

East
Ayrshire
Council
Education
Service



Willowbank School
Sgoil Bruach na Seileach



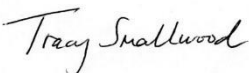
Establishment
Improvement
Plan
2025-26

School Improvement Plan	Willowbank School
Head Teacher	Mrs Tracy Smallwood
Date Submitted	Submitted to Chief Education Officer on: June 2025
School Vision and Values	<p>We embrace The Willowbank Way and pride ourselves on the school's positive, welcoming and supportive ethos. Our vision, values and aims help us achieve this.</p> <p>Our school vision is to inspire all pupils, staff and families to 'Be the best you can be'.</p> <p>Following consultation with our school community, our recently refreshed aims are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide an exciting, inclusive and communication-rich ethos where every pupil and member of staff is resilient, confident and safe. 2. Deliver modern, exciting and innovative teaching which allows every learner to develop their independence and celebrate their successes. 3. Embrace the Team With The Family approach, working with all stakeholders to minimise the barriers of additional support needs. 4. Promote positive relationships, led by highly skilled, nurturing staff who have the confidence and skills to take risks and embrace new ways of thinking.



Checklist

In line with the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 (amended 2016), the following checklist is designed to assist Heads of establishment with whole school/centre improvement planning that fulfils statutory duties in accordance with the Act. This must be completed prior to submission.

SIP Consultation included the following stakeholders:	Complete	Content of plan	Complete
Children and Young People	✓	Takes account of strategic priorities outlined in the Education Service Improvement Plan. https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/E/Education-Service-Improvement-Plan.pdf	✓
Parent Council and Forum	✓	HGIOS 4 and EYQF are used as the frameworks to inform the content of SIPs. Where appropriate. https://education.gov.scot/media/v5sh3dqt/frwk2_hgios4.pdf https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/inspection-frameworks/quality-improvement-framework-for-the-early-learning-and-childcare-sectors/	✓
Teachers, practitioners and ALL school/centre staff	✓	There is clear focus throughout the plan on measures to reduce of inequalities of outcome as a result of socio-economic disadvantage. PEF: https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-equity-funding-national-operational-guidance-2023/documents/ CEF: https://www.gov.scot/publications/care-experienced-children-young-people-fund-operational-guidance-2023-24/documents/ SEF: https://www.gov.scot/publications/strategic-equity-funding-national-operational-guidance-2023/documents/	✓
Volunteers/ Community partners		Appropriate cognisance has been made of the links between the plan and the working time agreement for teaching staff.	✓
Head Teacher / Head of Centre Signature: 		An accessible summary of the SIP is available and contained in this document and will be provided to parents, children and young people.	✓

Pupil and parental strategic involvement

For session 2025-26, please describe below how children and young people will be involved in decisions relating to the operation of the school/centre	For session 2025-26, please describe below how parents will be involved in decisions relating to the operation of the school/centre
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Council • Pupil Leadership Team • Committees • Consultations • Assemblies • Annual Review Meetings • School Elections • Termly Evaluations • Mind of My Own 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Council • Friends of Willowbank • Consultations and surveys (App and in person) • Family Learning events • Annual Review Meetings • ILP reviews • Parent Council attendance at Pupil Council • Learning Journals • Budget consultations

Community Plan East Ayrshire 2015 - 2030



Together, in achieving our Vision, Partners will demonstrate:

Effective leadership

We will provide clear leadership in Community Planning and engage effectively with our employees and communities

Collective ownership

We will take collective ownership for delivering on the Community Plan, the associated Single Outcome Agreement and the Community Plan Delivery Plans, and work hard to improve outcomes for local people and communities

Good governance

We will implement clear operating arrangements to support effective strategic direction, scrutiny and accountability

Democratic accountability

We will measure and report on the impact of our activities to demonstrate how effectively we are improving outcomes for local people and communities, and all partners will be held to account for their contribution.

Our Partnership will continue to work to meet the needs of the people who live in our communities. Our guiding principles will be reflected in all that we do and should be evident for all to see.

*Our
Vision*

"East Ayrshire is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs."

