

## Notice of Meeting and Agenda

### Education and Children's Services Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 18 January 2024	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

MARK CONAGHAN  
Head of Corporate Governance

### Membership

Councillor Emma Rodden (Convener): Councillor Jim Paterson (Depute Convener):

Ms Mary Jane Bird: Mr Jack Nellaney: Mr Ravinder Singh: Councillor Jennifer Adam:  
Councillor Fiona Airlie-Nicolson: Provost Lorraine Cameron: Councillor Carolann Davidson:  
Councillor Audrey Doig: Councillor Edward Grady: Councillor Gillian Graham: Councillor Anne  
Hannigan: Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes: Councillor Alec Leishman: Councillor David  
McGonigle: Councillor Iain McMillan: Councillor Will Mylet: Councillor Iain Nicolson: Councillor  
Ben Smith:

### Hybrid Meeting

Please note that this meeting is scheduled to be held in the Council Chambers. However, it is a hybrid meeting and arrangements have been made for members to join the meeting remotely should they wish.

### Further Information

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

A copy of the agenda and reports for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the Customer Service Centre, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley and online at <http://renfrewshire.cmis.uk.com/renfrewshire/CouncilandBoards.aspx>

For further information, please email  
[democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

## **Members of the Press and Public**

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## **Webcasting of Meeting**

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<https://renfrewshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

## Items of business

### Apologies

Apologies from members.

### Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

Members are asked to declare an interest or make a transparency statement in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest or the transparency statement.

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|----------|--|------------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring as at 10 November 2023</b>  | <b>5 - 11</b>    |
|          | Joint report by the Directors of Finance & Resources and Children's Services.                                |                  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Roll Projection Update</b>  | <b>12 - 16</b>   |
|          | Report by Director of Children's Services.   |                  |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Catchment Consultation Dargavel Primary School</b>  | <b>17 - 52</b>   |
|          | Report be the Director of Children's Services.   |                  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Dargavel Non Denomination Primary School Demand: Assessment of Options for Additional Future Capacity</b> | <b>53 - 58</b>   |
|          | Report by the Director of Children's Services.   |                  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Education Scotland Inspection Bishopton Primary School</b>  | <b>59 - 64</b>   |
|          | Report by the Director of Children's Services.   |                  |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Whole Family Wellbeing Update</b>   | <b>65 - 70</b>   |
|          | Report by the Director of Children's Services.   |                  |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Annual Report of the Fostering and Adoption Service 2022/23</b>   | <b>71 - 96</b>   |
|          | Report by the Director of Children's Services.   |                  |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Scottish Child Interview Model and Bairns Hoose Pathfinder Update</b>                                     | <b>97 - 102</b>  |
|          | Report by the Director of Children's Services.   |                  |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together – Progress Report</b>   | <b>103 - 107</b> |
|          | Report by the Director of Children's Services.   |                  |

## **10      Acronyms Glossary**

**108 - 114**

A list of frequently used acronyms found in reports to the Education & Children's Services Policy Board - for information.




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**To:** Education and Children's Services Policy Board

**On:** 18 January 2024

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**Report by:** Director of Finance and Resources,  
Director of Children's Services

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**Heading:** Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring as at 10 November 2023

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## 1. Summary of Financial Position

- 1.1. The projected Revenue outturn at 31 March 2024 for Children's Services is an overspend of £2.074m (0.8%) against the revised budget for the year.
- 1.2. The projected Capital outturn at 31 March 2024 for Children's Services is an underspend of £0.143m (2.3%).
- 1.3. This is summarised over the relevant service in the table below and further analysis is provided in the Appendices.

**Table 1: Revenue**

Division	Revised Annual Budget £m	Projected Outturn £m	Budget Variance £m	Budget Variance %
Children's Services	246.964	249.038	(2.074)	(0.8%)

**Table 2: Capital**

Division	Revised Annual Budget £m	Projected Outturn £m	Budget Variance £m	Budget Variance %
Children's Services	6.086	5.943	0.143	2.3%

## 2. Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- 2.1. Note the projected Revenue outturn position for Children's Services detailed in Table 1 above, and further note that the forecast position is based on best estimates and confirmed government support at this point in time;

- 2.2. Note the projected Capital outturn position for Children's Services detailed in Table 2 above; and
- 2.3. Note the budget adjustments detailed in sections 4 and 6.

### **3. Children's Services Revenue**

- 3.1. The Revenue Budget Monitoring report at Appendix 1 identifies a projected annual overspend of £2.074m (0.8% of total budget). Detailed service division reports can be found in Appendix 2, along with an explanation of each significant projected variance.
- 3.2. The main reasons for the projected outturn position are indicated below the table showing the objective analysis (which division is spending the budget).
- 3.3. A £2.505m overspend is anticipated within Children & Families mainly related to external specialised residential accommodation placements. An additional £2m was provided for in the 2023/24 budget, with an "expectation that up to a further £3m may be required to be funded from ringfenced balances in 2023/24".
- 3.4. All external placements are held under continual review by the service to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the individual children and young people. Options to mitigate cost pressures continue to be examined. The financial position will be closely monitored and reported as the year progresses.
- 3.5. Further overspends are anticipated in relation to contracted mainstream and additional support needs transport costs.

### **4. Revenue Budget Adjustments**

- 4.1. Members are requested to note from Appendix 1 that budget adjustments totalling £1.506m have been processed since the previous report. These adjustments mainly relate to drawdowns from reserves for Attainment Challenge (£0.400m) and Ukrainian pupil support (£1.001m), and to transfers from other services in relation to the Renfrewshire Alcohol & Drugs Commission and Hearty Lives Renfrewshire (£0.115m) offset by budget transfers to other services (£0.050m).

### **5. Children's Services Capital**

- 5.1. The Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28 was approved by the Council on 2 March 2023.
- 5.2. The Capital Monitoring report at Appendix 3 indicates a revised budget in the capital programme for Education and Children's Services of £6.086m.
- 5.3. The projected Capital outturn at 31 March 2024 for Children's Services is an underspend of £0.143m (2.3%). Further detail, including reasons for significant variances, can be found at Appendix 3.

## **6. Capital Budget Adjustments**

- 6.1. Since the last report there have been budget changes of (£0.490m). This relates to the reprofiling of spend into 2024/25 for the Paisley Grammar School New Campus project.
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### **Implications of this report**

#### **1. Financial**

The projected budget outturn position for Children's Services' Revenue budget is an overspend of £2.073m. Income and expenditure will continue to be monitored closely for the rest of the financial year and steps will be taken to mitigate any overspend, including applying flexibility within specific grant funding as permitted by the Scottish Government, and potential use of earmarked reserves.

The projected outturn position for Children's Services' Capital budget is an underspend of £0.143m. The Capital programme will continue to be monitored closely for the rest of the financial year.

#### **2. HR and Organisational Development**

None directly arising from this report.

#### **3. Community/Council Planning**

None directly arising from this report.

#### **4. Legal**

None directly arising from this report.

#### **5. Property/Assets**

None directly arising from this report.

#### **6. Information Technology**

None directly arising from this report.

#### **7. Equality and Human Rights**

The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

- 8. Health and Safety**  
None directly arising from this report.
- 9. Procurement**  
None directly arising from this report.
- 10. Risk**  
The potential risk that the Council will overspend its approved budgets for the year will be managed at a Council-wide level by the Chief Executive and Directors.
- 11. Privacy Impact**  
None directly arising from this report.
- 12. CoSLA Policy Position**  
n/a
- 13. Climate Risk**  
None directly arising from this report.

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**List of Background Papers: None**

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**RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24**  
**1 April 2023 to 10 November 2023**

**POLICY BOARD : EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Subjective Summary	Annual Budget at Period 6	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget at Period 8	Projected Outturn	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable		Previous Projected Outturn Variance	Movement
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%	£000	£000
Employees	174,639	2,442	177,081	174,392	2,689	1.5%	2,630	59
Premises Related	8,897	(4)	8,893	9,395	(502)	(5.6%)	(478)	(23)
Transport Related	4,590	0	4,590	6,236	(1,646)	(35.9%)	(1,659)	13
Supplies and Services	31,882	(754)	31,128	31,021	107	0.3%	434	(327)
Third Party Payments	15,198	0	15,198	18,665	(3,467)	(22.8%)	(4,012)	546
Transfer Payments	15,567	38	15,605	15,737	(132)	(0.8%)	(400)	268
Support Services	64	0	64	62	3	3.9%	11	(9)
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>250,837</b>	<b>1,722</b>	<b>252,559</b>	<b>255,507</b>	<b>(2,948)</b>	<b>(1.2%)</b>	<b>(3,474)</b>	<b>526</b>
Income	(5,379)	(216)	(5,595)	(6,470)	875	15.6%	997	(122)
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>245,458</b>	<b>1,506</b>	<b>246,964</b>	<b>249,038</b>	<b>(2,074)</b>	<b>(0.8%)</b>	<b>(2,477)</b>	<b>404</b>

**RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**  
**REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24**  
**1 April 2023 to 10 November 2023**

**POLICY BOARD : EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Objective Summary	Annual Budget at Period 6	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget at Period 8	Projected Outturn	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable		Previous Projected Outturn Variance	Movement
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%	£000	£000
Directorate	480	0	480	395	85	17.6%	99	(14)
Early learning and childcare	34,547	(37)	34,510	32,894	1,616	4.7%	1,345	271
Primary	63,785	172	63,957	63,920	37	0.1%	17	20
Secondary	86,780	621	87,401	87,992	(591)	(0.7%)	(546)	(45)
ASN (Special) Schools	7,016	(146)	6,870	6,799	71	1.0%	49	22
Additional support for learning (ASL)	16,254	638	16,892	17,642	(750)	(4.4%)	(750)	(0)
Psychological services	836	0	836	936	(100)	(12.0%)	(60)	(40)
Education development	2,254	(89)	2,165	2,165	0	0.0%	0	0
Attainment Challenge	(1,182)	364	(818)	(818)	0	0.0%	0	0
Facilities management	620	(16)	604	541	63	10.4%	6	57
Children & Families	34,068	(1)	34,067	36,572	(2,505)	(7.4%)	(2,637)	132
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>245,458</b>	<b>1,506</b>	<b>246,964</b>	<b>249,038</b>	<b>(2,074)</b>	<b>(0.8%)</b>	<b>(2,477)</b>	<b>403</b>

Objective Heading	Key Reasons for Projected Variance
Early Learning and Childcare	An underspend in Employee Costs is projected due to vacancies within the authority's Early Learning & Childcare Centres. This underspend is offset by a projected overspend in Transfer Payments in relation to an increase in the rate paid to funded providers (private and voluntary sector nurseries and childminders).
Secondary Schools	Overspends in Premises Costs and Transport Costs are projected. The overspend in Premises Costs is due to an expected increase in refuse collection and janitorial supplies costs. The overspend in Transport is due to an increase in the cost of the mainstream school transport contract. These overspends are partly offset by a projected underspend within Employee Costs mainly in relation to teachers' salary costs. These will be kept under review during the year.
Additional Support for Learning	An overspend in Transport Costs is projected. This is due to increases in the cost of transport contracts for pupils with additional support needs.
Children & Families	An overspend in Third Party Payments is projected, mainly in relation to external residential accommodation placements, where the number of complex, expensive packages has increased significantly. All external placements are held under continual review by the service, with options to mitigate cost pressure being examined on an ongoing basis. The Third Party Payments projection also includes additional costs (net of associated grant income) resulting from the introduction by the Scottish Government of a national recommended maintenance allowance for foster carers and kinship carers.

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL  
CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY - NON-HOUSING SERVICES  
1st April to 10th November 2023  
POLICY BOARD: EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Project Title	Prior Years Expenditure to 31/03/2023 £000	Current Year 2023-24						Full Programme - All years			
		Annual Budget at P6 2023-24 £000	Budget Adjustments £000	Revised Budget 2023-24 £000	Projected Outturn 2023-24 £000	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable		Total Approved Budget to 31-Mar-27 £000	Projected Outturn to 31-Mar-27 £000	Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable	
<b>EDUCATION &amp; CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>											
Early Years 1,140 Hours Expansion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
Primary Schools Estate Programme(SEMP)	10,421	203	0	203	60	143	70%	10,623	10,481	142	1%
Paisley Grammar New Campus	4,819	2,290	(490)	1,800	1,800	0	0%	75,100	75,100	0	0%
Thorn PS New Build	13	250	0	250	250	0	0%	10,000	10,000	0	0%
Dargavel Extension (Modular Units)	0	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	0%	2,000	2,000	0	0%
Other Schools Investment Programmes	23,569	1,407	0	1,407	1,407	0	0%	25,101	25,101	0	0%
Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces Programme	0	100	0	100	100	0	0%	100	100	0	0%
Technology Replacement Strategy ICT	0	326	0	326	326	0	0%	1,926	1,926	0	0%
<b>TOTAL EDUCATION &amp; CHILDREN'S SERVICES BOARD</b>	<b>38,822</b>	<b>6,576</b>	<b>(490)</b>	<b>6,086</b>	<b>5,943</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>124,850</b>	<b>124,708</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>0%</b>

\*Rolling programmes have a prior year year expenditure of £0 as the expenditure is not directly linked from one year to the next as a singular project.

Objective Heading	Key Reasons for Projected Variance
Primary Schools Estate Programme(SEMP)	Minor underspends relate to St Fergus new build and St Anthony refurbishment.




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**To:** Education and Children's Services Policy Board

**On:** 18 January 2024

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**Report by:** Director of Children's Services

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**Heading:** Roll Projection Update

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 To support long term planning and future decision making in terms of education provision relating to the Dargavel development, the Council commissioned a specialist data analytics company, Edge Analytics, to carry out a 10-year roll projection exercise for all schools affected.
  - 1.2 The output of this exercise was provided in February 2023, which provided a basis for decisions to be made on both a new 800 pupil primary school in Dargavel as well as an extension to Park Mains High School.
  - 1.3 The exercise provided different scenarios, and Officers have been planning for these.
  - 1.4 The 10-year projection indicated a year-on-year increase in pupil roll. To understand whether this trend might be reasonably expected to continue, level off, or drop off, which would then inform any future options, Edge Analytics were asked to extend their projections for a further five-year period to 2038.
  - 1.5 This extended exercise shows a peak in 2033/34 for primary provision but a year-on year fall in roll thereafter i.e., there is a spike then a drop off. For secondary, the roll peaks in 2034/35 then falls thereafter.
  - 1.6 The further ahead we project the less reliable the exact figures are, but the overall trend/curve can reasonably be used for the purpose of planning ahead.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board are asked to:
  - Note that the 15-year roll projection exercise carried out by Edge Analytics illustrates that the demand for non-denominational primary provision will peak in 2033/34 and will fall year-on-year thereafter.

- Note that the 15-year roll projection exercise carried out by Edge Analytics illustrates that the demand for non-denominational secondary provision will peak in 2034/35 and will fall year-on-year thereafter.
- Note that all roll projection data with an extended timeline must be treated with a degree of caution and that the data will continue to be closely monitored.
- Note that a further update will be brought back to Board on the roll projection exercise for the whole learning estate.

### 3. Background

#### Primary Provision

3.1 Edge Analytics provided three scenarios for non-denominational primary provision:

1. Projection of 1131 by 2033, derived from their tried and tested model used extensively across the UK
2. Adjusted projection of 1399 by 2033, based on a 2023/24 P1 intake of 140
3. Adjusted projection of 1500 by 2033, based on a 2023/24 P1 intake of 150

Scenario		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
1	Edge Analytics Standard Model	573	666	773	861	960	1,017	1,064	1,096	1,121	1,125	1,131
2	Adjusted Edge Analytics Standard Model based on a P1 intake of 140	604	729	872	996	1,133	1,229	1,314	1,353	1,385	1,391	1,399
3	Adjusted Edge Analytics Standard Model based on a P1 intake of 150	614	750	906	1,043	1,195	1,305	1,405	1,448	1,483	1,490	1,500

3.2 This Board agreed in March 2023 to base future planning on the 1131 figure, on the basis that the higher figures were extrapolated from only one year of P1 intake data and were not consistent with the tried-and-tested modelling used by Edge for similar sized developments across the UK. While it was noted that these higher figures should be treated with caution, it was also recognised that they also provide for a potential maximum scenario.

#### Secondary Provision

3.3 Edge Analytics provided two scenarios for Park Mains High School:

1. projection of 2134 by 2033, derived from their tried and tested model used extensively across the UK; and
2. adjusted projection of 1923 by 2033, based on a 2023/24 S1 intake of 260.

Scenario		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
1	Edge Analytics Standard Model	1,480	1,531	1,589	1,640	1,686	1,732	1,802	1,903	1,985	2,072	2,134
2	Adjusted Edge Analytics Standard Model based on a S1 intake of 260	1,453	1,476	1,505	1,524	1,543	1,568	1,629	1,718	1,791	1,868	1,923

3.4 It is important to note that the roll projection for Park Mains High School includes all pupils who could potentially attend the school including those attending via placing requests. Therefore, to protect the capacity, the Council will manage the requirements of the catchment only which will mean a reduction in the number of placing requests. The detail of this can be found in the August 23 Board report [Education Provision Aug 2023](#)

3.5 The 10-year projections for both primary and secondary indicated a year-on-year increase in pupil rolls.

#### 4. Longer Term Roll Projection

4.1 To provide further evidence to support long-term investment decisions, Edge Analytics were asked to extend their modelling exercise out over a 15-year period, to 2038.

4.2 The pupil projections and scenarios were derived using the latest and best available data at this point in time, informed by key assumptions on future births, migration and the impact of planned housing.

##### Primary provision: non-denominational

Scenario		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	2036-37	2037-38	2038-39
1	Standard Edge Analytics Model	573	666	773	861	960	1,017	1,064	1,096	1,121	1,125	1,131	1,095	1,063	1,035	1,013	995
2	Adjusted Edge Analytics model based on P1 intake Of 140	604	729	872	996	1,133	1,229	1,314	1,353	1,385	1,391	1,399	1,356	1,318	1,284	1,257	1,235
3	Adjusted Edge Analytics model based on P1 intake Of 150	614	750	906	1,043	1,195	1,305	1,405	1,448	1,483	1,490	1,500	1,454	1,412	1,377	1,347	1,324

##### Secondary provision: Park Mains High School

Scenario	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	33/34	34/35	35/36	36/37	37/38	38/39
Standard Edge Analytics Model	1,531	1,589	1,640	1,686	1,732	1,802	1,903	1,985	2,072	2,134	2,159	2,150	2,117	2,087	2,048
Adjusted Edge Analytics model based on S1 intake of 260, 2023	1,476	1,505	1,524	1,543	1,568	1,629	1,718	1,791	1,868	1,923	1,944	1,935	1,904	1,876	1,841

4.3 It is important to note that both scenarios above also include an element of assumed continuation for children who do not come from the 'feeder' primary schools (placing requests and those from denominational primary schools in the area). This represents 160 pupils and is recognised as discretionary provision of places that, if required, can be managed out the system over a number of years to protect the long-term availability of capacity for feeder primary schools – the projections excluding this additionality are outlined in

the table below. Adjusting for this 160 pupil additionality, the Edge projection over the next 15 year period indicates that in 2038/39, demand is projected to less than the 2000 capacity, and comfortably less if the current confirmed live data variation continues as a trend over the medium term.

Scenario	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	33/34	34/35	35/36	36/37	37/38	38/39
Standard Edge model excluding placing requests	1,371	1,429	1,480	1,526	1,572	1,642	1,743	1,825	1,912	1,974	1,999	1,990	1,957	1,927	1,888
Adjusted model excluding placing requests	1,316	1,345	1,364	1,383	1,408	1,469	1,558	1,631	1,708	1,763	1,784	1,775	1,744	1,716	1,681

- 4.4 The data from this further exercise for both Primary and Secondary provision illustrates that school rolls will peak then start to fall again in future years.
- 4.5 For the purposes of long-term planning, it is helpful to have the knowledge that demand is likely to peak then drop off.
- 4.6 The further ahead we project the less reliable the exact figures are, but the overall trend/curve can reasonably be used for the purpose of planning ahead.
- 4.7 As previously advised, actual admissions data over time will be closely monitored to better understand whether a trend is developing, and to allow sufficient time to plan ahead in order to manage any potential higher peak. Also on the agenda for this Board is a separate report on future options.
- 4.8 To inform future strategic planning across the whole learning estate, we have commissioned Edge to undertake roll projection exercises across all 61 of our schools. The results of this widescale exercise will be brought back to a future Board.

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## Implications of this report

1. **Financial**  
None.
2. **HR and Organisational Development**  
None.
3. **Community/Council Planning**  
None.
4. **Legal**  
None.
5. **Property/Assets**  
None.
6. **Information Technology**  
None.

**7. Equality and Human Rights**

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

**8. Health and Safety**

None.

**9. Procurement**

None.

**10. Risk**

None.

**11. Privacy Impact**

None.

**12. Cosla Policy Position**

None.

**13. Climate Risk**

None.

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**List of Background Papers**

None.

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*Children's Services*

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**To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board**

**On: 18 January 2024**

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**Report by: Director of Children's Services**

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**Heading: Proposal to Consult on:**

- **establishment of a new primary school to be built at Dargavel Village and**
- **a Catchment Review Affecting Dargavel Primary School and a new primary school to be built at Dargavel Village**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, this report seeks approval to consult on the establishment of a new school within Dargavel Village.
  - 1.2 The report seeks approval for consultation on the site of the proposed new building to be an 8.5 acre site at the north end of Craigton Drive and approval to consult on revised catchment areas for the existing Dargavel primary school and the proposed new school.
  - 1.3 Subject to approval by the Education and Children's Services Policy Board to proceed with this proposal and subject to the outcome of the consultation, it is anticipated that any new school will be constructed by 2027. Revised catchment areas would take effect on completion of construction.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Services Policy Board is asked to:
  - authorise the Director of Children's Services to undertake a consultation, in line with the procedure required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, on the basis of the proposal paper set out in appendix 1;
  - authorise the Director of Children's Services, or another appropriate officer nominated by her, to take such action as is required to carry that consultation through to completion, in accordance with the legal requirements;

- note that provision for denominational pupils within Dargavel Village will remain unchanged, within the St John Bosco Primary School catchment;
- note that the catchment secondary school will be Park Mains High School
- note that it is anticipated that a report on the outcome of the consultation will be submitted to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.

