resources in order to achieve its vision for schools.

There has been significant investment in the school estate over the last decade but there are still schools where there are concerns about the condition or suitability of the building. The Council needs to invest in its school buildings to ensure that, over time, all schools come up to the standards of the best. We will rebuild Portobello, James Gillespie's and Boroughmuir High Schools and continue progress on all other planned school developments while providing adequate investment in the fabric of all schools.

Despite the rising primary roll and the pressure in some primary schools across the city, there are still 5,500 empty school places across the primary estate. We will draw up a long-term strategic plan to tackle both overcrowding and under use in schools. There is a need to promote "local schools for local pupils" so that increasingly parents want to send their child to their local school. Parental expectation needs to be managed as it is clear there will be fewer places in schools for non catchment children in future.

The Council has invested £5m in the ICT refresh for schools. This now needs to be implemented in a way that makes maximum use of this investment and moves Edinburgh schools to the forefront of technological development including:

- ICT infrastructure which is secure and reliable
- more accessible VLE
- strategy in place for support for 1 to 1 technology
- arrangements for sharing best practice
- addressing issues regarding SEEMIS and GLOW
- development of a strategy for post 2016.

In order to make the best use of resources, we will:

- ensure maximum flexibility for Head Teachers to deploy resources to needs
- maintain business support for schools so that Head Teachers and teachers are able to focus on leadership and teaching & learning;
- improve the use of technology for business support e.g. SEEMIS, pupil tracking arrangements, financial systems; and
- strengthen and simplify support arrangements for Head Teachers including HR, property services and ICT.