



Education Scotland Corporate Plan for 2026 to 2031

October 2026

Contents

Education Scotland Corporate Plan for 2026 to 2031	1
Contents	2
CEO foreword	4
Plan on a page.....	7
Our operating context	8
Education Reform	8
National Improvement Framework.....	9
National Performance Framework	10
Public Service Reform	11
What the evidence tells us: staff & stakeholder views of the future	13
Engagement	13
Shared priorities from staff and stakeholders	13
Research	14
Vision, mission, and values.....	15
Vision	15
Mission	15
Values.....	15
Our strategic priorities for 2026 to 2031	16
Strategic priority 1: Coherent, inclusive curriculum	16
Strategic priority 2: Leadership of learning and system coherence.....	17
Strategic priority 3: Organisational performance, culture and impact.....	17
Strategic priority 1: Coherent, inclusive curriculum	18
Success measures	18
Contribution to National Improvement Framework outcomes	19

Strategic priority 2: Leadership of learning and system coherence.....	20
Success measures	20
Strategic priority 3: Organisational performance, culture and impact.....	22
Success measures	22
Our corporate, financial and performance planning cycle	26
Reporting year	27
Resources	27
Measuring and monitoring our progress	28
Attribution and contribution	28
Copyright	30

CEO foreword

This Corporate Plan 2026 - 31, my first as Chief Executive, represents Education Scotland's longer-term organisational strategy for 2026–2031. It sets out how we will support the Scottish Government's ambitions for children, young people and adult learners during a period of sustained reform across public services and education in Scotland. It also reflects the clear expectations from the Scottish Government for national bodies to work with purpose, rigour and collaboration to improve outcomes, strive for excellence and reduce inequality. This plan will be translated into delivery through Annual Delivery Planning arrangements.

This plan:

- illustrates our commitment to Public Service Reform, focusing our efforts where they add most value - supporting high-quality learning and teaching, inclusive curriculum design and effective professional learning across all sectors of education
- recognises Ministers' expectations for transparency, accountability and effective stewardship of public resources in a challenging fiscal environment, and establishes clear outcomes aligned to ministerial priorities, with a strong focus on organisational performance, evaluating impact and demonstrating value. We will continue to strengthen how we use evidence to inform decisions, prioritise activity and support continuous improvement. We are committed to measuring what is important to ensure Education Scotland is delivering a good quality, effective and efficient service, in line with our obligations as a public body and an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government
- reflects Ministers' expectations that improvement in curriculum, attendance, attainment and behaviour is most effective when it is shaped locally and supported nationally. Our role is therefore to provide clear, consistent leadership on curriculum and pedagogy while enabling educators to

respond confidently to the needs of all children and young people, particularly those affected by poverty and disadvantage

Excellence and equity underpin all aspects of this plan as fundamental drivers of improvement and are driven by the National Improvement Framework vision and outcomes. With our focus as a curriculum agency, greater clarity in what learners need to know, do and understand, with progression made explicit and learning made more relevant and engaging - creates the conditions for sustained improvement in attainment over time. This shared clarity through the Curriculum Improvement Cycle helps create consistent national standards, strengthens professional confidence in judgement, leading to improved quality and consistency of data. It will also provide a solid foundation for progression into qualifications and contribute to improved attainment and stronger international performance.

Education Scotland will work in partnership with local authorities, national agencies, and delivery partners to ensure coherence across the system and to reduce unnecessary complexity. In particular, we will work closely with Qualifications Scotland to support curriculum and qualifications reform, recognising this as a key ministerial priority. We will place strong emphasis on professional agency, evidence-informed practice and collaboration, recognising that sustainable improvement depends on the knowledge, commitment and leadership of Scotland's educators.

Education Scotland is committed to contributing directly to the Scottish Government's national missions, including the eradication of child poverty, the incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the delivery of more person-centred public services. Through our work on curriculum, professional learning and system improvement, we will support education to play its full role in improving life chances, strengthening communities and promoting wellbeing.

I am confident that this Corporate Plan provides a clear and focused framework for Education Scotland's work over the next five years. It reflects ministerial intent, responds to the needs of the system and reaffirms our commitment to working with respect, collaboration and purpose in the service of learners and educators across Scotland.

Finally, I would like to thank all staff and stakeholders who participated and provided valuable insight to support development of this plan and inform the future work of Education Scotland.