We will:

- Promote lifelong learning.
- Promote equality and tackle inequality;
- Adopt a preventative approach;
- Ensure effective community engagement in the planning and delivery of local services;
- Utilise the strengths and resilience within communities;
- Drive efficiency and performance improvement;

National and Local Priorities

The Scottish Government's vision for education in Scotland:

- Excellence through raising attainment and improving outcomes
- Achieving equity

Key priorities of the National Improvement Framework:

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

NIF drivers of improvement in the outcomes achieved by children and young people are:

1. School and ELC leadership
2. Teacher and practitioner professionalism
3. Parent/carer involvement and engagement
4. Curriculum and assessment
5. School and ELC improvement
6. Performance information



Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC)

[Scottish Attainment Challenge: framework for recovery and accelerating progress](#)

[Scottish Attainment Challenge Logic Model](#) –

Tackling the Poverty-Related Attainment Gap – Our Theory of Change

SAC organisers:

- Learning and teaching
- Leadership
- Families and communities

East Ayrshire Plans

Key Priorities	Education Service Improvement Plan:	Children's Services Plan:	Community Learning and Development Plan:
1: Our Leadership	We actively support, promote and enact leadership at all levels. Our young people are supported to be leaders on their learning in our centres, schools and wider life experiences. All staff have ready access to appropriate CLPL and experiences to promote leadership in every classroom and centre.	Priorities for 2023-26: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Our children and young people feel respected, listened to and influence change 2. We are working collaboratively, reducing the impact of social and economic poverty on our children and young people 3. Our children and young people feel safe 4. Our children and young people have the best start in life 5. Our children and young people's mental health is improving 	Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth • Wellbeing • Fairness • Sustainability Action areas <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth voice and participation 2. Lifelong learning and skills development 3. Empowering communities 4. Wellbeing and inclusion
2: Teaching and Learning Together	Our young people should experience a teaching, learning and curriculum offer that meets their needs, and those of our local and national context. All staff should be supported to deliver in new and innovative ways by accessing CLPL relevant to their needs and those of our young people.		
3: Our Wellbeing and Belonging	We want all of our young people to feel supported by people who know them well, and feel included in all of our schools and centres. Our staff need to be supported in their working with our young people, especially in times of adversity. As a key universal service, it is our vision that all young people attend our establishments on a full-time and regular basis to support them in their development at all stages.		
4: Our Attainment, Destinations and Achievements	We want the very best for all of our young people in East Ayrshire. We aim to ensure all young people secure a positive destination through excellent achievement and attainment at all levels.		

Our Leadership: Improvement priority: Learner-centred and family supported improvements to teaching and learning								
Rationale – To address identified gaps in inclusive teaching, learner engagement, and family involvement which have been evidenced through classroom observations, self-evaluation using HGIOS4, pupil and parent feedback, and data on attainment, wellbeing and parental engagement.								
NIF key drivers:	Teacher & practitioner professionalism		Curriculum & assessment		Parent/carer involvement & engagement		Performance information	
HGIOS4 QIs:	1.1	1.2	2.3	2.5	2.7	3.1		
ESIP key priorities:	Y Teaching & Learning			Y Our Wellbeing		Y Our attainment		
Outcomes for our learners		Our actions/Approaches/Interventions		PEF	Who	Measures		Review/milestones
(1) We will ensure our children and young people experience excellent teaching and learning, within inclusive classrooms.		(a) Scheduled professional dialogue, team teaching, learning walks and classroom observations.			TS/ KCC	Learning Walks Class Observations HGIOS4 ratings Pupil achievement of ILP targets Staff, pupil and family feedback		Monthly data analysis Termly feedback reviews
		(b) Further development of the Excellent Lesson framework.			JMcC NM			
(2) We will ensure Quality Assurance procedures directly improve curriculum and pedagogy for pupils.		(a) Refresh our approach to self-evaluation using HGIOS4 through working group and whole school activities.			JMcC NM KCC TS	Teacher and Classroom Assistant confidence levels Engagement levels of tracking tools Working Group feedback		Monthly reviews
		(b) Take on board feedback from authority Learning Visits and ensure all staff are empowered to take on leadership roles relating to this.						
(3) We will ensure our pupils’ educational needs are best supported by strong home-school partnerships.		Regular, accessible and inclusive family learning events, track and monitor attendance, using data to inform planning and promote inclusive engagement strategies.		✓	KCC	Tracking attendance/engagement Family feedback Pupil feedback Staff feedback Learning Journals engagement data		Termly reviews
(4) We will ensure increased opportunity for staff leadership leads to enhanced curriculum experiences for our learners.		All staff will be part of a Working Group and have assigned designated distributed leadership responsibilities.			NM	Staff confidence surveys, Learning Walks Class Observations, HGIOS4 ratings Staff, pupil and family feedback		Monthly reviews

