

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer****Educational Services Committee: March 2018**

Subject: Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update the Educational Services Committee on activity and progress with regard to implementing West Dunbartonshire's Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Educational Services Committee is recommended to note:

(a) the progress made in the past three months with the Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire.

3. Background

- 3.1** In line with the Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement the Committee receives a regular report outlining progress against this strategic priority.
- 3.2** The Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched in 2015. As a challenge authority West Dunbartonshire has been involved in delivering projects targeted at the primary stages. The challenge projects target schools and local authorities with the highest concentration of pupils living in multiple deprivation to close the attainment gap. Additional funding has been allocated to secondary attainment projects with confirmation of funding announced in October 2016. The Attainment Challenge is part of the Government drive to 'Deliver Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education. The Scottish Attainment Challenge has a budget of £750 million over the next 5 years with West Dunbartonshire being one of nine local authorities in the first tranche for primary schools in August 2015. Over the course of the Scottish Attainment Challenge it is estimated that we will secure £4.240m for primary and £2.616m for secondary.
- 3.3** Pupil Equity Funding was launched in April 2017 as part of the Government's drive to provide targeted support for schools and authorities supporting children and young people in greatest need. The Pupil Equity Fund has a budget of £120m with West Dunbartonshire schools receiving £3,380,400.

The funding has been distributed on the basis of pupils registered as eligible for free school meals in primary one to third year in secondary.

4. Main Issues

4.1 Project implementation needs to be on track to ensure outcomes for young people and families are delivered. The progress of projects is rigorously monitored by Education Scotland and Scottish Government. In December 2017, Education Scotland and Audit Scotland inspected West Dunbartonshire's progress to deliver the outcomes of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. The inspection focussed on progress in three key areas: raising attainment, narrowing the poverty related attainment gap and improving learning. At the time of producing this report the inspection report was still to be published.

4.2 Primary School Attainment Challenge Projects

4.2.1 Early Level Play and Learning

The training in play based learning has been delivered to all learning assistants working at the early stages. The West Dunbartonshire early stages baseline toolkit has been updated to include information about attainment data referenced against SIMD profiles. This is supporting earlier identification of the impact of poverty related attainment gap at the early stages. The early stages teachers have received training to ensure consistency of delivery in all establishments. Tracking meetings with early stages teachers, heads of centre and early years' practitioners have been established to plan next steps for learning using the baseline data.

Expenditure on this project to quarter 3 is £174,130.

4.2.2 Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing

Literacy

A strategy for literacy has been produced. An action plan for improvement supports the implementation of the strategy. The key areas of focus are:

- to improve the curriculum to help all children and young people develop the literacy skills required for learning, life and work
- to promote literacy as a skill for learning, life and work while supporting the aims of Developing the Young Workforce
- to provide schools with clear and coherent pathways of progression in the skills of reading, writing and talking and listening
- to provide strategic guidance on literacy and English development
- to ensure that all staff take account of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Benchmarks to ensure effective planning, learning, teaching, assessment and moderation

Maths and Numeracy

The maths attainment team are developing a digital Family Numeracy Hub to be shared on OurCloud. The maths attainment team are working with colleagues from South Lanarkshire to deliver Growth Mindset training. Training will be offered to staff across the West Partnership. The team will also present at the annual Scottish Mathematical Council Conference in

Stirling in March. The team are also providing professional learning sessions on SEAL (Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning) to colleagues in Argyll & Bute.

Maths challenge teachers have been established in all schools. Parental and family engagement is the area of focus for the improvement work being delivered by this group of teachers. Colleagues from Hillhead High School in Glasgow shared their approach to learning and teaching using the Mastery approach at our secondary maths curriculum network. Maths teachers from our five mainstream secondaries will attend training on Maths Mastery on the February in-service day.

Pupils from St Peter the Apostle called 'Transition Leaders' are working for a second year with a group of primary 5 and 6 pupils from the associated primaries. The secondary pupils who are leading this are gaining accreditation towards their Saltire Award. The primary pupils are learning about ways to manage stress and emotions to support their ability to be 'ready to learn'. The children have learned about Tai Chi and Yoga. They are learning relaxation techniques whilst learning about numeracy. The numeracy focus for this block is on money and practical life skills.

Family engagement and family learning continues to be a key strand of this work and to this end a 'Beyond the Bell' family learning event is organised within the learning community each term with an average attendance being 67.5 % to date. This is enabled through the provision of transport, crèche facilities and food allowing access and inclusion for all.

Expenditure on this project to quarter 3 is £433,585.

Health and Wellbeing

A Health and Well Being (HWB) planning group has produced a Progression Pathway Tool from early level to third level for use in all schools and early learning centres. These have been displayed as posters for each level. These will be shared with pupils and young people to ensure they are clear about the goals we wish them to attain in the aspects of physical, social emotional and mental health. We have launched an electronic tracking tool for HWB attainment and achievement. The purpose of the toolkit is to support the tracking of learners' progress in key aspects of HWB across the CfE levels.

Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood Education

The secondary curricular programme has been revised to include lessons and activities on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) to align with new emerging policy, evidence and research. Consultation with headteachers from our denominational secondaries will be conducted to ensure the revised programme is in line with policy and guidance for denominational schools. Lessons are available for schools on our HWB website. A revised relationships and sexual health policy is also available on our website. Plans

are underway to produce a new national 3-18 relationships and sexual health programme launching in September 2019.

Assessment and Moderation

Schools are beginning to use the new Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA). Pupils at P1, P4, P7 and S3 will be assessed at the level for their age and stage. The assessments will not be completed at one point in the year as has been our local practice but rather at a time during the session when teachers judge it suits the needs of individuals and groups. We have advised though that identifying key points in the year may assist with the management of the process. A training programme has been planned and is being delivered for lead staff. This training is to support lead staff to work collaboratively with teachers to support them. School collegiate agreements should accommodate time for implementing this new test.