Donna McMaster

Chief Executive Education Scotland

Corporate Plan 2026/31



Education
Scotland
Foghlam Alba

Scotland's
curriculum agency



Vision

To lead the co-design and support the implementation of an ambitious and inclusive curriculum for Scotland's learners.



Mission

Education Scotland will work with partners to strengthen practice and develop curriculum, placing equity, excellence and inclusion at its core, and connecting evidence, policy and practice.



Values

- **We are inclusive** – we seek to remove barriers and value all voices so that everyone can contribute and belong.
- **We work together** – we build strong relationships and work with others, sharing different perspectives to improve our work.
- **We show respect** – we listen, support one another and treat everyone with professionalism, fairness and kindness.
- **We are adaptable** – we are open to new ideas and ways of working, learning and adapting, to improve what we do.

1

Strategic Priority 1: Coherent, inclusive curriculum



We will work with partners to enable a coherent, inclusive curriculum that is clearly understood and confidently put into practice across all stages of learning.

A coherent, inclusive curriculum is essential to ensuring high-quality education that meets the needs of all learners. This strategic priority aims to ensure the curriculum is inclusive, building confidence and capacity, is as locally and authentically relevant as possible, and is designed to support learners to achieve and thrive. We will work with our partners to ensure a system-wide approach, including robust support, a shared national approach where the curriculum is shaped collaboratively with the profession and makes effective use of all available resources, including digital, to ensure improved outcomes for all. The Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC) is central to this.

We will achieve this by:

- 1 Ensuring the curriculum is clearly articulated, coherent and inclusive.
- 2 Supporting recruitment and ongoing improvement of the curriculum through converging the system.



2

Strategic Priority 2: Leadership of learning and system coherence



We will work with partners to strengthen coherence and sustainable leadership of learning at all levels across the system.

Effective leadership of learning is critical to achieving improved outcomes for all our learners, team. This priority focuses on strengthening leadership at all levels and promoting a system-wide approach through collaboration and partnership. By building professional capacity, providing high-quality support and building a culture of continuous improvement, we will help ensure all learners thrive and achieve.

We will achieve this by:

- 1 Improving education leaders' professional learning offer across the system.
- 2 Strengthening networks and support for system leaders, including a focus on leadership and partnership.
- 3 Building leadership at all levels to lead improvement through change.



3

Strategic Priority 3: Organisational performance, culture and impact



We will continue to build organisational performance and culture to maximise our impact.

Strong organisational performance and culture are essential to achieving our purpose. This will require focusing on our people, systems, processes and ways of working, while fostering an inclusive, respectful and high-performing culture. Our approach will ensure we are efficient, effective and make the best use of our resources to deliver the greatest impact for Scotland's learners. This priority also includes our work and external engagement.

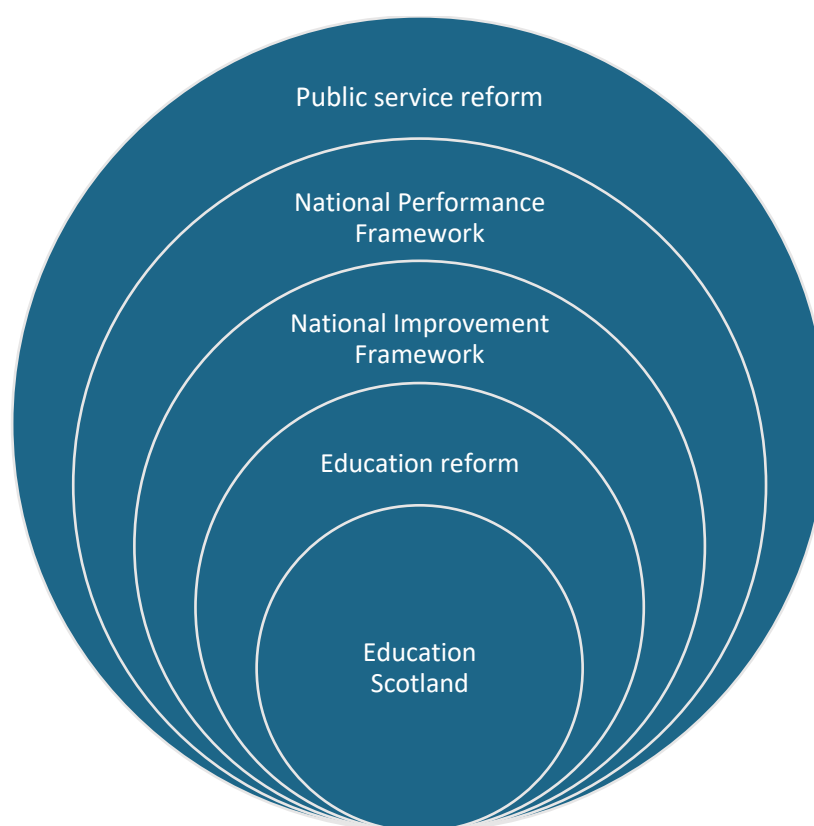
We will achieve this by:

- 1 Improving the data and evidence, processes and ways of working to achieve greater impact and value.
- 2 Continuing to ensure effective, proportionate governance and use of statutory and regulatory requirements.
- 3 Improving how we influence, demonstrate and communicate our impact.
- 4 Fostering an inclusive, supportive and high-performing culture across the organisation.



Our operating context

Our operating context shapes national priorities, expectations and our evolving role as a curriculum agency. By clearly positioning our role, Education Scotland can weave a strong “golden thread” connecting its work to national frameworks, policies and outcomes. This alignment is critical for demonstrating impact, supporting system coherence, and ensuring its work contributes meaningfully to wider ambitions for improvement and better outcomes for learners and communities across Scotland. Education Scotland operates within a nested system; a wider, interconnected system of national policy, reform, and delivery.



Education Reform

Education in Scotland has undergone significant education reform, including the establishment of Qualifications Scotland and an independent inspectorate, and the development of a renewed curriculum and assessment system. These reforms aim to build on the strengths of Scotland’s education system while ensuring it is responsive to current and future needs.

The Education (Scotland) Act 2025 followed Professor Ken Muir's 'Putting Learners at the Centre'¹ report and introduced major structural changes to Scotland's education system. Qualifications Scotland has replaced the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), and a new Chief Inspector of Education leads the new, independent inspection function for Scotland, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE).

As part of these changes, Education Scotland has been refocused on curriculum design, delivery, and improvement. With inspection functions removed, Education Scotland's role now centres on supporting high-quality curriculum implementation, strengthening professional learning, and working with partners to build a more coherent, transparent, and learner-centred education system.

This plan recognises that working effectively with key partners is essential to ensuring a coherent, aligned and high-impact education system. Education Scotland's collaboration with local authorities, COSLA, ADES and the Centre for Teaching Excellence, the professional associations and others, strengthens collective leadership, enables shared understanding of priorities, and supports consistent implementation across Scotland. Through partnership working, we can better connect policy, practice and evidence, ensuring that national priorities translate into meaningful improvements in learning, wellbeing and outcomes for children and young people.

National Improvement Framework

The National Improvement Framework (NIF) is the Scottish Government's key strategy for improving education, setting out the national vision, priorities and outcomes for children and young people. NIF focuses on delivering excellence and equity, ensuring that all learners achieve their potential regardless of background, and is supported by an annual improvement plan that outlines actions, evidence and measures of progress. This plan illustrates how NIF drives Education Scotland's

¹ **Muir, K. (2022)** Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education. Edinburgh: Scottish Government. (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/putting-learners-centre-towards-future-vision-scottish-education/>)

contribution to the national vision, priorities and outcomes for children and young people:

- Through our vision and mission: by reinforcing an ambitious, inclusive and collaborative approach to curriculum and system improvement. NIF emphasis on an inclusive and relevant curriculum, high-quality learning and teaching, and strong partnership working supports our commitment to co-design and implementation alongside practitioners and partners. At the same time, the NIF's core focus on equity, excellence and closing the attainment gap, alongside improving wellbeing and professional practice, closely drives our mission to strengthen practice and place these principles at the centre of curriculum development. The NIF reliance on evidence-informed improvement and system-wide collaboration also drives our aim of connecting evidence, policy and practice, ensuring that national priorities are translated into meaningful, high-quality experiences and outcomes for children and young people across Scotland.
- Through our strategic priorities: NIF's emphasis on an inclusive and relevant curriculum drives the setting of our strategy priority for a coherent, inclusive curriculum, ensuring clarity, progression and equity for children and young people. The NIF's focus on high-quality teaching, leadership and system-wide accountability also drives our strategic priority for leadership of learning and system coherence, reinforcing the need for strong, collaborative leadership at all levels to drive improvement. In addition, the NIF's outcomes around performance, equity, wellbeing and closing the attainment gap directly informs our priority on organisational performance, culture and impact, ensuring that our work is evidence-informed, outcome-focused and contributes to measurable improvements across the system. Collectively, our strategic priorities represent a key delivery mechanism through which national NIF ambitions can be realised.

