

To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 23 May 2024

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Inclusion Update

1. Summary

1.1 In August 2023, the Staged Intervention Framework and associated processes and plans were launched. This was following the GIRFEC Refresh which focused on bringing about improvements to support the wellbeing and learning of all our children and young people with additional support needs in mainstream school and early years establishments.

1.2 Our Inclusion Portfolio has a CLEAR mission.

By working collaboratively, we will,

- C** Improve **communication and collaboration** ensuring the rights of the child are front and centre
- L** Meet the wellbeing & **learning** needs of all our children & young people
- E** **Ensure** we provide **excellent** Children's Services support services using a robust quality improvement framework
- A** Invest in & develop **all** our people to improve outcomes for children
- R** Manage our **resources** effectively & equitably as close to the child as possible

1.3 The purpose of this paper is to update members on some of the main areas of progress since August 2023.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members of the Education and Children's Services Policy Board are asked to note the very positive progress the Inclusion Portfolio continues to make to improve outcomes for children and young people.

3. Background

3.1 Staged Intervention Framework

Since August 2023 we have continued to take forward the work of the GIRFEC Refresh and have now fully implemented the Staged Intervention Framework across all establishments in Renfrewshire. This includes early years classes and centres, funded providers, primary, secondary, and additional support needs schools. This framework makes clear that an inclusive approach to education supports an ethos of achievement and high expectation, recognises and respects diversity and sees differences between learners as opportunities for learning through a staged intervention approach. Staged Intervention is a framework that enables agencies to provide the most appropriate and least intrusive assessment, planning and support for any child or young person with wellbeing needs, including those with additional support needs. This framework ensures clear guidelines and a consistent approach to planning interventions to support children and young people with additional support needs.

3.2 Transition Policy

The revised Transition of Children with Additional Support Needs Policy Part 1 was approved by the Education and Children's Services Policy Board on 14 March 2024. This is a positive step to ensure consistent approaches to transition for all children and young people with additional support needs.

3.3 ADES Collaborative

Renfrewshire's Children's Services undertook Collaborative Improvement (CI) activity with representatives from Education Scotland and other local authorities from across Scotland in June 2023. The focus of this was on the recent work that has been undertaken to improve how we meet the needs of our children and young people with Additional Support Needs (ASN).

We were delighted when the following strengths were identified:

- The vision for inclusion was clear and well understood across agencies and within Education, in all the activities, practitioners demonstrated a clear understanding of what and how they would reach their ambition.
- The local authority has demonstrated an empowered approach to building capacity within their educational estate by drawing on peer-led and motivated "early adopters" to shape improvements.
- The local authority is making very effective use of relevant data sets to measure performance and impact.
- The direction of travel in relation to the flexible learning resources is in line with national and international thinking.
- Renfrewshire Nurturing Relationship Approaches (RNRA) is well understood across services/agencies and practitioners. There were clear examples of partnership working/multi-agency working.

3.4 Universal Approaches to Inclusion

We continue to work tirelessly to develop and upskill our workforce. We continue to focus on embedding the following universal approaches;

Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationship Approaches (RNRA)

All Renfrewshire schools are now participating in RNRA. Its universal approaches are underpinned by the vision and values of our Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationship Approaches (RNRA) which also permeates our Promoting Positive Relationships Policy.

Renfrewshire recognises that good teaching and learning begin with positive relationships. Relationships fulfil our most fundamental needs as humans – social connectedness. A nurturing approach recognises that positive relationships are central to both learning and wellbeing. Nurture is underpinned by **six guiding principles** and there is an expectation, through working with the Educational Psychology team that these will be understood by all and fully embedded in practice across all our schools and Early Learning & Childcare settings.

- Children's learning is understood developmentally.
- The classroom offers a safe base.
- The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
- Language is a vital means of communication.
- All behaviour is communication.
- The importance of transition in children's lives

The CIRCLE Framework

Almost all establishment are not trained in CIRCLE an Education Scotland resource which aims to empower education staff to support all pupils, to promote inclusive practice and to encourage effective collaboration between school staff, parents/carers, partner services and other agencies.

This resource focuses on 4 key areas

- Skills,
- Motivation,
- Structures and Routines,
- and Environment

Evaluating these four key areas using the CIRCLE resource will empower the practitioner to better meet the needs of all learners within their classroom and complements our authority-wide commitment to RNRA. For example, CIRCLE's Inclusive Classroom Scale, can be used at classroom and whole school level to review, reflect on and develop a positive learning environment for all.

These inclusive practices support all staff within education to develop positive, respectful relationships with children and young people and take account of the needs of individuals whilst planning for all.

Renfrewshire's Inclusive Classroom Environment (RICE)

A significant number of children have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), but they fall into two groups. It is estimated that around 10% of all children have a long-term persistent SLCN, whereas upwards of 50% of children on school entry have more transient difficulties and, with the right support, are likely to develop age-appropriate skills. Around 7% of children in the UK have specific speech and language difficulties - others have SLCN as part of more generalised difficulties or another condition e.g. Autism. RICE is a partnership approach with Speech and Language Therapy which supports establishments to develop small tests of change in their environment to support children and young people with communication needs. Training is based on active, engaged learning and allows practitioners to apply skills between sessions. There is also a specific focus on children with need who are entering primary 1 and to support an inclusive approach, the RICE team are working with the receiving teachers. RICE can also be used as a whole establishment approach. Whole school training and support & development groups show an increase in practitioners confidence when supporting children with speech, language and communication needs.