Teaching and Learning Together: Improvement priority: Increased inclusive teaching methodologies to increase attainment and engagement.									
Rationale – To address identified needs in literacy, play-based learning, and Deaf awareness, as evidenced by staff confidence, dialogues with external agencies, pupil communication observations, learning walks, and feedback highlighting the need for consistent, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate approaches across the school.									
NIF key drivers:	Curriculum & assessment		School & ELC leadership		Performance information		Teacher & practitioner professionalism		
HGIOS4 QIs:	2.3	2.2	2.4		3.1	1.2	1.3		
ESIP key priorities:	Y Our Leadership				Y Our Wellbeing		Y Our attainment		
Outcomes for our learners	Our actions/Approaches/Interventions			PEF	Who	Measures		Review/milestones	
(1) We will ensure our pupils benefit from increased opportunities for literacy and communication development.	(a) Principal Teachers of Literacy and Communication.			✓	TS/KCC	Staff confidence surveys Learning Walks Class Observations HGIOS4 ratings Pupil achievement of ILP targets Staff, pupil and family feedback		Termly reviews	
	(b) Staff training to develop confidence and skills in signing, symbol use (including PODD) and AAC devices, across all learning environments.			✓	KCC JMcC FB CMcP PM LS				
	(c) Use of Letterland phonics, ensuring consistency across primary.			✓	PM LS				
	(d) Develop a literacy programme focused on life skills and real-world functional literacy across secondary.			✓	PM LS NM				
(2) We will ensure all learners experience increased opportunities for learning through play across the school.	Scheduled professional dialogue, training, team teaching and learning walks.			✓	PM LS	Staff confidence surveys Learning Walks Class Observations HGIOS4 ratings Pupil achievement of ILP targets Staff, pupil and family feedback		Termly reviews	
(3) We will ensure learners are supported by best inclusive practice through improved staff awareness of and incorporation of strategies from support agencies.	Scheduled CLPL sessions and coaching with the Teacher of the Deaf, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Social Work Team Leader, Educational Psychology, Visual Impairment Teacher, professional dialogue and learning walks. All partner agencies will be requested to contribute meaningfully to the Child's Plan in the format of Pupil Passports or any other meaningful format.				KCC	Teacher and Classroom Assistant confidence levels ILP Tracking Class Observations Feedback from Partner Agencies		Termly reviews	

Our Wellbeing and Belonging: Improvement priority: Promotion of diversity, regulation and outdoor education.														
Rationale – To respond to data on dysregulation, incidents of distress and pupil and staff wellbeing which has highlighted the need for trauma-informed approaches, inclusive environments, and enhanced outdoor and learning. To ensure we take account of the significant Gypsy/Traveller population within our school and ensure our policies and practice are supportive to our families.														
NIF key drivers:	Performance information		Curriculum & assessment		School & ELC leadership		Teacher & practitioner professionalism							
HGIOS4 QIs:	3.1		2.4		2.2		2.7		1.5		2.5			
ESIP key priorities:	Y		Our Leadership		Y		Teaching & Learning		Y				Our attainment	
Outcomes for our learners		Our actions/Approaches/Interventions			PEF	Who	Measures				Review/milestones			
(1) We will ensure our pupils are able to learn in a calm, safe environment, where we have reduced incidents of violence and aggression and self-harm.		Use dysregulation trackers in consultation with Educational Psychology, with regular analysis to inform Safe Plans Exploration of Health and Wellbeing tracker.				KCC LT	Pupil dysregulation trackers Incident reports Monthly SLT data analysis Educational Psychology Observation and professional feedback Class Observations Learning Walks Parental Feedback				Monthly reviews			
(2) We will ensure our learners are exposed to quality outdoor learning, wellbeing and connection to nature.		Develop the garden space to become a valuable teaching and learning space.			✓	NM	Pupil feedback Staff feedback Lesson observations 50 Things To Do Outdoors tracker Pupil dysregulation trackers Incident reports				Termly reviews			
(3) We will ensure our school community is an inclusive and supportive environment for Gypsy/Travellers.		Parental engagement and parent-led staff learning and engagement with The Gypsy/Traveller and Roma Pledge for Scottish Schools. Celebration of Gypsy/Traveller culture through class topics, assemblies and visible wall displays and books.				JMcC	Parental engagement and feedback Tracking of parental attendance at events for Gypsies/Travellers Tracking of attendance and attainment Gypsies/Travellers				Termly reviews			
(4) We will ensure pupils benefit from the care and support of staff who are trauma-informed in an environment which is supportive for Care-Experienced young people.		90% of staff will be trained in the Promise to Level 3. All class and school activities and events will take account of the needs of the diverse range of families we have across our school community, including single parents and LGBT+ people, care-experienced pupils and Gypsy/Travellers.			✓	TS	Pupil dysregulation trackers Incident reports Monthly SLT data analysis Class Observations Learning Walks Parental Feedback				Termly reviews			