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### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act") makes provision for the consultation process that is to apply regarding various proposals made by Councils for schools. The principal purpose of the 2010 Act is to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools. These consultation processes are expected to be robust, open, transparent, and fair, and seen to be so. They are also expected to be consistent across Scotland. The 2010 Act applies to a wide range of changes to the school estate, referred to as "relevant proposals".
- 3.2 This report seeks approval to consult on the proposal to deliver a new non-denominational primary school within Dargavel Village and to revise catchment arrangements between Dargavel Primary School and the new school. The Report notes that the catchment primary school for all denominational pupils in Dargavel Village will remain St John Bosco Primary School. In accordance with Section 2 and Schedule 1, Para. 2 and 4 of the 2010 Act a proposal to establish a new school and a proposal to vary any admission arrangements for a school, including altering or establishing the catchment area of a school, is a relevant proposal for the purposes of the 2010 Act, therefore the proposal outlined above is subject to the 2010 Act.
- 3.3 The consultation will include the options officers have considered when developing the proposal for a new primary school. This includes identifying operational capacity and potential locations for a new school. It also includes consideration of the impact of increasing primary school provision on the catchment high school Park Mains High School.

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### **4. Summary**

- 4.1 This report lays out the consultation procedures required to take forward the proposal as outlined above in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, amended through the enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

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### **5. Procedures**

- 5.1 The procedures for consultation relating to this proposal are:
- a proposal paper has been prepared (Appendix 1) which:

- a) sets out the details of the proposal to establish a new primary school to be built at Dargavel Village; and to create a catchment area for that school and revise catchment arrangements for Dargavel Primary;
- b) proposes a date for implementation of the proposal;
- c) contains the educational benefits statement in respect of the proposal;
- d) sets out the information in support of, or relevant to, the proposal.

Copies of the document will be issued to a list of statutory consultees, who include:

- the parent Council of the affected schools: Dargavel Primary School; Bishopton Primary School and St John Bosco Primary School;
- the parents of the pupils at the schools identified above;
- the parents of any children who would be likely to become pupils at the affected schools or expected by Renfrewshire Council to attend any affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of the proposal paper;
- the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school;
- any trade union which appears to the education authority to be representative of the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school;
- elected members of wards affected by the consultation proposal;
- the community Council
- the community planning partnership for the area of the local authority in which any affected school is situated and any other community planning partnership that the education authority considers relevant;
- any other community groups using any of the affected schools.

## 5.2 It is proposed that:

- An advertisement will be prepared notifying the public and inviting written comment from individuals or organisations outlining the proposal and the recommendations and stating that full details can be obtained from establishments affected. The advert will be published in the Paisley Daily Express and the Renfrewshire Gazette
- The report will be available for inspection at all reasonable times and without charge at Renfrewshire House and on the Council website and at all affected schools and all public libraries.
- The consultation should commence no later than 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and, in line with statutory requirement of a period of at least 6 weeks, to include 30 days when the school is open to all pupils, will run until 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024.
- A public meeting will be held at Dargavel Primary School at 7pm on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 to allow the proposal to be discussed and oral representations to be considered.
- Written representation should be made to Gerry Lyons, Interim Head of Education, Renfrewshire Council, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street,

- 5.3 Copies of the proposal report and all written representations and comments received will be forwarded to Education Scotland who will consider the papers and prepare a report which will be sent to the education authority.
- 5.4 A consultation response report including a summary of all written submissions from all bodies and the report from Education Scotland will then be published by children's services in advance of any Council decision. The report will include a statement of the authority's responses to any issues raised by representations received or by the report from Education Scotland. The consultation response report will be available for inspection at all reasonable times and without charge at Renfrewshire House and on the Council website and at all affected schools and all public libraries.
- 5.5 The Council may not decide to implement, or implement, the proposal until three weeks after the date of publication of the consultation report.
- 5.6 The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, amended through the enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 does not require referral to Scottish ministers in cases other than closure of schools.
- 5.7 The final recommendation considering the results of the consultative process will be presented to a meeting of the Education and Children's Services policy board on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.
- 5.8 Appendix 1 is the proposal paper produced by the Council in accordance with the terms of Sections 1 and 4 of the 2010 Act.

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## **6 Correction of the proposal paper**

- 6.1 Where, during the consultation period, the Council has been notified of an alleged omission of relevant information from a proposal paper or an alleged inaccuracy in a proposal paper the Council must proceed as follows:
  - a) determine if relevant information has (in its opinion) been omitted and whether there is (in fact) an inaccuracy;
  - b) inform the notifier of its determination under paragraph (a), and the reasons for that determination;
  - c) inform the notifier as to the action (if any) it is taking and of the reasons why it is, or is not, taking such action; and
  - d) invite the notifier to make representations to the Council if the notifier disagrees with the Council's determination under paragraph (a) or its decision as to whether to take action.
- 6.2 Where the notifier disagrees with the Council's determination under paragraph (a) or its decision as to whether to take action and makes representations about that, the Council may make a fresh determination or make a fresh decision as to whether to take action. The Council must inform the notifier if it does so.

- 6.3 If the Council determines that relevant information has been omitted from, or there is an inaccuracy in, the proposal paper, related to a material consideration relevant to the Council's decision as to implementation of the proposal, it must:
- (i) publish a corrected proposal paper,
  - (ii) give revised notice to the statutory consultees and
  - (iii) send a copy of the corrected paper to Education Scotland, or
  - (iv) issue a notice to the relevant consultees and Education Scotland providing the omitted information or correcting the inaccuracy, and, if the Council considers it appropriate, extending the consultation period by such period as is reasonable by reference to the significance of the information provided or the nature of the correction.
- 6.4 Where the information that has been omitted or the inaccuracy does not relate to a material consideration, the Council may, but is not obliged to, take steps (i)-(iii) or (iv) described above, and may also take no further action, except to report the inaccuracy/omission as required by the 2010 Act in the consultation report, which is referred to in more detail below.
- 6.5 If the Council issues the notices providing the omitted information or correcting the inaccuracy after the end of the consultation period, the notice may specify a further period during which representations may be made on the proposal.
- 

## **7 Consultation arrangements**

- 7.1 As confirmed above, the present proposal is a relevant proposal for the purposes of the 2010 Act, and therefore the Council will adhere to the consultation process in the 2010 Act.
- 7.2 The proposal paper attached to this report as Appendix 1, provides background information to the catchment review. It details the proposal and indicates a timeframe for implementation should the proposal be approved.
- 7.3 The proposal paper also includes the Council's Educational Benefits Statement.
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## **8 Involvement of Education Scotland**

- 8.1 A copy of this proposal has been sent to Education Scotland.
- 8.2 At the end of the formal consultation period Children's Services will send Education Scotland the following:
- a) a copy of all relevant written representations that are received from any person during the consultation period;
  - b) a summary of any oral representations made by any person during the public meeting;

- c) a copy of any other relevant documentation, as available and so far, as practicable.
  - 8.3 Education Scotland will provide the Council with a report on the educational aspects of this proposal. This report will be submitted to the Council no later than 3 weeks after Children's Services have sent them all of the representations and documents noted above, or such longer period as the Council may agree with Education Scotland.
  - 8.4 In preparing their report, Education Scotland may visit establishments affected by the proposal and may make reasonable enquiries of such persons (both in the establishments and outwith) as they consider appropriate.
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## **9 Consultation Report**

- 9.1 After receiving the report from Education Scotland, Children's Services will review the proposal having regard (in particular) to the following:
  - a) written representations received by the Council from any person during the consultation period;
  - b) oral representations received by the Council from any person at the public meeting; and
  - c) the report provided by Education Scotland.
- 9.2 Thereafter the service will prepare a consultation report for consideration by the Education and Children's Services Policy Board.
- 9.3 The consultation report will contain the following:
  - a) a record of the total number of any written representations made to the Council (by any person) on the proposal during the consultation period;
  - b) a summary of those written representations and any oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting.
  - c) a statement of the Council's response to those representations and Education Scotland's report.
  - d) a copy of that report
  - e) a statement explaining how the Council complied with its obligation to review the relevant proposal.
- 9.4 The consultation report will also include the following:
  - a) details of any (alleged) omission/ inaccuracy in the proposal paper with a statement of the Council's opinion on it;
  - b) a statement of the action taken in respect of the (alleged) omission or inaccuracy, and why; and

- c) any representations made to the Council where the person who made the notification re: omission/inaccuracy disagreed with the Council's determination as to whether there had been an omission/inaccuracy, or its decision as to whether to take action.

9.5 The Council will:

- a) publish the consultation report in both electronic and printed form;
- b) make the report available for inspection at all reasonable times and without charge at Renfrewshire House and on its website; and at the affected schools and all public libraries.
- c) provide the information contained in the consultation report to such persons as may reasonably require it in another form in that form, if requested, without charge.
- d) inform any person who during the consultation period made written representations on the relevant proposal of the publication of the consultation report; and
- e) advertise the publication of the consultation report in the Paisley Daily Express and the Renfrewshire Gazette.

9.6 The timeline and summary of the consultation process in respect of this proposal is set out below:

Activity	Date
Approval for consultation sought from Education and Children's Services policy board	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Proposal document to be issued outlining the proposal to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the parent Council or combined parent Council of any affected schools;</li> <li>the parents of the pupils at any affected school;</li> <li>the parents of any children who would be likely to become pupils at the affected schools expected by the education authority to attend any affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of the proposal paper;</li> <li>the pupils at any affected school (in so far as the education authority considers them to be of a suitable age and maturity);</li> <li>the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school;</li> <li>any trade union which appears to the education authority to be representative of the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school;</li> <li>the community Council</li> <li>the community planning partnership for the area of the local authority in which any affected school is situated and any other community planning partnership that the education authority considers relevant;</li> <li>any other education authority that the education authority considers relevant; and</li> </ul>	By 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2024

Activity	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any other community groups using any of the affected schools.</li> </ul>	
Advert to advise of public consultation meeting and the commencement of the formal consultation period issued via local press.	By 29th January 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public consultation meeting held to consult with affected community; and</li> <li>Proposal Questionnaire to go live on the Council website.</li> </ul>	19 <sup>th</sup> February 2024 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Public consultation period ends.	26th March 2024
Report to Education Scotland on outcome of consultation.	12 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
Response from Education Scotland on outcome of consultation.	By 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2024
Consultation response report (including Education Scotland response) presented to Education and Children's Services policy board meeting stating consultation outcomes and making final recommendation.	23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2024
Implementation of any proposal approved.	No earlier than 14 <sup>th</sup> June 2024

## 10 Delegation of Power to Manage the Consultation Process to the Director of Children's Services

- 10.1 The process as set out above requires various actions to be taken by the Council in order for the consultation to proceed (for example, dealing with any notification of an omission or inaccuracy). It is not practicable for these steps to be referred back to this Board for approval in the timescales set out. For that reason, the Board is asked to delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services, or another appropriate officer nominated by her, to take such action as is required to carry the consultation through to completion, in accordance with the legal requirements.

### Implications of this report

#### 1. Financial

None.

#### 2. HR and Organisational Development

None.

#### 3. Community/Council Planning

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Our Renfrewshire is thriving | - <i>The revised catchment areas and approval of site will give clarity to the community and enable the new building to have a positive start</i> |
| Our Renfrewshire is fair     | - <i>The process is designed to ensure everyone can give their views and have them heard</i>  |



Reshaping our place, our economy, and our future	- <i>The catchment review informs the development of the new building</i>
Building strong, safe, and resilient communities	- <i>There is a clear consideration given to safe travel</i>
Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy	- <i>The site evaluations had sustainability and green space as a clear focus</i>
Working together to improve outcomes	- <i>Ensuring children have a high quality and sustained primary education is at the core of the process.</i>

**4. Legal**

The requirement for consultation and the process to be followed is set out in law. The recommendations made in this report will ensure that the Council meets its legal obligations in that regard.

**5. Property/Assets**

None.

**6. Information Technology**

None.

**7. Equality and Human Rights**

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because the consultation recommended will be open to all interested persons, as set out by the legislation governing the matter.

**8. Health and Safety**

None.

**9. Procurement**

None.

**10. Risk**

None.

**11. Privacy Impact**

None.

**12. Cosla Policy Position**

None.

**13. Climate Risk**

None.

## List of Background Papers

### (a) Background Paper 1

The foregoing background papers will be retained within children's services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Gerry Lyons, Interim Head of Education Renfrewshire House 0141 487 0084 Email: [Gerry.Lyons@Renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:Gerry.Lyons@Renfrewshire.gov.uk)

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**Children's Services**

GL/JC

10 January 2024

**Author:** Gerry Lyons, Interim Head of Education, 0141 487 0084,  
email: [gerry.lyons@Renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:gerry.lyons@Renfrewshire.gov.uk)

**THIS IS A PROPOSAL PAPER**  
**This is a consultation on 2 proposals:**

- 1 A proposal to establish a new primary school in Dargavel Village on an 8.5-acre site at the north end of Craigton Drive.
2. A catchment review affecting Dargavel Primary School and the proposed new primary school to be built at Dargavel Village.

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2. Procedure for Statutory Public Consultation
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9. Catchment Considerations
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Proposal Appendices

1. Edge Analytics Housing and Roll Projections
2. Map of proposed Catchment Area for 2 Dargavel Primary Schools
3. List of streets included in the new catchment areas
4. Dargavel Education Provision – New Build – Site Options Matrix
5. Dargavel Education Provision – New Build – Site E1 location map

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 This paper asks for your views on the proposals set out above, in accordance with requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

**2 Procedure for Statutory Public Consultation**

- 2.1 The procedures for the statutory public consultation relating to this proposal are:

This paper will be issued simultaneously to:

- the Parent Council or combined Parent Council of Dargavel Primary School; Bishopton Primary School and St. John Bosco Primary School;
- the parents of the pupils at the schools identified above;
- the parents of any children who would be likely to become pupils at the affected schools or expected by Renfrewshire Council to attend any affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of this proposal paper;
- the pupils at any affected school – for the purposes of this consultation, Dargavel Primary School, Bishopton Primary School (in so far as Renfrewshire Council considers them to be of a suitable age and maturity);
- the staff (teaching and other) at these schools;
- any trade union which appears to Renfrewshire Council to be representative of the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school;
- elected members of wards affected by the consultation proposal;
- the community Council (if any);
- the community planning partnership for the area of the local authority in which any affected school is situated and any other community planning partnership that the education authority considers relevant; and
- any other community groups using any of the affected schools.

## 2.2 Also:

- An advertisement will be prepared notifying the public and inviting written comment from individuals or organisations outlining the proposal and the recommendations and stating that full details can be obtained from establishments affected. This will be published in The Paisley Daily Express and the Renfrewshire Gazette.
- The paper will be available for inspection at all reasonable times and without charge at Renfrewshire House and on the Council website at <https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/dargavel-school-consultation> and at all affected schools and all public libraries.
- The consultation is now underway and will run until 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024.
- A public meeting will be held at Dargavel Primary School at 7pm on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 to allow the proposal to be discussed and oral representations to be considered.
- Written representation should be made to The Director of Children's Services, Renfrewshire Council, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1LE or to [Dargavelreview@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:Dargavelreview@renfrewshire.gov.uk), no later than noon on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024

## 2.3 Copies of the proposal paper and all written representations and comments received will be forwarded to Education Scotland who will consider the papers and prepare a report which will be sent to the education authority.

- 2.4 A consultation response report including a summary of all written submissions from all bodies and the report from Education Scotland will then be published by Children's Services in advance of any Council decision. The report will include a statement of the authority's responses to any issues raised by representations received or by the report from Education Scotland.
- 2.5 The consultation response report will be available for inspection at all reasonable times and without charge at Renfrewshire House and on the Council website and at all affected schools and all public libraries.
- 2.6 The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 does not require referral to Scottish Ministers in cases other than closure of schools.
- 2.7 The final recommendation considering the results of the consultative process will be presented to a meeting of the Education and Children's Services policy board on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024. Implementation of any decision may not be carried out until at least three weeks have passed.

### **3 Rationale for Proposal to establish a new primary school and catchment review**

- 3.1 In August 2019, following a consultation process in the first half of 2019, the Education and Children's Service Policy Board agreed the defined catchment for a new non-denominational primary school within Dargavel Village. In January 2022, the newly constructed Dargavel Primary School in Arrochar Drive, within the village development, opened.
- 3.2 In November 2022, a report was presented to a Special Education and Children's Services Board setting out that the Council had identified that the primary school capacity provided at Dargavel Primary School would be insufficient to meet the revised projected demand expected to emerge from the catchment area, as the Dargavel Village development progresses to completion.
- 3.3 Following detailed and updated projection modelling undertaken by the Council and specialist consultancy Edge Analytics in the first half of 2023, the Education and Children's Services Policy Board agreed the need to plan to deliver a second primary school to meet the revised projected demand.
- 3.4 Although underpinned by the best available data and a tried and tested model that has been used extensively across the UK by Edge Analytics, it is recognised that pupil projection modelling in relation to major sites retain unavoidable risk and uncertainty. This is particularly the case when projecting over a significant timeframe. Given almost a decade of development is yet to be delivered in Dargavel Village, the future demand projections produced from the modelling carry an inevitable degree of uncertainty.
- 3.5 The Edge Analytics model – which projects over a 15-year period and has assumed a completion of the Dargavel Village development in 2033, has indicated a peak in non-denominational demand of 1,131 in 2033/34. This is expected to reduce over the second half of the 2030's to a slightly lower stabilised level of demand. This pattern of a peak demand followed by a lower stabilised level of demand is evidenced in other large-scale developments across the UK.

- 3.6 In addition, further scenario modelling, informed by one year of live data for the forthcoming 2024/25 year suggests that if P1 admissions continued long-term at this rate - higher than the Edge Analytics modelling, a peak demand of around 1,500 could emerge in 2033/34. Discussions with Edge Analytics indicate this scenario is not consistent with the experience of large community growth areas elsewhere in the UK and would place Dargavel Village in the very upper tier of education demand profile.
- 3.7 In this context and based on the core Edge Analytics modelling (peak demand of 1,131), the Education and Children's Services Policy board agreed that a second school should be planned for to expand non-denominational education provision and deliver 800 pupil places in addition to the existing capacity of Dargavel Primary School (434).
- 3.8 This followed engagement with Dargavel Parent Council and their strong advocacy for a second primary school to be delivered. It was also agreed that options would be identified for managing potential upper end projection scenarios, should this be required in the long-term.
- 3.9 Therefore, the proposal for consultation is to deliver a new non-denominational primary school within Dargavel Village for 800 pupils, and to revise catchment arrangements between Dargavel Primary School and the new school. The proposal notes that the catchment primary school for all denominational pupils in Dargavel Village will remain St John Bosco Primary School.
- 3.10 In accordance with Section 2 and Schedule 1, Para. 2 and 4 of the 2010 Act, a proposal to establish a new school and a proposal to vary any admission arrangements for a school, including altering or establishing the catchment area of a school, is a relevant proposal for the purposes of, and subject to, the 2010 Act.

#### **4 School Configuration Options**

- 4.1 Although the Council identified an unavoidable requirement to deliver a new school and additional permanent non-denominational primary school capacity of 800, it is recognised that there are options that can be considered to achieve an expansion in capacity at this scale.

**Option 1** - fulfil the need through delivery of a new 800 capacity primary school.

**Option 2** - fulfil the need through delivery of a new smaller capacity school of circa 600 and extend capacity at the existing Dargavel Primary School which is now possible following an additional land parcel adjacent to the existing school being secured from BAE systems.

**Option 3** - fulfil the need through delivery of a new smaller school of circa 600 capacity and extend the catchment of Bishopton Primary School to encapsulate an element of Dargavel Village. This option recognises that a degree of surplus capacity exists at Bishopton Primary School that could support demand from an expanded catchment area encompassing an appropriately sized element of Dargavel Village that is within closest proximity to the school and benefits from a safe walking route.

**Option 4** – fulfil the need through a combination of both 2 and 3, where a much smaller new school is delivered of a similar scale to the existing Dargavel Primary, with the existing Dargavel Primary extended and Bishopton Primary catchment extended to take in an element of Dargavel Village.

4.2 In assessing the options, the key consideration focused on the following assessment criteria:

- To what extent the option delivers a learning environment which best supports the delivery of the curriculum and the best educational experience for all learners.
- To what extent the option supports environmentally sustainable facilities with lower carbon footprints, satisfactory building conditions, sufficiency levels and education facilities.

In addition to these core educational assessment criteria, additional wider factors were considered as part of the assessment process.

- To what extent the option would assist in preserving the broad conclusion of the 2019 consultation exercise to maintain a clearly identifiable primary school provision and catchment serving Dargavel Village, whilst retaining a separately identifiable catchment for Bishopton Primary School which should remain focused on the needs of the historic village.
- Given the uncertainty and risk in relation to the potential for further additional capacity demand to emerge, to what extent the option supports the Council to maintain flexibility to respond to potential upper demand scenarios emerging in the future.
- The extent to which the proposal can deliver facilities that would, outside of school operating times, provide flexible space to support a wide range of community activities and uses within Dargavel Village. This acknowledges community feedback during the pre-consultation engagement that accessible and flexible community facilities is a key requirement the community would like to see fulfilled. This also recognises the existing Dargavel Primary School design failed to adequately meet this expectation.
- The financial cost and value for money of the proposed solution.

4.3 Based on the above criteria, the option appraisal assessment has identified that option 1, delivery of a new 800 school provides the best overall school configuration outcome.

