

East Ayrshire Council
Education and Skills
Willowbank School



Willowbank School
Sgoil Bruach na Seileach

Establishment
Improvement
Plan 2026-27

School Improvement Plan	Willowbank School
Acting Head Teacher	Mr Kris Campbell Caldwell
Date Submitted	Submitted to Chief Education Officer on 15 June 2026

School Vision and Values

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.

Our school vision is to inspire all pupils, staff and families to “**Be the best you can be**”.

Our values are underpinned by the Getting It Right For Every Child wellbeing indicators. We strive to ensure that all children and young people are: **Safe**, **Healthy**, **Achieving**, **Nurtured**, **Active**, **Respected**, **Responsible** and **Included**.

Our aims are to:

- Provide an exciting, inclusive and communication-rich ethos where every pupil and member of staff is resilient, safe and confident to reach their full potential.
- Deliver modern, exciting and innovative teaching which allows every learner to develop their independence, talents and skills and celebrate their successes.
- Embrace the Team With The Family approach, working with all stakeholders to minimise the barriers of Additional Support Needs.
- 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

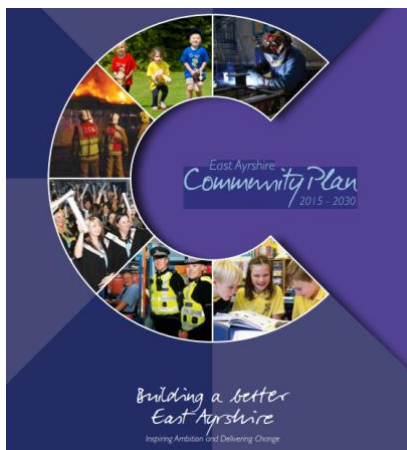
In line with the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 (amended 2016), the following checklist is designed to assist Heads of establishment with whole school/centre improvement planning that fulfils statutory duties in accordance with the Act. This must be completed prior to submission.

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 is used as the framework to inform the content of SIPs. Where appropriate. https://education.gov.scot/media/v5sh3dqt/frwk2_hgios4.pdf	✓
Teachers, practitioners and ALL school 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 Signature: <i>Kris Campbell Caldwell.</i>		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 2026-27, please describe below how children and young people will be involved in decisions relating to the operation of the school	For session 2026-27, please describe below how parents will be involved in decisions relating to the operation of the school
• Pupil Council • Pupil Leadership Team • Class committees and leadership opportunities • School consultations and surveys • Assemblies and learner forums • Annual Review Meetings • School elections • Termly evaluations of learning, wellbeing and school improvement priorities • Learner participation in quality assurance and self-evaluation activities • Consultation on curriculum developments, learning environments and wider achievement opportunities • Individual target setting and review processes	• Parent Council • Friends of Willowbank • School and local authority consultations • Parent surveys and feedback opportunities • Family learning events • Annual Review Meetings • Individual Learning Plan reviews • Learning Journals • Parent Council engagement with pupil leadership groups • Budget and resource consultations • Consultation on school improvement priorities and self evaluation activities • Partnership working to support curriculum development, transitions and learner wellbeing

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

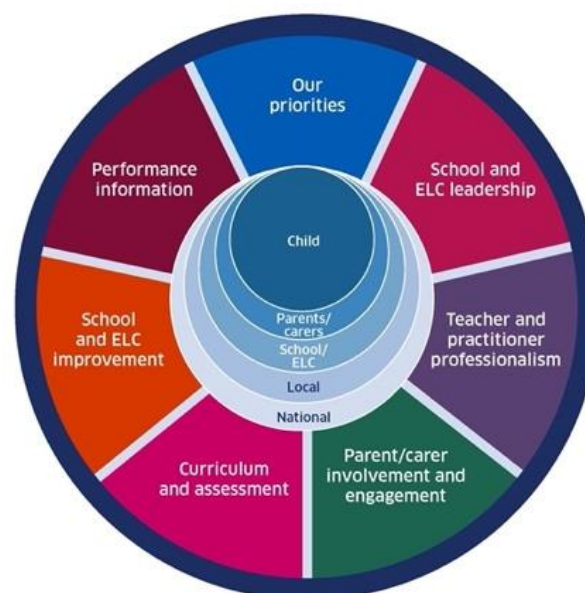
Key priorities of the National Improvement

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: 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: • Growth • Wellbeing • Fairness • Sustainability Action areas 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: Develop a culture of self-evaluation, quality assurance and professional learning which leads to better teaching and learning for learners.

