

A Research/Policy/Practice University and School District Professional Learning Partnership to Strengthen Leadership of and for Critically Conscious School Communities



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Future of Headship



Glasgow
CITY COUNCIL

PAPER ABSTRACT

A Research/Policy/Practice University And School District Professional Learning Partnership To Strengthen Leadership Of And For Critically Conscious School Communities

This paper explores perspectives on politically cognisant leadership for school effectiveness and improvement, internationally and through a university and school district research/policy/practice professional learning partnership. Principals worldwide are navigating a complex global landscape in which volatility and inequity have been heightened through and since the Covid-19 pandemic. Given such global challenges, reflected in glocal policy trajectories, political literacy is increasingly essential in principals/headteachers if they are to reconcile the fundamental and escalating tensions around the purpose(s) of education and learning, not least the paradox of *Equity and Excellence*. Political astuteness, as a leadership attribute, is promoted in many systems globally, including Scotland, where the General Teaching Council for Scotland's (GTCS) mandatory professional standards for headteachers (principals) highlight the imperative of leadership that is research informed, with leaders who are adept at interrogating and navigating the complexities of education policy and politics. Articulations of the principal role are underpinned by social justice, and a recognition of the power of education to challenge pervasive political and social injustices that undermine inclusion and equality.

PAPER ABSTRACT (continued)

This paper uses Scotland's context as a case study to report on an innovative university/district partnership; the Enhanced Political Awareness (EPA) programme, designed to realise the prescribed GTCS standards around political literacy to improve student learning and school effectiveness. EPA aims to nurture school leaders' political astuteness and their knowledge, confidence and capacity to foster critically conscious school communities that will advance and enact positive social change. It strengthens participants' understanding and interrogation of the political foundations of education and social policy, and how policy mandates can support or undermine social justice and equity, in education leadership and in society. This paper illustrates, through three participant perspectives (a district lead, a school principal, and a school curriculum lead) the impact of the EPA programme on inclusive education leadership practice and critical literacy in students. It reports on how the expansion of participants' critical consciousness has led to deeper understanding of complex glocal and global challenges to education, including the intersections between poverty, inclusion, race and all protected characteristics. EPA has also increased confidence in nurturing critically conscious school communities that will challenge discrimination in all its forms. The paper concludes with a proposition to the ICSEI community around the importance of supporting professional learning and leadership that will enhance students' and school communities' capacity to recognise, understand and critique policy and social injustices, to prepare our students for courageous and ethical living, learning and leading in politically and socially volatile times.