4.4 A 3 to 18 campus for Dargavel and Bishopton has previously been suggested by some members of the community. This consultation does not propose to alter the catchment area for Park Mains High School. A detailed analysis of high school demand and provision for the Park Mains catchment, and the Council's decision to extend Park Mains High School was subject to a Report to Board on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023 which can be accessed here [Microsoft Word - Education Provision Dargavel ECSPB \(cmis.uk.com\)](https://cmis.uk.com/Microsoft%20Word-Education%20Provision%20Dargavel%20ECSPB)

## **5 Site Option Appraisal**

- 5.1 Renfrewshire Council began identifying and assessing potential sites within the Dargavel area to locate a second primary school in December 2022. Since then, there have been additional sites suggested by both BAE Systems as part of discussions in relation to the Dargavel Village development as well as suggestions that have been promoted directly by members of the community.
- 5.2 The key factors which have been used to guide the site search by Council officers, guide discussions with BAE Systems and the assessment of all options identified throughout the process have focused on a series of key criteria outlined and explained in the site evaluation matrix (Appendix 4)
- 5.3 This matrix has been used in an appraisal assessment where all the identified sites were evaluated against these criteria and the associated site evaluation matrix is outlined in Appendix 4. Sites which did not meet the required site size were automatically discounted.
- 5.4 As detailed in Appendix 4, the site referred to as E1 to the north end of Craighton Drive within the Dargavel Village masterplan, has been identified as the preferred location and is identified on the map provided at Appendix 5.

## **6. Catchment Proposals**

- 6.1 The impact of this proposal is illustrated through existing and proposed catchment maps for Dargavel Primary School and the proposed new primary school within Dargavel Village and is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 6.2 It is proposed that, if approved, the catchment changes would be implemented to take effect following construction of the new school which it is anticipated will be in 2027.
- 6.3 If the proposals are approved, all pupils living in affected addresses currently attending Dargavel Primary School would be entitled to continue attending to the end of primary 7. If they are entitled to free school transport, in line with the Council's transport policy, then this entitlement would also continue.
- 6.4 Siblings of pupils currently attending Dargavel Primary School would also be entitled to attend the school with their sibling if their older sibling is registered in the school when they enrol.
- 6.5 Free school transport for new primary 1 pupils would only be provided in instances where the pupil enrolls in the school at a time when their sibling still attends the school and where that sibling is entitled to free school transport.

## **7 Educational Benefits Statement**

- 7.1 Under the 2010 Act where the Council has formulated a relevant proposal, the Council must prepare an educational benefits statement ("an EBS") in accordance with Sections 1 and 3 of the 2010 Act.
- 7.2 The Educational Benefits Statement must include the following:
  - a) the Council's assessment of the likely educational effects of a relevant proposal (if implemented) on:



- (i) the pupils of any affected school;
  - (ii) any other users of the school's facilities;
  - (iii) any children who would (in the future but for implementation) be likely to become pupils of the school; or
  - (iv) the pupils of any other schools in the Council's area,
- b) the Council's assessment of any other likely effects of the proposal (if implemented),
- c) an explanation of how the Council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse educational effects that may arise from the proposal (if implemented),
- d) a description of the educational benefits which the Council believes will result from implementation of the proposal (with reference to the persons whom it believes will derive them), as well as the Council's reasons for coming to those beliefs.

### 7.3 Educational Benefits

7.3.1 **Section 3** of this document sets out the strategic context and rationale for the identified need to deliver a second primary school as part of increasing by 800 the non-denominational primary school capacity serving Dargavel.

7.3.2 The educational benefits of the proposed building and the proposed location as outlined in the proposal:

- will ensure sufficient primary school capacity to meet projected demand, providing catchment school places for catchment children. This will be monitored on an ongoing basis.
- ensures all schools serving Dargavel Village and Bishopton have a viable and sustainable school roll, located within the local area and can serve children, families, and the community of Dargavel.
- ensures continuity of learning as children will go through all stages of their primary education in a 21st century learning environment which will accommodate future demand – future-proofed for peak projections and is sector-leading in its design.
- will provide the school with a learning environment where it can build a culture of the highest expectations; placed at the heart of the community this will contribute to the creation a community identity for Dargavel Village which can be grown through community engagement and learning, and which sends the most positive messages about the children and their potential.
- dining areas will be welcoming, naturally ventilated areas with immediate access to outdoor dining and the IT infrastructure allows for cashless catering arrangements which will enhance the inclusive ethos of the school while supporting the efficient management of dining sittings.

### 7.4 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

7.4.1 The Council has been working with a Space Planning Consultant who has worked with key stakeholders to develop a strategic brief on what a 21st Century learning environment should look like as part of the proposed new

school. This includes classroom spaces which will enable children to experience the full range of learning and teaching approaches with the facility for whole class learning; for children to work and learn together in groups of different sizes and to learn independently based on planned learning. This will provide an environment where teachers will be able to give children a voice in their own learning and the opportunity to lead their learning.

- 7.4.2 The digital connectivity within the proposed new school will provide the opportunity for children to develop digital learning skills and learn through digital learning methodologies.
  - 7.4.3 Proposals include plans for learning plazas to support project-based learning; multi-purpose spaces which will allow children to learn in different contexts in all curricular areas; and break out spaces where teachers will be able to develop play pedagogy developing skills for learning life and work in all children.
  - 7.4.4 This wide range of learning spaces will improve the quality of assessment and professional judgement as teachers will be able to plan learning on a stage and level basis which can be delivered and assess across more than one class, allowing teachers to develop shared understanding of assessment standards.
- 7.5 Curriculum – Developing the 4 capacities in all 4 contexts of learning
- 7.5.1 Over and above classroom spaces, the proposed school environment will provide opportunities to experience the ethos and life of the school. The children will develop as confident individuals through whole school activities including school shows; choirs and instrumental bands; school clubs and opportunities to work with community partners in a range of different activities.
  - 7.5.2 The planned environment and assembly spaces will provide opportunities to build positive relationships across the school; opportunities for inputs from partners on key aspects of personal and social education including keeping safe and healthy; building positive self-esteem and self-efficacy.
  - 7.5.3 Outdoor spaces will be designed to encourage and enhance pupil participation in outdoor learning and deliver positive experiences of outdoor play, supporting children to become responsible citizens and effective contributors.
  - 7.5.4 High quality sport and P.E. facilities will provide space for children to participate in a wide range of sport and exercise supporting the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing curriculum.
  - 7.5.5 The proposed location of a new school, in the heart of the community and sufficiently close to Dargavel Primary School and Bishopton Primary School, will allow children to participate in activities where they can work together to improve their community; to help vulnerable people in their community and so grow their understanding about what it means to be responsible citizens.
  - 7.5.6 The school's proposed location within the catchment of Park Mains High School will allow pupils to benefit from well-established cluster planning activities as well as highly effective support for primary/secondary transition.

## 7.6 Supporting Children with additional support needs

- 7.6.1 The range of spaces that can be delivered within the proposed new school will enable the school leadership team to design facilities which support children who require targeted support – assessed through Renfrewshire Council's staged intervention policy. This may include break out spaces which allow for targeted intervention for groups of children who require support in specific areas to achieve expected levels of achievement, and flexible space which could be used for sensory rooms for neurodivergent children and space for nurture bases and safe spaces. Additionally, spaces can be created for visiting partners to support children through counselling or group work where there is identified need.
- 7.6.2 The creation of this high-quality learning environment will send positive messages about all children supporting an ethos of inclusion and equality where all children feel valued. This is supported by the range of spaces available for whole school development on issues of equality. The proposed building will be compliant with the provisions of the Equality Act (2010).

## 7.7 Staff Development and Leadership Development

- 7.7.1 The proposed building is a 21st century work environment where teachers will have enhanced facility to work together on planning learning and school improvement activity. The digital capability and high quality work spaces will enhance this further providing potential for improvements for digital learning and to maximise the possibilities presented by Artificial Intelligence.
- 7.7.2 The quality of assessment and moderation will also be improved as there is high quality space for teachers to work together, share practice and learn from each other. The proposed site also presents opportunity for the 2 primary schools and Dargavel primary school to improve through looking outward.

## 8 Wider Site Considerations

- 8.1 The preferred site has been assessed as fully meeting all the criteria for the new building. The Council owns the land; it provides the necessary space for the new school building and is sufficiently distanced from the existing primary school, whilst maximising opportunity for active travel and supporting environmental considerations. In addition, the site presents the most deliverable proposal in terms of timeframe and costs for completion. This positions this site as the optimum location for ensuring continuity and sustainability in children's learning and delivering the planned provision within Dargavel village.
- 8.2 The site will allow the school design to plan for delivering high quality space for community use outwith school hours as well as additional outdoor sport pitch provision in this new and growing area, enabling social capital and community involvement in developing the use of the space. This will strengthen community and school capacity to promote health, wellbeing and resilience. Attention will be given on creating new opportunities for the local community. As a result, the proposal will provide not only a high-quality educational environment for children but will also realise significant outcomes for the entire community.

- 8.3 The site position within the heart of the Dargavel Village and the central amenity parkland area, coupled with the proposed catchments, maximises the opportunity for safe active travel to school, for both the new school and existing Dargavel primary and maximises convenience for community use outwith school hours.
- 8.4 Consideration of the integration of the proposed school site with Dargavel Village road and pathway infrastructure will be part of the formal planning application process and will ensure safe traffic flows and optimum road safety for pedestrians and all road users. The infrastructure considerations will include measures such as active travel infrastructure to primarily support children walking, wheeling, or cycling to the central location of both schools, as well as providing effective drop off/pick up arrangements for private cars and school bus services. Council Officers will work collaboratively on issues related to managing traffic and road safety in and around the existing school site and proposed school site. Previous learning and community feedback will inform the future design process.
- 8.5 Delivering effective road restrictions around the proposed new school and Dargavel Primary School will be considered holistically to promote the best environment possible for travel to and from the school grounds. Traffic management schemes will be designed to promote positive and considerate pedestrian and road user behaviour in the proximity of the school.
- 8.6 Officers from Environment, Housing and Infrastructure will lead the development and assessment of safe walking routes and a school travel plan to ensure the network around the proposed new school is safe.
- 8.7 Initial engagement has commenced with a transport consultant to identify early opportunities to pro-actively incorporate such infrastructure and wider design considerations early into the school design process and to support the more substantial work associated with the transport assessment which will be subsequently carried out as part of the future planning application process.

## **9 Revised Catchment Considerations**

- 9.1 The revised catchment areas have been identified from the number of houses planned in the Dargavel Village and the projected pupil yield from those planned houses. This has been supplemented by data gathered about the roll of the current primary school and indications from the actual number of children in the school, which will be closely monitored on an ongoing basis.
- 9.2 Despite the inherent uncertainty as projections stretch over a longer period, the proposal is designed to provide a viable and sustainable pupil roll in both primary schools both in the short and long term. The proposed catchments will allow teacher staffing levels and stage classification arrangements to be effective, and children will be able to learn in a sustainable way in their local area.
- 9.3 The revised catchment areas improve the options for safe and sustainable travel as they reduce travel distances, making walking to school highly viable for almost all children attending the school. This has benefits for the children's health and well-being as well as having a positive environmental impact with the potential for a significant and sustained reduction in children being brought to school by car.

- 9.4 The proposed new primary school will be part of the Park Mains High School cluster comprising Bargarran, Barsail, Bishopton, Dargavel and Inchinnan primary schools. As such it will benefit from existing strong relationships with the associated secondary school. There will be an increased roll for the secondary school, but all projection work undertaken by the Council and consideration of viable options indicate this increase can be accommodated with a planned extension to the existing school, the design of which is part of ongoing engagement.

## **10 Statutory Public Consultation Process**

- 10.1 This document has been issued by Renfrewshire Council for consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

- 10.2 What is a statutory consultation?

In Scotland, local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure the adequate and efficient provision of education in their areas. If a local authority proposes to change any part of the existing education provision in its area, then it must engage in a formal consultation process in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2021. This act aims to ensure that all major changes which affect schools are subject to clear consultation with parents, children, young people and communities.

- 10.3 When does the Statutory Public Consultation start?

The consultation will start on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and close on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024, which includes a period of 30 school days.

- 10.4 Who will have access to this proposal document?

The proposal document has been made available to all interested parties, including parent Councils, Education Scotland, parents and carers of children attending the establishments affected, Staff Trade Unions and any other users of the establishments as detailed in the distribution list.

The proposal document is published on the Council website at:

<https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/dargavel-school-consultation>

Copies are also available at Renfrewshire House, Dargavel Primary School and local libraries

Copies can also be made available in alternative formats or translated for readers whose first language is not English.

- 10.5 What if I notice an error in the document?

If any inaccuracies or omissions are discovered in this proposal document, either by the Council or any person, the Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or if there has been any inaccuracy.

The Council may then take appropriate action, which may include the issue of a correction notice, the reissuing of the proposal document or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period, if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and Education Scotland will be advised.

#### 10.6 How will I get a chance to give my opinion?

You will be able to give your opinion on the proposal:

- Online at - <https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/dargavel-school-consultation>
- By completing an online response form at <https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/dargavel-school-consultation>
- By submitting a paper copy of the response form, attached at Appendix 7
- By emailing - [Dargavelreview@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:Dargavelreview@renfrewshire.gov.uk)
- In writing to Gerry Lyons, Interim Head of Education, Renfrewshire House  
Cotton Street Paisley PA1

All responses must be submitted by no later than close of business Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024

#### 10.7 Will there be any meetings for the public?

There will be a public meeting on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm in Dargavel Primary School. This meeting will provide an opportunity for interested parties to hear about the proposal from Council officers, ask questions and have their views recorded so that these can be considered as part of the consultation process.

Advance notice of specific questions or issues to be raised at the public meeting will be accepted up to Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024. This will allow all issues to be covered and give those who may not be comfortable speaking publicly their opportunity to be heard.

A note will be taken of comments, questions, and officer responses at the public session. The notes will be published on the Council website and a copy will be made available on request. The notes will be forwarded to Education Scotland along with all other submissions and comments that are received by the Council during the consultation process.

#### 10.8 Will any other agencies be involved in the process?

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 requires that a report on the proposal on the proposal is prepared by Education Scotland. Education Scotland may attend the public meetings.

Once the statutory public consultation period comes to an end, Education Scotland have three weeks to consider the educational aspects of the proposal and submit a report to the Council.

Education Scotland receives a copy of relevant papers from the Council, including:

- A copy of the proposal, paper copies of the written representations or a summary of them (if Education Scotland agree)
- A note of the oral representations made at the public meeting sessions; and

- Any other related documents

Education Scotland may visit schools as part of their consideration of the proposal and meet with children, staff and parents who may be affected by the proposal.

Upon receipt of the proposal document and other relevant documentation, Education Scotland will consider the educational aspects of the proposal. They will ensure that their report takes account of:

- The educational benefits statement
- The representations received by the Council; and
- Any further representations made directly to Education Scotland on educational aspect of the proposal which is considered relevant.

The consultation report that the Council publishes following the statutory public consultation must include the report from Education Scotland in full.

#### 10.9 Will the outcome of the consultation be made public?

The Head of Service (Education) will prepare a report on the results of the consultation process. The report will take account of all Education Scotland recommendations. This report will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be advertised in the Paisley Daily Express and the Renfrewshire Gazette. It will be available on the Council website and from Council Headquarters.

The report will include a record of the total number of written representations made during the consultation period, a summary of written and oral representations and the Council's response to recommendations made by Education Scotland. A copy of the Education Scotland report will be an appendix to the consultation report which will be published and available for further consideration for a period of more than 3 weeks ahead of presentation to Elected members in May 2024.

#### 10.10 When will the Council make a decision on the outcomes of the consultation?

The consultation report, together with any other relevant documentation, will be considered by the Education and Children's Services Policy Board, who will make a decision in May 2024.

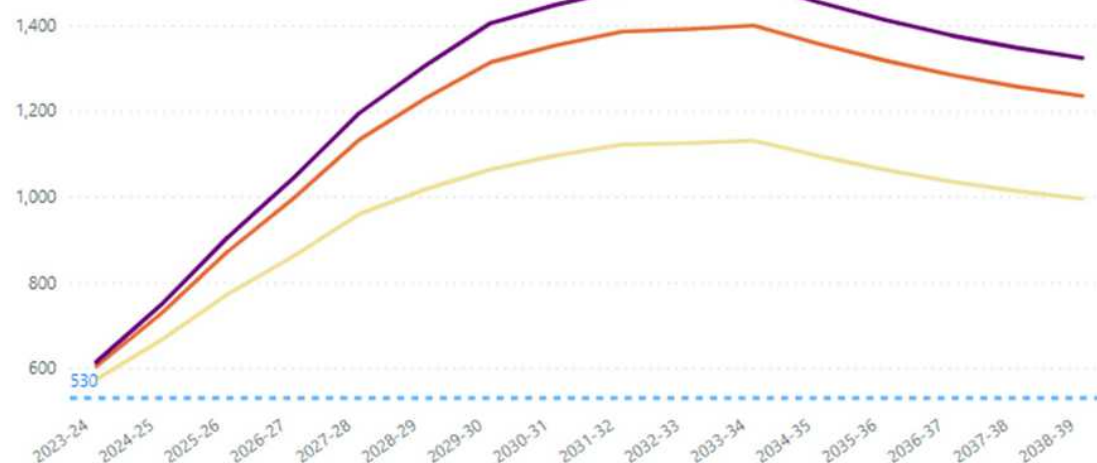


## Roll Projection - Edge Analytics

School

Dargavel Primary

Scenario ● HOUSING-E ● HOUSING-E (P1 Adjusted - 140) ● HOUSING-E (P1 Adjusted - 150)

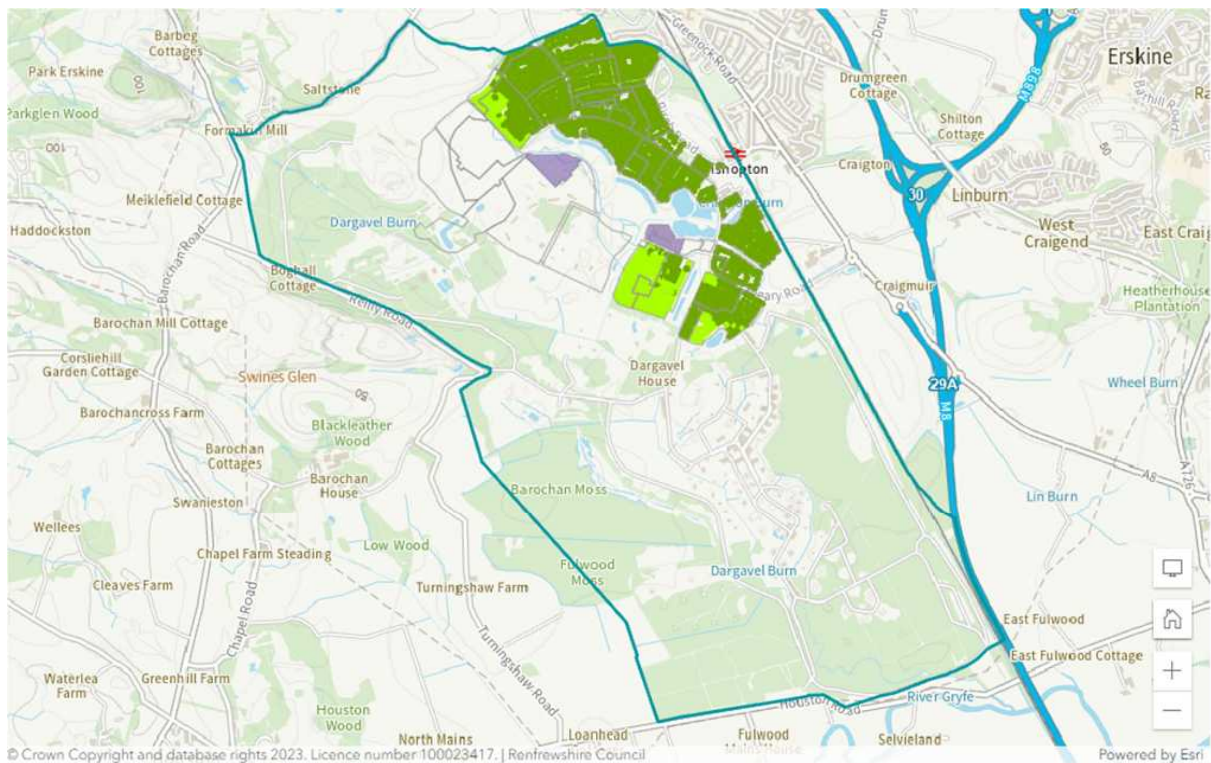


Scenario	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	2036-37	2037-38	2038-39
HOUSING-E	573	666	773	861	960	1017	1064	1096	1121	1125	1131	1095	1063	1035	1013	995
HOUSING-E (P1 Adjusted - 140)	604	729	872	996	1133	1229	1314	1353	1385	1391	1399	1356	1318	1284	1257	1235
HOUSING-E (P1 Adjusted - 150)	614	750	906	1043	1195	1305	1405	1448	1483	1490	1500	1454	1412	1377	1347	1324

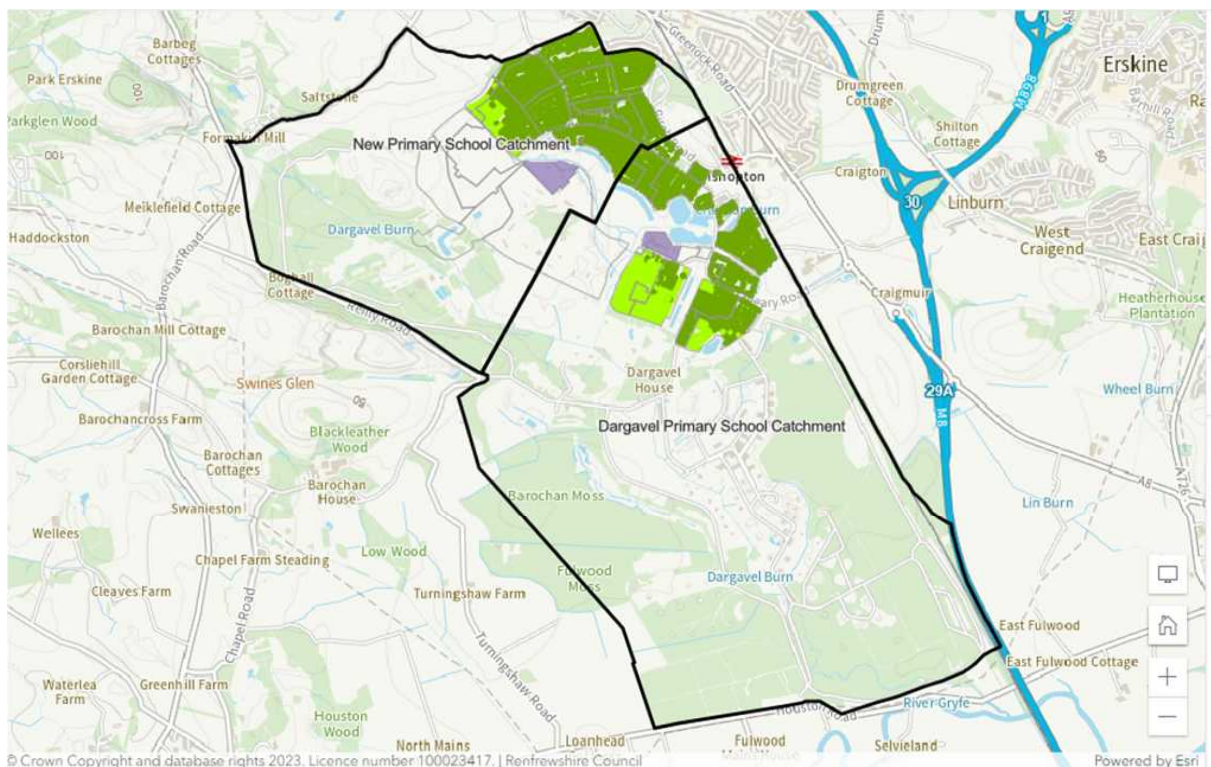
Scenario	Description
HOUSING-E	The HOUSING-E scenario includes the impacts of planned housing on cohort size, through the application of primary and secondary pupil yield factors to a trajectory of planned housing growth. The pupil yield factors have been derived by Edge Analytics, using pupil yield evidence from a sample of dwelling growth areas, located in Renfrewshire and across Scotland.
HOUSING-E (P1 Adjusted - 140)	The HOUSING-E (P1 Adjusted - 140) scenario uses assumptions that are consistent with the HOUSING-E scenario. In this scenario, the P1 intake is adjusted to reflect 140 P1 Registrations at Dargavel Village Primary School in August 2023 (2023-24). For Bishopton Primary School and St John Bosco Primary School, P1 Registrations of 40 and 23 respectively have been assumed.
HOUSING-E (P1 Adjusted - 150)	The HOUSING-E (P1 Adjusted - 150) scenario uses assumptions that are consistent with the HOUSING-E scenario. In this scenario, the P1 intake is adjusted to reflect 150 P1 Registrations at Dargavel Village Primary School in August 2023 (2023-24). For Bishopton Primary School and St John Bosco Primary School, P1 Registrations of 40 and 23 respectively have been assumed.