National Performance Framework

The National Performance Framework (NPF) provides Scotland's overarching wellbeing framework, setting out a clear national purpose, values, and a series of National Outcomes that describe what the Scottish Government wants to achieve

across economic, social, and environmental areas. These outcomes are supported by indicators to measure progress. NPF guides decision-making and drives improvement across Scotland's government and public services.

At the time of publication, the NPF is subject to review. There is a recognised need to strengthen its impact in practice, ensuring it more effectively informs decision making resource and system alignment (Carnegie UK, 2024²). This creates an opportunity for Education Scotland to clearly demonstrate how its work contributes to national outcomes, supports collaboration and wellbeing.

In this context, Education Scotland has a key role in advancing equity, inclusion and improved long-term outcomes for all learners, ensuring that education makes a central contribution to Scotland's wider wellbeing ambitions. The National Performance Framework (NPF) guides decision-making and improvement across Scotland's government and public services. It provides a wellbeing framework and clear purpose, values, and outcomes. These describe what the Scottish Government want to achieve across economic, social, and environmental areas. They are supported by indicators to measure progress.

Public Service Reform

Scotland's Public Services Reform Strategy sets out the Scottish Government's vision for high-quality, efficient, and effective public services. Building on the Christie Commission (2011)³, its priorities prevention, joined-up services, and efficiency, alongside addressing deeper systemic issues such as leadership and culture, accountability and incentives, empowerment, and structural complexity. The Strategy also signals an increased pace and ambition in delivering this vision.

Public service reform crosscuts the entirety of this plan: it crosscuts what we will deliver and how we will deliver it and enables Education Scotland to play a distinctive

² **Carnegie UK (2024)** How a strengthened National Performance Framework can drive effective government in Scotland. Dunfermline: Carnegie UK. (<https://carnegieuk.org/publication/how-a-strengthened-national-performance-framework-can-drive-effective-government-in-scotland/>)

³ **Scottish Government (2011)** Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services (Christie Commission). Edinburgh: Scottish Government. (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/commission-future-delivery-public-services/>)

role in contributing to a more coherent, efficient and learner-centred system that improves outcomes for all.

This Corporate Plan and the Annual Delivery Plans that flow from it, reinforces Education Scotland's commitment to focus on prevention, partnership and supporting system-wide coherence. The Public Service Reform Strategy emphasises joined-up services and addressing systemic barriers and this aligns closely with Education Scotland's role in supporting curriculum delivery, strengthening leadership of learning and enabling collaboration across the education system. It also highlights the importance of modelling high-quality practice, building capacity and demonstrating clear, measurable impact.

Education Scotland has prioritised maximising efficiency through an extensive organisational design programme and the development of shared services with HMIE and other education partners as well as Scottish Government. This commitment to maximising efficiency will continue for the duration of this plan.

What the evidence tells us: staff & stakeholder views of the future

Engagement

Education Scotland undertook extensive engagement with staff and a wide range of external stakeholders, including practitioner networks, other national public bodies, Community Learning and Development Standards Council (CLDSC) and the Scottish Assembly for Parents and Carers. This engagement informed the development of this corporate plan and focused on how best Education Scotland could meet future system needs.

Shared priorities from staff and stakeholders

Across all groups, there was a strong consensus that Education Scotland should fulfil a clear, nationally recognised leadership role, with a sharp focus on improving outcomes for all learners. Stakeholders highlighted the need for greater clarity of role and purpose, alongside stronger system alignment to reduce fragmentation and ensure consistent national direction, guidance, and expectations. Collaboration was emphasised as a key way of working, through partnerships, networks, and joint working with practitioners to support improvement and reduce duplication, with a clear expectation that Education Scotland should help convene a more coherent and connected system.

