

Agenda Item	10.
Report No	EDU/24/25

The Highland Council

Committee: Education Committee

Date: 27 August 2025

Report Title: Education Workforce Planning Progress Report

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – People

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 On 23 November 2023, Members considered and noted the Education Workforce Plan 2023-2026. This report aims to provide updates on the progress made so far, including updated workforce data.
- 1.2 Cluster workforce plans were completed in March 2025, and the People Workforce Plan includes information for Education & Learning and Health and Social Care. In addition, information from the service workforce plans was incorporated in a [Corporate Workforce Action plan](#) which was presented at the Corporate Resources Committee on 20 March 2025.
- 1.3 The focus of this report is to update on Education and Learning workforce planning only for the purpose of this Committee.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:-
 - i. **Note** the Education workforce planning progress report and action plan; and
 - ii. **Note** the positive outcomes from the report, including:-
 - a. Implementation of the My Highland Future Portfolio which will support workforce development and offer more career-focused opportunities;
 - b. 108 Community Learning and Development staff were transferred from High Life Highland into Education & Learning via TUPE;
 - c. Progress in moving staff from fixed-term to permanent contracts in non-teaching roles, 221 moved in August 2024 and a further 156 due to move in August 2025;
 - d. The staff turnover rate for both Teaching and Non-Teaching staff decreased in 2024/25 compared to 2023/24;
 - e. Senior Management restructure and recruitment completed;
 - f. 100 probationer teachers were employed — an increase of 27 from the 2023/24 academic year; and

- g. 20 staff completed Scottish Government's 'Into Headship' programme in the last session - for teachers working in, or aspiring to, leadership roles in Scottish primary or secondary schools.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - A failure to manage workforce planning and change puts at risk the Council's capacity to make the most effective use of resources. The impact of failure of statutory service delivery will have a reputational impact, as well as financial implications from any relevant regulatory body.
- 3.2 **Legal** - Care is required that large scale and complex workforce change be managed in line with current employment legislation and Highland Council policy.
- 3.3 **Risk** - Having a sustainable workforce is included in the Corporate Risk Register. There are also staffing resource challenges associated with budget constraints. The delivery of core and statutory functions will be impacted if the Service is inadequately resourced, and staff do not have the necessary skills to deliver core functions. This report mitigates the risk of an insufficient current and future workforce.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** - Staff wellbeing is a priority in the People Strategy and the Service action plans, and this is reflected in the Corporate Workforce Plan.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** – there are no Gaelic implications, other than the reference to difficult to recruit Gaelic educational posts.

4 Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies, or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5 Introduction

- 5.1 Workforce planning is the process that organisations use to make sure they have the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. To manage their workforce effectively, organisations need to have up to date information on:
- The number of people they employ to carry out different tasks.
 - What skills the workforce has and where there are gaps.
 - What skills and staff will be needed to deliver future services and priorities.
- 5.2 Effective workforce planning will support the Education & Learning Service to:
- Deliver improved service

- Ensure we have the right number of staff with the necessary skills to deliver the service effectively
- Manage staffing budgets effectively
- Ensure sufficient and appropriate training is provided.

- 5.3 On 23 November 2023, the Education Committee noted the Service Workforce Plan for Education and Learning. This report provides a progress update.
- 5.4 There have been several changes in the Service since the last workforce plan was presented, including the Council's organisational restructure aligning seven services to three Clusters. Education & Learning now forms part of the People Cluster along with Health & Social Care; however, this report provides an update on the previously titled Education & Learning Service only. Future workforce plans will be developed based on the new structure in 2025/26.
- 5.5 The Education & Learning workforce data is split into Teaching and Non-Teaching due to the fact that both staffing groups are on different terms and conditions.
- 5.6 The availability of teacher education courses is determined at national level. Highland Council contribute at national forums to influence decisions in relation to the availability of initial teacher training and post graduate courses. The service is involved on an annual basis in bidding for probationer teachers through the Teacher Induction Scheme but ultimately has limited influence on the number of probationer teachers received each year.
- 5.7 A significant challenge in Highland is the ongoing decline in school rolls, which has resulted in the closure or mothballing of several schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings. In some cases, a declining school roll does not affect the viability of the school but can instead lead to a reduction in the number of classes. These demographic changes directly impact our workforce requirements, often requiring the reduction or reallocation of staff in affected areas. Our planning processes enable us to adjust staffing levels accordingly, ensuring that service delivery remains unaffected.