## CURRENT DARGAVEL CATCHMENT MAP



## PROPOSED DARGAVEL CATCHMENT MAP



**Streets Affected BY PROPOSAL – Dargavel Primary School and a New Primary School to be built at Dargavel Village**

**As at 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

Aberlady Way  
Abington Circle  
Acer Drive  
Alness Way  
Applecross Drive  
Arrochar Drive  
Ballantrae Crescent  
Balnagown Drive  
Barbeg Crescent  
Barmore Crescent  
Barmore Drive  
Barmore Wynd  
Barrangary Road  
Birch Road  
Birchtree Road  
Boghall Drive  
Boghall Place  
Bolerno Avenue  
Bolerno Circle  
Bolerno Crescent  
Bolerno Gardens  
Bolerno Place  
Bolerno Wynd  
Broadford Place  
Catterline Way  
Cedarwood Gardens  
Central Park View  
Cherrytree Gardens  
Colintraive Crescent  
Craigmuir Drive  
Craigmuir Road  
Craigmuir Way  
Craigton Drive  
Crail Crescent  
Crosshill Avenue  
Crosshill Mews  
Crosshill Road  
Crosshill Wynd  
Culrain Drive  
Dalbeattie Way

Dalgety Drive  
Dornie Way  
Drumbeg Road  
Dunbeath Circle  
Dundonnell Road  
Durness Avenue  
Elder Crescent  
Elie Drive  
Fern Way  
Forge Crescent  
Forge Way  
Gatehead Avenue  
Gatehead Crescent  
Gatehead Drive  
Gatehead Grove  
Gatehead Wynd  
Girvan Terrace  
Glenluce Drive  
Greenock Road  
Inveraray Road  
Kilmartin Gardens  
Kilmelford Drive  
Kirkconnel Road  
Kirriemuir Circle  
Lairg View  
Limetree Lane  
Lochside Avenue  
Lochview Wynd  
Luss Grove  
Melness Grove  
Melvich Way  
Millbank Avenue  
Millbank Circle  
Millbank Crescent  
Millbank Drive  
Moffat Gardens  
Mosshall Drive  
Nairn Drive  
Northbrae Drive  
Northbrae View  
Ormsary View  
Plockton Way  
Portpatrick Avenue  
Portree Crescent  
Rossland Crescent

Sanquhar Way  
Skelmorlie Avenue  
Slateford Road  
Station Lane  
Station Road  
Tain Avenue  
Tayinloan Way  
Thurso Crescent  
Torrisdale Crescent  
Ullapool Grove  
Whitemoss Way  
Whitemoss Wynd  
Whithorn Crescent

The development is still under construction and more addresses may be added to this list, which fall within the boundary of the development site.

**DARGAVEL – NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL – SITE OPTION MATRIX**

	Size The site is large enough to accommodate proposed scale of school capacity	Active Travel - site is less than 1km walking distance from majority of school catchment residents	Ownership of land Site is owned by RC, BAE or other	Land Use Designation The site is identified for future development in adopted Local Development Plan	Anticipated additional cost of developing (see definition)	Total score	Council officer comments
Scoring	PASS = Site is > 8acres in size	3 = majority of catchment <1km walking distance	3 = site is owned by RC	3 = land designated for development	3 = no anticipated additional costs		
	FAIL = Site is < 8acres in size	2 = less than 50% of catchment <1km walking distance	2 = site is owned by BAE	2 = land has no definite status (eg. Unallocated land)	2 = either significant earthworks, new road, additional utility connections required for development site		

Option Appraisal Ref			1 = majority of catchment >1km walking distance	1 = site is owned by other than RC or BAE	1 = site is allocated for open space or green belt	1 = more than one significant additional cost required		
	Sites							
1	Site W7 (Dargavel Masterplan)	10.9 acres = PASS	3	2	3	3	11	Not considered an optimum location due to close proximity (diagonally across road) from existing Dargavel Primary School
2	Site C1 (Dargavel Masterplan – adj existing DPS)	2.5 acres = FAIL						
3	Site A (periphery of Masterplan - west of Whithorn Crescent)	5.93 acres = FAIL						

4	Site B (periphery of Masterplan west of plot W11)	8.08 acres = PASS	3	2	3	2	10	This site has the disadvantage of being accessed primarily via residential streets through masterplan plots W9, W10 and W11. This is very likely to result in adverse impacts for residents in these streets. Although a distinct new road access could be provided to Site B this would significantly add to the construction costs.
5	Site C (periphery of Masterplan - west of plot W8)	6.28 acres = FAIL						
6	Site D (periphery of Masterplan - west of plot W5)	6.00 acres = FAIL						
7	Site E (periphery of Masterplan - East of Slateford Road)	4.50 acres = FAIL						
8	Site F (periphery of Masterplan - between Birch	4.99 acres = FAIL						

	Road and railway line)							
9	Site E1 (Dargavel Masterplan)	8.5 acres = PASS	3	3	3	3	12	
10	Site E2 (Dargavel Masterplan)	8.5 acres = PASS	3	2	3	3	11	Not considered as optimum a site as E1 due to closer proximity to existing Dargavel Primary School
11	Site W2 (Dargavel Masterplan)	9.1 acres = PASS	3	2	3	3	11	Site W2 is closer to planned housing development in Dargavel Masterplan than site E1. This could lead to impacts on residential amenity through the planned introduction of floodlighting for the community sports provision at the new school
12	Newton Road Playing Fields, Bishopton	7.5 acres = FAIL						
13	Holm Park, Bishopton	9.5 acres = PASS	1	1	1	2	5	Owned by Community Development Trust and very unlikely to be available for new school development



14	North of Ingliston Drive	9.0 acres = PASS	1	1	1	1	4	Site is designated as Green Belt in LDP with a presumption against its loss to development. Planning status could elongate planning consenting process by up to 2 years. Site is relatively remote from proposed catchment.
15	East of Slateford Road, Bishopton	8.2 acres = PASS	3	1	1	1	5	Site is designated as Green Belt in LDP with a presumption against its loss to development. Planning status could elongate planning consenting process by up to 2 years. Site is relatively remote from proposed catchment.
16	West of Greenock Road, Bishopton	61.7 acres = PASS	2	1	1	1	5	Site is designated as Green Belt in LDP with a presumption against its loss to development. Planning status could elongate planning consenting process by up to 2 years. Site is relatively remote from proposed catchment.

17	<b>East of Greenock Road, Bishopton</b>	70.4 acres = PASS	1	1	1	1	4	Site is designated as Green Belt in LDP with a presumption against its loss to development. Planning status could elongate planning consenting process by up to 2 years. Site is relatively remote from proposed catchment.
18	<b>Ingliston Drive, Bishopton</b>	2.3 acres = FAIL						
	<b>Matey's Field, Bishopton</b> (Camphill Gardens)	1.5 acres = FAIL						
20	Site W (Parent Council) – <b>Station Road, Bishopton</b>	6.4 acres (tbc) = FAIL						
21	Site X (Parent Council) – <b>Gladstone Hill, Dargavel</b>	27.5 acres = PASS	3	2	1	1	7	Site is designated as open space in Dargavel Masterplan with a presumption against development. Current landform (steeply sloping site) would result in significantly increased costs of construction compared to Site E1.
22	Site Y (Parent Council) – <b>West of Slateford</b>	duplicates with West of Greenock Road (site 16 above)						

	Road, Bishopton							
23	Site Z (Parent Council) – Ferry Road / Greenock Road, Bishopton	duplicates with East of Greenock Road (site 17 above)						

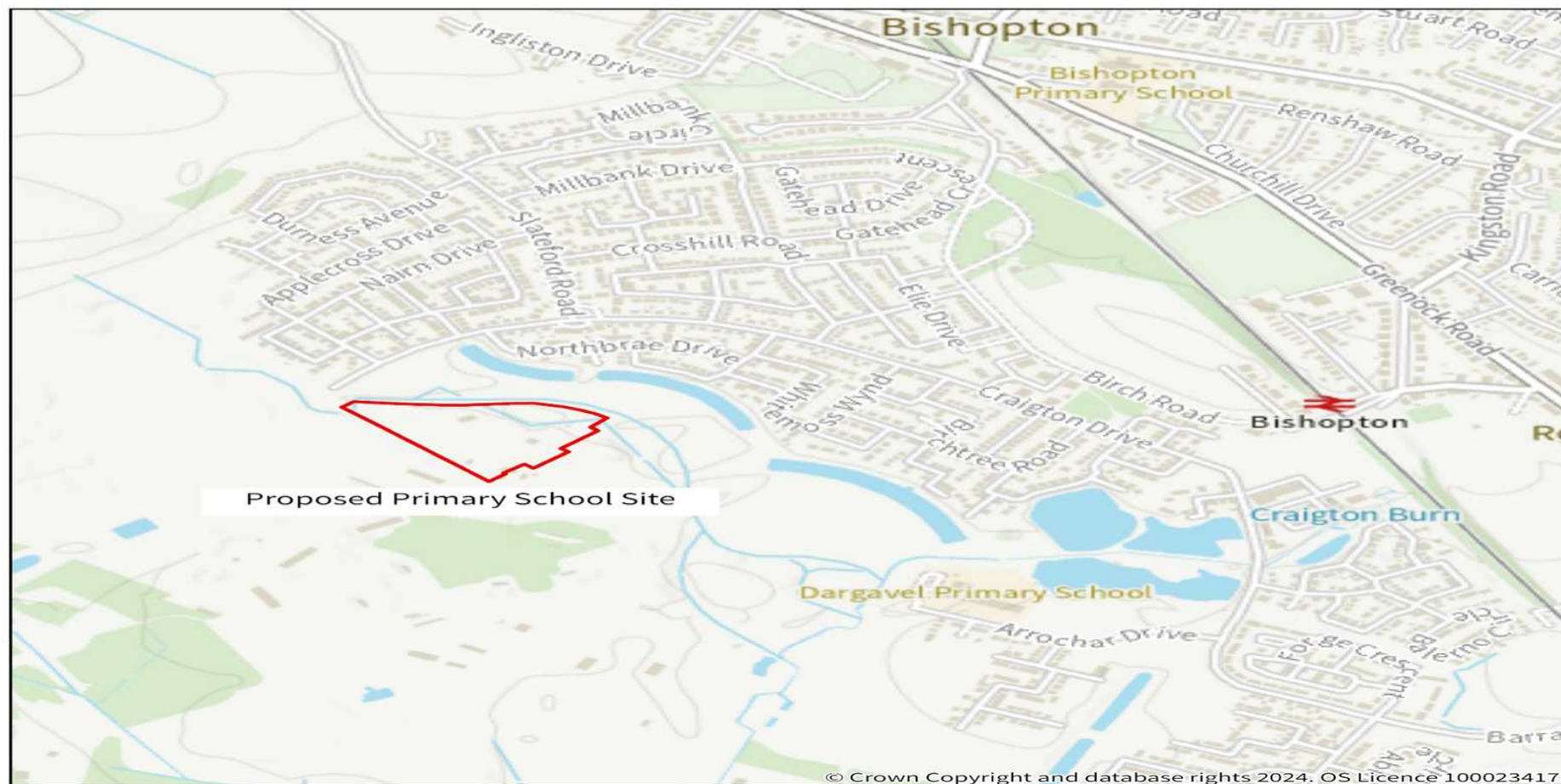
### Notes

**Size** 8 acres considered the minimum size required for an 800 capacity primary school and necessary community facilities. Sites smaller than this threshold not considered further

**Ownership** criterion is scored based on the speed and ease of delivery of the school. A third party owner will inevitably involve negotiations and costs to purchase (not otherwise accounted for elsewhere) and lead to a longer timescale for delivery. A BAE owned site is considered to be quicker due to their imperative to find a solution to assist future housebuilding but not as quick as a Council owned site.

**Anticipated additional costs of developing** this criterion is based on a relatively flat, unencumbered site with good existing or committed road access would represent the lowest cost solution for site development. Sites with no existing or committed road access of a suitable nature or with significant earthwork requirements will add significantly to the cost of the development

Map of proposed Site for Proposed new Primary school






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**To:** Education and Children's Services Policy Board

**On:** 18 January 2024

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**Report by:** Director of Children's Services

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**Heading:** Dargavel Non Denomination Primary School Demand:  
Assessment of Options for Additional Future Capacity

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1 Given both the scale of the masterplan development at Dargavel Village, coupled with the expectation of around a decade of development still to be delivered, there remains ongoing risk and uncertainty in respect to the actual level of educational demand that will arise from the development – both in terms of the scale and timing of an anticipated peak in demand as well as the stabilised longer-term position. The work completed to date in conjunction with Edge Analytics has identified upper projection scenarios in addition to the core projection estimate to inform longer term planning and management of risk.
  - 1.2 In this context it was agreed that work would be progressed to consider the range of options that would be available to the Council in future years should additional capacity be required as the development progresses towards completion over an estimated 10+ period. This report provides an overview of the assessment process which confirms that the Council is able to deploy a range of options either individually or combined to respond appropriately to any confirmed trend that would indicate a longer-term position in excess of the currently planned primary provision capacity.
  - 1.3 Officers will continue to monitor all relevant live data and updated projections and provide appropriate updates to future boards to support timely decision making in future years.
- 

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board are asked to:
  - Note that the Edge Analytics tried and tested core model indicates a peak of demand 1,131 for planning purposes which is within the current planned operational primary capacity of 1,230;

- Note that current projection data also presents a number of potential upper scenarios that would require further intervention from the Council if these materialise;
- Note that as outlined in the paper the Council will be able to consider a number of options which can be deployed either in isolation or combined and has significant flexibility to respond appropriately at a future point in time should additional demand emerge. This includes a temporary peak in demand and or longer term stabilised demand;
- Note that the roll projections are being continually monitored and updated and that regular updates will be provided to the Board to enable timeous decisions to be made in future years as and when required.

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### **3. Background**

- 3.1 As outlined in the report Roll Projection Update on this agenda, long term pupil projection work (15 years), completed by officers in conjunction with Edge Analytics for the Dargavel Village catchment, has identified that primary school demand will reach a natural peak, estimated to occur in 2033/34, as the development progresses towards completion. This is similar to other comparable large scale developments across the UK. After this point the demand levels are projected to drop year on year towards the end of the 2030 decade, transitioning to a mature stabilised level of demand.
- 3.2 The decisions the Council has taken to date to expand primary school provision within Dargavel, by planning an additional 800 capacity primary school, has been framed based on the core model arising from Edge Analytics. The Edge Analytics core modelling, which is based on tried and tested formula used across the UK, indicates a projected peak roll of 1,134 by 2033/34. Additional projection models were run by Edge Analytics at the request of the Council, to also include limited live registration data. These additional scenarios suggested the potential for a higher peak of up to circa 1,400 - 1,500 pupils could be possible if the current registration trend continued and was sustained over the long term.
- 3.3 Given both the scale of the masterplan, coupled with there being an expectation of around a decade of development still to be delivered, there remains ongoing risk and uncertainty in respect to the eventual educational demand that will arise from the development – both in terms of the scale, pace of growth, timing of the anticipated peak as well as the stabilised longer-term demand. In these circumstances it is prudent to consider now what options the Council could deploy to respond to potential upper end scenarios, recognising there are a very wide range of potential outcomes and ensuring the Council retains flexibility to deliver a response aligned to the specific circumstances that emerge.
- 3.4 In this context it was agreed by Board that work would be progressed to consider the range of options that would be available to the Council in future years should additional capacity be required to address upper demand scenarios above the core modelling position. This report provides an overview and outcomes from that assessment process.

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#### 4. Scenarios and Option Assessment

4.1 As live data is confirmed over the coming years, it will provide increasing confidence and eventual certainty over the longer-term trend. In the meantime, in considering options to manage this uncertainty and risk, there are three broad outcome scenarios which the Council is required to consider and plan for: -

- **Scenario 1** – the current planned provision provides sufficient capacity to support the actual level of demand that will emerge, both in terms of the expected peak and the mature stabilised demand. In such circumstances no additional intervention will be required by the Council.
- **Scenario 2** – the current planned provision provides sufficient capacity to support the actual level of mature stabilised demand – however for a relatively short period leading up to and after the temporary peak, demand will exceed this capacity. In such circumstances, the Council would be required to identify additional capacity, but only for a temporary period. This would not require investment in a permanent extension to school capacity given the temporary nature of the demand. Permanent additional capacity would not represent value for money and would result in surplus capacity once the short term peak had subsided.
- **Scenario 3** – the current planned provision is insufficient to meet the stabilised demand when the development fully reaches maturity. In such circumstances, the Council would be required to resolve two issues. Firstly, provide additional permanent capacity to meet the long-term stabilised demand and identify and provide temporary capacity to manage the period of additional demand arising from the temporary peak.

4.2 The options available to the Council to be deployed in isolation or combination to meet the specific needs that may be presented in the future are outlined below: -

- Additional Permanent Capacity

Should additional permanent capacity be required there is significant flexibility offered through the existing Primary School site as well as the potential long-term use of capacity at Bishopton Primary School.

##### **Extension at the existing Dargavel Primary School site**

As part of the agreement with BAE Systems the Council has secured ownership of additional land adjacent to the existing Dargavel Primary School site. This additional land provides significant flexibility for the Council to extend the existing school capacity through a range of potential options.

Utilising the now available adjacent land provides flexibility to permanently extend the existing school if this was deemed a requirement. Any permanent extension would require to be scaled appropriately to the identified need, however the additional land now secured would

comfortably accommodate an extension that could increase operational capacity by up to 268 pupils. This flexibility provides comfort that the Council could secure access to more than sufficient additional permanent capacity to address the projected upper scenario of stabilised demand should this ever materialise. Based on the layout of the additional land holding and design of a potential extension this could be delivered without disrupting the existing school operations.

It is estimated that it would take approximately three years to deliver a permanent extension and therefore this would require to be factored into any relevant future decision in this regard.

### **Utilisation of surplus capacity at Bishopton Primary School**

Bishopton Primary has a maximum capacity of 519 pupils and is currently operating at 70% capacity. Edge Analytics supported roll modelling indicates that the roll at the school will gradually decrease, reducing to in the region of 50% capacity by 2033/34.

It would be a feasible option to utilise the spare capacity at Bishopton Primary School on a permanent basis by matching demand to the available capacity across the three schools in Dargavel and Bishopton. This would require a future redrawing of catchment boundaries. This would merit consideration given some neighbourhoods within Dargavel Village are as close to Bishopton Primary as they are to either the existing or proposed primary school sites.

This option offers a practical solution that requires no physical intervention and is cost-effective short-term, avoiding the need to invest in a permanent extension and making maximum and efficient use of the existing available school estate.

