

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Thursday, 27 April, 2023

South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) Update

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the added value provided through links across the South East Improvement Collaborative.
 - 1.1.2 Note the participation of Edinburgh Schools and staff in a range of SEIC Networks.

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South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) Update

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The following report contains an outline of progress within the South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) with a focus on SEIC work within City of Edinburgh Council. It provides an update of work from August 2022 – March 2023 and identifies next steps.

3. Background

- 3.1 The rationale behind regional collaboration (RICS) continues to be a key element in the evolving future of Scottish Education. The aim of all RICs is to provide support for improvement for leaders, teachers and practitioners through teams of professionals drawn largely from local authorities and schools.

Recent publications have reviewed the progress of RICs since their inception and considered their impact in supporting the education system at all levels, to provide the best possible outcomes for our children and young people.

The establishment of RICs was not about creating new formal bodies, but was about developing different ways of working, bringing together capacity from across an area and beyond, to add value through collective efforts.

- 3.2 The South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) recognises that the accountability for improvement remains with each local authority and that SEIC's role is to provide added value through collaboration.

By working collaboratively at establishment, local authority and regional level, SEIC accelerates progress in agreed priority areas, impacting positively on colleagues working within the region and contributing to improved outcomes for learners. SEIC work takes in account the responsibilities set out in the Education Scotland 'Scottish Attainment Challenge Framework' (March 2022),

for all regional improvement collaboratives, in agreeing priorities and collaborative activities.

The SEIC RIC vision is to work together, to empower colleagues and help improve outcomes across the City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian and Scottish Borders Councils.

A variety of SEIC Networks provide opportunities for collaboration on common areas of focus and need, and the sharing of approaches, ideas and practice. Universal supports are available throughout the session, promoted through local and regional communications and within the SEIC website.

4. Main Report

- 4.1 School and setting staff continue to benefit from a range of opportunities to collaborate to improve practice through the SEIC.
- 4.2 In session 2022-23, collaborative working across the region has focused on two shared priority areas to support improvement: Literacy and Learning Pathways and Positive Destinations. SEIC improvement support comes in the form of a series of bespoke SEIC 'Connector' programmes, enabling collaborative learning with a clear focus on improving outcomes for learners.
- 4.3 SEIC works in partnership with the Education Scotland South East Regional Team, national agencies such as Skills Development Scotland and local authority officers to deliver and quality assure Connector programmes.
- 4.4 The priority areas are actioned through the five elements of the SEIC Empowered System: Research Schools, Learning Schools, Pedagogy Pioneers, SEIC Associates and Improvement through Partnership.
- 4.5 Universal supports are available throughout the session, promoted through local and regional communications and within the SEIC website.
- 4.6 A variety of SEIC Networks provide opportunities for collaboration on common areas of focus and need, and the sharing of approaches, ideas and practice.
- 4.7 All SEIC improvement support programmes are evaluated at the point of delivery and the collective responses received between August 2022 and March 2023 indicate that:
 - 89% agreed the collaborative event was relevant for their context.
 - 79% agreed their knowledge had increased or improved as a result.
 - 70% agreed that they benefitted from opportunities for collaboration.

Following completion of this session's programmes, a final audit will be undertaken and evaluative findings published in the plan for 2023-2024.

- 4.8 City of Edinburgh Schools' engagement is more fully detailed in Appendix 1.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The regional collaborative priority areas for next session have been identified as Literacy P2-P4. Learning Pathways and Positive Destinations.
- 5.2 Schools and settings have applied for connector programmes which support these priorities as well as P1 Play Pedagogy and Research Schools.
- 5.3 Additional Head Teachers will connect with others regionally via HT Trios and staff will share practice and learn from peers via Pedagogy Pioneers.
- 5.4 Applicants are reviewed and endorsed by the Quality Improvement Team and spaces are allocated in April.
- 5.5 An introductory SLT session is delivered, and a baseline audit is conducted in May.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 Funding for the SEIC is external to City of Edinburgh Council and is bid for annually based on the planned interventions for each year. A funding bid is agreed by Directors of Education or Chief Education Officers before being submitted to the Scottish Government.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The SEIC Implementation Group drives the agreed work of the SEIC plan alongside the SEIC team within the contexts of local authorities. It consists of a senior officer from each local authority alongside representatives from the SEIC team and Education Scotland's SEIT. They will drive the work of the new working groups and harness the support of our collaborative networks to deliver improvement.
- 7.2 The SEIC Trade Union Group provides insight into members' views and highlights any potential, or identified, issues being experienced as a result of SEIC work. This group provides advice and support on ways of

communicating key messages and offers of support for the benefit of their members.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [SEIC Regional Improvement Plan 2022-2023](#)
- 8.2 [Review of the Regional Improvement Collaboratives \(\[www.gov.scot\]\(http://www.gov.scot\)\)](#)
- 8.3 [Education Scotland 'Scottish Attainment Challenge Framework' \(March 2022\)](#)
- 8.4 [SEIC website](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – City of Edinburgh Schools' Engagement

Appendix 1 – City of Edinburgh Schools SEIC Engagement

City of Edinburgh has wide representation of engagement within all areas of the SEIC Empowered System from all sectors including special schools and early years. This session 10 Head Teachers are involved in SEIC Trios and 3 are SEIC Associates. A total of 24 schools and settings are involved in a SEIC Connector Programme. Practitioners from 4 schools and settings have delivered peer-to-peer professional learning to staff across the region. Evidence of progress and impacts is collected in multiple forms including participant evaluation, engagement tracking, reporting on school-identified outcomes and case studies.

Head Teacher Forum

The Edinburgh SEIC forum has representation across all sectors and supports communication from the board to schools and vice versa. They have helped evaluate and provide feedback for the next SEIC plan.

