

Council approves climate change action by school pupils

The council's education committee backed a proposal by Green councillor Mary Campbell to give approval to young people wanting to take part in a day of action against climate change on 15 March, provided they have consent from parents or guardians. It is believed to be the only council to do so.

This is part of a growing global movement, begun by Swede 16-year-old Greta Thunberg last August, drawing attention to the scale of climate breakdown and the need for urgent action.

Since the start of 2019, the movement has gathered steam, with the next big day of action on 15 March. Some families and young people have raised concerns about how schools and education authorities might handle absences for the action amid fears that young people could be punished for being off school.



Councillor Mary Campbell

Councillor Mary Campbell said: “Climate breakdown is the defining issue of our age. The future will depend on how willing we all are to listen to children and young people whose futures are most at risk, versus some politicians or vested interests who want to delay or do nothing.

“So that it is why I want Edinburgh to show a lead and recognise the importance of the climate strikes, and support the children and young people taking part. I am glad that the Education Committee passed this motion today, and I believe it shows how seriously we take both climate breakdown and the voice of our children.”

Scottish Greens Education spokesperson Ross Greer MSP said: “Local councils should support young people who choose to strike for the climate. They are living out the Curriculum for Excellence objective of responsible citizenship. I commend the City of Edinburgh Council for the world-leading action they have taken today and would encourage other councils to follow suit before the global strike on March 15th.”