

Community Learning and Development Progress Visit Report

Glasgow City Council

28 May 2024

1. Context

HM Inspectors visited Glasgow City Council to undertake a community learning and development (CLD) progress visit during April 2024. During the visit, we talked to learners and community representatives, CLD leaders, managers, staff, and volunteers, and other key stakeholders. HM Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of local authority CLD partnerships' approach to self-evaluation and planning for improvement, and considered progress made against identified priorities in their CLD plans.

2. Findings from the progress visit

How effective is the leadership of the local authority and their CLD partners in improving outcomes?

Areas of positive progress

Leadership of CLD is strong and effective. Partners on the Glasgow Community Learning and Development Strategic Partnership (GCLDSP) are clear about their role in ensuring effective governance of CLD across Glasgow. They understand and are committed to their shared priorities. This is helping them to improve how they use resources to meet existing and emerging needs. CLD services and CLD methodologies are increasingly valued by senior leaders and by other services. CLD partners and staff understand how their work aligns to Glasgow City Plan, council priorities, and the Glasgow CLD Strategic Plan. The CLD Strategic Plan is reviewed regularly and actions from it updated annually by the GCLDSP. CLD outcomes are reported to both the Glasgow City Partnership and to relevant council committees.

A key feature of CLD provision across Glasgow is the strong and positive ethos of partnership working. Partners have high levels of mutual trust and work together well, with a clear focus on improving outcomes. They understand how cooperation can add value and enable more needs to be met. For example, partners on the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Providers Network and ESOL Strategy Group work collaboratively to jointly identify gaps, plan provision, and make best use of shared resources. Partners work together very effectively to deliver against key priorities such as employability and increasing community empowerment. Glasgow's strategic approach to family learning demonstrates very strong partnership working. An extensive training and coaching programme is increasing the confidence and skills of school, family learning and early years staff effectively. As a result, family learning programmes are offered in almost all primary schools in the city. CLD practitioners are important partners in enabling parents to access financial support and learning programmes that enable them to address challenges in their lives.

CLD partners at all levels have a clear and sustained focus on improving outcomes for learners and communities. They have a strong understanding of the needs across communities and align their work well to try to address them. Partners use feedback from communities and learners, well to inform their planning. Self-evaluation is strong and effective across most partners. Partners on the GCLDSP and in wider partnerships challenge and support each other effectively. This helps them to reflect on their collective progress and agree next steps. This is supporting leaders to understand the overall capacity to improve, identify risks and consider solutions to key issues. CLD partners facilitate networks that are effective in helping staff and volunteers to share knowledge and support each other. Staff and volunteers are supported well to enhance their skills through training and professional development activities. This is improving their confidence and has positive impacts on their practice. The Glasgow Capacity Building

Strategic Group work well to ensure that there are clear routes for small and larger organisations to access the support they need. This development offer is improving the sharing of information between organisations, which is helping them to avoid duplication.

Areas for development

Learners and community representatives are not sufficiently involved in CLD planning. Work is underway to increase young people's contribution to strategic decision-making and this has the potential to increase how they can influence CLD planning. Whilst adult learners are involved in decisions about their own learning there is a need to develop ways for them to be involved in CLD planning. There are high levels of consultation with communities across Glasgow and feedback from them informs several plans, including the CLD plan. However, the GCLDSC needs to consider how best to involve community activists and local groups in CLD strategic planning as equal partners.

Partly due to the size of Glasgow, the reporting and partnership structures for CLD are complex and time consuming. There is a need for strategic partners and leaders to continue to review these arrangements to ensure they are as clear and straightforward as possible.

How well does the performance of the local authority and their CLD partners demonstrate positive impact?

Areas of positive progress

CLD Partners work together well to share data, learner and community feedback, and local knowledge. They also have a strong understanding of demographic changes in Glasgow communities. CLD priorities are informed by this intelligence. Partners, including community organisations, make good use of data to plan their work and monitor improvements. This is helping to develop programmes that address key community planning, council and CLD priorities. Across partners, the available information shows largely positive trends over the last two years in learner and community participation. The Glasgow ESOL Register shows the very high and increasing demand for ESOL learning in Glasgow. Currently there are over 4,500 participants in ESOL programmes. In the last year 1,151 learners gained a qualification and the ESOL schools' provision saw 1,443 learners progressing to college. The Local Employability Partnership has exceeded its targets for the past two years. The number of participants engaging in employability programmes is increasing, with over 1,800 during the past year. Of those, 897 participants reported progressing to work, further learning, training or another positive destination.