Networks

All local authorities are represented on a wide range of SEIC Networks which continue to provide opportunities for collaboration on common areas of focus and need, and the sharing of approaches, ideas and practice.

All SEIC networks are self-sustaining, are not required to directly deliver the SEIC plan but to set their own agenda, pace and areas of focus. Networks collaborate to develop universal professional learning sessions, resources and materials which are then locally tailored as required. They are shared through SEIC Updates on the website, local forums and communication channels.

Empowered System Exemplars

The SEIC Associates network develops specialist knowledge and skills to drive school improvement and build peer capacity through review process. The City of Edinburgh has 3 SEIC Associates who access Quality Improvement support from, and participate in activities with, 40 other regional SEIC Associates. Professional learning is provided to support SEIC Associates to work alongside improvement teams in their own, and other, authorities as part of the quality improvement process. Current evaluations show that 100% of SEIC Associates agree that their knowledge has increased or improved due to involvement in school visits and the training provided to support them in their role. 93% agreed that they benefited from collaboration with peers from across the region.

Pedagogy Pioneers

Pedagogy Pioneers includes authority identified practitioners who share their high-quality practice universally in the South-East through webinars and Question and Answer sessions. In addition, the SEIC Play Pedagogy Connector provides bespoke supports are provided for 5 City of Edinburgh schools, in a cohort of 23 regional schools. Regular connector sessions deliver input based on data gathered in initial audits and evaluations at the end of each connector session. Current data shows that 93% of participants feel the sessions are relevant for their context, 78% feel they have improved their knowledge and skills, and 76% feel taking part is enabling them to benefit from collaboration. Connector Schools visit three identified SEIC Learning Schools, learning from practice and experience of former Play Pedagogy Pioneers. Additionally, 4 universal SEIC professional learning sessions on play pedagogy were delivered.

Research Schools

The whole school practitioner enquiry programme is overseen by a group of local authority QIEOs and led by a team of SEIC Officers in partnership with a University of Edinburgh Lecturer in Educational Leadership, an Education Scotland Professional Learning and Leadership Lead Specialist, General Teaching Council for Scotland senior leaders.

Connector Case Study – Research Schools

During session 2022-2023, St Francis RC Primary School, Longstone Primary School and Fox Covert Early Learning Centre have participated in SEIC Research Schools Connector.

Connector sessions provide 14 schools and settings from all five local authorities with professional learning in the enquiry process, identifying areas for and using data for improvement. Enquiry Leads in each school/setting receive Coaching support from the University of Edinburgh.

Former Research Schools share their experiences and connect with current research schools to support their enquiries. In-Service and Collegiate Activity Time workshops are facilitated by regional officers. Expert guidance is provided by a Professor of Education at the University of Strathclyde.

Research schools are funded and supported by SEIC to embed a culture of professional learning and enquiry to improve outcomes for learners.

The most up to date evaluations from Research Schools sessions indicate that: 90% agree that the content of the connector programme has been relevant, and 83% agree that their knowledge has increased or improved.

Improvement Through Partnerships

The SEIC secondary subject network has 20 curricular based groups with representation from CEC Subject Leads. This year they have been supported to create a Digital Pedagogy walk-through book.

To support online learning and provision for a blended learning approach, SEIC funded practitioners are developing online lessons at senior phase level. A number of our practitioners have provided content, and accessed lessons, which is shared within the West OS partnership website. Data is collated by the SEIC digital board providing both SEIC, and City of Edinburgh, management information.

Connector Case Study – Learning Pathways and Positive Destinations

The Learning Pathways and Positive Destinations Connector Programme is a new programme developed in 2022-23 and is led by SEIC Officers in partnership with an Education Scotland Attainment Advisor, Education Officer and the Curriculum Innovation Team, Skills Development Scotland, SCQF Partnership, DYW and Insight.

Schools are supported to improve outcomes for learners through connector sessions and site visits. Regionally, there are 13 connector schools including Queensferry High School and James Gillespie's High School from the City of Edinburgh.

Craigmount High School have supported the programme this session as a Learning School, sharing their curriculum pathways approach regionally.

Connector Schools and Learning Schools are funded and supported to develop their curriculum offer, improve their balance of or overall positive destinations through collaboration.

On-going feedback gathered from the Connector schools shows that 100% of participants feel the content of learning inputs is relevant to their context. 76% report that their knowledge had increased or improved, whilst 82% agree they are benefitting from collaboration with peers from across the region.

Learning Schools

In City of Edinburgh, 7 schools are in a current cohort of 20 Digital Connector Settings and 4 schools participate in a cohort of 20 Literacy Connector schools.

Recent evaluation responses indicate 91% feel the Digital Connector is relevant for their setting. 82% agree their knowledge has increased or improved and 65% identified collaboration as a benefit.

Connector Case Study – Digital Schools

Corstorphine Primary School was one of 11 primaries and 4 secondaries in the City of Edinburgh who participated in the Digital Schools Connector during session 2021-2022 as part of a cohort of over 50 schools across the region.

Connector sessions were structured to support schools through the five criteria required to achieve the Digital Schools Award Scotland. Connector sessions were led by a Regional QIEO (Digital), Education Scotland National Officer (Digital) and Local Authority Officers. Schools across the region shared examples of excellent practice, providing opportunities for collaboration in achieving the award.

Corstorphine Primary School successfully achieved the Digital Schools Award Scotland in June 2022. In 2023, they became a SEIC Learning School, collaborating and sharing their expertise with a new cohort of five City of Edinburgh and a further 20 regional schools in their Digital Schools Award journey.

Learning Schools and Connector schools are funded and supported by SEIC to empower systems change to improve outcomes for learners.