

Item 6.1 - Business bulletin

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 11 October 2016

Main Council Chamber, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh

Education, Children and Families Committee

Convener:	Members:	Contact:
<p>Convener Councillor Paul Godzik</p> 	<p>Cllr Paul Godzik (Convener) Cllr Cathy Fullerton (Vice-Convener) Cllr Elaine Aitken Cllr Robert Aldridge Cllr Norma Austin Hart Cllr Stefan Tymkewycz Cllr Maureen Child Cllr Nick Cook Cllr Gavin Corbett Cllr Cammy Day Cllr Alex Lunn Cllr Michael Bridgman Cllr Allan Jackson Cllr David Key Cllr Richard Lewis Cllr Melanie Main Cllr Eric Milligan Cllr Vicki Redpath Cllr Keith Robson Cllr Jason Rust Cllr Andrew Burns (ex officio) Cllr Frank Ross (ex officio)</p>	<p>Ross Murray Committee Officer Tel: 529 4227 Alasdair Oliphant Departmental Adviser to the Convener and the Vice-Convener Tel: 529 3294</p>
<p>Vice-Convener Councillor Cathy Fullerton</p> 	<p>For education items: Marie Allan (religious representative) Rev Thomas Coupar (religious representative) Allan Crosbie (teacher representative) Craig Duncan (religious representative) Alexander Ramage (parent representative) John Swinburne (teacher representative)</p>	

Edinburgh schools reopen

All 17 closed PPP1 schools reopened ahead of schedule and in time for the start of the new term. 7,600 pupils were affected by the closures as a huge logistical plan was put in place to provide alternative arrangements. More than 5,000 children were educated at over 70 different schools and education facilities during the three months up to the start of the summer holidays.

This was undoubtedly a very difficult few months for everyone affected by the closures and parents, staff and pupils showed enormous patience, dedication and resilience during this period of considerable disruption. It was pleasing that many staff and children commented on the warm welcome they received from their host school and this can hopefully be a basis for new and lasting partnerships and friendships.

The respected construction and procurement industry expert, John Cole CBE is leading the independent inquiry into Edinburgh's school closures and this is now underway. It is anticipated this will be completed by the end of the year, with a full report coming back for councillors to consider. The clear and thorough terms of reference set out exactly what the Council is aiming to achieve through this inquiry – to find out what went wrong when these schools were built and determine what lessons can be learned, not just here in Edinburgh but across Scotland and the rest of the UK.

Exam results success

The SQA exam results show that 2016 has been another really positive year for Edinburgh students, with the city achieving record results. It is testament to the dedication of teaching staff and the hard work of pupils that performance has risen yet again.

A total of 39,884 results were awarded for 8,007 candidates in more than 80 subjects ranging from Accounting to Urdu. Of particular strength is the success of pupils by the end of S5 and S6, where strong levels of attainment have been maintained or improved at all stages. It is a real achievement to have not only sustained, but built on the successes from previous years, with year on year improvement since 2011.

Another key aim has been to ensure that all school leavers enter a positive destination of employment, training or further education. Initiatives such as the

For more information on the reopening of the closed schools, [click here](#)

For more information about Edinburgh pupils exam success, [click here](#)

Edinburgh Guarantee are helping to make this a reality. With 92% of our young people achieving and sustaining a positive destination, this is a real success story which we aim to improve further.

Carers Champion Progress Update

The Health, Social Care and Housing Committee on [21 June 2016](#) considered an update on the progress made by the Carer's Champion, Councillor Work over the last year. The development of a Carers' champion was one of the 53 Capital Coalition pledges made by the Council in August 2012.

The committee agreed to note the progress taken by the Carers' Champion in this role and to note the progress with the implementation of the adult carers' action plan and the young carers' action plan.

The report was referred to the Education, Children and Families Committee for information.

School Catchment Fraud

Over the summer, there was positive media coverage of the work undertaken which led to 24 families losing their school places for the 2016/17 session about being caught giving false statements to get their children into certain city schools. The Council's Fraud Team carried out 1,500 investigations, which included every potential S1 pupil at three of the most popular high schools – St James Gillespie's, Boroughmuir and St Thomas of Aquin's. The findings uncovered 13 catchment frauds at high schools and 11 at primaries. The school with the highest number of fraudulent cases was St James Gillespie's High School with seven. The overall number of cases quadrupled from last year, when only six families were caught.