Rationale – Self-evaluation and a recent Local Authority Learning Visit have identified a need to strengthen moderation, data analysis and quality assurance processes. We will now build leadership capacity at all levels.

NIF key drivers:	School & ELC leadership	Teacher & practitioner professionalism		School & ELC improvement	Performance information	
HGIOS4 QIs:	1.1		1.2		1.3	
ESIP key priorities:	Y Teaching & Learning		N Our Wellbeing		Y Our attainment	
Outcomes for our learners	Our actions/Approaches/Interventions		PEF	Who	Measures	Review/milestones
1.1 Learners will experience improved outcomes as staff use self-evaluation, moderation and data more effectively to identify strengths, address gaps and inform improvement.	Increased focus and CLPL sessions on self-evaluation, moderation and data analysis. Implement termly moderation activities (CFE/BGE and National Qualifications) and attainment meetings. Develop a shared approach to analysing attainment and achievement data, including attendance.			HT, DHT, PTs	Moderation records will show increased consistency in professional judgement. Attainment meeting data will record data-informed planning and how this enhanced learners' experiences. Target cohort of pupils will increase attendance by 5%.	Term 1 (Aug – Nov) SIP and QA Calendar launch. Learning Walk Cycle 1. Planning, ILP and Learning Journal scrutiny. Attainment Meeting 1 and attendance analysis. Moderation Cycle 1. HGIOS self-eval/deep dive 1 (learning, teaching, moderation and planning).
1.2 Learners will experience consistently high-quality learning, teaching and support as quality assurance processes provide robust evidence to enhance continuous improvement across the school.	Implement a clear annual QA calendar. Align QA activities to SIP priorities, HGIOS4 and the Excellent Learning Experience Framework. Strengthen evidence gathering, analysis and evaluation processes.			HT, DHT, PTs	QA calendar will be completed and evaluated. Learning Walks records (linked to Excellent Experience Framework). Classroom observations. HGIOS self-evaluation evidence. Improved teacher confidence in implementing the Excellent Learning Experience.	Term 2 (Dec – Feb) QA and Leadership Interim Review 1. PR+SP moderation. Moderation Cycle 2. Attendance analysis and Attainment Meeting 2. Learning Walk Cycle 2 and Learning Journal scrutiny. Practitioner Enquiry interim updates.
1.3 Learners will benefit from strengthened leadership at all levels, resulting in sustained improvements in learning, teaching and outcomes.	Provide leadership opportunities linked to SIP priorities. PEF Develop staff leadership through working groups. Collaboration and sharing of effective practice. All teachers will complete a practitioner enquiry project and present their findings. (Including purchase of appropriate resources) PEF		✓	HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers	Staff leadership evaluations (SIP review and self-evaluations). Working group outcomes. Professional enquiry evidence. Staff confidence will increase.	Term 3 (Mar – Jun) HGIOS self-eval and deep dive 2. QA and Leadership Interim Review 2. Learning Walk Cycle 3 and Annual Report scrutiny. Attainment Meeting 3. HGIOS self-eval and deep dive 3. Final QA and Leadership Review, ACEL/NQ analysis and final SIP evaluation.

Teaching and Learning Together: Deliver consistently high-quality learning, teaching and assessment experiences which provide appropriate pace, challenge and progression for learners.

Rationale – We wish to further develop consistency in learning, teaching and assessment across the school. We continue to develop our Excellent Learning Experience Framework, moderation processes and curriculum planning approaches to ensure we provide appropriate pace, challenge and progression.