3.5 Supporting Attendance

Supporting attendance continues to be a priority and we have introduced/improved the following interventions;

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

This was launched in August 2023. Emotionally based school avoidance is both a strategic support and a school based support for young people and their families to access school. Nationally, attendance has dropped post pandemic due to mental health issues and is often related to poverty and additional support needs.

We know in Renfrewshire that when schools plan individually for young people and put in supports as well as provide key relationships and a nurturing approach, that this raises the attendance rate for the most vulnerable.

There are also support and development groups for EBSA. This a community approach using the expertise of a range of services including CAMHS, Social Work, Eps and RAMH (which support adult mental health).

Locality Support Network (LSN)

This is a well-established platform that enables practitioners to discuss individual children and young people in their localities alongside colleagues from neighbouring schools, Educational Psychology and specialist support services. This can include discussions regarding interventions to support with attendance.

Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF)

The WFWF consists of 3 separate elements:

Community Family Wellbeing Team (previously Families First)

The staff supporting the community front door will work on a locality basis and receive referrals for families who live in that locality. They will work towards a family hub model, where a range of services, groups and supports will be available to parents in the one place by bringing a range of services together. This will be started by running parent drop ins and will be built on as the service develops. The Community Family Wellbeing Team will link closely with early years establishments and the third sector. They will work on a locality basis and teams will provide support across the following localities:

- Johnstone/Linwood/Villages
- Renfrew/Erskine/Bishopton/Gallowhill
- Paisley (excepting Gallowhill)

Schools Family Wellbeing Team

The staff supporting the schools front door will work on a locality basis and link directly with schools in that locality. They will work on a referral basis with families at stage 2 of the staged intervention process who require an assessed family wellbeing service and intervention which will support attendance and attainment by dealing with family stress. The localities will be based around school clusters and will mirror the same localities as the Community Family Wellbeing Team.

Interrupted Learners Wellbeing Team

This team will work with children and young people who experience discontinuity in their education and where intensive family support is required to enable the family and young person to re-engage in learning and a positive pathway. The team will take referrals from the Education Support and Resource Group (ESRG)

Non- Violent Resistance (NVR)

NVR is also being used to support the attendance of young people with distressed behaviour, often in relation to significant additional support needs. Parental support to return young people to schools is being accessed via NVR parent groups.

3.6 Parent/Carer Complaints

Since the introduction of the Staged Intervention Framework in August 2023 there has been a noticeable decline in the number of parental complaints received in relation to meeting children and young peoples (CYP) needs from August 2022 to March 2024.

3.7 Parent Ambassador Group

Our Parent Ambassador Group continues to grow and has become a well

established network of parents and carers with children and young people with ASN. This group has become an integral part of policy shaping and quality assurance of the GIRFEC Refresh. Following request from parents, the Parent Ambassador group received a session from Craig McFadyen, Education Advisor to CAMHS.

Education Manger, Susan Bell also presented to the group with regards to the Whole Family Wellbeing team and the group provided feedback on community and family supports.

3.8 Next Steps

Through partnership with other third sector services and our schools and early years establishments, we will continue to collate and create a suite of interventions to ensure children and families are supported appropriately and which are allocated equitably through our recently launched Request for Assistance mechanism.

We will continue to provide bespoke professional learning, as required, to support the development of the staged intervention framework. We have also developed training for our Additional Support Needs Assistants and Classroom Assistants which focuses on their role in supporting children and young people with additional support needs. This learning has been shaped by the workforce through the results of an audit which asked them to identify their training needs. Further universal learning sessions are planned and bespoke work will be provided, as requested.

3.9 Policy

Updating key policies in relation to Additional Support Needs continues to be a priority. Ensuring clear guidance and systems are in place across all establishments will promote more consistent approaches. Next term, we aim to launch our updated Inclusion Position Statement, Violence and Aggression Policy and Promoting Positive Relationships Policy.

We have introduced an additional support needs quality assurance framework that is currently being piloted through our triage system with our Education Officers. We will continue to develop this to ensure shared language, consistency and quality of plans across all establishments in Renfrewshire.

3.10 Conclusion

In summary, there continues to be a significant amount of development work being undertaken, with significant progress being made within this portfolio and there are strong plans in place to continue to ensure that our provision for children and young people with additional support needs is fair and equitable and that resources are deployed as close the child as possible.

Implications of this report

- 1. Financial**
No financial implications

2. HR and Organisational Development

No implications for HR and Organisational Development

3. Community/Council Planning

- Our Renfrewshire is thriving - Ensuring the best support for all children and young people
- Our Renfrewshire is well - Early intervention will lead to healthier outcomes for children and young people.
- Our Renfrewshire is safe - Local services/establishments will support children, young people and members of the community.
- Building strong, safe and resilient communities - The quality of community life is enhanced by supporting children and young people.
- Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all - Effective governance arrangements ensure that the organisations can deliver effective and equitable support for children and young people
- Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy - Effective support arrangements will contribute to a quality education for children and young people

4. Legal

No Legal implications

5. Property/Assets

No implications for property/assets

6. Information Technology

No implications for Information Technology

7. Equality 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, 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

No implications

9. Procurement

No implications for procurement

10. Risk

No risks

11. Privacy Impact

Personal information will only be held as required to deliver the service.
This will be done in accordance with data protection legislation.

12. COSLA Policy Position

None

13. Climate Risk

None

List of Background Papers

[Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\)](#)

[The Promise Scotland](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

[Support for Learning: All our Children and all their Potential](#)

Children's Services
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Author: Emma Henry, Interim Head of Education