A prominent shared priority is curriculum coherence, with a need for clear, practical support for curriculum design and implementation across diverse contexts and learner needs. Alongside this, professional learning and workforce capacity building were identified as central to success, focusing on empowering practitioners to deliver change confidently and effectively. Stakeholders also emphasised the importance of learner centred, rights-based approaches, underpinned by equity, inclusion, and wellbeing. Finally, there was a strong call for more effective use of evidence, data and system insight, alongside clearer communication, engagement and strategic prioritisation, positioning Education Scotland as a trusted national agency supporting improvement.

Research

Research and stakeholder evidence points to a shared vision for a more coherent, inclusive, and learner-centred education system, with equity, wellbeing, and rights at its core. This requires stronger alignment across curriculum, assessment and professional learning, clearer system purpose, reduced fragmentation, and more flexible approaches that recognise wider achievement.

Education Scotland is central to this, acting as a system enabler by building professional capacity, supporting collaboration and evidence-informed improvement, and ensuring national policy translates into consistent, high-quality learning experiences in a complex and rapidly changing world.

Vision, mission, and values

Vision

To lead the co-design and support the implementation of an ambitious and inclusive curriculum for Scotland's learners

Mission

Education Scotland will work with partners to strengthen practice and develop curriculum, placing equity, excellence, and inclusion at its core, and connecting evidence, policy and practice.

Values

We are inclusive

We seek to remove barriers and value all voices so that everyone can contribute and belong

We work together

We build strong relationships and work with others, valuing different perspectives to improve our work.

We show respect

We listen, support one another, and treat everyone with professionalism, fairness, and kindness.

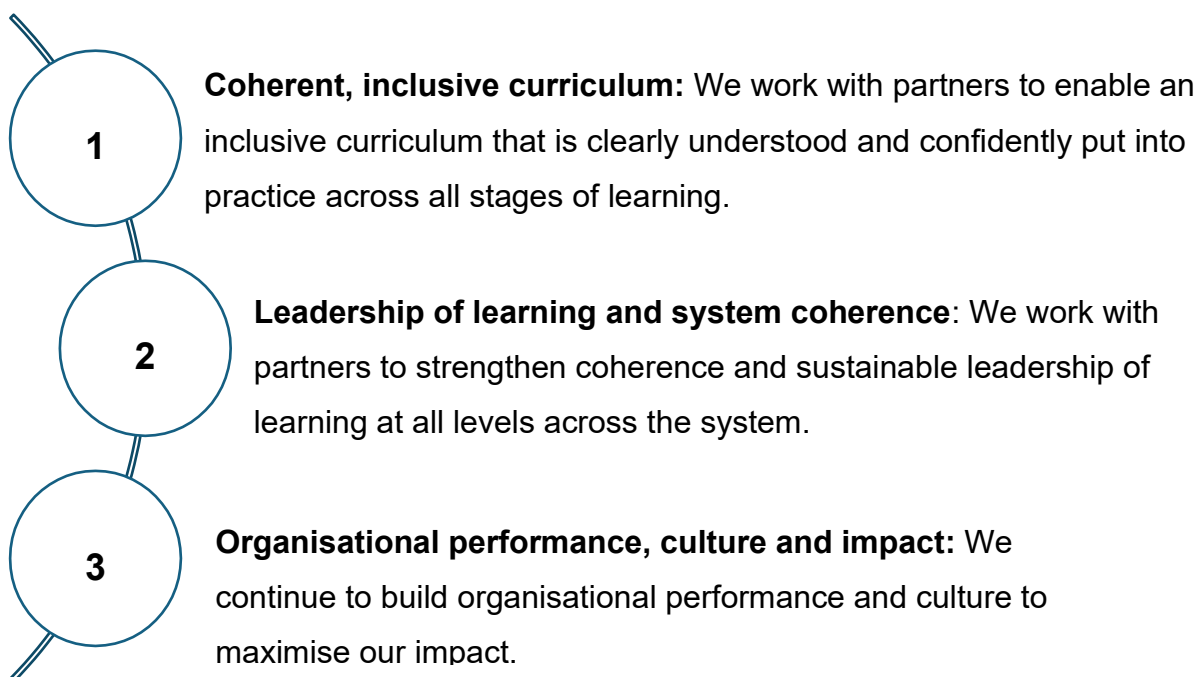
We are adaptable

We are open to new ideas and ways of working, learning, and adapting to improve what we do.