6 Workforce Planning Updates

6.1 Recruitment & Retention

- 6.1.1 Recruitment continues to be a significant challenge for some job roles, notably Head Teachers, Gaelic Medium primary teachers, STEM subjects, English, and Home Economics Teachers in Secondary. It should be noted that shortages in these secondary specialisms is a national issue and not specific to Highland. Factors contributing to recruitment difficulties include national co-ordination of teacher workforce planning and outward migration.

The Highland Council introduced a revised Exit Interview process, which asks leavers to complete an online exit questionnaire. An interview with their manager or HR can also be requested. In 2024/2025, 80 exit questionnaires were received from Education & Learning staff. The top three reasons for leaving Highland Council employment were:

1. Leaving the area
2. Change of workplace/work pattern
3. Career progression

The Council does have sufficient numbers of primary teachers, which allows the Service to focus efforts on addressing shortages in more pressured areas.

- 6.1.2 To address ongoing shortages in English and Maths teaching staff, we have developed a targeted pathway enabling current secondary teachers to gain an additional qualification in either subject. This initiative not only supports professional development and career progression for existing staff, but also strengthens our capacity to meet curriculum demands in critical areas.
- 6.1.3 The My Highland Future Portfolio - one of six portfolios in the Council's Delivery Plan - encompasses a wide range of programmes and projects. A key objective is to enhance the attraction, recruitment, and development of staff and make the Highland Council an employer of choice. One of the projects is to expand school-based activities to market the Highland Council as a future employer. This portfolio reports to the Education Committee and to Economy and Infrastructure Committee.
- 6.1.4 On 1 December 2024, 108 staff members from Youth Work and Adult Learning services joined Highland Council from High Life Highland under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE). This transition reflected the Council's strategic commitment to aligning these services with the My Highland Future portfolio. Bringing this team back in-house will enhance achievement programmes within schools, support adults into employment through improved employability services and streamline overall service delivery. The Employability Team that previously sat within our Economy and Regeneration Service also moved into Education & Learning on 1 April 2025 to further support this portfolio going forward. These measures are intended to maximise the impact of our programmes and provide more comprehensive support to the people of Highland.
- 6.1.5 Education & Learning is also making progress on reducing reliance on fixed-term contracts by moving staff into permanent roles wherever possible. For Pupil Support Assistant staff, 176 members of staff moved from fixed-term to permanent contracts in August 2024, with an additional 100 for the start of the new school session in August 2025. Similarly, the number of Early Learning and Childcare staff moved to permanent contracts in August 2024 were 45 and in August 2025 a further 56. These positive developments reflect our ongoing commitment to building a more secure, stable, and sustainable workforce to support consistent and high-quality service delivery. Further data on temporary contracts is provided in paragraph 6.5.4.
- 6.1.6 The number of Modern Apprentices that have completed their programmes within Education & Learning has increased from 29 in 2023/24 to 36 in 2024/25, predominantly in Early Years. These highlight continued growth in workforce development opportunities.

Modern Apprentices	Completed
23/24	29
24/25	36

- 6.1.7 The turnover data for the Education and Learning service area shows a positive downward trend in staff departures across both teaching and non-teaching roles between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Turnover in Non-Teaching has improved, decreasing from 17.1% in 2023/24 to 13.1% in 2024/25, a positive reduction of 4%.

In Teaching roles, turnover also reduced from 11.9% to 10.6%. While the decrease is smaller at 1.3%, it still points to growing stability in the teaching workforce.