ICSEI
International Congress for
School Effectiveness and Improvement

Dublin, Ireland
January 2024

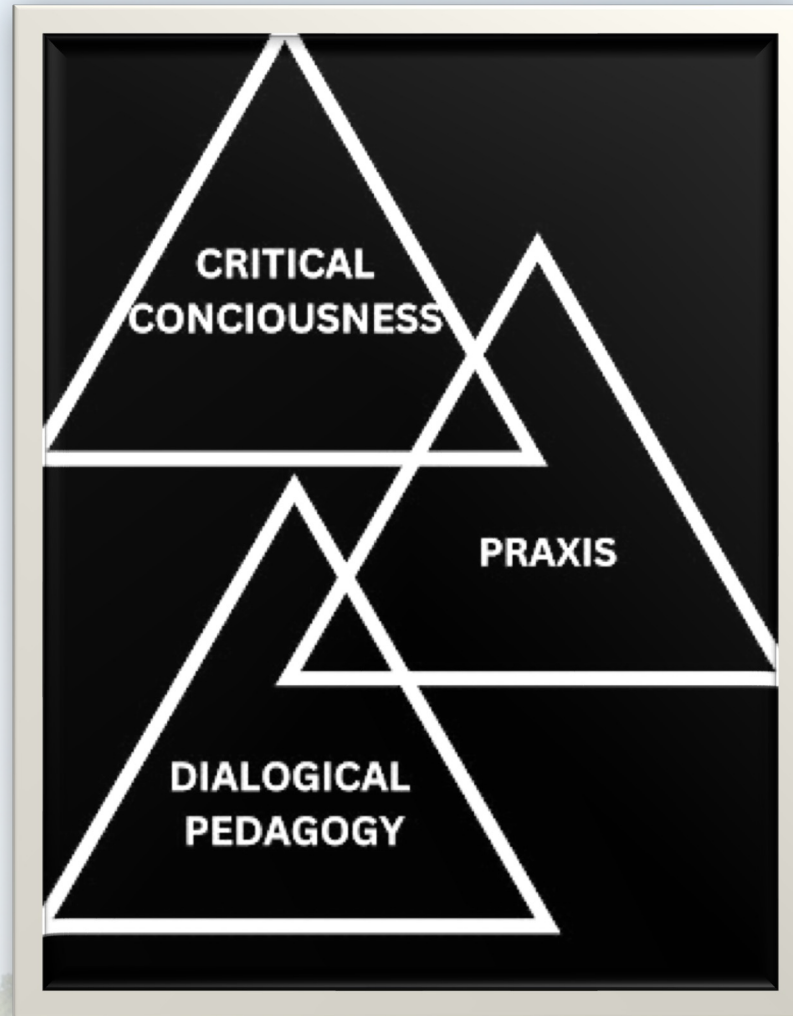


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Glasgow High Street St Mungo's Mural (Smug, 2016)

*Education is always
a political act, which
can be used both to
maintain the status
quo and to promote
social change.*

Paulo Freire

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Challenging educational inequities: A sense of Scotland

Policy?



Practice?

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Scottish
Government
Riaghaltas
na h-Alba



What is changing?

Heightened Volatility

(Magill & Rodrigues, 2022;
OECD, 2021)

Political Literacy

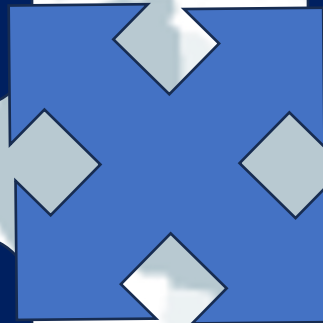
(GTCS, 2021; Yates & Hartley,
2021; Ydesen et al., 2023)