NIF key drivers:	Teacher & practitioner professionalism		Curriculum & assessment		School & ELC improvement	
HGIOS4 QIs:	1.2		2.2		2.3	
ESIP key priorities:	N Our Leadership		N Our Wellbeing		Y Our attainment	
Outcomes for our learners	Our actions/Approaches/Interventions		PEF	Who	Measures	Review/milestones
2.1 Learners will experience consistently high-quality learning, teaching and assessment through the effective implementation of the Willowbank Excellent Learning Experience Framework.	Review/refresh framework. Ongoing CLPL sessions with teachers and classroom assistants. Use Learning Walks, professional dialogue and QA activities to support implementation – refreshed, more aligned QA paperwork. Share and celebrate effective practice.			HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers	Learning Walks will demonstrate increased consistency in practice. Learner engagement. Pupil voice: L&T Surveys. Improved pace, challenge and differentiation will be observed during Learning Walks. Increased staff confidence in delivering ELE.	Term 1 (Aug – Nov) CIC & ELE CLPL. Excellent Observations CLPL. Planning and ILP scrutiny. Moderation Cycle 1. Learning Walks (challenge, enjoyment, personalisation and choice). HGIOS 2.3 self-eval and deep dive 1.
2.2 Learners will experience greater consistency and accuracy in assessment as staff develop confidence and consistency in moderation practices in Curriculum for Excellence and National Qualifications.	Develop a whole-school moderation calendar. Implement termly moderation activities. Strengthen understanding of national standards and assessment judgements. Increase teacher confidence in critically analysing colleagues' planning, teaching and assessment. Deliver CLPL on high-quality observations and evidence gathering ('An Excellent Observation'). Develop a consistent approach to Learning Journals use.			HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers	Moderation records. Professional dialogue with teachers. Improved consistency of professional judgement. NQ verification outcomes. Learning Journals audits. Planning scrutiny. ILP targets	Term 2 (Dec – Feb) ELE review. Curriculum Improvement Cycle review. Moderation Cycle 2. Learning Walks (breadth, depth and progression). Learning Journal scrutiny and Learning Walk Cycle 2.
2.3 Learners will experience learning that provides appropriate pace, challenge and progression as staff reflect on the Curriculum Improvement Cycle and progression pathways.	Deliver CLPL on the Curriculum Improvement Cycle. Review progression pathways and planners to align with the new frameworks. Teachers will engage in professional dialogue and curriculum development activities. Monitor planning through QA processes (ongoing through QA calendar).			HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers	Staff confidence surveys. Planning scrutiny. Learner progress data. There will be increased evidence of pace, challenge and progression across curriculum areas (Learning Walks). Evidence in planning of new CIC approaches.	Term 3 (Mar – Jun) Planning and ILP scrutiny. HGIOS self-eval and deep dive 2. Curriculum pathways, accreditation and destinations review. Learning Walk Cycle 3. Moderation Cycle 3. HGIOS self-eval and deep dive 3. Review of attainment, accreditation and wider achievement.

Our Wellbeing and Belonging: Develop nurturing, trauma-informed and inclusive approaches further to support wellbeing and regulation for pupils.

Rationale – The needs of our learners continue to become increasingly complex, with a growing number requiring highly individualised approaches to communication, and regulation strategies to support their wellbeing. We will further develop nurturing, trauma-informed and inclusive practice to ensure all learners feel safe, regulated and ready to learn.

NIF key drivers:	School & ELC leadership	Teacher & practitioner professionalism			Parent/carer involvement & engagement
HGIOS4 QIs:	2.4	2.7			3.1
ESIP key priorities:	N Our Leadership	Y Teaching & Learning			N Our attainment
Outcomes for our learners	Our actions/Approaches/Interventions	PEF	Who	Measures	Review/milestones
3.1 Learners will benefit from consistent trauma-informed and nurturing approaches which support wellbeing, engagement and readiness to learn.	Deliver CLPL on trauma-informed practice, ACEs and nurturing approaches. Develop a shared understanding of excellent practice (further develop ELE framework).		HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers, CAs	Staff confidence surveys. Learning Walks. Wellbeing observations. Learner engagement. Feedback from staff and families.	Term 1 (Aug – Nov) Baseline Learning Walks and wellbeing observations. Attendance and behaviour analysis. Learning and Teaching survey. Planning and ILP scrutiny. HGIOS self-eval and deep dive 1.
3.2 Learners will have access to consistent regulation strategies and environments which support emotional wellbeing and participation in learning.	Audit existing regulation spaces and resources. PEF Develop and resource regulation stations. PEF Share effective regulation strategies and monitor implementation through PR+SP moderation.	✓	HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers, CAs	Audit outcomes. Learning Walks. Pupil engagement. Reduction in barriers to learning. Feedback from learners, families and staff.	Term 2 (Dec – Feb) PR+SP moderation. Interim Review 1. Attendance & behaviour analysis. Trauma, nurture and wellbeing CLPL. HWB learner survey. Learning Walk Cycle 2.
3.3 Learners will demonstrate increased participation, engagement and belonging through personalised and inclusive approaches which meet their individual needs.	Review personalised support approaches in Child's Plan. Strengthen learner voice (in classes and pupil council). Purchase of AAC devices to support. PEF Ensure communication and inclusion needs are reflected in planning and practice.	✓	HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers	Learner voice evidence. Attendance and engagement data. QA evidence. Feedback from learners and families. Increased participation in school life.	Term 3 (Mar – Jun) HGIOS self-eval and deep dive 2 (wellbeing, regulation, learner and family voice). Interim Review 2. Attendance & behaviour analysis. GIRFEC, Strengths and Interests moderation. Partnerships & Family Learning survey. HGIOS self-eval and deep dive 3.
3.4 Learners will experience improved wellbeing and reduced barriers to learning through effective partnership working with families and agencies.	Strengthen partnership working through better communication and collaborative with other agencies. Increase opportunities for family engagement and participation. PEF	✓	HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers, Partner Agencies	Family feedback. Attendance at events & meetings. Multi-agency records. Wellbeing outcomes. Evidence of reduced barriers to learning.	