Our strategic priorities for 2026 to 2031

Our strategic priorities connect national priorities and evidence from research and stakeholder insight, setting out clear objectives for what we aim to achieve over the next five years. These are underpinned by our values and principles of using evidence-informed approaches and best value.

Education Scotland's three strategic objectives for 2026 to 2031



Strategic priority 1: Coherent, inclusive curriculum

5-year ambition

A clear, coherent, and inclusive curriculum is consistently understood and confidently enacted across all stages of learning, co-developed with partners and embedded in practice, with strong system-wide collaboration driving improvement for all learners.

Strategic priority 2: Leadership of learning and system coherence

5-year ambition

Sustainable leadership of learning is strengthened at all levels. High-quality coherent professional learning and inclusive practice is embedded across the system, with confident leadership enabling collaborative improvement through change.

Strategic priority 3: Organisational performance, culture and impact

5-year ambition

Education Scotland is a well performing, inclusive and values driven organisation with effective systems, good governance and a collaborative culture, demonstrating clear, measurable impact and maximising its contribution to system-wide improvement.

Strategic priority 1: Coherent, inclusive curriculum

We will work with partners to enable a coherent, inclusive curriculum that is clearly understood and confidently put into practice across all stages of learning

A coherent, future-focused curriculum is essential to ensuring high-quality education that meets the needs of all learners. This strategic priority aims to ensure the curriculum is inclusive, building confidence and capacity in its design and implementation. This will support a shared national approach where the curriculum is shaped collaboratively with the profession and makes effective use of all available resources, including digital, to ensure improved outcomes for all. The Curriculum Improvement Cycle (CIC) is central to this.

We will achieve this by:

1. Ensuring the curriculum is clearly articulated, coherent, and inclusive.
2. Supporting enactment and ongoing improvement of the curriculum through convening the system.

Success measures

Objective 1.1

- a. 100% of CIC milestones meet agreed timelines, with progress monitored and reported each quarter.
- b. All draft CIC resources are shared with partners prior to final publication, with feedback reviewed and, where appropriate, incorporated

Objective 1.2

- a. All 32 local authorities will engage with professional learning offered to support the enactment of CIC from Q3 2026-27.
- b. From 2026-27 baseline, CIC related surveys report improved confidence in enacting the new curriculum.

Contribution to National Improvement Framework outcomes

3. Inclusive and relevant curriculum and assessment gives young people the knowledge and skills to contribute to society, and shape a sustainable future.
4. High levels of achievement across the curriculum for all learners, with action to close the poverty-related attainment gap while celebrating and supporting progression for all.
7. An education system supported by a skilled workforce who engage in digital technologies, reducing digital inequality to enhance all aspects of learning and teaching.

Strategic priority 2: Leadership of learning and system coherence

Effective leadership of learning is critical to achieving improvement across the education system. This priority focuses on strengthening leadership at all levels and enhancing partnership working through high quality learning that supports curriculum change, inclusion, and equity. By building greater confidence across the system, it aims to enable leaders and practitioners to drive meaningful improvement for all learners.

We will achieve this by:

1. Improving coherence in Education Scotland's professional learning offer across the system.
2. Strengthening professional practice across the system by providing high quality professional learning, to support: curriculum change, additional support needs (ASN), equalities, equity, and high-quality learning, teaching, and assessment approaches.
3. Building leadership at all levels to lead improvement through change.

Success measures

Objective 2.1

From 2026-27, coherence of professional learning will be assessed as part of Education Scotland's Annual Delivery Planning process.

Objective 2.2

- a. At least 90% of practitioner evaluations report increased confidence to apply professional learning to practice (post programme evaluation).
- b. At least 70% of nationally developed professional learning programmes demonstrate impact against programme specific objectives and agreed success measures defined at the outset, using analysis of participant outputs and/ or structured evaluation activities (e.g. focus groups).

Objective 2.3

- a. At least, 80% of leaders report increased confidence in leading improvement, measured through an annual survey.
- b. At least 70% of nationally developed leadership programmes will demonstrate impact against programme specific objectives and agreed success measures defined at the outset, using analysis of participant output and/or structured evaluation activities (e.g. focus groups).

Contribution to National improvement framework outcomes

- 5. Highly skilled teachers and school-leaders drive excellent learning, teaching, and assessment for all, especially those with additional support needs.
- 6. Improving relationships and behaviour, and attendance, with increased engagement in learning in a culture of dignity and respect for all.