Our Attainment, Destinations and Achievements: Improvement priority: Opportunities for peer relationships and promotion of excellent attendance.									
Rationale – To address reduced pupil interaction, relationships and friendships with those from other schools, to target fallen attendance rates across the school as a result of gaps identified through attendance tracking, and the success of pilot interventions indicating the need for increased support for families to increase attendance. To strengthen approaches to transitions which have been an area of challenge in recent years.									
NIF key drivers:	School & ELC leadership			Parent/carer involvement & engagement	School & ELC improvement			Performance information	
HGIOS4 QIs:	3.1	1.2	2.7		2.4	3.2	3.3		
ESIP key priorities:	Y Our Leadership			Y Teaching & Learning			Y Our Wellbeing		
Outcomes for our learners	Our actions/Approaches/Interventions			PEF	Who	Measures		Review/milestones	
(1) We will ensure learners are able to meaningfully experience leadership activities and increase their confidence.	Strengthen partnerships with St Andrews Primary School through joint initiatives.			✓	LS PM	Pupil feedback Staff feedback Family feedback Pupil dysregulation trackers Incident reports		Termly reviews	
(2) We will ensure our learners and their families are supported to maximise attendance at school.	Regular parental engagement, weekly monitoring and monthly data analysis, full implementation of Supporting Attendance policy which was piloted last session.				TS KCC	Monthly SLT data analysis SEEMiS attendance data EAC attendance data Pupil feedback Staff feedback Family feedback		Monthly reviews	
(3) We will ensure all leaving pupils experience a coherent and well-supported transition.	(a) Provide an extensive, meaningful and supportive transition programme for ECC → P1 which includes parents and wider families.				JMcC	Pupil feedback Staff feedback Family feedback ECC feedback		Terms 2 and 3	
	(b) Develop and distribute a parental support checklist and facilitate a structured parental information session.				NM	Pupil feedback Staff feedback Family feedback Feedback from Adult Services		Terms 1 and 2	
	(c) Actively gather pupil voice, identify personal interests and engage families in setting long- term goals to inform future adult provisions planning.				NM	Pupil feedback Staff feedback Family feedback Feedback from Adult Services		Termly reviews	
	(d) To continue to make use of the Independent Review Group to ensure correct placement of pupils in order to best meet their educational needs.				TS KCC	Pupil feedback Staff feedback Family feedback Pupil dysregulation trackers Incident reports		Termly reviews	
(4) We will ensure our pupils make coherent progress across the school.	Embed use of Learning Journals for both general curriculum tracking as well as ILP target progress.				KCC	Tracking ILP progress Tracking curriculum coverage		Termly reviews	

Summary of Improvement Plan directly linking to Education Service Improvement Plan

Our Leadership	Teaching and Learning Together
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone gets the help they need to learn and do their best in class. • We work together to think about what we do well and how to make our school even better. • Your family and the staff work together to help you learn and feel supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff learn new ways to communicate, like using signs, symbols, devices. • We all use the same reading and writing tools in classes. • You have lots of opportunities to play, because this helps you to explore and learn. • We all learn ways to support pupils who are Deaf to learn even better.
Our wellbeing and belonging	Our Attainment, Destinations and Achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We support everyone to be well-regulated and keep our school a safe place to learn. • Our garden is a fun, exciting place to learn. • We learn from our Gypsy/Traveller, LAAC and LGBT+ families to make sure everyone feels welcome and included in our school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are becoming friends with and working alongside pupils from St Andrew's Primary. • We support everyone to come to school as much as they can. • Transitions into Primary One and into Adult Services will be enhanced.

Willowbank School Priorities for Improvement 2025 - 2026

