

Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 8 October 2019

Children and Young People's Participation

Item number
Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
- 1.1.1 Note the progress made on joined-up children and young people's participation, and the planned next steps.
 - 1.1.2 Note the issues raised by children and young people through ongoing participation and approve the progress made to deliver the changes required.
 - 1.1.3 Note the formation of a Children and Young People's Participation Group, which will connect with young people's feedback from Youth Talk, *What kind of Edinburgh?*, schools and youth groups to identify and report on the top issues.
 - 1.1.4 Note the strong focus on involving as yet unheard voices from across disadvantaged groups.
 - 1.1.5 Request a further report on participation and progress relating to the top priorities in six months, to be delivered by children and young people.

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Report

Children and Young People's Participation

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report sets out the progress that has been made since May in developing a more coherent and coordinated approach to engagement with children and young people, and in response to specific areas of concern raised by children and young people via these various engagement activities.

3. Background

- 3.1 The outcome of the *What Kind of Edinburgh?* project was reported to E, C & F Committee in May 2019, presented by some of the young people who took part. Using a rights-based approach (UNCRC article 12), the aim of the project was to embed children and young people's participation in the planning and delivery of services, and to ensure that they felt involved, valued and that their views would be acted upon.
- 3.2 Other activities which are centred on engagement of children and young people also seek to elicit their views in order to influence policy and practice, including Youth Talk, Young Edinburgh Action, Scottish Youth Parliament and #makingadifference. In May, Committee requested that these various activities work together in a more coherent and consistent way, including the possibility of a mechanism that would allow young people to input thoughts to Committee members.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Work is underway to examine how the key messages from *What Kind of Edinburgh?* could be used to form the basis of a new Children's Services Plan. The *What Kind of Edinburgh?* project report has been sent to all schools and senior education staff asking them to consider how they can act on the points raised by the children and young people. Additionally, articles have featured on the Orb, which is viewed by all Council staff, with links to the project report. An article about *What*

Kind of Edinburgh? has featured on the Scottish Government website, and Children in Scotland has prepared a case study.

4.2 A Children and Young People Participation Group has been established and has met three times since May. The membership is drawn from the Council, NHS and other partners. Its purpose is to:

- Co-ordinate children and young people’s participation activities.
- Feedback on the outcomes of children and young people’s participation activities to: Children’s Partnership; politicians; children and young people; staff.
- Seek to influence, and keep under review, authority policy and planning in line with information gathered through Children and Young People’s Participation.

4.3 The group will report progress with its work twice per annum to both the Education, Children and Families Committee and the Children’s Partnership. The intention wherever possible is for children and young people themselves to deliver these reports, outlining how they have participated and what has happened as a result. The work will also link to engagement work taking place in schools as part of Empowering Edinburgh/Edinburgh Learns. The group’s Terms of Reference are appended (see appendix 1). It should be noted that resourcing participation work is a challenge, particularly in the current climate. It is important that where participation raises expectations, there are resources in place to support any changes.

Outcomes of participation activities:

4.4 A great deal of participation work takes place across the department and elsewhere in the Council. A range of examples is set out below, showing how children and young people are participating in their own school, their own communities and across the city, and the differences they are making.

4.5 The **Youth Talk** programme has been rolled out across various communities in Edinburgh and almost 3,000 young people have participated in the process so far. The table below sets out themes which young people have identified and actions which have been taken or are planned in relation to these. The timescale for the delivery of Youth Talk has varied by locality, hence the differing levels of progress in relation to developing and progressing the action:

Area	Outcome/theme	Action to date / Planned action
Queensferry / Kirkliston	Young people feeling isolated as a result of LGBT issues will be better supported and valued in their community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBT Youth Edinburgh to provide training to tertiary staff to better understand issues and isolation; • LGBT Youth Scotland to work with CEC Lifelong Learning to provide dedicated LGBT Youth space/club in Queensferry; • Working with High School to identify further support/information measures