Strategic priority 3: Organisational performance, culture and impact

Strong organisational performance and culture are essential to delivering our priorities. This strategic priority focuses on strengthening systems, governance and ways of working, while fostering an inclusive, supportive and improvement and performance-oriented environment. By improving how we evidence and communicate our impact, and harnessing digital tools to improve efficiency, joined up working and decision-making, we will embed Public Service Reform priorities and ensure our work delivers clear value and sustained improvement.

We will achieve this by:

1. Improving Education Scotland systems, processes, and ways of working, consistent with Public Service Reform and wider obligations.
2. Continuing to ensure effective, proportionate governance and meet all statutory and regulatory requirements.
3. Improving how we evidence, demonstrate, and communicate our impact.
4. Fostering an inclusive, supportive, and improvement-oriented culture across the organisation

Success measures

Objective 3.1

A programme of new 'ways of working' is implemented and evaluated, with at least 2 processes reviewed annually against defined success criteria, demonstrating measurable improvements in organisational processes, with findings used to refine and strengthen practice over time.

Objective 3.2

- a. Increase year-on year, the percentage of audit recommendations implemented on time from a 2026/27 baseline.
- b. Education Scotland's annual report and account will receive an 'unqualified opinion' by external auditors annually.

Objective 3.3

Increase year-on-year from a 2026/7 baseline, the percentage of Annual Delivery Plan programmes and projects able to demonstrate measurable impact against defined objectives and agreed success measures.

Objective 3.4

From 2025/26 baseline, staff survey results will be maintained in years 1 and 2. From 2028/29, there will be year-on-year improvements in key culture measures, including access to the right learning and development opportunities and organisational communication.

Contribution to National improvement framework outcomes

2. Young people experiencing the benefit of schools and early years settings working in excellent partnerships with wider children's services and other partners, families, and communities, in line with the GIRFEC approach.

Our governance framework

Education Scotland is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government, now operating, as the national body for curriculum in Scottish education. As an agency, it remains part of the Scottish Government and is accountable to Scottish Ministers, while exercising professional and operational independence in delivery of its functions.

Education Scotland serves as Scotland's national curriculum agency, leading curriculum design, delivery, and ongoing improvement. It builds on existing national leadership professional learning programmes, works in partnership to inform approaches to wellbeing, inclusion, additional support for learning, relationships, and behaviour, while strengthening the system's focus on equity. Through this work, it plays a central role in supporting a coherent, inclusive education system and curriculum where all learners can flourish. The organisation is operating within a period of education reform with the aim of strengthening curriculum, inspection, and qualifications functions. As part of this reform, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) separated from Education Scotland in April 2026.

Governance structures are essential to ensure we operate effectively, transparently and in line with our strategic aims. They provide a clear framework for decision making, accountability, and oversight, helping to ensure priorities are delivered and resources are used appropriately, with best value at the forefront. These arrangements support strong performance management, effective risk management and alignment with national policy and objectives.

As an Executive Agency, Education Scotland operates impartially while remaining directly accountable to Scottish Ministers for its performance and use of public funds. Education Scotland's Chief Executive is designated as the Accountable Officer. In this role, the Chief Executive is responsible and accountable for proper, efficient, and effective use of public resources allocated to the Agency and ensuring robust governance, financial management and internal control systems.

An Advisory Board supports our Chief Executive and organisation. The Advisory Board's role is to provide advice to the Chief Executive about discharging her functions and comprises of Executive and Non-Executive members. The Chief

Executive appoints the Non-Executive Board Members to bring an independent, external perspective to the work of the Agency. There are also shared governance structures with HMIE, including a Shared Services Board, Partnership Board and Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee. Education Scotland's own governance framework continues to operate but is being reviewed to ensure it supports our new ways of working.