This is an issue that concerns many parents and it is hoped this publicity can help to offer reassurance that the Council is taking the matter very seriously and working hard to manage the problem. Parents are warned every year that the Council is actively looking into catchment fraud and that school places will be withdrawn if this is found to be the case.

Playground Improvement Projects

Over the last two years, a number of schools have actively developed their playgrounds for natural play. Whilst the benefits of these projects for the children have been enormous, some issues have also arisen. Although most parents are very supportive of playground developments, some questions have been raised about health and safety and accessibility for children with additional needs. As a

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result, any schools currently looking to start planning improvement work, or who have not yet commissioned this are being asked to postpone their plans until after Christmas. This will allow time for a full review of protocols and guidance.

Having taken internal and external expertise, new Council guidance will detail the process and protocols which ensure the development of safe, challenging and appropriate school playgrounds. A playground steering group of head teachers and other Council representatives will also seek to consolidate the learning from current projects and improve the process for future developments.

Training will be delivered to all head teachers before December. As part of the new guidance, head teachers will be expected to fully share the new protocols with their parent councils and details of the council support available.

Young Consumers of the Year Competition

In the previous Business Bulletin, Boroughmuir High School was highlighted for clinching the title of Scotland's Young Consumers of the Year 2016. Since then, the national final has taken place in London where Boroughmuir completed against three other schools from across the UK. After the tough two-day final, Boroughmuir prevailed against their rivals to be crowned UK champions.

Organised by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute and Consumer Empowerment Alliance, the annual event is for schools and youth groups across the UK to test their consumer and financial knowledge.

In addition to claiming the coveted trophy, the Boroughmuir students also won £1,000 for their school and a £50 voucher each. Winning the competition is a prestigious achievement and the end result of a lot of hard work from pupils and staff.



Portobello High School

The new Portobello High School will open its doors to pupils on 26 October after the mid-term break, three months earlier than expected. The school was originally due to have opened in the summer, but water drainage issues meant a delay until January next year. However, close liaison between the Council's project team, contractors Balfour Beatty and Scottish Water got the problems resolved quicker than expected.

The new school becomes the Council's largest, with space for 1,400 pupils. It provides state of the art teaching facilities, with both indoor and outdoor sports facilities including a swimming pool and two all weather pitches. This enables all curricular PE to be provided on site rather than having to transport pupils to other locations as happened previously.



Leith Academy Pupils

Four Leith Academy pupils have won a nationwide competition to intern as part of US Democratic Party presidential nominee Hillary Clinton's campaign in the US in November. The Inspire US 2016 competition, organised by education charity, The Transformation Trust, received entries from schools all across the UK. Five winning schools were selected, with Leith Academy being the only one from Scotland.

The pupils will travel to America with their Modern Studies teacher on 29 October and will be based in Tampa, Florida where they will spend time working on Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign and the campaigns for several House of Representatives and Senate candidates. The trip will conclude with a short trip to Washington DC where the pupils will get a chance to see the White House

For more information about the new Portobello High School, [click here](#)

and Capitol Hill. Crucially, the pupils will be in America for Election Day on 8 November.



Edinburgh Early Learning and Childcare Academy

The academy's second cohort started in August and 28 new trainee Early Years practitioners are now in placement and working towards a SVQ3 qualification. The training programme is proving a real success for Edinburgh, with the first cohort having graduated in June, resulting in 21 newly qualified practitioners joining the workforce. The two-year training programme involves the trainees working in a learning and childcare setting where they receive mentoring and support from colleagues and a training team of assessors and internal verifiers.

Business Support to Schools

It was agreed at the last Education, Children and Families Committee to provide an update on the Transformation Programme and specifically the review of Business Support in Schools. Communities and Families and the Transformation Team are still consulting with Head Teachers on how best to proceed and an update on progress is being reported to the Finance and Resources Committee as part of their regular Transformation Update reports. There will be a further update to the Finance and Resources Committee on 3 November 2016 and more details will follow in the December Business Bulletin.

Internal Audit Quarterly Update Report : 1 January 2016 – 31 March 2016

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee on [23 June 2016](#) considered a report which detailed the Internal Audit progress for the period 1 January 2016 to 31 March 2016.

The Committee agreed to note the progress of Internal Audit in issuing 18 internal audit reports during the quarter and to note the areas of higher priority findings for reviews issued in the quarter.

[The report](#) was referred to the Education, Children and Families Committee for information and to specifically highlight high risk findings concerning School IT Systems.

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