	Young people wish to be involved with more sports-based activity, with gender specific activity;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019 summer programme redesigned to incorporate a mixed ability and wide-ranging sports festival in Kirkliston and Queensferry; • Working with young people to identify potential to develop Girls Football Team (none exist in the area)
Leith	Young people will have reduced access to alcohol and will be more knowledgeable about the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lothian and Borders Police have strong ongoing relationships with local shop licensees • North East Action on Alcohol group has been updated about needs identified through Youth Talk and will be supporting future action
	Young people's online safety will be enhanced through awareness raising in schools and youth clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners will provide online safety awareness raising at all Leith Academy parents' evenings and events during 2019/20 • North East Youth Reporters Project will have a focus on online safety & privacy when using social media. • School based youth work programmes will focus upon online safety
Liberton / Gilmerton	Young people have come together following the 'gathering' and have established a YouthTalk forum to agree themed priorities – action plan to be developed.	<p>Themes identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Gangs, rivalries, territorialism • ASB/Safety • Mental health • Poverty/Homelessness • Discrimination/homophobia • Facilities • Environment/waste • Drugs/alcohol
Wester Hailes	Young people feel safer to go out in their communities.	There will be further work with young people to prioritise how this will be carried out but at the gathering they identified that increased lighting, particularly in parks, and closer relationships with police officers would help.
Clermiston / Drumbrae / Corstorphine	YouthTalk forum established following 'gathering' on last day of term. Forum to agree priorities and action plan to be developed.	<p>Themes identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Activities • Safety • Mental health • Social Media safety • Academic/Employment Support • Politics

- 4.6 Young people have participated fully in the youth work grants programme, **Choose Youth Work** (see *Choose Youth Work, ECFC 21 May 2019*). Through Young Edinburgh Action's annual gathering, young people identified key themes including stress and equal opportunities/fairness. Youth Work providers were then invited to apply for funding for projects to address these themes. Young people decided on priorities, co-designed the application form and questions, and co-assessed applications. A total of £166,000 was allocated through Choose Youth Work. The views of children and young people will continue to play part in funding allocations as applicants under the new revenue grants programme will be asked to refer to key messages from *What kind of Edinburgh?* and *YouthTalk* in their applications.
- 4.7 The Youth Project Fund, which distributes approximately £20,000 per annum for youth work, will be renamed the Youth Participation Fund and will invite applications that are in line with priorities identified by young people. Young people will be involved in designing the application form and assessing applications that are received. This process will be piloted in autumn 2019.
- 4.8 The Health and Wellbeing Team, in partnership with Young Edinburgh Action, consulted with 450 children and young people on what was already happening in schools to support mental health and emotional wellbeing and what could be improved (see *Supporting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-being in Schools, ECFC 21 May 2019*). The feedback was turned into a Top Tips Document for Schools along with complementary Top Tips for Parents/Carers and Top Tips for Children and Young People on how others could better support young people's mental health and wellbeing. The Top Tips documents were launched by young people, schools and staff at the Children's Conference Mental Health & Wellbeing in February. More than 160 staff from schools and other settings took part. The documents have been circulated to all Communities and Families staff with suggestions on how they could be used to raise awareness and improve support for all children and young people. Further work will take place to raise the profile of the feedback across all school clusters.

Some of many examples from schools:

- 4.9 **Juniper Green Primary School** - Data from pupil wellbeing questionnaires (PWQ) is shared with teachers in order for them to base their planning and interventions for the year in Health and Well-Being. Class teachers are able to plan learning for HWB more accurately with the data they receive from PWQ. PWQ results show an increase in children's empathy over a 4-year period although the school is still slightly below the city average for "children in this school are kind to each other" and "I try to help others when things are hard for them". 94% of pupils are happy with who they are at Juniper Green and 93.5% of them can choose how they behave, both results confirming that the new behaviour policy is working and making a difference.
- 4.10 After feedback from children, Pupil Voice changed this session and the school now uses Bingo Balls at assembly to choose two smaller groups to meet with two class teachers weekly using 'Wee How Good Is OUR School' (the children's version of

the self-evaluation tool) to focus the self-evaluation around. Children appreciate being in the smaller groups and having their views heard. The school is able to monitor more effectively changes that we have implemented in school.

- 4.11 **Dalry Primary School** – there are strong partnerships with Active Schools, volunteers, school staff and third sector organisations. The Senior Development officer speaks to pupils not accessing wider achievement clubs or activities (and their parents/carers) and identifies the interests of the pupil and then works with school staff and with external agencies and third sector partners to enable the child to attend a relevant activity/group. On the school website, the school advertises the wide range of wider achievement opportunities and indicates where these have been offered as a response to pupil requests. Also, if pupils request specific clubs/activities that the school doesn't currently offer, the school advertises this on their website and asks for parents and members of the local community to get in touch to see if partnerships can be established to enable these activities to be offered to pupils. The number of pupils accessing opportunities for wider achievements has increased by 22% to 85% of all pupils. The number of pupils in SIMD 1 and 2 who are not accessing an opportunity has decreased from 9% to 5%. All pupils in SIMD bands 1 and 2 have been offered opportunities through the work of the SDO.
- 4.12 **Tynecastle High School** is the first school in Scotland to allocate 10% of Pupil Equity Funding to students, allowing them to decide how this funding will be spent. The school recently celebrated the unveiling of the big vote by inviting councillors, parents, and colleagues from City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Government to join our Student Steering Group in school. The importance of this innovative approach to engage students in decision-making attracted the attention of the media and featured in an STV news report.
- 4.13 The **Rights Respecting Schools Award** encourages schools to place the UNCRC at the heart of their ethos and curricula, modelling rights and respect in all relationships. Staff create an environment that is conducive to participation and opportunities are provided for all children to become involved in decision-making in different contexts, including in governing bodies, staff appointments, curriculum planning and evaluating teaching and learning. Children and young people are supported to get involved and the impact of participation on policy development and outcomes for children is reviewed. Currently 53 primary schools are accredited (7 at gold, 15 at silver and 31 at bronze) and 16 are registered; 15 secondary schools are accredited (2 at gold, 3 at silver and 10 at bronze) and 4 are registered; and 8 special schools are accredited (1 at gold, 2 at silver and 5 at bronze).