Our corporate, financial and performance planning cycle

It is important that this Corporate Plan clearly records how Education Scotland's corporate planning, performance, and financial planning cycle continues to evolve through the period of education and wider public service reform. A description of the strategic, planning, performance and budgetary cycle is set out below:

- 2021-22: Education Scotland published a five-year Corporate Plan which set out how Education Scotland would continue to work towards a vision of achieving excellence and equity for Scotland's learners, in partnership with Scotland's educators
- 2022–24: Education Scotland published an updated Corporate Plan aligned to reform timelines set at that time and interpreted national expectations following the Scottish Government's response to Professor Ken Muir's review of Scotland's education system.
- 2024–25: Education Scotland extended the 2022 – 24 Corporate Planning period by a further reporting year through publication of the Annual Action Plan 2024-25, retaining Strategic Priorities, updating the key actions, and highlighting the pivot towards a refocused Education Scotland. The Education Scotland Financial Strategy 2024–25 was published in tandem with the Annual Action Plan. The Annual Action Plan 2024 – 25 was consistent with the Accountability Framework, set out a proportionate set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and aligned with NIF. The Annual Action Plan 2024–25 recognised 'Inspection' as a 'refocus through reform' area, supported the initial work to make the shift to an independent Inspectorate (HMIE) and set out a distinctive set of key actions for the Chief Inspector.
- 2025–26: Education Scotland extended the Corporate Planning period by a further reporting year through publication of the Education Scotland Annual Action Plan 2025–26 and Education Scotland Financial Strategy 2025–26. Iterative improvements were made to priorities, KPIs and alignment with NIF and Programme for Government. The Annual Action Plan 2025 – 26 and Financial Strategy 2025 – 26 covered an intensive period of reform. Taken

together, the documents enabled an effectively managed divergence of Education Scotland and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education for Scotland accountability arrangements through good planning and reporting within the reporting year, recognising the break point in accountability between Education Scotland Chief Executive and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education for Scotland Chief Inspector (from April 2026).

- 2026 – 31: Education Scotland Corporate Plan (2026–2031) aligns the refocused Education Scotland Corporate Plan and Financial Strategy and sets out clear, refocused priorities and success measures. This includes publication of Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) for 2026-27.

Reporting year

Education Scotland's reporting cycle follows the financial year (April to March) rather than the school year. This enables Education Scotland to meet its public body obligations, including the alignment of organisational performance and finance:

- Quarter 1 relates to April to June
- Quarter 2 relates to July to September
- Quarter 3 relates to October to December
- Quarter 4 relates to January to March

As this reporting cycle differs from the school year, we will continue to work across different timeline and be clear about what timeline each quarter represents.

Resources

The Resource Budget for 2026 – 27 is just over £20 million, made up of core budget plus resources allocated in support of national priorities.

This represents approximately 0.5% of the Education Budget in Scotland. This resource covers staffing costs, contracts by external providers, digital, buildings and energy, and administration as well as some grants for external bodies. Our budget is, and will continue to be, under pressure due to several inter-related challenges that,

when taken together reduce the level of available resources for programme and project activities.

This Corporate Plan makes a clear commitment to pivot resources behind the strategic priorities, with a primary focus on curriculum. In doing so, we are clear about the things that we will rigorously prioritise and pay closest attention to. We remain committed to aligning organisational strategy (this Corporate Plan) and financial strategy.

Measuring and monitoring our progress

This Corporate Plan sets out our strategic priorities and how we will deliver them over the 5-year period. The Corporate Plan is translated into delivery through Annual Delivery Plans (ADPs). It sets out updated success measures against the strategic priorities, in the form of KPIs, to monitor performance. The KPIs, taken together with quarterly delivery reporting and organisational evaluation practice, will provide a robust and transparent approach to organisational performance. This will be supplemented by external evaluation where required.

Management of the Corporate Plan and the ADPs that flow from it, is undertaken by the Education Scotland Leadership Team (LT) and monitored by the Advisory Board (AB). Reporting is also provided regularly to Scottish Ministers. Strategic Priorities – and the linkages across priorities and actions – are overseen by Education Scotland's Delivery Board and associated arrangements for Corporate Services and Digital Services. Reporting is also undertaken to a newly established Shared Services Board for Education Scotland and HMIE.

Attribution and contribution

Organisational performance arrangements (delivery, evaluation, KPIs) focus on areas of organisational performance directly attributed to Education Scotland ('attribution').

However, our distinctive role within the education system in Scotland means that our reporting arrangements also include reference to some areas of focus and performance that we contribute to at an educational system level but go beyond the parameters of organisational performance ('contribution').

Going forward

Moving forward, we will continually improve qualitative and quantitative measures of success and capture not just the work we are doing, but how that work is experienced and the impact it has.

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