2024-25 - Turnover	No of Leavers	Turnover
Education and Learning (Non-Teaching)	376	13.1%
Education and Learning (Teaching)	315	10.6%

2023-24 - Turnover	No of Leavers	Turnover
Education and Learning (Non-Teaching)	489	17.1%
Education and Learning (Teaching)	351	11.9%

Key factors contributing to improved retention include the introduction of a comprehensive induction programme for new teachers, the transition of 377 staff from fixed term to permanent contracts, and the continued success of the Modern Apprentice scheme.

- 6.1.8 The [Talent Strategy](#) recognises the Highland Council's need to plan, manage and improve people approaches, and supports the achievement of the [People Strategy](#) and implementation of the Council's [Delivery Plan](#). To create a robust organisation, we must embrace diversity and foster an inclusive workplace that encourages ambition and supports change. The Talent Strategy will provide the foundation to build the 'ambitious, sustainable and connected' culture, placing people at the very heart of the organisation.
- 6.2 Performance Management
- 6.2.1 As part of the Service commitment to raising attainment across all schools, there will continue to be attention given to reviewing teacher competency in line with LNCT (Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers) 39 - the local Highland Council agreement that sets out how the GTCS (General Teaching Council for Scotland) Framework on Teacher Competence is implemented to support and manage teacher performance effectively.
- 6.2.2 Following the introduction of clearer reporting lines and accountability through the implementation of the Education & Learning senior management restructure, consideration will be given to embedding performance management as a core component of workforce planning across Education & Learning as it plays a vital role in strengthening service delivery. A well-structured performance management approach enhances communication and clarifies expectations, supporting continuous improvement and accountability which drives higher levels of staff engagement and retention. It enables managers to identify strengths, address areas for development, and align individual performance with service priorities. To ensure effective implementation, service managers are supported with training and dedicated HR guidance.
- 6.3 People Development

- 6.3.1 The Highland Council has an annual Employee Review and Development (ERD) process for non-teaching staff. Teaching staff take part in a separate process known as Professional Review and Development (PRD). Both ERD and PRD meetings are designed to support open and constructive conversations between employees and their managers. These discussions provide a chance to explore development needs or aspirations, consider wellbeing, and talk about future career opportunities. The Service has made significant progress in ensuring PRDs are being undertaken, with over 96% completed by June this year compared with 75.8% in the preceding period.
- 6.3.2 The introduction of a dedicated corporate Career Coach, alongside the expanded availability of online training through Traineasy is building staff competence and driving a culture of continuous learning and improvement.
- 6.3.3 Furthermore, commitments have been made to explore additional specialist training opportunities for teams. One key example is Trauma-Informed Practice, which deepens understanding of psychological trauma, its impact on the individuals we support, and the pathways to recovery. This approach has now been implemented across all Council services. An accompanying e-learning module is available to all staff, which also emphasises the importance of self-care in our line of work.
- 6.3.4 As part of the Talent Strategy that was approved by Corporate Resources Committee on 20 March 2025, the organisation intends to work towards Investors in People (IIP) Accreditation. IIP is an internationally recognised accreditation for people management and employee wellbeing, and it aims to increase productivity across organisations by creating a stronger, healthier, and happier society. The focus of IIP accreditation is to invest in people, wellbeing and apprentices which aligns with our workforce planning ambitions. Education & Learning will go through this programme in March, April, and June 2026, with the expectation that the accreditation be sought by August 2026.
- 6.4 Structures
 - 6.4.1 As part of the Highland Council senior management restructure, two Chief Officers were appointed for Education & Learning, one internal and one external appointment.
 - 6.4.2 Following the recruitment of Chief Officers, the next phase of the restructure within the Education & Learning section of the People Cluster was implemented. Aligned with the future operating model, the service is now organised into two geographical areas: North and South. This strategic shift is designed to deliver more streamlined and effective support to Head Teachers, with the overarching aim of raising attainment across Highland. After a period of engagement with staff and trade unions, recruitment was completed for the next two tiers of the structure, resulting in the appointment of 8 Area Quality Improvement Managers and 8 Education Support Officers.
 - 6.4.3 Further restructuring of roles and teams within the Education & Learning section is ongoing to ensure the service is fully aligned with the strategic objectives of the People Cluster. This next phase of organisational change will focus on refining team structures and responsibilities to support the new area-based model and enhance service delivery across Highland, as well as to ensure service wide strategic requirements are fully supported.