CLD partners have a clear focus on reaching and removing barriers for people affected by poverty and disadvantage. Almost all provision has free access or provides targeted support to those on low incomes to enable them to participate and make changes in their lives. For example, the Air Fryer Project in Castlemilk has had a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of learners. Participants value learning how to use a fuel-efficient method to make hot food. CLD partners work proactively to enable learners to address challenges in their lives and progress in the learning. Overall, provision is targeted well and delivered flexibly based on learner need. For example, the Young Movers Walk and Talk programme supports young people with mental health difficulties to re-engage with their communities and the outdoors. This is improving young people's confidence and wellbeing.

CLD partners deliver early intervention and prevention programmes that aim to address systemic issues. Targeted family learning programmes, such as Play Along Maths, Family Play

and Families Connect, are engaging families well in learning together. Many parents now feel more confident to engage with their children at home using the skills they have gained. CLD partners are supporting learners of all ages to gain confidence and skills that support them to meet their personal aims. Young people who participate in the Health Issues in the Community course have increased confidence and are able to use the skills they gain in other settings. CLD partners are collaborating well to support learning pathways across aspects of adult learning. Learners in the Glasgow Code Learning Digital Skills for Employability programme all have individual action plans. This is supporting learners to set and work towards clear goals and to understand their achievements. Staff encourage learners effectively to consider their next steps and to progress to further provision, such as paid internships.

Volunteers and community organisations contribute to other people's learning and their communities very effectively. Glasgow residents access a wide range of wellbeing support delivered by volunteers at libraries. This includes Macmillan@Glasgow cancer information and support sessions and Memory Scotland reminiscence groups. The People Make Glasgow Communities programme provides bespoke advice, training and ongoing support to local, usually volunteer led, organisations. Ambitious and effective community organisations, that have taken on running facilities through the programme, are delivering a wide range of activities and opportunities across the city. For example, since Easterhouse Henosis took on a venue in Autumn 2023, their provision has grown rapidly. They now have around 1,000 participations per week accessing learning, sports, sustainable food and social activities. Their work is helping to build community cohesion and pride.

Areas for development

Overall, the specific contributions and impacts of CLD across Glasgow are not captured clearly enough. The GCLDSP need to set measures of success and ambitious, but realistic, targets in the new CLD plan. This will help them to identify and monitor the key performance information that will best demonstrate progress.

Current staffing resources cannot meet the demands for ESOL. Partners are efficient, creative and work together very well to share resources. However, they are aware that the demands are growing and not all learners are receiving adequate and timely support. There is a need for senior leaders to continue to explore options to address these growing unmet needs. Not all young people's achievements and skills are recognised and tracked. There is a need for CLD partners to work with secondary schools, to ensure that every young person's achievements and skills are understood, recognised and celebrated.

3. Practice worth sharing more widely

Family learning strategic approach

Glasgow Life and their partners have a well-developed strategic approach to family learning across the city. Family learning programmes delivered in most Glasgow primary schools are impacting positively on the most disadvantaged parents and children. Targeted programmes such as Play Along Maths, Family Play and Families Connect are engaging families effectively in learning. Over 60 primary schools across Glasgow are now delivering Play Along Maths. The CLD approach, which is embedded in partners' practice, is valued highly. The Family Learning Toolkit, produced by Glasgow Life, is helping partners to deliver consistently high-quality family learning programmes. The use of the toolkit helps senior staff in education and CLD to moderate approaches across the city. Family Learning Action Groups meet regularly to share practice and

build confidence in the delivery of family learning programmes. This is building effective connections between school staff and community partners.

People Make Glasgow Communities Programme

The People Make Glasgow Communities programme is enabling and supporting local organisations to take over the running and development of community facilities and spaces across Glasgow. The programme is an empowering process that sees the council and key partners work collaboratively with local organisations. It also builds the capacity of a wider range of groups through ongoing support and access to relevant training. Through this programme 14 organisations are now operating venues with a further 10 working towards this. In addition, around 70 organisations are being mentored currently. The ambitious and proactive organisations, which have taken on running community facilities, deliver a wide range of activities and have expanded provision rapidly in response to local need. This is increasing opportunities for learners and communities.

4. What happens next?

The local authority and their CLD partners are making sufficient progress with their CLD plan and have the capacity to continue to improve. As a result, HM Inspectors will take no further action in relation to this progress visit. During the inspection, we identified aspects of highly effective practice which we would like to explore further.

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