However, it is acknowledged that Bishopton Primary School is predominantly an early 1960's construction and will inevitably have a limited future lifespan. In addition, in considering future investment needs linked to achieving the Council's net zero ambitions, the age of Bishopton Primary may, on value for money grounds, direct the Council to a future replacement strategy rather than a net zero retrofit. In such circumstances and based on its existing catchment area a replacement project would deliver a much smaller school aligned to the existing and projected school roll at that time.

In this context therefore any cost benefit of permanently utilising capacity at Bishopton Primary rather than investing in an extension at Dargavel Primary School may be marginal and limited to merely achieving a relatively short delay in timing of investment in new build capacity. Such cost benefit perspectives would require to be considered amongst other factors as part of the assessment carried out at the appropriate future point in time.

- **Additional Temporary Capacity**

Should additional short-term capacity be required to manage a peak in demand, the Council will continue to have a number of alternative options



to consider and assess at a future point in time and which can be framed to meet the specific demand in terms of scale and length of time the additional capacity demand is expected to last.

### **Modular Units at Dargavel Primary School**

The existing temporary arrangements at Dargavel Primary, which are to date working successfully and effectively from an educational perspective and have been well received by the school community, have clearly demonstrated that additional modular capacity can be introduced if required. This option would therefore be available to be reintroduced at a future point in time if necessary. This option could also be introduced whilst any extension was being delivered to the existing school.

### **Use of surplus capacity at Bishopton Primary**

Similar to current arrangements, Bishopton Primary school could be used to provide relief capacity for a short period if demand exceeded available in-take capacity.

### **Use of flexible capacity at existing schools**

Should relatively limited temporary additional demand emerge that is expected to occur for only a short period of time, there would remain the option to consider the use of flexible capacity at the existing Dargavel Primary School and second primary school.

The existing Dargavel Primary, has an operational design capacity of 430 pupils, with the ability to expand to 530 for shorter periods through the flexible use of space. In addition, the planned second primary school to be delivered is planned to have an operational capacity of 800. Equally, the second primary school will have flexibility as a core design principle and is expected to have a similar ability to flexibly accommodate above its planned operational capacity to meet short term demand.

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## **5. Next Steps**

- 5.1 Officers will continue to monitor all available data and report back regularly to this board. This will provide opportunities to review the longer term projection as live data and trends become increasingly available and support timely decision making should any increase in provision, be that temporary or permanent, be identified as a future requirement.

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## **Implications of this report**

- 1. Financial**  
None
- 2. HR and Organisational Development**  
None.
- 3. Community/Council Planning**  
None.

4.     **Legal**  
None.
5.     **Property/Assets**  
None.
6.     **Information Technology**  
None.
7.     **Equality and Human Rights**  
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only.
8.     **Health and Safety**  
None.
9.     **Procurement**  
None.
10.    **Risk**  
None.
11.    **Privacy Impact**  
None.
12.    **Cosla Policy Position**  
None.
13.    **Climate Risk**  
None.

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#### **List of Background Papers**

None.

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*Children's Services*

*JC*

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**To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board**

**On: 18 January 2024**

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**Report by: Director of Children's Services**

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**Heading: Education Scotland Inspection of Bishopton Primary School**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Bishopton Primary School was inspected by Education Scotland in August 2023 as part of a national sample of education. Education Scotland uses different models of inspection and at Bishopton Primary School the full model approach was deployed. Inspectors assessed the school with a focus on four quality indicators which are referenced in How Good is our School? 4

Quality Indicator 1.3	Leadership of Change
Quality Indicator 2.3	Learning, teaching and assessment.
Quality Indicator 3.1	Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion.
Quality Indicator 3.2	Raising attainment and achievement.

- 1.2 This was a very positive inspection which evaluated all quality indicators as ‘

Quality Indicator 1.3	Very Good
Quality Indicator 2.3	Good
Quality Indicator 3.1	Very Good
Quality Indicator 3.2	Very Good

- 1.3 As part of the inspection model the following area was also reviewed:

Quality Indicator 2.1 Safeguarding

Education Scotland do not attach an evaluative grade to this. Instead in the Summary of Inspection Findings there are evaluative statements provided which are positive and contribute to the overall school ratings.

- 1.4 The inspection report in the form of a letter to parents, published by Education Scotland on 5 December 2023, is attached as an appendix to this report and

is also available from the Director of Children's Services or from the Education Scotland website.

1.5 The letter to parents identified four key strengths of the school.

- The headteacher and senior leaders encourage and support staff effectively to take responsibility for leading improvements. All staff feel trusted to lead changes to improve and enhance learning experiences for children.
- Staff use a range of nurturing approaches to maintain a very positive and supportive environment. Children respond well to the encouragement and support they receive and are able to progress well as a result.
- Children are confident, articulate, and happy in school. They respect each other and are proud of their school. They welcome opportunities to take on leadership roles.
- Across the school, children have high levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy, Children have meaningful opportunities to apply their learning and skills in a variety of situations and through a wide range of activities beyond the school day.

1.6 The inspection report also identified two areas for further improvement:

- Continue to develop whole school approaches to assessing children's progress and attainment, involving parents in the review of how and when information is shared. To support this improvement, staff should further develop the work they currently do with other schools to continue to ensure that national standards are applied and maintained.
- Staff should build on the highly effective practice that already exists to develop greater consistency in delivering high quality learning and teaching across the school.

1.7 There is an agreed set of procedures for responding to inspection reports which will support the school and Children's Services to plan how the area for further improvement will be addressed. Actions are detailed within the school improvement plan which is shared with parents. In addition, the school will be supported in its improvement journey by Children's Services.

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## 2. Recommendations

2.1 Members of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board are asked to note and celebrate the key strengths and recognise the areas for further improvement in the Education Scotland report on Bishopton Primary School.

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### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Following a pause to inspections due to the pandemic, Education Scotland's routine programme of inspection of schools and early years settings resumed in September 2022. Children's Services welcomes the process of audit undertaken by Education Scotland as supportive to continuous improvement in Renfrewshire's education establishments. The school team at Bishopton Primary School approached the inspection in a positive manner and embraced it as a professional learning opportunity in partnership with colleagues at Education Scotland.
  - 3.2 The report includes two areas for further improvement, and progress in addressing this will be monitored by Children's Services staff through the Quality Improvement Framework.
  - 3.3 The inspection report will inform planned improvement activity and will enable the school to build on the recognised strengths and focus further development on areas for improvement to enable the school to continue to deliver a quality educational provision.
- 

### **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** - None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community/Council Planning** – engaging with, and learning from external inspection, ensures that our Renfrewshire is thriving. High standards of education provision ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life so that they promote and contribute to a more prosperous, fairer society. It also ensures our Renfrewshire is well – by providing an environment which encourages care, welfare and development, establishments play a crucial role in developing children and young people so that they become responsible citizens.

The inspection process also supports delivery of the Council Plan cross-cutting theme of improving outcomes for children and families as well as other Council Plan key strategic outcomes, for example:

#### **Economy**

Equipping all children and young people to achieve success in life

#### **Fair**

- Creating inclusive and supportive learning environments for children and young people.
- Embedding children's rights in our decision-making processes

4. **Legal** – None

5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -  
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - None
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** - None
11. **Privacy Impact** - None
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – N/A
13. **Climate Risk** – None.

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**List of Background Papers** - The inspection report and additional evidence is published on the Education Scotland website.

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TMcG  
7 December 2023

**Author:**

Tracy McGillivray, Head of Education, [tracy.mcgillivray@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.mcgillivray@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

5 December 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In September 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Bishopton Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The headteacher and senior leaders encourage and support staff effectively to take responsibility for leading improvements. All staff feel trusted to lead changes to improve and enhance learning experiences for children.
- Staff use a range of nurturing approaches to maintain a very positive and supportive environment. Children respond well to the encouragement and support they receive and are able to progress well as a result.
- Children are confident, articulate, and happy in school. They respect each other and are proud of their school. They welcome opportunities to take on leadership roles.
- Across the school, children have high levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy, Children have meaningful opportunities to apply their learning and skills in a variety of situations and through a wide range of activities beyond the school day.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from Renfrewshire Council.

- Continue to develop whole school approaches to assessing children's progress and attainment, involving parents in the review of how and when information is shared. To support this improvement, staff should further develop the work they currently do with other schools to continue to ensure that national standards are applied and maintained.
- Staff should build on the highly effective practice that already exists to develop greater consistency in delivering high quality learning and teaching across the school.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Bishopton Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>very good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Inspection and Review | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. Renfrewshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Teri McIntosh  
HM Inspector





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**To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board**

**On: 18 January 2024**

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**Report by: Director of Children's Services**

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**Heading: Whole Family Wellbeing Update**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. This board paper is to update members of the progress of an area of Renfrewshire's Children's Service Partnership (RCSP) work to improve whole family wellbeing access for families and support.
- 1.2 The Scottish Government has provided Whole Family Wellbeing Funding to the RCSP to build local capacity for transformational system change and to scale up and drive the delivery of holistic whole family support services.
- 1.3 We know from local data that 18% of Renfrewshire's children live in families affected by poverty. Our communities face further challenge through a cost-of-living crisis, with the cost of heating our homes and buying food and basic provisions increasing. Some parents can feel isolated without a strong network of family support, not knowing who to turn to for help.
- 1.4 More and more of Renfrewshire's children and young people are seeking support with their mental health and wellbeing. We understand the link between adverse childhood experiences and the risk this presents to mental health and wellbeing. We also appreciate that the impacts of these events can sometimes carry through to adulthood, and that parents and carers might struggle to cope and respond positively to certain situations or challenges. This reinforces our approach to early intervention, and developing ways to work with children, young people, and their families to help them cope before reaching a crisis.
- 1.5 Through a series of workshops and data analysis the RCSP identified gaps in services for the following:

- families of children with a neurodevelopmental disorder for example Autistic Spectrum disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) either pre or post diagnosis
- families of children (0-8) requiring parenting support and/or support for distressed behaviours
- families of children 11-16 displaying distressed and/ or risk-taking behaviour
- families of children with disabilities

1.6 The desired outcomes of this work include:

- improved family wellbeing outcomes;
- reduced inequalities in family wellbeing;
- reduction in families requiring crisis intervention;
- reduction in the number of children and young people living away from home and
- increase in families taking up support.

1.7 Local third sector and community organisations can play a vital role in supporting families within their local communities and are able to use local knowledge and connections to build a network of support around vulnerable families.

1.8 There are three main aspects of delivery for the plan agreed by the RCSP for the Renfrewshire Whole Family Wellbeing:

### **Service Redesign; Request a Service Approach; Building Capacity in Third Sector Organisations**

## **2. Progress**

2.1 The Whole Family Wellbeing Manager took up post full time in July, supported by a project manager. Networking and engagement with key partners were undertaken during the first few weeks in post as well as engagement with staff in scope for redesign.

2.2 **Service Redesign** – work has been underway with staff from the Home Link Service; Families First Service and the Care Experienced Home Link Team to create a whole wellbeing service with various access points for families from community to school based on the staged intervention approach and building on existing good practice. The service will aim to provide streamlined and consistent delivery of evidence-based approaches including parenting approaches. Capacity will be enhanced for the delivery of more early intervention and preventative family support through the commissioning of third sector organisations. A monitoring and evaluation framework will be developed with an agreed dataset and quality improvement process built on Supporting Families: A National Self-Assessment Toolkit for Change (Scottish Government).

- 2.3 The new structure for the new Family Wellbeing Service will be ready for January 2024. Staff induction, training and development will take place alongside the work to deliver on the new request for assistance system. During this time staff in the Community Family Wellbeing Team will be establishing themselves across Renfrewshire localities, linking with 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations, families, and the community to develop an identity and a presence locally. The corporate communication team will work with the service during this time to ensure that all stakeholders both internal and external are alerted to the development and focus for the new service, which will be launched by March 2024.
- 2.4 **Request a Service approach:** Building on the work that was started through REN 10 this cross-directorate workstream is sourcing a digital solution to enable families and practitioners to access a simple online platform which will guide them to support.
- 2.5 **Building capacity in third sector organisations:** in line with the fund criteria a proportion of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund has been ringfenced for direct access by third sector organisations (TSO) on a commissioning basis. The application process went live early August 2023 via Engage Renfrewshire's Funding E-alert and communication was also sent to all members of the "Our Children Forum as well as being posted on the Renfrewshire Council website. A guidance document was developed with support from Engage Renfrewshire and was made available with the online application form.

Two funds have been made available:

Fund 1: "Community Grassroots" - maximum of £50k with bids being accepted between £500 - £5,000k.

Fund 2: "Community Step-Change" - maximum of £200k with bids being accepted up to £50k.

The TSO was asked to align their bid to one or more of the five priority areas stated in section 1.5 of this document.

- 2.6 There were 17 applications for funding and the selection panel used a pre-agreed scoring matrix to assign the over 200K worth of grants. The delivery of these interventions will begin in the new year and the referral process will be shared. The next round of funding will be announced in early January 2024. All unsuccessful bids received feedback to support reapplying if they so wish.
- 2.7 **Other Progress** - In order to measure the success of interventions we are piloting a Whole Family Wellbeing Scale that has been developed by East Renfrewshire's Educational Psychologists. It is designed to assist families and professionals to measure and reflect on family levels of wellbeing, and support self-reliance, build resilience and thereby preventing negative outcomes.

The scale is evidence based and measures:

- Family bonding
- Affection
- Togetherness
- Respect
- Communication
- Openness

2.8 **Under pinned by robust quality assurance** – it is important that we ensure that all services working with our children and young people improve outcomes and so we are developing a robust quality assurance programme. This will

- encourage services to scrutinise and reflect on practice and identify strengths and areas for improvement;
- enable recognition of the work of partners which are having a positive impact and where there might be gaps;
- identify where quality needs to be maintained; where improvement is needed and where services should be working towards achievement excellence in service delivery and
- help all services to focus on the individual and collective areas of expertise and good practice and use this learning to further develop services and celebrate success.

2.9 **Potential** – there are a number of areas of work within other directorates that support children and families, and work will be undertaken to map all interventions and services to ensure there is an effective supporting families strategy.

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### 3. Recommendations

3.1 This work is part of Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership and is for noting by members of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board. If members would like more information about any aspect of the report or the work of the Whole Family Wellbeing team, then please contact the Whole Family Wellbeing Lead Education Manager Susan Bell [susan.bell-hq@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:susan.bell-hq@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

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### 4. Background

4.1 Renfrewshire's Children's Services Partnership (RCSP) is responsible for ensuring that services delivered to children, young people and their families in Renfrewshire are the best they can be. Membership of the RCSP include the council, other public sector organisations, and the third sector. Together, we identify local priorities and plan how we can join up to add value and deliver services to children, young people and their families that make a real difference to their lives.

4.2 One of the aims of the RCSP is for family support to be readily available to families that need it. We want to make sure that families are able to

access the help they need, where and when they need it. We want parents to be able to access holistic support which addresses the needs of children and adults in a family at the time of need rather than at crisis point. This will help families to flourish and reduce the chances of family breakdown, and of children entering the care system.

- 4.3 The national vision is for family support to be readily available to families that need it. This is echoed by Renfrewshire and through this work we want to make sure that families are able to access the help they need, where and when they need it. This is in line with our ambitions to #keepthepromise as it will enable us to work better together, to keep families together through providing unstigmatized access to early and effective universal support along with intensive family support.
- 4.4 Throughout the work to implement the whole family wellbeing approach the term holistic support is used. Holistic support should address the needs of children and adults in a family at the time of need rather than at crisis point. This will help families to flourish and reduce the chances of family breakdown, and of children entering the care system. The same preventive interventions should also support parents' ability to engage with the labour market. These interventions could help parents/carers to pursue qualifications or progress in employment, thereby enabling them to improve their financial situation.
- 4.5 The Whole Family Wellbeing Funding (WFWF) is a £500 million investment over the life of this Parliament (2022 to 2026) to:
- support the whole system transformational change required to reduce the need for crisis intervention.
  - shift investment towards prevention and early intervention.

Renfrewshire's share of this is around 900K and this was provided to the Renfrewshire's Children's Services Partnership to scale up and drive the delivery of whole family support and build capacity for change.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community/Council Planning** – engaging with, and learning from external inspection, ensures that our Renfrewshire is thriving. High standards of education provision ensure that children and young people are given the best start in life so that they promote and contribute to a more prosperous, fairer society. It also ensures our Renfrewshire is well – by providing an environment which encourages care, welfare and development, establishments play a crucial role in developing children and young people so that they become responsible citizens.

The inspection process also supports delivery of the Council Plan cross-cutting theme of improving outcomes for children and families as well as other Council Plan key strategic outcomes, for example:

### **Economy**

Equipping all children and young people to achieve success in life

### **Fair**

- Creating inclusive and supportive learning environments for children and young people.
- Embedding children's rights in our decision-making processes

4. **Legal** – None

5. **Property/Assets** - None

6. **Information Technology** - None

7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** - None

9. **Procurement** – None

10. **Risk** - None

11. **Privacy Impact** - None

12. **Cosla Policy Position** – N/A

13. **Climate Risk** – None.

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**List of Background Papers** - None.

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TMcG  
05/12/23

**Author:** Tracy McGillivray, Head of Education, [tracy.mcgillivray@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.mcgillivray@renfrewshire.gov.uk)




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**To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board**

**On: 18 January 2024**

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**Report by: Director of Children's Services**

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**Heading: Annual Report of the Fostering and Adoption Service  
2022/23**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. This report provides elected members with the opportunity to review the 16th annual report of Renfrewshire's Fostering and Adoption Service (appendix1).
  - 1.2. The annual report sets out the work undertaken by the Fostering and Adoption Panel and the Fostering and Adoption Service in the period 1 August year 2022 to 31 July 2023. The annual report notes that on 31 July 2023 there were 75 fostering households approved by Renfrewshire. During the period covered by this report, 13 children and young people had a permanence plan considered by the panel and approved by the agency decision maker.
  - 1.3. The annual report notes that the Fostering and Adoption Service was inspected by the Care Inspectorate in January 2023. The inspectors reported strengths in the services and awarded grades of good or very good for the services provided.
  - 1.4. The report considers the future work of the panel and the continued work of the fostering and adoption service.
- 

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. The Education and Children's Services Policy Board is asked to:
    - a) note the contents of the Fostering and Adoption Annual Report 2022/23 attached as appendix 1.
-

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. The Looked After (Scotland) Regulations 2009 and the Adoption Agencies (Scotland) Regulations 2009 require Social Work in its role as a Fostering and Adoption agency to operate a Fostering Panel and an Adoption Panel. This panel has the responsibility for putting forward recommendations to the agency decision makers John Trainer (Head of Child Care and Justice Services) and Michelle McCargo, (Children's Services Manager) regarding the suitability of people to adopt or foster children. Furthermore, the Panel considers and approves plans for children to be adopted or for the Council to apply for Permanence Orders on a child. The Panel also considers and approves the matching of a particular child with a particular family where the plan is for the child to live there permanently.
- 3.2. Renfrewshire operates a Fostering Panel and Adoption Panel with one constitution. The panel separates out the Fostering business from the Adoption business to ensure that the appropriate regulations are met regarding a quorum, and for the attendance of the legal and medical advisers. The panel has two chairpersons who are independent from the work of the service: One is a Social Work manager, and the other is from the Association for Fostering Adoption and Kinship Scotland.
- 3.3. There are currently 12 members of the panel comprising elected members, social work staff, a legal adviser, a medical adviser, carers, independent panel members, and an independent member from the Association for Fostering Adoption and Kinship Scotland. The panel sits at least monthly. There are typically 3 panel members at each meeting along with appropriate advisors. The panel considered 71 agenda items over the course of the year.
- 3.4. The panel has a unique overview of the work being undertaken to assess and approve foster carers and adopters alongside the work being undertaken by social workers to progress plans for children who cannot be cared for within their own family. The annual report has been produced as a means of sharing this work with a wider audience and to assist in the process of service planning.
- 3.5. Renfrewshire had 75 active households of foster carers on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022. In the period 1/08/22 and 31/7/2023 an additional 6 households were registered as foster carers, and 4 foster care households left the service, 2 foster care households left the service due to changes in their circumstances, 2 households retired after a lengthy career in fostering.
- 3.6. The report notes the ongoing need to recruit Renfrewshire foster carers and adopters because of children being accommodated and in need of permanent care, and our commitment to reducing the number of children being placed externally. In the past we have had high-profile recruitment activity which only produced 1 or 2 more applications to foster. Most of our fostering applications come from people who already have foster carers as friends or family. There is a national difficulty in recruitment of foster carers. The service continue to work with communication and marketing to consider how best to promote fostering recruitment.



- 3.7. In the period 1/08/22 and 31/07/2023 a total of 6 Renfrewshire households were approved as adopters at the Renfrewshire panel.
- 3.8. The Fostering and Adoption services are subject to regulation and were last inspected by the Care Inspectorate in January 2023. The Care Inspectorate reports were positive with gradings of very good or good being applied to all domains inspected.
- 3.9. The Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014 increases the responsibility/ duty of Local Authorities to provide continuing care placements for young adults up to the age of 21. This means that more young people are remaining in the same placement after they are 18. The service continues to assess foster carers to become supported carers wherever this is appropriate.
- 3.10. There are currently 13 young adults living with supported carers. Many of these carers were previously the young adults' foster carers.
- 3.11. The Children (Scotland) Act 2020 became law in 2021 and places new duties on local authorities to place brothers and sisters together in placements and place a new duty on local authorities to promote contact between brothers and sisters who are looked after. This is in keeping with the independent care review report, The Promise.
- 3.12. Renfrewshire approved the "Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together Policy" in May 2021. The policy contains the following pledge "When children come into care Renfrewshire will place brothers and sisters together". The policy recognises that there will be times that brothers, and sisters can't be placed together but requires us to report on this. The Fostering and Adoption Service operate within this policy.

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## Implications of this report

1. **Financial**  
None
2. **HR and Organisational Development**  
None.
3. **Community/Council Planning**  
  
Our Renfrewshire is safe - *The provision of foster care provides Renfrewshire's children with safety and care.*
4. **Legal**  
None.
5. **Property/Assets**  
None.
6. **Information Technology**  
None.