Critical Consciousness

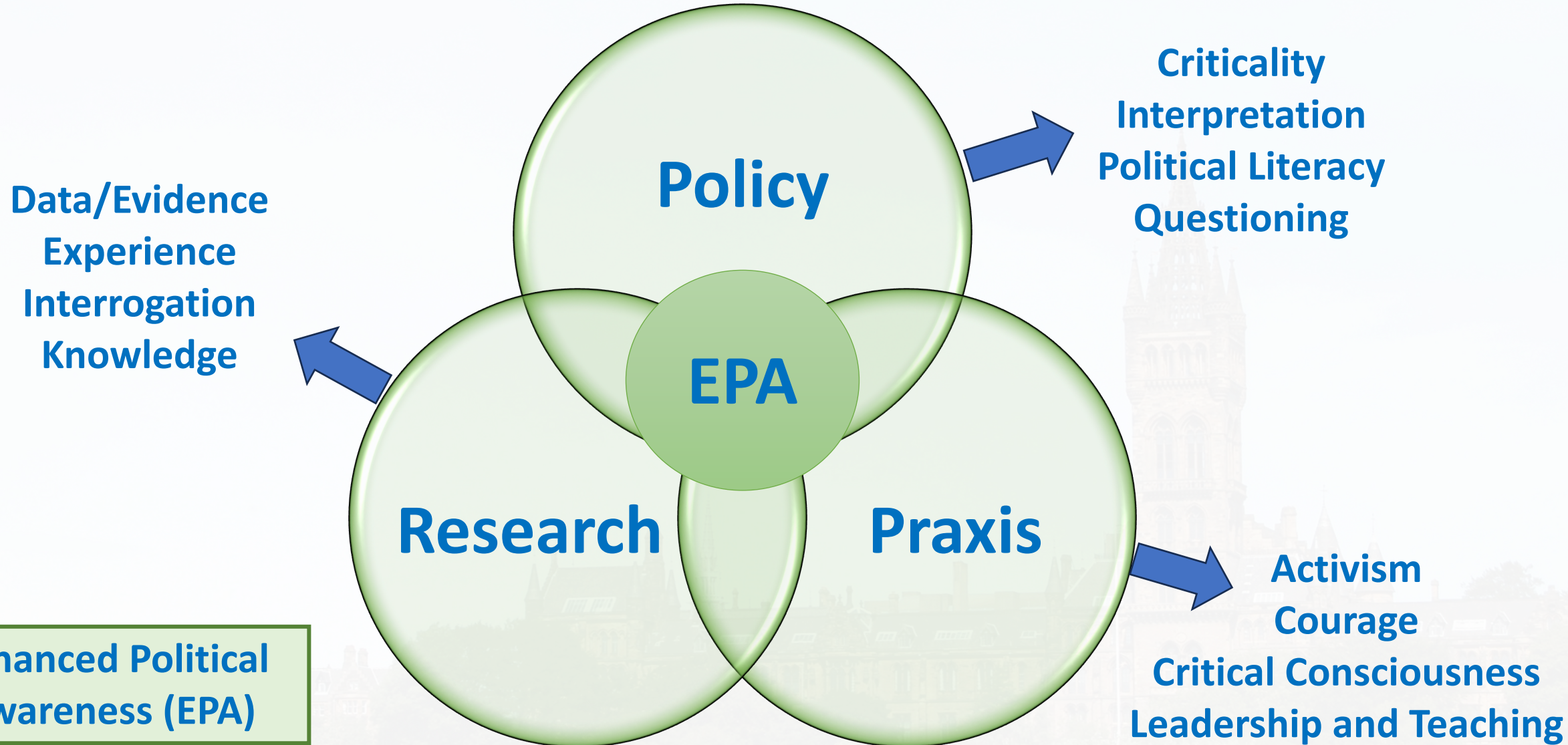
(Friere, 1970; Heberle et al,
2021; Ydesen et al., 2023)

Mobilise Activism

(Diemer et al., 2021; Heberle
et al', 2021)



**INSPIRING
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Education across Glasgow is delivered through:

- **110** council managed early learning and childcare settings
- **125** partner providers of early learning and childcare settings
 - **140** Primary Schools
 - **30** Secondary Schools
 - **22** Additional Support for Learning Schools



There are **9496** children in GCC and Funded Provider (partnership) nurseries



There are **70406** school pupils in Glasgow

- **41188** Primary pupils
- **27909** Secondary pupils
- **1309** ASL pupils

Over half (**56%**) of all pupils in Glasgow live in the most deprived Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation deciles



Nearly a quarter (**23%**) of pupils in the city speak English as an additional language

There are **130** different languages spoken by pupils in Glasgow's schools. The main three languages spoken after English are **Urdu, Arabic** and **Polish**

Glasgow has the **largest proportion of care experienced children** with responsibility for **18%** of Scotland's care experienced children and young people



OUR PURPOSE

Sustainable development goal 4:

Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.



CHALLENGES

We have identified **five grand challenges** that offer the most promise in achieving our vision of **A world class learning city founded on nurture principles**, ensuring every learner is able to embrace their potential.



OUR VISION

A world class learning city founded on nurture principles.