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The key messages from *What kind of Edinburgh?* will feature in the development of the forthcoming Children's Services Plan 2020-2023.
- 5.2 The Participation Group will report to Committee twice each year, involving children and young people in the delivery of reports where possible. The group will also work with Communications to consider appropriate mechanisms to allow children

and young people to input thoughts to Committee members. It should be noted, however, that participation work of this kind may raise expectations, especially of young people. Where this is the case, it is important that, where required, there are resources available to support any changes that are agreed.

6. Financial impact

6.1 There are no known financial impacts at this point.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

7.1 This report is specifically concerned with ensuring that children and young people's views and experiences are sought out and that their voices are listened to across the services that the department provides.

7.2 There are no health and safety, governance, compliance or regulatory implications.

7.3 There are no carbon impacts or impacts on climate change and sustainable development.

8. Background reading/external references

8.1 What Kind of Edinburgh? E, C & F Committee 21 May 2019.

8.2 Choose Youth Work, E, C & F Committee 21 May 2019.

8.3 Supporting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-being in Schools, E, C & F Committee 21 May 2019.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 Empowering Edinburgh: Children and Young People Participation Group Terms of Reference.

EMPOWERING EDINBURGH

Children and Young People Participation Group

Terms of Reference

August 2019 and revised annually

Purpose of Strategic Group

- To coordinate children and young people's participation activities.
- To feedback on the outcomes of children and young people's participation activities to: Children's Partnership; politicians; children and young people; staff.
- To seek to influence, and keep under review, authority policy and planning in line with information gathered through Children and Young People's Participation.

Core Themes

- To support strategic and locality teams to develop coordinated, consistent, appropriate and high-quality processes for children and young people's participation (Youth Talk, What Kind of Edinburgh?, Young Edinburgh Action, Scottish Youth Parliament, #makingadifference).
- To share important messages that emerge from participation activities.
- To report progress to other strategic groups, in particular
 - Children's Partnership
 - Edinburgh Learns
- To consider evidence as appropriate from young people's representatives, engagement activities, schools, inspections, local authority reviews, Leadership Learning Partnerships and use this evidence for the benefit of all partners.
- To review regularly all information gathered, analyse and track to work already underway or to make suggestions for work which needs to take place, particularly:
 - What could be implemented relatively quickly and easily?
 - What would need to be explored further?
 - What could connect with work that is already planned or underway?
 - What would be unrealistic or unachievable at present?
- To target our activities around the priorities in the Children's Services Plan, which are currently:
 - Best start in life
 - Attendance and attainment

- Health and wellbeing
- Equity
- Empowerment
- To audit professional learning needs and make suggestions for any additions or amendments to the current arrangements.

Membership of Group

Accountability & Governance

- Report to be prepared twice per year to Education, Children and Families Committee.

Role of Group members

- Be aware and informed of national policy;
- Reflect the views of colleagues and peers;
- Support the communication of key messages;
- Consider the impact of new information, research, policy and guidance on their work;
- Analyse data and agree next steps;
- Support preparation of reports to Education, Children and Families Committee;
- Develop coherence with policy and planning from other service areas;
- Be a champion for the voice of young people.

Timeline of Activities for Strategic Group

Annual schedule to include five themed meetings based on the strategic outcomes in the Children's Services Plan:

Theme 1 – Health and Wellbeing ('really listen to children and young people' – 'What kind of Edinburgh' key message)

Theme 2 – Attendance and Attainment ('poverty shouldn't hold us back' – 'What kind of Edinburgh' key message)

Theme 3 –

Theme 4 –

Theme 5 -