The Service values the positive partnership it has with Trade Unions, and they continue to be consulted regarding any proposed changes.

6.5 Current Workforce Profile

- 6.5.1 The Service has approximately 6,060 employees and 4,386 FTE, compared to 5,600 employees and 4,230 FTE in 2023. This represents an increase of 460 employees and 156 FTE. This increase in headcount is primarily explained by the TUPE transfer of 108 employees from High Life Highland, the transfer of the Employability Team into the Service, and the movement of staff from fixed term to permanent contracts.

Teaching:	2973 employees and 2473 FTE
Non-teaching:	3090 employees and 1913 FTE

This breakdown shows that there are more part-time non-teaching staff (Early Years Practitioners, Pupil Support Assistants, and Clerical Assistants) compared to teaching staff. This reflects the hours that these groups of staff are required to work.

- 6.5.2 As of 2024/25, 78.1% of teaching staff within Highland Council are female, while 21.9% are male. Among non-teaching staff, the gender distribution is even more pronounced, with 93.3% female and 6.7% male, which is similar to 2023.

These figures are broadly in line with national trends for teaching staff. According to Scottish Government data published in 2024, 77% of teachers across Scotland are female, and 23% are male. However, no directly comparable national data was available for non-teaching staff in local authorities.

Given the current challenges in attracting male applicants to non-teaching roles and the unique geographical spread of Highland Council, particularly in rural areas, proactive and innovative recruitment strategies and clear career pathways will be essential to successfully fill posts over the next four years.

- 6.5.3 Age profile: Teaching staff is one of the most balanced staffing groups in Highland Council. The number of Teachers reduces from the age of 60, when most teachers retire. However, there is a reassuring number of teachers in the age groups 31-40 and 41-50.

The non-teaching workforce has a noticeably older age profile, with 39% of employees aged 51 and above, including 12% who are over 61. It is likely that a significant portion of those over 61 will retire within the next four years. While many non-teaching roles can be filled by individuals who can become qualified relatively quickly, the availability of suitable candidates in the labour market is increasingly limited.

The Highland Council age profile is in line with the national trend which shows that the age profile of teachers has changed over the past 10 years. There is no longer a peak at age 55-60 and instead the age profile shows more teachers in their twenties, thirties, and forties than previously. Nationally, in 2024, around half of teachers were aged between 27 and 43. (based on statistics produced by Scottish Government 2024)

- 6.5.4 Over 90% of teaching staff are employed on a permanent contract. Fixed term contracts consist mainly of probationary teachers as part of the national Teacher Induction Scheme and temporary cover for maternity leave and long-term sickness

absence. Please note that this figure, 10%, includes permanent staff who are covering additional hours or a role at a higher level of responsibility.

15% of non-teaching staff are employed on a fixed term contract. The key reason for this percentage is that many staff on temporary contracts are funded from time limited funding such as Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). This is particularly the case for many PSAs. In October 2024, a total of 174 (part-time) non-teaching staff were employed on the basis of temporary funding, including 144 PSAs. It should be noted that it is not unusual for the temporary funding to continue after two years, giving the fixed term employees redundancy and deployment rights which can result in financial pressures for the Service.

- 6.5.5 The number of probationer teachers commencing in primary schools has seen a significant increase in 2025/26, rising to 65 from 48 in the previous year. This is due to Highland Council being successful in increasing our bid which will allow flexibility in the deployment of teaching staff to support the service.