OUR VALUES

COMPASSION, AMBITION, TRUST, EQUITY

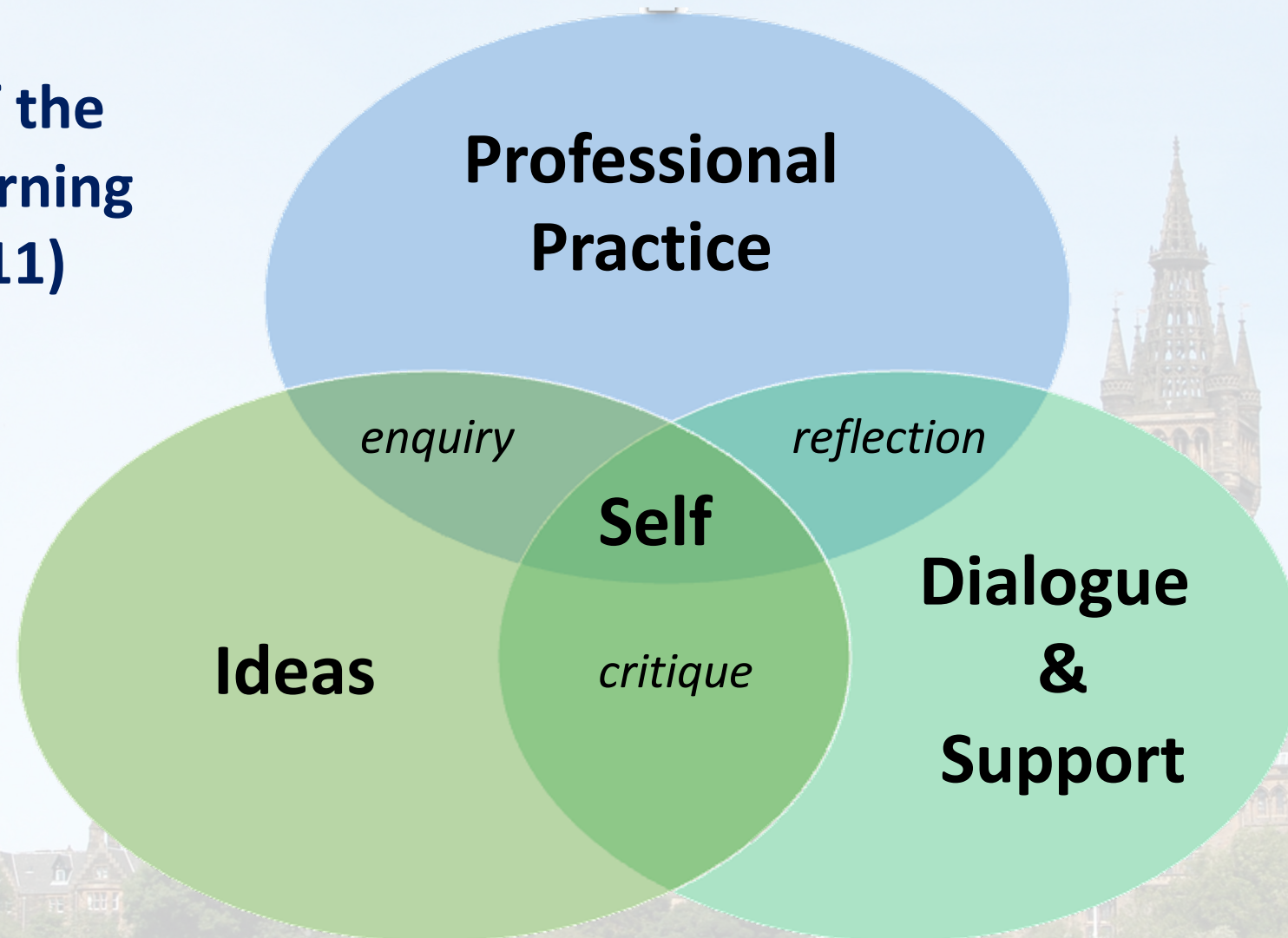


EPA: A necessity for district and school leaders

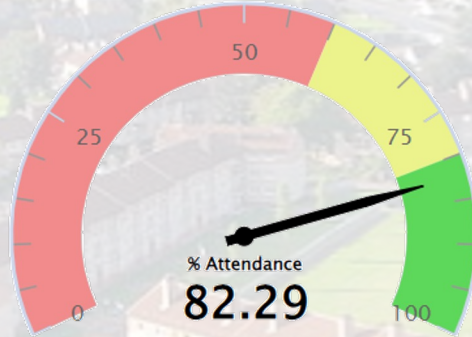
- Why leaders undertake the course?
- Self and context: professional learning journeys
- Coherence across leadership
- How does learning impact on their role, influence, confidence and their career progression?