**7. Equality and Human Rights**

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.

**8. Health and Safety**

None.

**9. Procurement**

None.

**10. Risk**

None.

**11. Privacy Impact**

None.

**12. Cosla Policy Position**

None.

**13. Climate Risk**

None.

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**List of Background Papers**

(a) Background Paper 1: Fostering and Adoption Annual Report.

The foregoing background papers will be retained within children's services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Clare Cuning 0141 487 4297

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**Children's Services**

CC 6/12/22

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**THE FOSTERING AND  
ADOPTION  
PANEL AND SERVICE  
  
ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023**

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## Foreword

Welcome to the annual report of Renfrewshire's Fostering and Adoption Service and The Fostering and Adoption Panel. This report reviews the previous year and looks to future developments.

On 31 July 2023, Renfrewshire Council had 627 Looked After Children. Of these, 170 children and young people were looked after at home, 270 were looked after by kinship carers or friends/relatives and 167 were accommodated with foster carers, in pre-adoption arrangements or within residential placements. Renfrewshire Council had 75 Fostering households at this time.

Children who are looked after in foster care, can either be with Renfrewshire foster carers or with foster carers approved by an external agency or charity. Wherever possible we try to have children live with Renfrewshire foster carers. On 31 July 2023 there were 21 children/young people living with foster carers from external fostering agencies compared to 39 in 2022. This is a substantial decrease over this period and is in line with Renfrewshire's strategy to ensure children are cared for by their own family, in kinship or with Renfrewshire's internal services. The number of children placed with external foster care has also reduced as they reach the age of 18 and are no longer reported as children.

The work of the Fostering and Adoption Service continues to ensure that children are living in the best and safest environments to meet their individual needs, and that children who require to live permanently in foster care are matched with an appropriate foster family at the earliest opportunity.

The Fostering and Adoption Service remains committed to ensuring that the principles of Renfrewshire's 'Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together' policy are embedded in all aspects of its practice. Where we cannot place brothers and sisters together, the service supports natural family time between brothers and sisters outwith formal arrangements wherever possible.

The Fostering and Adoption Panel provides an important quality assurance role in ensuring that the work undertaken to assess children's long-term care needs, and the assessment of their potential carers, is carried out to the highest standards. The Panel's role is to make recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker who ultimately approves children's permanence plans or confirms that a household can adopt or become foster carers.

The Panels continue to be busy. Between 1 August 2022 and 31 July 2023, 14 children's permanence plans were approved by the Agency Decision Maker.

We hope that you enjoy reading this year's annual report.

John Trainer  
Head of Child Care and Justice  
Chief Social Work Officer

Michelle McCargo  
Social Work Children's Services Manager

## Introduction

This is the 16<sup>th</sup> annual report of Renfrewshire Council's Fostering and Adoption Panel and Service.

Renfrewshire Council has a statutory duty to operate fostering and adoption panels. In Renfrewshire we have one panel which carries out both functions.

The Adoption and Fostering Panel operates within the statutory framework of the Adoption Agencies (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (Part II) (AAS Regulations) and the Looked After (Scotland) Regulations 2009 (Part VI) (the LAC Regulations).

These regulations set the basis for the membership of the panel, the frequency of meetings, the appointment of advisors and the different functions of the panel.

The Renfrewshire Fostering and Adoption Panel has at least one business meeting with panel members, advisors, and the Agency Decision Makers in attendance on an annual basis. It is good practice for all panels to have regular planned business meetings to review their overall functioning. The quorum for individual meetings of the panel is three members, and we ensure this number includes people with relevant experience and a range of backgrounds to provide robust and independent scrutiny of the business presented.

Responsibility for the functions and decisions of the panel rests with the Chief Social Work Officer. Authority is delegated to a Senior Manager in Children's services to chair the panel. We have a second chair from the Association of Fostering and Kinship Adoption Scotland. The Head of Child Care and Justice and the Social Work Children's Services Manager, act as Agency Decision Makers for the panel.

The purpose of the Panel is to consider prospective foster carers, prospective adopters, and supported/continuing carers. In addition, the Panel considers individual children's needs for alternative permanent carers (where the care plan for the child is that they do not return home to their birth family), this includes considering the most appropriate legal route to secure this outcome. The Panel also considers the matching of a child with specific foster carers or adoptive parents.

The fostering and adoption team is responsible for the recruitment, training, supervision and support of suitable foster carers and prospective adopters. Ensuring we have sufficient carers with the skills and experience necessary to meet the needs of the diverse range of babies, children and young people who need care away from their birth families is the over-arching objective of the team.

## Context

The work of the Fostering and Adoption Panel should be viewed in the context of the overall numbers of Renfrewshire Council's Looked After and Accommodated children.

### Accommodated and Looked After Children/Young People

As of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023, Renfrewshire Council had 627 Looked After Children/Young People. The number of children living in Kinship arrangements has increased from the previous year \*. The number of children living with Renfrewshire Council's foster carers remained the same whilst those residing with independent/charity sector foster carers reduced. The number of children residing in independent sector foster carers decreased again in the reporting year continuing a trend of steadily decreasing each year over the past 10 years.

	31/07/2022	31/07/2023
Local Authority – Children in Children's Houses	17	20
Local Authority – Children in Foster Carer	110	112
Independent Sector Children in Foster Care	39	21
Independent Sector Children in Residential School	13	11
Independent Sector Children in Residential Special Needs	18	18
Pre – Adoption	8	2
Independent Sector Children – Secure School	3	3
Children Looked After by Kinship carers/friends/relatives	230	270 *
Children Looked After at home	143	170
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>627</b>

\*This figure includes 25 young people who have been with kinship carers for a number of years but were previously considered not to be looked after and accommodated. Following review in April of 2023 of the circumstances of these children it was decided they should be included in the reporting of looked after children. Over the 12 months there has therefore been an increase of 15 young people in new kinship placements.

<b>Cases presented to the Fostering and Adoption Panel</b>	<b>August 2022 –</b>	<b>July 2023</b>
Business Item	Previous Year	Aug 22 - July 23
Child adoption plans and links	6	4
Approval of Renfrewshire adopters (households)	2	6
Approval of adopters to increase registration	1	0
Conversion of Foster carers to Adopters	1	0
Approval of Adopters for children from overseas.	0	0
De registration of adopters	1	0
Review of Registration (Adoption)	1	1
Request/Review of Adoption Allowance	3	2
Children's Permanence Order plans	9	9
Links with Permanent Foster Carer	6	4
Approval of new Foster Carer	2	6
Approval of Foster Carer – change from interim to permanent status	6	4
De registration of foster carers	9	4
Approval of Supported Carers	8	5
Initial review of Foster Carers after 1 year	3	2
Foster Carer Reviews (after year 3)	20	24
Review/Change of Foster Carer Registration	1	0
<b>Total Number of Agenda Items</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>71</b>

**There were a total of 16 Fostering and Adoption Panels held between 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023.**



## **Panel Membership**

The service has continued to have a consistent and committed panel membership over the past year. However, the number of panel members has reduced to 12 including 2 chairpersons – one of whom is independent and commissioned from the Association of Fostering, Kinship and Adoption Scotland. Over recent months there has been an active recruitment of panel members to ensure that the panel membership continues to reflect a wide range of experience from a range of areas including social work, education, health, independent sector, and those with lived experience of fostering and adoption. As such we have five new panel members going through the induction process.

The medical advisers continue to offer a valuable service and support to the panel in respect of provision and interpretation of medical information in relation to the children and adults being presented to panel. The medical adviser provides up-to-date written information regarding any health issues in relation to a child or a prospective foster carer or adoptive parent.

The panel has a representative from the council's legal services who acts as legal advisor and provides written legal advice to the Panel in relation to adoption and permanence work. The legal advisor attends the Panel whenever permanence is being considered, and on other occasions where the chairperson feels their advice is required.

The Senior Social Worker for Adoption acts as the professional panel advisor.

Panel members attend appraisal meetings with the panel chair and panel professional advisor. Feedback from panel members is gathered from this meeting and ideas generated are incorporated into the business meeting agenda for consideration on how to improve the functioning and participation at panel.

## **Staffing**

The structure of the Fostering and Adoption Service is: -

Social Work Manager (operations) - Registered manager of the service.

Service Manager (responsible for overall management of the fostering and adoption service).

1 Senior Social Worker (responsible for adoption and permanence service, and management of staff)

1 Senior Social Worker (responsible for the fostering service and management of staff)

9 full time Social Workers

1 part time social worker

2 social work assistants

The fostering and adoption service now has a separate fostering team and an adoption and permanence team. This separation allowed the development of more specialist skills regarding fostering and adoption. Both teams work closely together and share expertise and learning.

## **Commitment to permanence planning 01/08/2022 to 31/07/2023**

Between 01.08.21 and 31.7.22, Renfrewshire has progressed adoption and permanence plans for 13 children. This is fewer than last year with more Permanence Order Plans being approved than Adoption Plans. Renfrewshire Council recognises the importance in progressing plans for children within appropriate timescales. There are different initiatives being implemented by senior management to support and enable social work staff involved in permanence work to undertake both the direct work with the child and family and to complete the necessary reports. These initiatives include training for social workers and carers on issues specifically relevant to permanence, working closely with social work staff with regards to the needs of the child and planning for adoption or permanency.

In line with our commitment to keeping children with their birth families where it is safe to do so, we are working to improve identification of potential alternative care arrangements within parents' wider family network at the earliest possible stage. This important work with parents occurs before presentation to the permanence panel, however, even where permanence outwith the family becomes necessary, it can provide the child with important life-long links with their family and contribute to more positive long-term outcomes for children.

The decision to place a child permanently outwith their birth family rightly involves a high level of assessment to ensure the plan is in the best interests of the child and will meet their needs throughout their childhood. During the permanence process, checks and balances are in place to ensure the best possible outcome for the child. Permanence planning work is complex however, it is also highly rewarding when children find new 'forever' families and have the opportunity to thrive into adulthood.

### **Inspection**

The Fostering and Adoption Service is a regulated service, which is registered and subject to inspection by the Care Inspectorate. The last inspection took place in January 2023. This inspection included the Supported carers Service Inspection at the same time.

The Services were inspected using the following quality Indicators (QI):

QI 1 How well do we support people's wellbeing and

QI 5 How well is our care and support planned?

The care Inspectorate grade services from unsatisfactory, weak, adequate, good and very good.

The Fostering Service received grades of good for QI 1 and QI 5.

The Adoptions Service received grades of good for QI 1 and very good for QI 5.

The Supported carers service received grades of good for QI1 and very good for QI 5.

The inspection was using a new QI framework and we have scored highly in comparison with other Local Authorities. The Inspections recognised the very good work that all services provide.

## **Report on Fostering Service**

The fostering service continues to offer a high standard of care to children in our care. All supervision and unannounced visits have continued face to face. The Fostering and Adoption Panel and Foster Carer Reviews have also returned to being face to face in the office. There continues to be some training and other related meetings offered in a hybrid format.

### **Developments within the Fostering Service 2022 – 2023**

- During Fostering Fortnight in May 2023, the service made use of social media, offering virtual and in person drop in opportunities for anyone interested in fostering and also articles from our foster carers were shared.
- The Service continued to work with neighbouring authorities regarding shared services.
- We continued the introduction of a “Letter to the Child” from Foster Carers to Children in their care which form part of their life story.
- Children in foster care continued to be involved in participation strategies through the Breakthrough group with Who Cares? Scotland.
- Managers within the Fostering Service continued to attend Social Work Scotland meetings and liaise with neighbouring authorities.
- We have encouraged birth families to contribute to foster care reviews.
- We have continued to try to increase the number of Continuing Carers and Supported Carers
- The service began embedding Egress which is an electronic communication system to allow us to communicate electronically and securely with our foster carers.

### **Recruitment activity/ Preparation groups**

The Service Manager and the Fostering Senior Social Worker work with Renfrewshire Council’s Communication team to continue to develop and refine our recruitment strategy. It is recognised nationally that there is a shortage of foster carers. We know that fear of the unknown and concerns about managing complex behaviours often get in the way of people coming forward to foster. For these reasons, our recruitment strategy will focus on the excellent wraparound support we provide to our carers.

If the person who has enquired wishes to take the next step, an initial visit is completed by a social worker from the fostering team. After the initial visit, a discussion takes place between the visiting social worker and the senior social worker to consider whether the enquirers should be invited to preparation groups. (See appendix 1 for fostering criteria). The usual process is that applications to be assessed as a foster carer are not submitted by applicants until after they have completed the preparation groups.

Between 1 August 2022 - 31 July 2023 the service assessed 6 households to become foster carers. Of these, four were assessed as short break carers, and two as interim carers.

The preparation groups are the start of the assessment process and an opportunity for the participants to receive more in-depth information and to discuss the implications of fostering and as such it is important that all enquirers attend. Experienced foster carers come along to talk to the group about their different experiences of caring for foster children. The preparation groups cover a range of topics including managing challenging behaviour, brain development, attachment issues, safer care and working with birth parents.

Preparation groups run for five or six evening sessions. The facilitators from the fostering team make use of the Fostering Network 'Skills to Foster' materials, as well as up-to-date research and our own training materials.

There were no preparation groups held within the reporting period due to a shortage of interest.

### **New foster carers and carers deregistered**

In the period August 2022 – July 2023, an additional six fostering households were approved as new foster carers. Two households were approved as interim and four households as short break foster carers. During this period there were also four fostering households deregistered. The reasons for the deregistration of fostering households were that two fostering household resigned due to a change in their personal circumstances and two fostering households retired after many years and coming to the end of their fostering career.

### **Foster Carer Reviews**

Foster Carers have a review by the Fostering Panel at the end of their first year of fostering and every three years thereafter. Outwith this timescale, foster carers will also return to Panel if their registration requires a review due to a change in registration, consideration of a complaint or allegation, breakdown, or a significant change in circumstances.

Between 1 August 2022 and 31 July 2023 the Fostering and Adoption Panel reviewed 26 foster care households.

Foster Carer Reviews are an opportunity for foster carers to talk about their experience, training, and support etc. Renfrewshire Council's foster carers, in the main expressed satisfaction with their experiences of fostering and their learning and remain enthusiastic and committed. They have found the support provided by their social worker to be beneficial and available as required. Foster carers have attended less training during this period as many have stated that the training program on offer currently is courses many have attended previously. We will continue to encourage foster carers to attend this training because even if it is a course they have attended before no two training sessions are identical, and they will always get something different out of each training as it is always updated.

Foster carers registration is internally reviewed on an annual basis by Social Work Managers. The foster carers provide written and verbal contribution to the review process, as well as written reports from their birth children. Reports by their supervising social worker and child's social worker are all part of the review process. Foster children are encouraged to contribute to the review process and there has also been a development which has seen more response with regards to birth parents being encouraged to submit a report for the Foster Carer Review regarding the care their child/children is receiving.

Within the reporting period, 55 foster carer household reviews took place in total including those at panel.

The duties of the supervising social workers from the fostering team are to keep regular contact with the foster carers, this includes home visits and telephone contact. Home visits generally take place on a four to six-weekly basis, depending on the issues arising. Home visits consist of supervision, training, and development, as well as performing a range of duties including ensuring health and safety checks are carried out annually, annual medical information is received and PVG checks are up to date. Safer caring policies are in place for each fostering household which include a minimum of two unannounced visits annually. Supervising social

workers will also attend Looked After Children review meetings. Joint visits by the child's social worker and the social worker from the fostering team takes places when a child first moves to live with a foster carer and routinely thereafter.

### **Permanent Foster Carers**

Nine children's plans for Permanence Orders were approved between 1 August 2022 – 31 July 2023, four of these children were linked to their current foster carers for the purpose of permanent fostering. These children remained with their carers who were re-assessed as permanent carers by the fostering team.

### **Foster Carer Training**

A Training program designed specifically for foster carers has been reintroduced in the reporting period with the support provided to foster carers by their supervising social worker continued to address training needs and the development of skills.

The fostering service continues to provide mandatory training on fire safety, first aid and safer caring. Some of this training was disrupted by the pandemic. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service resumed fire safety training in June 2022 which will be offered on an ongoing basis and all carers will be expected to attend. West of Scotland College is to restart first aid training. Mandatory training should be attended by foster carers every three years.

Social workers and foster carers can also attend external training courses. The Fostering Network and Association of Fostering and Kinship Adoption Scotland have provided training to new social workers within the Fostering and Adoption Team including Skills to Foster, the Role of the Supervising Social Worker and Assessment of foster carers and adopters. Staff have also attended other training relevant to their role.

### **Staying Connected Toolkit**

From July 2022 to July 2023, one social worker in the Fostering and Adoption Service undertook a year's secondment opportunity with Association of Fostering and Kinship Adoption Scotland, in the role of Staying Connected Project Co-ordinator. During this year she developed a new Toolkit for practitioners who support children to transition to permanent fostering, to adoption, and to kinship care. The Toolkit is informed by the most up to date research and policy guidance, to help practitioners support children and young people make successful moves, and to stay connected to the people important to them during these transitions and beyond. The Toolkit is not procedural; there are no forms, and it's not a 'how to' and 'when' approach. Instead, it encourages individualised and trauma informed practice that is guided by listening to children and young people. As such, it is fully congruent with the principles of The Promise.

The Toolkit has been launched across Scotland and has two main intended uses. Firstly, it can be used by those who deliver training to others. It includes PowerPoint slides and trainers notes for 4 sessions: Key Principles in Permanence Transitions, Transitions to Adoption, Transitions to Permanent Foster Care and Transitions to Kinship Care. Secondly, the Toolkit supports individual learning through a series of Briefing Papers and video presentations. Finally, there are also a series of case examples to support reflective learning in individual or group settings.

The worker has now returned to the Fostering and Adoption Service with a new network of resources, information and expertise which will support the team on an ongoing basis.

## **Foster Carers' Support Group**

The foster carers have their own informal support group where they can share information/experiences and any issues raised within the group are fed back to the fostering team via the carers supervising social worker or the foster carers consultation group. This group had to become a "WhatsApp" group during the pandemic with active and ongoing communication. Some carers were keen to get back to a face-to-face group, and while the WhatsApp group has continued and is used frequently, the Foster Carers restarted the monthly face to face group in December 2022.

The Fostering Service has facilitated 2 Foster Carer Coffee Mornings over the last year, these have been an informal opportunity, where all fostering households are invited along as well as all the fostering and adoption staff and managers. This is particularly beneficial for new carers and building networks of support. These have been highly attended events and it is hoped they will continue to be offered a few times per year.

The Foster Carers come along, tea/coffee and cakes are provided people can have a chat in a very informal setting, it is also an opportunity for foster carers to put a face to the names of staff members whom they may never have met in other circumstances.

## **Consultation Group**

The Carers Consultation Group met four times between August 2022 and July 2023. These have all been offered face to face in the office environment. All Foster Carers are invited to this group, and it is attended by the Senior Social Worker Fostering, the Service Manager/or Operations Manager and on one occasion the Head of Service. This provides an opportunity for foster carers to be kept updated with any changes within the service and discuss any issues that have arisen for them or other carers. It is also the opportunity for more informal discussion. Feedback to carers who do not attend is through the newsletter, minutes, or discussion with their own Supervising Social Worker.

## **Breakthrough Group**

The Breakthrough group is now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year and has been running on a monthly basis since 2015. This is a semi structured participation group for children and young people in foster care. This group is facilitated by Renfrewshire Council Children's Services and Who Cares? Scotland.

The group was originally set up to give children/young people a safe space with other children who may be experiencing similar issues whilst living in fostering families. The focus of the group was to support and facilitate the young peoples' voices on issues important to them. These voices and stories were then put in a newsletter, written, and produced by the young people. This was then sent out to all of Renfrewshire's young people currently in foster carer. We have around 9 regular group members, some of whom are original members from 2015.

Over the years the focus of the group has naturally evolved. During 2020 and 2021 the group had to move online with occasional face to face meet ups when it was safe to do so. In March 2022, the group were able to resume our monthly face to face group setting. At this point the young people felt a need for change and made the decision to embark on a different project as they felt their voices could be better heard in a different form other than and newsletter. They also decided to try and complete a project as a group as opposed to their individual stories being included in a newsletter.

The theme of their project was called 'Moving relationships' addressing the importance of maintaining significant relationships throughout their care journey. The young people wanted a different platform to share their views, initially thinking of doing something online or web based. We liaised with Duncan Wilson coordinator of The Promise Arts and Culture Programme, who after speaking with the young people and their thoughts of creating an animation, accessed funding from Future Paisley. Through these links, Duncan arranged for us to meet with an animation company called Toads Caravan, specifically Joanne Susskind. Joanna has, over the past 2 months, met with the young people and on 6 occasions, taking their thoughts and ideas and helping them create a short animation entitled 'Moving Relationship'. This animation is still in its editing stage and is hoped to be completed by December 2023.

The young people appear to have enjoyed this experience, learning new skills. Moving forward they are in discussion of potentially doing more art-based projects in the coming months.

### **Newsletter for Foster Carers**

The fostering newsletter is produced in Spring, Summer and Winter editions and distributed to all foster carers by e-mail. The focus of the newsletter is about providing the carers with updates on legal or practice changes that affect them or the children they care for, providing some thought-provoking articles about issues that affect fostered children, keeping them informed of changes within the child care team, and advertising training opportunities. Topics covered in the last year include updates on the implications of 'The Promise', protocols for children who go missing from placement, preparing children for children's hearings, therapeutic life story work, the importance of play in child development and the meaning of care records for young people. Much of the inspiration for the topic choice comes from the Carers' Consultation Group, the CELCIS website and Council's Children's Services 'Learning gone viral' newsletter. The fostering quarterly newsletter continues to go out to all fostering households. Foster carers are encouraged to contribute to the newsletter in relation to their learning and experiences.