Primary Status	Year 23/24	Year 24/25	Year 25/26
Probationers	48	42	65

Despite bidding for significant numbers of secondary probationer teachers as part of the Teacher Induction Scheme, the numbers allocated to Highland Council have been very disappointing over the last 5 years with the average allocation being 45% of the bid. Whilst Secondary probationer teacher numbers have increased at a slower rate over the last 3 years the allocation remains challenging and well below the numbers bid for.

Secondary Status	Year 23/24	Year 24/25	Year 25/26
Probationers	30	31	35

In 2024, 39 probationary teachers successfully secured teaching roles after their probationary year.

In 2023, the Service developed an induction programme for new Teachers and Head Teachers which has since been completed by 107 staff members.

6.6 Absence Management and Staff Wellbeing

- 6.6.1 The annual average days lost due to sickness absence within the Service is 9.96 days per employee in the Teaching staff group, and 15.1 days for non-teaching staff. The Highland Council average is 13.16 days per employee which shows that Teaching is lower than the Highland Council average whilst Non-Teaching is slightly higher.
- 6.6.2 Most common reasons for absence are the same across Teaching and Non-Teaching
- Viral (covid, colds & flu)
 - Diarrhoea & Vomiting
 - Headache & Migraine
- 6.6.3 The mandatory absence management training for managers was refreshed and has

been completed by 69% of the managers in Education & Learning. The Service are working towards a 100% completion rate. Education & Learning has a dedicated Attendance Support Officer who works closely with Head Teachers to help manage staff attendance. The number of Attendance Support Officers is currently being reviewed, with the aim of increasing the level of management support available.

- 6.6.4 The Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing team offers a wide range of support services for both staff and managers. To raise awareness, the team is actively promoting the new Mental Health and Wellbeing Helpline and our network of Mental Health First Aiders through Viva Engage. In addition, all employees have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which provides confidential, independent advice on a range of issues including mental health, wellbeing, and financial concerns.
- 6.6.5 In addition, the Education Psychology Team have developed an offer of Professional Reflective Supervision for all Head Teachers. This recognises that Head Teachers are the only professional group working directly with children and young people who do not ordinarily have access to professional, reflective supervision. Head Teachers are offered an initial 6 x 1-hour, monthly supervision session with an Education Psychologist they don't usually work with. After 6 sessions they are asked to provide feedback on their experience and the contract is either continued or completed at that point. Any Head Teacher can return to supervision at any time. Information about who is receiving supervision is kept confidentially by the Principal Educational Psychologist. Feedback has been very positive from the Head Teachers accessing supervision, and there has been interest from other Local Authority Education Psychology Services (EPS). Moray EPS have now received training from the Principal Educational Psychologist and have started to trial this approach with their Head Teachers. They are receiving similarly positive feedback.

7. Succession Planning

In 2024, a new Succession Planning Toolkit was introduced across all Clusters to assist in identifying key senior management roles within Education & Learning. The toolkit provides structured guidance on setting appropriate timelines and evaluating the development needs of internal employees who demonstrate potential for progression into these roles.

As part of our ongoing commitment to succession planning and leadership development within education, we can report that 20 teachers have successfully completed the Scottish Government's 'Into Headship' programme in the last session. This programme is designed for teachers working in or aspiring to leadership roles in Scottish primary or secondary schools, and equips participants with essential skills for effective headship, aligning with national standards in Scotland.

8. Hybrid Working

The majority of roles in Education and Learning are school based. Hybrid working is therefore less relevant for this Service.

9. Action Plan

- 9.1 The action plan is included as **Appendix 1**. The last column informs Members of progress to July 2025.