Dynamics of the Model of Learning (Forde, 2011)



% Attendance - Academic Year to Date
Drumchapel High School



School Roll (Status 01)
Drumchapel High School



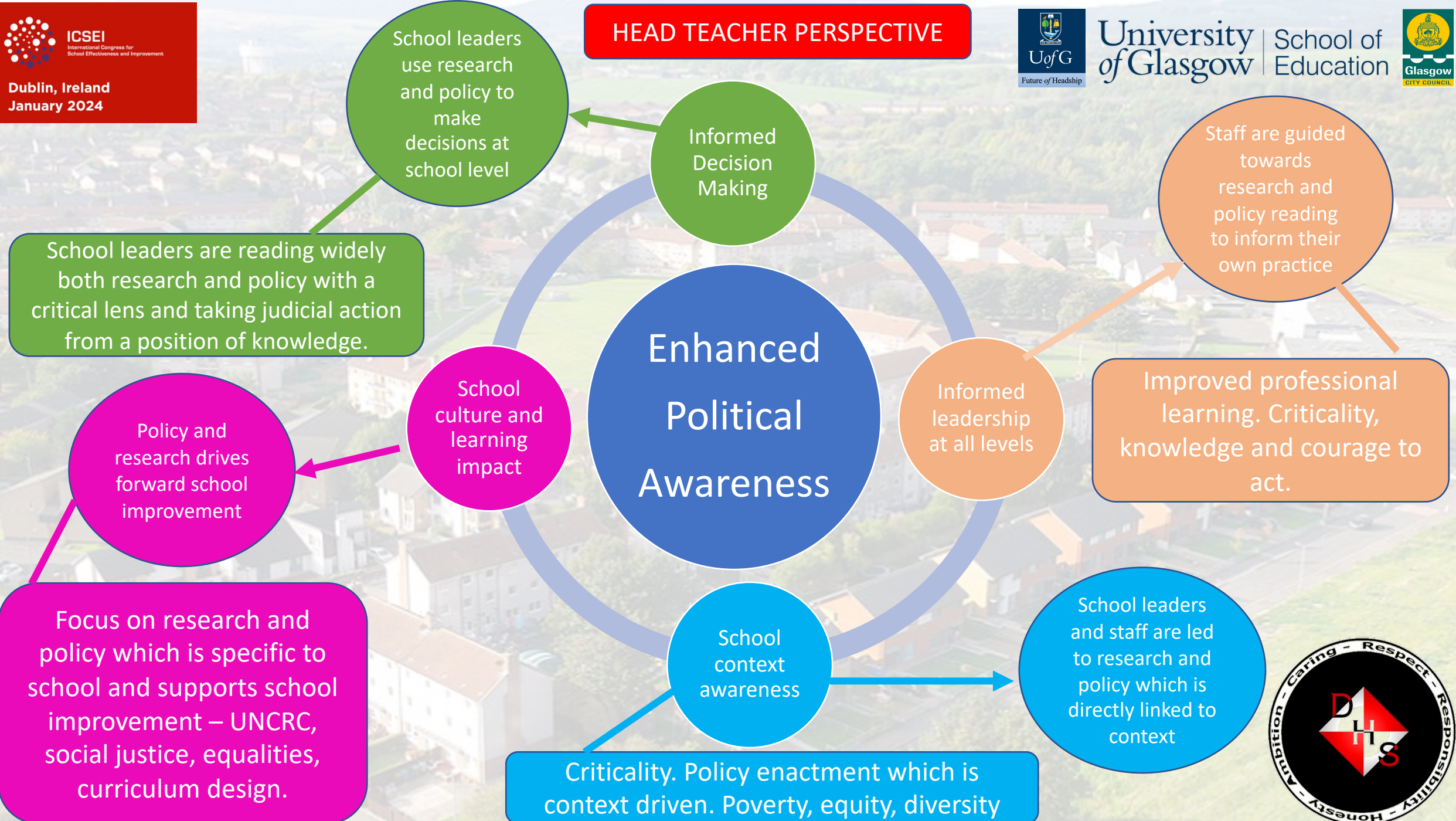
% ASN (% roll with 1 or more ASNs)
Drumchapel High School