### **Future developments of the fostering service 2023 – 2024**

1. Relaunch Book Group for foster carers.
2. Breakthrough Group supporting care experienced young people to continue monthly, with feedback from young people to inform service development.
3. Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) groups to be offered more frequently.
4. Review and provide training programme to carers, including evening training and training to support carers.
5. Produce professional development plan for carers.
6. Provide Sleep Scotland Programme to carers where required.
7. Support group for foster carers of teenagers.
8. Continue roll out implementation of the Letter to the Child.
9. Social event calendar for Carers and their families.
10. Feedback from Foster Carer Support Group monthly.
11. Convene Foster Carer Consultation Group at least 4 times per year including senior management. Feedback to inform service development.
12. Quarterly newsletter for foster carers.
13. Fostering Network membership for all carers.
14. Review Transition Planning and to include move to permanence including home.
15. Digitisation of records/communication by rolling out Egress to Carers.
16. Recording Policy for Carers.
17. Review Safer Care Practice.
18. Embed principles of The Promise by encouraging carers to become promise keepers.
19. Review paperwork to ensure is compliant with #keepthepromise.

20. Increase understanding of role of foster carer to child's social worker by attending locality team meetings with a carer.
21. Meeting with Corporate Communications to discuss Recruitment Strategy- focus on older children and children with disabilities.
22. Continue to increase social media exposure.
23. Reach out to LGBT+ during Fostering and Adoption week.
24. Continue to review process of preparation groups depending on numbers.
25. Introduce Assessment Agreement at start of assessment process.
26. Introduce support network meeting for new applicant during assessment process.
27. New Carers Support Group if numbers allow.
28. Continue to offer a mother and baby placement.

## **Report on Supported & Continuing Care Service 2023.**

Current carers and outcomes for young people;

We currently have 12 continuing carers and 1 supported carer supporting 13 of Renfrewshire's young adults. Of the 13 young people, 9 attend college placements fulltime or University, 4 have an apprenticeship or are in fulltime employment.

We are currently assessing a further supported care for another young person.

Additional Outcomes for our young people;

1 young person, moved onto independent living and secured their own tenancy, whilst attending college and working parttime.

Inspection process was mentioned earlier in this report.

Developments:

Staff have been trained in being able to deliver innovative training with use of Virtual reality headsets, providing powerful and informative scenarios and case studies to enhance carers learning experiences. One session has been delivered to carers with further opportunities to be rolled out in 2024.

## **Report on the Adoption Service**

### **Developments within the adoption service in Renfrewshire 2022- 2023**

1. Recruitment of new Fostering and Adoption Panel Members.
2. Significantly developed work with birth families by offering direct support to all birth parents and birth family members including birth brothers and sisters who have been affected by the loss of a child through adoption.
3. Further developed extended family members' participation in the assessment process through work with individual families.
4. Developed joint work and training opportunities with neighbouring local authorities to share expertise.



5. Reviewed the criteria, process and procedures for adoption support needs assessment, adoption support plans and reviews.
6. Ongoing development of support to birth parents with regards to understanding the plan for their child and supporting birth parents with letter box contact.
7. Further supporting children's transitions from foster care to adoption through the use of Child Appreciation Day where required.
8. Continued work with Scottish Adoption Support Services (SAAS - Barnardo's) for young people, birth parents and adopters requiring additional support, where appropriate.
9. Continued work with Scottish Adoption Register/Link maker.

### **Recruitment, Preparation & Assessment of Adoptive Parents**

Within the reporting period the Adoption Service received 26 initial enquiries which is two more than the figure of the previous year. Some of these did not progress due to a range of issues, and others continue to progress with their adoption journey. There were 4 preparation groups held, between March and September 2023. The feedback received was extremely positive, particularly in relation to guest speakers with lived experience. As a service we plan to review our preparation group materials with a focus on co-facilitation with adoptive parents going forward.

The Adoption Service has progressed 6 adoption applications (households) to the Adoption panel during the reporting period, and all were approved. Feedback received about the adoption assessment has highlighted that although the process is lengthy there is recognition that the content and discussions although at times difficult are necessary in preparing for the next stages of the adoption journey. Our work with support network meetings has received positive feedback about the value of these.

Renfrewshire Council's Adoption Service has continued to use Scotland's Adoption Register. Once applicants are approved as adopters their information and what age of child they have been approved for is added to the Register. Adoption social workers across Scotland can access this information should they be trying to place a child for adoption.

### **Family Finding**

There continues to be a need for adoptive parents for children of all ages particularly for brother and sister groups and older children. Nationally, there has been a reduction in the number of children being placed for adoption which has seen the average wait for a child identified for adoptive families' significantly increase. Consequently, there are a large number of adoptive parents on Scotland's Adoption Register.

Scotland's Adoption Register has reintroduced face to face Adoption Exchange days and Adoption Activity Days. The Register has continued to support practitioners in achieving permanence for children Scotland.

During the recording period, there has been active family finding for 4 children in Renfrewshire. Each has an adoptive family link identified, and 3 of these children have been placed with their adoptive family. These figures represent the same numbers as last year.

## The Adoption Register (Scotland) - National Position

Scotland's Adoption Register continues to be a statutory service fully funded by the Scottish Government which provides a free service to support local authorities and voluntary agencies with family finding activity. The Adoption Register is where Adoptive families once approved have their approval details registered. The Adoption Register is committed to facilitating social workers' overall goal of securing children's futures through moves to permanent families.

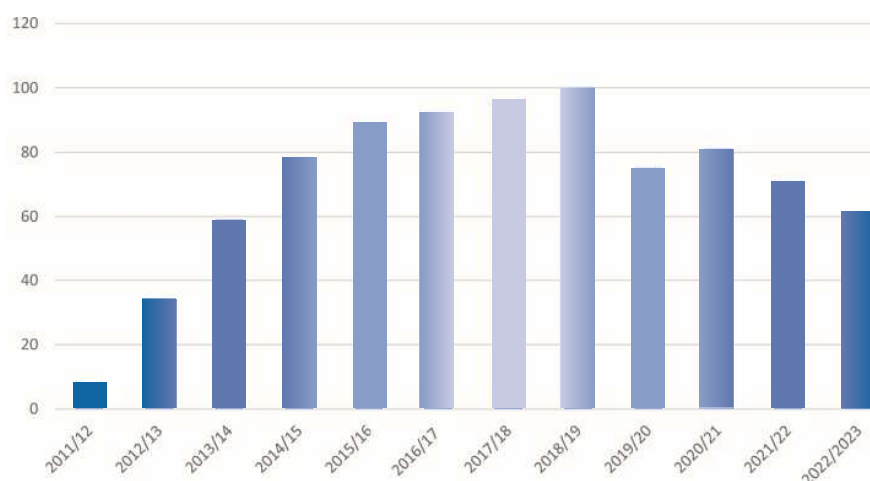
A total of 61 children were matched with adoptive families through the Scottish Adoption Register in 22/23.

The Register played an active role alongside Association of Fostering and Kinship Adoption Scotland and Adoption UK in Scotland in the delivery of Adoption Week Scotland 2022 which explored 'The connection with past, present, and future family'. The week's events included input from research projects, providing the opportunity for professionals, prospective adopters and adoptive parents to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the importance of maintaining links with birth families and paying careful attention to the planning of transitions for children moving to their adoptive homes.

The Adoption Register continues to improve the process and to support adoption agencies in reducing delays in matching children with adoptive families.

The end of year total of matches is a decrease on the previous year, down from 71 to 61 despite the increase in numbers of children being referred in the latter quarter of 22/23. Matches take time to explore and progress but that alone does not explain the lower figure.

There is greater evidence of children's plans being progressed following the delays caused by the impact of Covid on the completion of assessments and panel decisions. The Register continues to support Social Work Practitioners to ensure referrals are made in line with their statutory responsibilities and to offer practical support to colleagues and carers, whilst at the same time recognising the current pressures on Local Authorities due to staff recruitment and retention issues and delays caused by legal processes.



It should be noted that the trend for fewer adoptions in Scotland continues to reflect the UK wide experience of lower numbers of children moving to adoptive families. Despite this, there continues to be a vital role played by the Adoption Registers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## GENDER

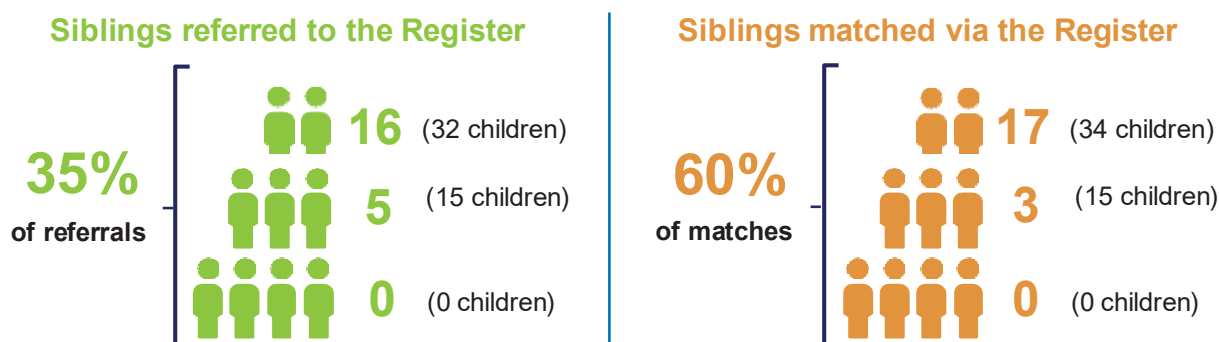
Of the 96 children referred to the Register in 22/23, 38 (40%) were girls and 58 (60%) were boys. This sees a return to the previous recordings of more boys than girls following a change in 21/22 where more girls than boys were referred to the Register since its inception in 2011.

## ETHNICITY

89 (92%) were white (82 White Scottish) and (7 White European). 2 (2%) were from an Asian background. 2 (2%) were from a multi-ethnic background. 1 (1%) were from Black African background. 2 (2%) were from other Ethnic background

## SIBLINGS

35% of the children referred to the Register in 2022/23 were part of a sibling group. This is a small decrease from 37% last year.



## Renfrewshire Adoption Plans and Links

During the period 01.08.2022 to 31.07.23, 4 children were presented to the Adoption Panel for consideration of their adoption plans and links. This is a slight decrease on the 6 adoption plans considered in the previous year. In all cases the Agency Decision Maker accepted the panel's recommendations to approve the adoption plan and links between the child and their prospective adopters.

Renfrewshire Council make good use of the Scottish Adoption Register by way of Link maker and Adoption Exchange days. The Scottish Government's GIRFEC strategy for Looked After Children and Young People (November 2015) identifies the achievement of 'early permanence' as one of its key strategic priorities. Legislation and guidance introduced in 2016 support that goal and reinforced the role of the Adoption Register for the relatively small number of children who are unable to stay with their own family and require an adoptive placement.

## Adoption Support Group

The pandemic significantly impacted on our opportunities to reach out to adoptive families through the adoption support group, which previously led to a reduction in the number of adoptive families engaging in this support. This year, we have continued to build on last year's efforts to re-engage our families, with real success. The support group met in November 2022, March 2023 and June 2023, with positive responses each time from the families who attended. Each session gave adopted children opportunities to connect with one another, and adopters time to catch up with each other and with workers in a relaxed environment.

Our adoptive parents previously advised they value support groups and training. Therefore, this year we have continued to offer all adoptive families access to training through Barnardo's, and plan to further develop the training opportunities offered here.

## **Adoption Support to Individual Families**

Throughout the year the adoption team have provided adoption support on an individual basis to 21 adoptive families. Barnardo's Scottish Adoption Advice Service (SAAS) also continues to offer support, including counselling, to Renfrewshire families. A total of 43 children in 34 families received an adoptive allowance during the reporting period.

Post Adoption Support Planning meetings are held for all children when an adoption order is granted to consider their support needs. We continue to allocate an adoption social worker to adoptive parents for 1 year following the granting of an adoption order at which point the adoptive family are invited to a review meeting to consider any further adoption supports required.

Within Renfrewshire we have 83 adoptive families on our mailing list who receive our quarterly newsletter and notification of all support groups and training events.

## **Birth Connections**

Birth Connections is a new service, in Renfrewshire, funded by the CORRA Foundation, that supports birth family members who are affected by adoption. The support offers both individual supports, tailored to the individual's specific needs, and group support every two weeks, providing a therapeutic environment to meet with other people who have had similar experience. The individual support we have provided since the service launched in March 2023 have ranged from supporting people to fill in housing applications, attend appointments, building up confidence out in the community, letterbox exchange, engaging in community opportunities, and much more. The Group support launched in May 2023. Birth Connections aim is to provide lifelong support so that service users can access the support at any time when they feel able to and can choose when they do or do not wish to engage.

Birth Connections run the fortnightly Group out of Station 7 in Johnstone (Active Communities) and are liaising closely with them and the community opportunities that they can provide. Currently, we are organising Cooking/Baking classes, Women's Health information sessions, and Barista training for the birth family members engaged with Birth Connections, through Station 7.

The Birth Connections service is provided by Kirstin Harvey, who has been in post since December 2022, alongside Renfrewshire Council's Adoption Team. Kirstin is currently seconded for a year as the CORRA Foundation provided 12 months of funding to start up a Birth Family Support service and we are fortunate that we have received extended funding until 30<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Birth Connections currently supports around 25 birth family members with individual support and there are currently 4 birth family members involved in the Group Support. These numbers are growing.

## **Adoption Newsletter**

The adoption newsletter is produced 4 times per year. Within this newsletter useful articles for national adoption websites and organisations are included. Stories are encouraged from adopters on any issues they have experienced. The feedback received is that the recipients benefit from reading about other adopter's stories.

Also, as the adoption support service has increased over the years, the service has brought out various new leaflets, have summer activities with the children and support group feedback is

usually included to encourage others to join. Each newsletter has an update on training information.

## **Letter Box Contact**

Letterbox contact provides contact between birth families and the adoptive parents or contact between siblings. The letterbox service can provide support in writing and replying to letters. Currently the letterbox service has a caseload of 121 which 75 are operational. Letterbox contact varies on an individual case basis, mostly contacts are annual, however we have some which are twice, three times or quarterly.

The service has now introduced individual support and offered electronic methods of letterbox to support some participants to engage via email. This has encouraged a high uptake of participants.

## **Future developments of the adoption service**

Over the next year the service intends to strengthen the adoption service by developing the following:

1. Introduction of Co-Facilitation of Preparation Group with an Adoptive Parent.
2. Further recruitment of new Fostering and Adoption Panel Members as required, including non-voting members such as additional Legal Advisors.
3. Increase opportunities of support groups to adoptive families and their children.
4. Highlight the importance of maintaining links through adoption during Adoption Week Scotland.
5. Develop a post approval training programme for prospective adopters, promoting learning whilst awaiting matching and the Adoption Order.

## **Conclusion**

This report has highlighted the work of the Fostering, Adoption and Supported Carers Services and the work of the Fostering and Adoption Panel during August 2022 - July 2023. The activity of the Fostering and Adoption Panel reflects the number of children unable to live with their birth families within Renfrewshire.

The Fostering, Adoption and Supported Carers Services are committed to safeguarding children's lives in Renfrewshire and to continual improvement.

As the Registered Manager for the Fostering and Adoption Service, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our panel members for their commitment to Renfrewshire's most vulnerable children.

Our Foster Carers and Adopters have continued to show their commitment and love to the children they look after, and adopt. They help us to ensure that the children receive the best outcomes that they can.

As always, we look forward to the coming year and to progressing our work with all partner agencies to continue to improve the outcomes and secure the future of Renfrewshire's most vulnerable children.

Clare Cuning  
Social Work Manager  
(Registered Manager of Fostering and Adoption Service)

## **Appendix 1 Renfrewshire Council Fostering Criteria**

### **Who Can Foster?**

Renfrewshire Council accepts applications from different backgrounds as everyone has their own individual experience to offer.

#### **Requirements to foster:**

1. Are over 21 years,
2. Are in good health and
3. Have a spare bedroom.

#### **You can be:**

1. Single, married, cohabiting or in a civil partnership.
2. Own or rent the property you live in
3. Be employed or not employed.
4. Be of any religious background or sexuality.

### **Preparation Groups**

Enquirers will be required to attend preparation groups before making a formal application. The purpose of these groups is to provide the opportunity to learn more about fostering, and the children who require to be in a foster placement.

If preparation groups are not available other means will be considered to provide and share information with enquirers.

### **Local Authority, Health, and Police Checks**

All applicants will be subject to stringent local authority, health, and police checks. These will extend to any other resident in the household over 16 years of age and to anyone who will have care of the child.

**Renfrewshire Council  
Adoption Criteria**

**Age**

All applicants must be over 21 years of age.

**Status**

Applications will be considered from couples or single applicants irrespective of their sexuality.

A couple may be the same sex or unmarried. Same sex couples are not required to be in a Civil Partnership.

Joint applicants must be in an enduring family relationship.

**Preparation Groups**

Enquirers will be required to attend preparation groups, if groups are available, prior to making a formal application. The purpose of these groups is to provide enquiries with the opportunity to learn more about the children needing adoption, their backgrounds and the genetic factors adopters may have to consider when parenting adopted children.

If preparation groups are not available other means will be considered to provide and share information with enquiries.

**Infertility**

Prospective adopters should have completed infertility investigations at least 6 months prior to application.

**Local Authority Health and Police Checks**

All applicants will be subject to stringent local authority health and police checks. These will extend to any other resident in the household over 16 years of age and to anyone who will have care of the child.






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**To:** **Education and Children's Services Policy Board**

**On:** **18 January 2024**

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**Report by:** **Director of Children's Services**

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**Heading:** **Scottish Child Interview Model and Bairns Hoose Pathfinder Update**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. When a child discloses that they have been abused the investigation of the abuse allegation can be a challenging and traumatic experience for the child. Renfrewshire has worked in partnership with 4 other local authorities, Police Scotland, the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration and Children 1<sup>st</sup>, a national charity to improve the way investigations are carried out through the North Strathclyde Partnership.
- 1.2. The North Strathclyde Partnership Team consists of social workers and Police Officers who are trained in the Scottish Child Interview Model, and recovery support workers from Children 1<sup>st</sup>. The team provides a child centred trauma responsive approach to child interviews and a recovery support programme. A fundamental principle of the partnership is that trauma informed recovery is embedded into the process, from the point of disclosure for children.
- 1.3. The partnership with Children 1<sup>st</sup> is unique in Scotland and has resulted in the North Strathclyde Partnership being able to offer children who are victims of abuse or witnesses to crime to access Scotland's first Bairns Hoose. The Bairns Hoose is the Scottish delivery of a Scandinavian model of support and protection for children.
- 1.4. Children 1<sup>st</sup> was able to secure funding from the People's Postcode Lottery to allow it to open the Bairns Hoose. The Bairns Hoose is now operational from a location in East Renfrewshire.
- 1.5. The Scottish Government announced funding of £6million to support the development of the Bairns Hoose model across Scotland. The first phase of funding has been identified to support pathfinders and the North Strathclyde Partnership has been successful in securing pathfinder status.

- 1.6. This report provides information on the North Strathclyde Partnership, the Scottish Child Interview Model, the first Bairns Hoose in Scotland and the current position in relation to the Pathfinder application.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. The Education and Children's Services Policy Board is asked to:
- a) note the contents of the report.
- 

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. Partner agencies across Renfrewshire have significant responsibilities in relation to the protection of children from abuse and harm. Some children will have experienced abuse and harm and the role of agencies is to prevent further abuse whilst investigating the abuse or harm which has already occurred. It is recognised that abuse and harm are traumatic experiences and the investigation of this can be further traumatising.
- 3.2. As part of the continuous agenda Renfrewshire joined with a number of other local authorities, Police Scotland, the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration and Children 1<sup>st</sup>, a national charity, to form the North Strathclyde Partnership Joint Investigative Interview Team in August 2020. This team includes Social Workers, Police Officers, and Children 1<sup>st</sup> Bairns Hoose, Children's Recovery staff and operates from the Eastwood Health and Care Centre in East Renfrewshire.
- 3.3. The members of the North Strathclyde Partnership are East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, and Renfrewshire Councils, Police Scotland (G and K Divisions, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration and Children 1<sup>st</sup>, a national charity. The Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service and the Sheriffdom of North Strathclyde are active partners in the work.
- 3.4. The Scottish Child Interview Model is the approach to joint investigative interviews of children. Joint investigative interviews are carried out when a child requires to be interviewed by police and social work when it is suspected that they have been the victim of abuse to detect a potential crime against them, and to gather evidence about their safety. The Scottish Child Interview Model interview is also used when a child is a witness to a crime.
- 3.5. The Scottish Child Interview Model was developed in response to the Evidence and Procedure Review of the Scottish Courts Service in 2015. This review considered how to obtain the best evidence from children and vulnerable witnesses.
- 3.6. The North Strathclyde Partnership provides a child centred trauma responsive approach to child interviews and a recovery support programme. A fundamental principle of the partnership is that trauma informed recovery is embedded into the process, from the point of disclosure for children. Children 1<sup>st</sup> Bairns Hoose Trauma Recovery Team provide recovery support to the child who has been interviewed and their family.