10. Priorities

10.1 The Education and Learning Service will plan to ensure they have the appropriate workforce going forward. This will be achieved through the following actions:

- Recruitment and retention – addressing current and future staffing needs.
- Succession planning and staff development - to mitigate the impact of an ageing workforce and ensure continuity of service.
- Staff wellbeing and absence management - promoting a healthy, supported workforce.
- Continued implementation of a sustainable staffing structure which is informed by capacity and demand - ensuring long-term service resilience on a financially sustainable basis.

Several actions identified through the workforce plan will be linked to work streams covered in the Corporate Workforce Strategy, such as improvement of management data, Talent Strategy and business processes.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive – People

Date: 12 August 2025

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Background Papers: Education and Learning Workforce Report 2023, People Cluster Workforce Planning report 2025, Corporate Workforce Strategy, People Strategy, Delivery Plan, Talent Strategy

Appendix 1: Education and Learning Action Plan Update for 2024/25

Education and Learning Action Plan 2023 - 2026

Appendix 1.

WORKFORCE CHALLENGES PRIORITIES	ACTIONS REQUIRED	DESIRED OUTCOMES	WHO	Update July 2025
Age profile				
<p>Teaching staff is one of the most balanced staffing groups in Highland Council.</p> <p>The percentage of teaching staff over the age of 50 is approximately 30%.</p> <p>In contrast, approximately 40% of non-teaching staff are aged over 50.</p>	<p>Succession planning</p> <p>Pathways for non-teaching posts, and career paths in teaching (grow our own)</p> <p>Implement succession planning for senior management roles to proactively address potential continuity risks associated with the ageing workforce.</p> <p>Implement measures for an aging workforce to support continuing employment.</p>	Sufficient staff numbers in the future	Senior management, HRBP, Strategic Lead Resources, E&L workforce planning & staffing manager	<p>My Highland Future Portfolio is to extend school-based activities to market the Highland Council as a future employer.</p> <p>A succession planning toolkit was developed in 2024 which will support the Service with identifying key roles, including those impacted by the ageing workforce—and implementing measures to ensure leadership continuity and minimise operational risk.</p>
Employment types				
Fixed term contracts	<p>Review use of Fixed Term contracts and ensure they continue to be used for the right reasons.</p> <p>Minimise the number of fixed term contracts wherever possible.</p>	Improved service delivery. Robust legal position. Reduced turn over.	Senior management, HR BP, E&L workforce planning & staffing manager	377 fixed term contracts were replaced by permanent contracts, specifically EYPs and PSAs, since November 2023.
Recruitment and Retention				

<p>Difficult to recruit vacancies. This is a national problem, which is more significant in rural areas in the Highlands, especially in the North and the West. Recruitment to specific Secondary teaching posts (STEM, English & Maths) is experienced Highland wide.</p> <p>In November 2023, the turnover rates for non-teaching staff was 10% and 18% for non-teaching staff.</p>	<p>Develop Recruitment Strategy</p> <p>Continuation of the MA frameworks to upskill non-teaching staff.</p> <p>Succession planning to fill Depute Head Teacher and Head Teacher posts.</p> <p>Refresh current job descriptions. Develop career paths.</p> <p>Use existing Exit Interview process to analyse reasons for leaving and resolve where possible.</p> <p>Review induction programme to improve support to new staff to increase the changes of long-term employment.</p>	<p>Ensure the Service has the right people at the right place at the right time, now and in the future.</p> <p>Reduce turnover by mitigating reasons for staff to leave employment with HC.</p> <p>Highland Council to be an Employer of Choice</p>	<p>Senior management, Talent management Team, HR BP, E&L Workforce Planning and Staffing Manager, MA centre</p> <p>Talent management team, HR BP, senior management</p>	<p>Compared to 2023, the number of probationer teachers in primary schools has increased by 26% to 68.</p> <p>The number of secondary probationer teachers has increased by 14% to 35.</p> <p>A refreshed Job Description template is now available for all posts.</p> <p>Quarterly exit questionnaire data is now made available to SMT.</p> <p>The turnover for non-teaching staff has reduced to 17.1% in 23/24 and to 13.1% in 24/25. Although the turnover rate for Teachers went up in 23/24, it is now back down to 10.6%.</p> <p>The New and Acting Head Teacher induction training was developed and implemented in 2023. 52 staff enrolled in 2023 and 55 in 2024.</p>
Staff development		-		
<p>Up to date knowledge is a priority to enable staff to respond to changing needs and changes in policies, guidance, and practice.</p> <p>Design career paths to attract and retain staff.</p>	<p>Improve digital skills.</p> <p>Invest in leadership development.</p>	<p>Staff are well equipped and feel confident to undertake their duties.</p> <p>Improve retention.</p> <p>Leadership development programme for</p>	<p>(senior) management, HR BP, People development service Digital Transformation</p>	<p>The talent strategy was approved at Resource Committee in March 2025, supporting the Service with planning, managing, and improving staff recruitment, retention, and development.</p> <p>Since 2023, 65 members of staff completed the Modern Apprentice Framework, mainly</p>