Our Attainment, Destinations and Achievements: Improve attainment, achievement and positive destinations through personalised curriculum pathways and learner journeys.						
Rationale – We are committed to ensuring all learners achieve success and leave Willowbank with the qualifications and skills for life, work and future learning. We wish to create more individualised curriculum pathways and opportunities for wider achievement. We also wish to maximise positive destinations for leavers.						
NIF key drivers:	Curriculum & assessment	School & ELC improvement	Performance information		Parent/carers involvement & engagement	
HGIOS4 QIs:	2.2	2.6	2.7		3.2	
ESIP key priorities:	N Our Leadership		N Teaching & Learning		N Our Wellbeing	
Outcomes for our learners	Our actions/Approaches/Interventions		PEF	Who	Measures	Review/milestones
4.1 Secondary learners will improve their attainment and achievement through increased opportunities for accreditation, Qualifications Scotland awards and wider achievement.	Review current qualifications offer. Increased opportunities for personalisation and choice. Increase opportunities for accreditation where appropriate (non-NQ wider achievements). Explore progression from National 1 to National 2 qualifications where appropriate for target cohort of learners. Align internal moderation and assessment approaches including consistency of approach.			HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers	Qualifications Scotland attainment data will show increased range and number of qualifications. Wider achievement data. NQ moderation and verification evidence will show pupils' achievements.	Term 1 (Aug – Nov) Review NQ and wider achievement offer. Moderation Cycle 1 & planning scrutiny. Attendance, attainment and achievement review. ILP target monitoring. HGIOS deep dive 1. Term 2 (Dec – Feb) Interim review of NQs, accreditation and wider achievement, Moderation Cycle 2, Attainment Meeting 2. Review of employability, DYW & community learning opportunities. Transition planning reviews for S3-S6 pupils. Term 3 (Mar – Jun) Curriculum pathways, accreditation and destinations review. Moderation Cycle 3. HGIOS deep dive 3. Analysis of NQs and wider achievement. Destination data review and transition evaluation.
4.2 Learners will develop increased independence, employability and life skills through meaningful learning experiences and wider achievement opportunities.	Extend employability and enterprise opportunities. Further develop work experience and community-based learning. Build on existing DYW opportunities including Thanks a Latte café, spa, enterprise activities. Strengthen partnerships with external providers. PEF		✓	HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers, Partners	Wider achievement records. Learning Journals profiles. Evidence of increased independence and participation (observations during Learning Walks, parent and partner feedback).	
4.3 Learners will be supported to achieve positive and sustained post-school destinations through effective transition planning and partnership working.	Strengthen transition planning processes. Enhance partnership working with families, , Ayrshire College, employers and adult services. Increase opportunities for learners to experience post-school pathways.			HT, DHT, PTs, Teachers, Partner Agencies	Destination data. Family feedback. Partner feedback. Pupil feedback. Evidence of successful and sustained transitions.	

Summary of Improvement Plan directly linking to Education Service Improvement Plan

Our Leadership	Teaching and Learning Together
We will continue to improve how we evaluate our work, develop staff skills and use evidence to ensure every learner at Willowbank receives the best possible support and opportunities.	We will continue to improve learning and teaching at Willowbank so that all children and young people experience engaging, challenging and meaningful learning that helps them make progress and achieve success.
Our wellbeing and belonging	Our Attainment, Destinations and Achievements
We will develop nurturing and inclusive approaches that help children and young people at Willowbank feel safe, supported, valued and ready to learn.	We will increase opportunities for achievement, qualifications, independence and life skills, helping Willowbank's learners prepare for their next steps in learning, life and work.



Willowbank School's Targets



Your ideas will help us make Willowbank the best it can be.



We will help you learn, grow and achieve your goals.



We will help you feel safe, respected, included and proud to be part of Willowbank.



We will help you build the skills and confidence you need for your future.