- 3.7. In November 2022 the North Strathclyde Partnership won the Scottish Social Services Awards Excellence in Children's Services category. This was in recognition of the innovation involved in creating the partnership and in developing a trauma and child centred approach. The North Strathclyde Partnership was the first area to introduce the new Scottish Child Interview Model.
- 3.8. From the onset of creating the partnership the ambition was to deliver a Bairns Hoose based on the Barnahus model in place in Iceland. The vision was to ensure a child-friendly, multidisciplinary, and interagency model for responding to children who have been victims and witnesses of abuse. The purpose of Barnahus is to offer each child a coordinated and effective child protection and justice response, and to prevent traumatisation and re-traumatisation during investigation and court proceedings. The model in Iceland and other Nordic countries is that a child visits the Barnahus for the joint interview with police and social work, their medical, to give court evidence and to start their recovery journey all under one roof.
- 3.9. Initially the Partnership team was colocated in a police office before moving to accommodation in East Renfrewshire. The joint interviews were generally conducted in a police office which had been adapted to be more child friendly. Children 1<sup>st</sup> were able to secure funding from the People's Post Code Lottery.
- 3.10. Children 1<sup>st</sup> were successful following a funding bid to The People's Postcode Lottery for the first Bairns Hoose in Scotland. The funding bid was led by Children 1<sup>st</sup> in association with Victim Support Scotland, University of Edinburgh, and Children England.
- 3.11. Following the award of funding from the People's Postcode Lottery, the first Bairns Hoose in Scotland was opened by Children 1<sup>st</sup> in August 2023. The Bairns Hoose known as the Wee Hoose is located in East Renfrewshire and it is used by the North Strathclyde Partnership team for their joint investigative interviews, and for the children's recovery. Within the Wee Hoose there is an interview room, a court suite from which children can give their evidence in court remotely, a children's recovery room, and a room which can be adapted as a health suite.
- 3.12. To date, partnership data shows the number of children making a clear disclosure during interviews is upwards of 80%.
- 3.13. One of the strengths of the partnership has been the routine monitoring and evaluation of the overall investigation process including decision making around planning of interviews, balancing good practice of preparing the child, accounting for their individual needs in interview planning and ensuring best possible evidence capture. However, there is an acceptance that our current processes are still causing further distress and traumatisation for children and their families and need to improve.
- 3.14. The purpose of a Bairns Hoose is to ensure that children and young people who have been victims and witnesses of abuse or violence (and in the case of Scotland, this will initially be extended to children under the age of criminal responsibility who have caused harm) receive appropriate assessment, treatment, and support from the moment they disclose abuse, or abuse is suspected or alleged. It is to avoid subjecting children to multiple interviews by

different agencies in different locations and to ensure high-quality evidence is collected to inform both legal and protective measures. The Barnahus model is that professionals come to children, rather than children being taken to different services and re-telling their story each time. Children have informed this model with their feedback from their experiences in the Child Protection and Justice System.

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#### **4. Bairns Hoose Pathfinder Phase**

- 4.1. In 2022 the Scottish Government set up a National Bairns Hoose Governance Group with the aim of bringing the Bairns Hoose model to the whole of Scotland. The expectation is that agencies work together across Children's Services, Health, Justice, and that local Chief Officer Groups decide how many Bairns Hooses are needed in each area.
- 4.2. On 31 May 2023 Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the Care Inspectorate published Scotland's Bairns' Hoose Standards. The standards set out what the Bairns Hoose will mean for children and their families as well as for professionals supporting them. Children who have had experience of the protection and justice process participated in the writing of the standards.
- 4.3. The plan is to develop Bairns Hoose in Scotland in three phases. The first is the Bairns Hoose Pathfinder Phase 2023-25 and the Scottish Government announced £6million of funding to support this development of the pathfinder phase. The second is the Bairns Hoose Pilot phase from 2025, and the third is the national rollout of Bairns Hoose from 2027.
- 4.4. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of October 2023, the North Strathclyde Partnership were successful in their application to become one of the 6 Bairns Hoose Pathfinder sites in Scotland. The other multi agency sites are Fife, Tayside, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and the Outer Hebrides.
- 4.5. The purpose of the Pathfinder Phase is to learn about the systems, practices and culture change required to facilitate transformational change. One of the essential criteria for becoming a pathfinder site was that the partnership includes the participation and engagement of children and young people in the development of the service.
- 4.6. The Pathfinders sites will trial the Bairns Hoose Standards, continue to implement the SCIM model of interviewing, take part in collaborative learning, and inform the development of a 'Bairns Hoose Blueprint' for the piloting of Bairns Hoose in Scotland.
- 4.7. A further output of the first phase will be a Pathfinders Findings Report with a set of conclusions, along with a toolkit to support partnerships during the pilot phase. We will work closely with Pathfinder partnerships in a collaborative way to identify measures of success and gather data and intelligence. The intention is to gather data at the end of the Pathfinder phase that will act as the baseline for the evaluation of the pilot phase.
- 4.8. Delivery of Bairns' Hoose will be the responsibility of Chief Officers' Public Protection Groups however the Scottish Government has made some financial investment to support these transformative systems change. The Pathfinder Sites will have access to apply for this funding. The Pathfinders

sites will also receive support from a community of learning and implementation advisors.

- 4.9. The North Strathclyde Partnership welcome this next phase on the journey to Bairs Hoose being fully implemented across Scotland. Further reports will be provided to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board as the Bairs Hoose in this area develops.
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## **Implications of this report**

**1. Financial**

None.

**2. HR and Organisational Development**

None.

**3. Community/Council Planning**

Our Renfrewshire is safe: Providing good quality response to children who disclose abuse is central to ensuring that the most vulnerable children in Renfrewshire are provided with an opportunity to recover in a safe and nurturing environment

**4. Legal**

None.

**5. Property/Assets**

None.

**6. Information Technology**

None.

**7. Equality and Human Rights**

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.

**8. Health and Safety**

None.

**9. Procurement**

None.

**10. Risk**

None.

**11. Privacy Impact**

None.

**12. Cosla Policy Position**

None.

**13. Climate Risk**  
None.

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**List of Background Papers**

None.

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**Children's Services**  
CC/JT/JO'N  
7 December 2023

**Author:** Clare Cuning, Acting Children's Services Manager  
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**To:** Education and Children's Services Policy Board

**On:** 18 January 2024

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**Report by:** Director of Children's Services

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**Heading:** Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together – Progress Report

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Independent Care Review highlighted the issue of children who are accommodated by local authorities being placed in separate placements from their brothers and sisters. In response, Children's Services co-produced a report with our Children's Champions Board, "Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together", which recommended practice improvements to keep more brothers and sisters together when they are in the care of the local authority. The Renfrewshire "Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together Policy" was approved by Board in May 2021.
- 1.2 The policy is ambitious and contains the following pledge: "When children come into care Renfrewshire will place brothers and sisters together".
- 1.3 The policy recognised there will be some situations when brothers and sisters cannot be placed together and when this occurs, the policy requires a clear decision-making process to be evidenced, along with robust arrangements to maintain family time and regular care reviews. The policy states that all sibling separations in care must be approved by the Head of Child Care and Justice Services and be reported to Board on an annual basis. The first annual report on progress between June 2021 and May 2022 was presented to the Board 27 October 2022.
- 1.4 This report covers our activity to keep brothers and sisters together between June 2022 and May 2023. Of the 52 children and young people who were newly accommodated during the period and who had siblings, 26 were placed with at least one sibling.
- 1.5 Review of the circumstances of the siblings placed separately shows that separation was necessary and appropriate. The main reasons for separation related to the different needs and care plans of siblings, the significant support needs of individual children, the complexity of some family relationships and high numbers of half-sibling relationships, as well as the capacity of some kinship and foster carers to provide care to multiple children.
- 1.6 Where siblings were separated, robust family time contact plans are in place and brothers' and sisters' relationships are supported in line with the individual needs and

aspirations of the children.

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## **2. Recommendations**

### **2.1 Members of the Board are asked to:**

- a) note the progress of the second year of implementation of the Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together Policy.
- 

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Children (Scotland) Act 2020 became law in January 2021 and places new duties for local authorities in relation to ensuring that brothers and sisters are supported to be together and where this is not possible, to have their relationship supported on an ongoing basis. Our Brothers and Sisters policy is compliant with the requirements of this piece of legislation and has been highlighted as national best practice.
- 3.2 The policy pledges that Renfrewshire will place brothers and sisters together. It is recognized, however, that there are circumstances in which this will not be possible, or indeed in the best interests of the individual children and young people. Moreover, there are times when brothers' and sisters' individual needs are not compatible with each other, and difficult decisions require to be made by the team of professionals responsible for their care that they should be placed in separate placements.
- 3.3 In circumstances where the separate placement of siblings is due to the unavailability of kinship or foster carers, or residential service able to take a sibling group, or for significant safeguarding reasons, there is a requirement that a robust family time contact plan is in place and the possibility of the children being reunited in placement is regularly reviewed via the established Looked After Reviews process.
- 3.4 Where the team around the child agree a care plan which separates brothers and sisters in care for other reasons, the policy requires the explicit approval of the Head of Childcare and Justice Services. In this process, the reasons for the separation must be fully recorded and a family time contact plan developed. In addition, an annual report on delivering the pledge is produced for Board to hold the service to account for performance in this area.
- 3.5 A range of practice tools are in use to inform the assessment of brothers' and sisters' relationships and to support the development of these very important relationships, irrespective of their placement, including child-friendly family time contact plans developed by our Promise Ambassador in partnership with local children and young people.
- 3.6 A desk-top review of the circumstances of all children with siblings brought into care during the period June 2022 to May 2023 was carried out to ascertain compliance with the policy and to identify reasons for any separation of siblings.
- 3.7 In addition to the 52 newly accommodated children and young people during the period, there are 24 young people in long-term kinship placements who were, for the first time, included in our Looked After statistics. The decision to do so was made to ensure parity between all placement types and to expand payments to all family and friends carers of young people placed outwith parental care. Of these 24 young people, 14 were living with at least one sibling in a kinship care placement and 10 had no siblings under the age of 18



who were accommodated in Renfrewshire, or the siblings were in secure care or a pre-adoptive placement.

- 3.8 The group of 52 children who are in care separate from one or more of their siblings includes those children whose siblings were brought into care at different times, such as when older children (single and sibling groups) are already in care and a new baby brother or sister is subsequently accommodated in a separate placement. The group also includes children whose siblings are half-siblings where parents have re-partnered (sometimes resulting in three or more siblings with different half relationships on the maternal and paternal side). These half-sibling relationships tend to be complex, and children have never lived together and sometimes are not aware of each other's existence.
- 3.9 Over the period, three young people were accommodated who were separated from a sibling because the sibling was in a residential placement. These types of placements tend to be used for young people whose needs are such that they cannot be met in a family-based placement. In these cases, it would not be appropriate to keep siblings together when some of them could settle well into a foster or kinship placement. Similarly, we cannot place siblings together when one of them is placed in secure care. Three young people were placed in secure during the period and were therefore separated from their siblings.
- 3.10 Of the 52 children with siblings who were accommodated separately from their siblings, 28 have half siblings who were Looked After at home with one or two parents, or in an accommodated placement. Most of these accommodated children are in kinship placements where the carers are typically not blood-related to the child in local authority care.
- 3.11 As was the case in last year's review, it was shown that small sibling groups of two or three who were brought into care at the same time were most likely to be kept together. There were a small number of cases where one or more children was already in a care placement and the carer was able to accommodate a newly arrived sibling. Younger sibling groups were more likely to be placed together than older children.
- 3.12 Of the 52 brothers and sisters who were separated, there were a number of issues in common. Most frequent was the placement of siblings at different times. A typical scenario was one or more siblings placed together and then a sibling (usually a new baby) coming into care several months or years later. In these cases, either the care placement was unable to offer an additional placement, or the child(ren) already placed had a permanence decision agreed and were at various stages of progression to a permanent destination. In the current review, one child had adopted siblings and another had a sibling in a pre-adoptive placement, hence they cannot be kept together.
- 3.13 The physical capacity of foster and kinship carers' homes was a barrier to some sibling groups being placed together. However, the carers' ability to provide the level and nature of care required for individual children with differing care and support needs was a more prevalent reason for siblings not being placed together. Our in-house foster care service accommodates many sibling groups as well as several households of three or more unrelated children. These placements are simply unable to accommodate sibling groups at the present time.
- 3.14 Renfrewshire has made considerable progress in recent years towards shifting our balance of care away from foster care towards kinship care. More than half our accommodated children and young people are now in kinship placements. This aligns with the recommendations of the Independent Review of Care and our statutory duty to keep children within their birth families wherever possible. Kinship carers are different to

foster carers in that they are not ‘recruited’ and trained to care for children who have experienced trauma and who present challenging behaviours. As such, kinship carers tend to have less capacity to provide placements for multiple children. This review has highlighted that while many kinship carers are managing very well with one or two children, they are unable to take on new siblings as they come into care.

- 3.15 The use of kinship care placements also means that half-siblings cannot always be accommodated together. The review highlighted instances where the kinship carer was not related to one or more of the sibling group, and they were unwilling to offer sibling group placements in these circumstances. There is a very high frequency of half-sibling relationships amongst our population of accommodated children.
- 3.16 In line with the requirements of the policy, all children accommodated separately from their siblings have a ‘family time’ contact plan which specifically addresses their contact with siblings. This is reinforced by the statutory duties imposed by the children’s hearings system which requires that all reports submitted about children who have siblings includes a specific assessment of their relationship and each child’s individual views and wishes about sibling contact.

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**Implications of this report**

- 1. **Financial**  
Where children require external placements to remain together there are higher costs than if placed in internal provision.
- 2. **HR and Organisational Development**  
All staff in children’s social work have been trained in the operation of the Policy..
- 3. **Community/Council Planning**  

Our Renfrewshire is thriving

- Providing good quality care is central to ensuring that the most vulnerable children in Renfrewshire are provided with an opportunity to thrive in a safe and nurturing environment.
- 4. **Legal**  
The Children (Scotland) Act 2020 placed a new duty on local authorities in relation to how they support and promote contact between brothers and sisters. The current policy satisfies the authority’s duty in this area.
- 5. **Property/Assets**  
None.
- 6. **Information Technology**  
None.
- 7. **Legal**  
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals’ human rights

have been identified arising from the recommendations. Our approach locally will be compliant with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill

- 8.     **Health and Safety**  
None.
- 9.     **Procurement**  
None.
- 10.    **Risk**  
None.
- 11.    **Privacy Impact**  
None.
- 12.    **Cosla Policy Position**  
None.
- 13.    **Climate Risk**  
None.

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**List of Background Papers**

Keeping Brother and Sisters Together - Report to Education and Children’s Services Policy Board on 20 May 2021

Keeping Brothers and Sisters Together – Progress Report – Report to Education and Children’s Services Policy Board on 27 October 2022

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*Children’s Services*  
*KN*

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## Acronyms

ADES	Associate Directors of Education (Scotland)	
ASN	Additional Support Needs	
ASL	Additional Support for Learning	Additional support for learning means giving children extra help or support so they can get the most out of their education.
ASN	Additional Support Needs	A child or young person is said to have additional support needs if they need more or different support to what is normally provided in schools or early learning centres to children of the same age.
ASNA	Additional Support Needs Assistant	
AFKA	Association for Fostering Adoption and Kinship Scotland	
BAME	Black and Asian Minority Ethnic	
BGE	Broad General Education	This is the learning which is done from the age of 3 to 15 up to the end of S3. The aim is to make sure children have a wide-range of learning until S4 when they will start to specialise in difference subjects.
CA	Classroom Assistant	
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	
CfE	Curriculum of Excellence	CfE is the way schools and early years centres organise learning and teaching for 3-18 year olds.
CG	Clothing Grants	
CHS	Children's Hearings Scotland	
CLD	Community Learning & Development	Teams who work with and support communities in areas such as adult and family learning and youth work.
CP	Child Protection	

CPD	Continuing Professional Development	Each teacher in Scotland is required to undertake a certain amount of CPD each year to maintain or upgrade skills and knowledge.
COG	Chief Officer Group	
CPPM	Child Protection Planning Meeting	
CSP	Co-ordinated Support Plan	A child/young person is eligible for a CSP when they need support at school from services on an ongoing basis.
DHT	Depute Head Teacher	The role of DHT will vary school to school but generally he/she will stand in for the head teacher as necessary and will have responsibility for leadership and management of colleagues.
DO	Development Officer	Usually, a local authority officer who has a specific job around supporting schools.
DYW	Developing the Young Workforce	DYW is the Scottish Government's Youth Employment strategy which aims to get young people ready for the world of work.
EAL	English as an Additional Language	
EIS	Educational Institute of Scotland	The largest teaching union in Scotland.
ELC	Early Learning and Childcare	This term is meant to empathise that care and education of very young children are not separate things as babies and young children are learning all the time.
ELCC	Early Learning and Childcare Centre	
ELCO	Early Learning & Childcare Officer	
EM	Education Managers	
EP	Educational Psychology	
FGDM	Family Group Decision Making	
FE	Further Education	This is post-compulsory education which is difference from that offered in universities. It is mainly taught in colleges and is sometimes done as work-based learning or in adult and community learning.

FH	Faculty Head	
FLR	Flexible Learning Resource	Out-reach facility within schools to support children and young people.
FME	Free School Meals	
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent	This is a way to measure how much time a member of school staff works in school. For example, FTE of 1.0 means the person is equivalent to a full-time worker, while FTE 0.5 means the person is half-time.
GGC	Greater Glasgow and Clyde (Health Board)	
GIRFEC	Getting it Right for Every Child	A Scottish Government policy which aims to make sure all Scotland's children, young person and their families have support across public services, such as health, education, and social work.
GME	Gaelic Medium Education	A form of education where pupils are taught mainly in Scottish Gaelic, with English as a secondary language.
GTCS	General Teaching Council Scotland	This is the professional body which maintains the register of teachers and ensures teachers' professional standards. In Scotland, children must be taught by qualified and GTCS registered teachers.
HE	Higher Education	This is post-compulsory education which usually takes place in universities.
HMIE	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education	The Inspectorate carries out inspections of all places of learning. HMIE is part of Education Scotland.
HNC	Higher National Certificate	HNCs are offered by colleges, some universities and many training centres. They usually take one year to complete and provide skills you need to do a job.
HND	Higher National Diploma	HNDs are offered by colleges, some universities and many training centres. They usually take two years to complete.
HT	Head Teacher	Leader and manager of a school.
HWB	Health and Wellbeing	
ICT	Information and Communications Technology	ICT in education can be found in the following ways – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- as a subject</li> <li>- as a tool to support teaching and learning</li> </ul>

		- as an administrative tool
IEP	Individual Education Plan	An IEP is a document which sets out the goals and achievements of each school pupil. Every child should have an IEP and should also have an input to its content.
IRD	Initial Referral Discussion	
JII	Joint Investigative Interview	
LA	Local Authority	There are 32 local authorities in Scotland.
LD	Learning Disability	
LGBT+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender	
MOG	Member Officer Group	
Mentors in Violence Prevention	MVP	
NIF	National Improvement Framework	Launched in January 2012, this Scottish Government framework is about measuring and evaluating performance in schools. It includes parents and carers as part of the process.
NPFS	National Parent Forum for Scotland	Supported by the Scottish Government, NPFS provides a parental perspective for local and national policies and issues and helps support parental involvement.
NQ	National Qualifications	NQs are taken by young people in secondary schools and colleges (and some training centres).
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification	These are work-based qualifications.
NVR	Non-Violence Resistance	
OSCR	Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator	OSCR decides whether to grant an organisation charitable status and to enter it on the Scottish Charity Register.
PEF	Pupil Equity Funding	This is money given to schools to help support children who may be falling behind and don't have the same chances in education because their family is experiencing poverty or other financial difficulties.
PGS	Paisley Grammar School	Locally used term.

PLP	Personal Learning Plan	The document/folder where a pupil can keep a record of his/her goals and achievements alongside examples of their work.
PPP	Public Private Partnership	A collaboration between a local authority and private companies, often used in the building and management of schools.
PRD	Professional Review and Development	Each teacher has the right to an annual PRD interview to focus on their strengths and areas for development and to agree on their training needs.
PT	Principal Teacher	In primary schools, this is usually a classroom teacher who also takes on some managerial roles within the school.
PU	Professional Update	This supports teachers to develop their skills and work; teachers are asked to keep a record of their learning throughout their careers.
PVG	Protection of Vulnerable Groups	The PVG Membership Scheme is the Scottish disclosure system.
QA	Quality Assurance	
QAF	Quality Assurance Framework	
QI	Quality Improvement	
QIO	Quality Improvement Officer	Usually, a local authority officer who has a specific job around supporting schools.
RCPC	Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee	
RCSP	Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership	
RIC	Regional Improvement Collaborative	Collaborative that brings together a range of professional including local authority and Education Scotland officers with a focus on supporting teacher and other school staff to improve outcomes for children and young people.
RLDS	Renfrewshire Learning Disability Service	
RME	Religious and Moral Education	
RMPS	Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies	



RNRA	Renfrewshire Nurturing Relationships Approach	
SAC	Scottish Attainment Challenge	
SCCYP	Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People	The Commissioner aims to promote and protect the rights of children and young people in Scotland.
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework	This organisation promotes lifelong learning in Scotland.
SCRA	Scottish Children's Reporter Administration	
SDS	Skills Development Scotland	Works in schools to provide information and advice about careers.
SEF	Scottish Equality Funding	
SIF	Summary of Inspection Finding	This document is available on the Education Scotland website following an inspection.
SIP	School Improvement Plan	This document should show improvement targets for a school.
SP	Senior Phase	
SLFU Initial	School Leavers Follow Up (Initial) Destinations	
SLFU Follow Up	School Leavers Follow Up (Follow Up) destinations	
SLT	School Leadership Team	
SMT	School Management Team	Usually includes the headteacher and deputies; may also include the business manager and principal teachers.
SPOIN	Scottish Parental Involvement Officers Network	A network group for local authority officers who have a specific role in supporting family engagement.
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority	SQA is responsible for the design, setting, assessment and certification of qualifications.
SSERC	Scottish School Education Research Centre	
SSTA	Scottish Secondary Teacher Association (SSTA)	
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths	The name used for this group of subjects.

STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths	The name used for this group of subjects.
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification	These qualifications are based on standards drawn up by industry, commerce, and education.
SWS	Social Work Scotland	
UCAS	Universities and College Admissions Service	UCAS process most applications for entry to higher and further education throughout the UK.
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child	This is an internal human rights treaty that grants all children and young people a set of rights.
WFW	Whole Family Wellbeing	This is a phrase to describe work within the Children's Service's Partnership designed to better support families and communities through deploying a new fund, downloaded to every local council, known as the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.