B&E Incidents - Academic Year to Date
Drumchapel High School



HEAD TEACHER PERSPECTIVE





The impact of critically conscious leadership on staff:

- Critically conscious staff
- Contribution to systemic change
- Leading from the middle

Curriculum Design for Social Justice, Rights & Equalities

Social justice is considered a **core professional value** by the General Teaching Council for Scotland who define it as “the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities now and in the future” (GTCS, 2021, p. 4).

It is a priority

This work is **not optional**. Nor is it an **add-on**. It is a core part of creating opportunities for every child in Scotland to become but also to be, throughout their education, the Four Capacities.

We did not want to produce something that was ‘adding even more guidance’ about curriculum, but wanted to produce a resource that is **highly practical** in helping educators with how to do this, as well as creating something which, we hope, can support education reform, whatever that might look like. Therefore, in our Big Ideas you will find **exemplification, tools and approaches** that we hope are helpful in educators in 3-18 settings across Scotland.

Identifying and dealing with this Racist bullying does not mean labelling a young person as 'a bully' or as 'racist'.

Key questions to identify whether a bullying incident is racist would include:

Does anyone feel that the incident was racist?

Does the behaviour reflect stereotypes based on colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin?

Does the behaviour include use of racial slurs or racist language?

In line with the Macpherson definition of a racist incident, an incident should be considered racist if it is "perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person." This includes young people experiencing bullying, parents, teachers and any bystanders who witness the behaviour. This definition is crucial to ensure the impact of what's happening can be addressed, regardless of intention (or claims about intention) from the person responsible.

Examples of phrases which can help to address the use of racist language could include:

What happened?

What were your thoughts at the time; were you aware that what you said sounds racist, and could hurt someone?

What have been your thoughts since; have you considered that this language is racist?

Who has been affected by what happened?

How have they been affected?

What do you need to happen now; do you need more information about racism and how it affects people?

Supports at Drumchapel High School include:

- Anti-Racism Society (see appendix 3)
- Decolonising the Curriculum (see the Equalities Policy for more details)
- Pupil Focus Groups
- Extensive PSE lesson that are review yearly
- Adult representation where the young people can see themselves to foster a sense of belonging and provide inspirational role models

A section on terminology and common questions in Appendix 1 and 2.



Presented by the Antiracism Society

MONDAY 21ST MARCH	LOOK UP STEPHEN LAWRENCE AND LEARN HIS STORY
TUESDAY 22ND MARCH	RESEARCH THE HOLIDAY OF RAMADAN
WEDNESDAY 23RD MARCH	CHECK OUT THE ANTIRACISM DISPLAY IN THE LIBRARY!
THURSDAY 24TH MARCH	WATCH A DOCUMENTARY OR SERIES ABOUT RACE/RACISM
FRIDAY 25TH MARCH	WEAR ORANGE WITH YOUR UNIFORM GET AN ORANGE RIBBON OR WRISTBAND MAKE A DONATION TO THE ANTIRACIST SOCIETY



Participants' Agency
within the policy
exosystem

Contextual support or
isolation in
participants' sites of
practice

Challenges

Pushback against
perceived *wokeness*
e.g., positive action
measures

Competing priorities
and ideologies that
intersect all system
levels



To what extent does leadership across your system(s) enhance stakeholders' capacity to recognise, understand and critique social injustices, to prepare our communities for living and leading in politically and socially troubling times.

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Thank you to the ICSEI Community
and to our hosts in Dublin

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