Professional learning for teaching staff		Teachers – succession planning		<p>for upskilling purposes and obtain SVQ qualifications (EYP).</p> <p>In 23/24, 16 Highland Council staff signed up for the Education Scotland Into Headship training, increasing to 20 staff members in 24/25.</p> <p>Trauma informed training has been made available for staff.</p> <p>The Service continues to focus on increasing the number of staff ERD and PRDs, both are designed to support open and constructive conversations between employees and their managers. These discussions provide a chance to explore development needs or aspirations, consider wellbeing, and talk about future career opportunities.</p>
Structure and roles				
<p>The Service restructure has been under review. First due to the decoupling from Health and Social Care and the Corporate Redesign process. In 2024, E&L was amalgamated with H&SC in the People Cluster.</p>	<p>Review current establishment and determine if the present roles are sufficient to meet change in needs and practice.</p>	<p>Establish a sustainable, cost-effective structure that is fit for purpose and ensures safe service delivery.</p>	<p>Senior management, HR BP Talent management Team,</p>	<p>The new Assistant Chief Officer for the People Structure role was appointed to in April 2024.</p> <p>As part of the Highland Council senior management restructure, two Chief Officers were appointed for Education & Learning, one internal and one external appointment.</p> <p>Aligned with the future operating model, the service is now organised into two geographical areas: North and South. The next two tiers of the structure are complete with 8 Area Quality Improvement</p>

				<p>Managers and 8 Education Support Officers now in place.</p> <p>108 HighLife Highland employees transferred into HC Education & Learning Service via TUPE.</p> <p>The Employability team moved across to the Education & Learning Service from the Place Cluster.</p>
Staff Wellbeing and Performance				
<p>Absence management enables staff to return to work at the earliest opportunity, which is not just good practice. It is cost effective and also avoids further absence by team members who absorb additional workload.</p> <p>Mental health is one of the main reasons for absence and is often complex to manage.</p>	<p>Refresh management knowledge of absence management and performance management policy, guidance, and processes.</p> <p>Work closely with the Attendance Support Officer and Occupational Health to identify trends and act proactively to reduce absence.</p> <p>Ensure that all staff have an up-to-date Employee Review and Development plan / Professional Review and Development plan which includes Staff wellbeing.</p> <p>Make staff aware of the Employee Assistance Programme and Mental Health First Aiders. Ensure that all managers have completed the compulsory Mentally Healthy Workplace course.</p>	<p>Substantive and timely support for staff will reduce staff absence, performance issues and improve overall staff wellbeing, ultimately resulting in reduction of cost and turnover.</p>	<p>(Senior) Management, HR BP, People development</p>	<p>The refreshed attendance management training was implemented in 2024 and completed by 69% of E&L managers.</p> <p>In 2023, Highland Council contracted a new Occupational Health provider which improved the attendance support to staff and management.</p> <p>The Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team is offering a wide range of tools for staff and managers to help manage mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Service continues to work with the E&L attendance Support Officer.</p>