4.2.3 School Improvement Partnership Project (SIPP/CAR)

We were invited by the Robert Owen Centre from Glasgow University to host a visit by a group of education directors from Finland. The visitors were interested in the approach used by West Dunbartonshire to support teacher and Head Teacher collaboration to plan improvements to raise attainment. We are in discussion with our Finnish colleagues about establishing School Improvement Partnerships between West Dunbartonshire and a Finnish authority. This is the third group of international visitors to the authority this year. We have hosted visitors from Chile, America, England and Wales.

Expenditure on this project to quarter 3 is £115,397.

4.3 Secondary Attainment Challenge Projects

4.3.1 Multi Agency Hub

Clydebank High School

The school is committed to advertising the multi-agency hub to pupils, parents and associated primary schools. Presentations have been made to parents of primary 7 pupils in the associated primary schools, the parent council and groups of parents of pupils in first year to fifth year. Weekly text messages are also sent to all parents to advise them about the hub and how to access the service it provides. As a result of the attainment projects there has been a reduction in the number of pupils being referred to the schools Joint Assessment Team (JAT) compared to last year. Figures for the number of young people attending sessions with the pupil counselling service are double the number between August and January last year. Historically there has been a waiting list for referral. However, the waiting times are now greatly reduced.

Our Lady and St Patrick's High School

A nurture group has been established delivering sessions to a group of second year pupils. Through participation in the group, behaviour and attendance has improved significantly for some of our young people. Thirty two (32) members of teaching and support staff are working through the 6

Nurturing Principles. Feedback has been very positive from staff who have attended the training, in terms of staff having a better understanding of attachment behaviours and child development.

There have been five group sessions delivered by LifeLink Counselling staff. Forty two (42) young people have taken part in emotional literacy programmes covering a range of well-being topics. Ten young people from our targeted group are working towards Dynamic Youth Award with staff from Working 4U. The children taking part in the programme are benefitting from group work sessions which help to develop their confidence and self-esteem.

The appointment of an additional Pupil and Family Support Worker to work with identified children and their families is having a significant impact on an identified group of young people and their parents / carers. This is working well and has led to better behaviour, attendance and a reduction in exclusions.

The establishment of a Family Opportunities Team in the school has supported parents with the following:

- arranging appointments with Welfare Rights colleagues to advise on eligible benefits
- liaising with housing officers at local housing associations and WDC to assist with issues including overcrowding, new applications for housing
- arranging appointments with Energy Advice colleagues at CAB
- confidence building activity through various interventions including one to one coaching and group work
- **Inspire** 6 week course for parents / carers beginning 1st February 2018 and will run for 6 weeks. The 6 week course focuses on confidence building and goal setting. Participants are supported and encouraged to identify and work towards reducing the current barriers they are experiencing, for example: long term unemployment, no IT skills, low core skills, little or no qualifications, confidence issues and a variety of health concerns.

Expenditure on this project to quarter 3 is £340,781.

4.3.2 Skills Academies

Three hundred and seventy (370) pupils are participating in the skills programme being delivered in Vale of Leven Academy funded by the Scottish Attainment Challenge. The majority of courses being delivered are practical so maximum class sizes are 20. The courses are being offered to pupils who require a broader experience of the curriculum than the core subject areas. Vale of Leven Academy is on track to extend the range of courses being offered.

Eight skills based courses have been introduced this year with plans to increase to twenty (20) courses next year.

Expenditure on this project to quarter 3 is £99,055.

4.3.3 Enhanced Broad General Education

Dumbarton Academy and St Peter the Apostle High School have identified groups of pupils who are benefitting from an alternative Broad General Education in first and second year. The pupils are benefitting from a personalised approach to learning that aims to provide them with strategies to improve their attainment and achievement in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing:

Dumbarton Academy

To support our pupils in S1 and S2 who find maths challenging a revised course provision is being delivered. A detailed assessment of pupils' arithmetical skills has been completed. Individualised teaching content and assessment are supporting consolidation of learning in arithmetic. A parent information evening is planned for March. Parents will learn about the impact of anxiety on a child's ability to learn in maths / numeracy in particular. Advice will be given on strategies that can be used to support a young person.

St Peter the Apostle High School

Pupils have been involved in one to one interventions with the school raising attainment team to develop either their mental, emotional and social well-being, or to bridge gaps in their knowledge of the risks associated with substance abuse, poor food health / physical exercise and their ability to form and maintain relationships. Individual pupils have also had support in relation to planning for choices and change. A baseline of HWB against SHANARRI (Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible, Included) indicators has been completed to assess pupil mental, social and physical well-being. This has been completed by pupils, their parents and their pupil support teacher. Breakfast Clubs and Homework Clubs have been established to support the identified group of pupils. The pupils enjoyed a day trip to Sky Academy to enhance their creativity, communication and teamwork skills. Parents who have been struggling at home to support their child's behaviour have been working with the school team to learn about strategies for managing their child's behaviour.

Expenditure on this project to quarter 3 is £203,641.

4.4 Pupil Equity Funding

West Dunbartonshire schools received £3,380,400 in April 2017. The spend for financial year 2017/18 is projected to be around £2.1m, with schools carrying forward around £1.3m to be spent by July 2018.

In January 2018 there was announcement by Scottish Government of funding to West Dunbartonshire schools for session 2018/19. West Dunbartonshire schools will receive £3,425,880.

This is a slight increase in the budget allocation from the previous year which is attributed to change in school rolls and the number of children entitled to free school meals.

Head Teachers have been notified and are being supported by central officers. In January 2018 Head Teachers engaged in workshops to share ideas, successful projects and key partners who have delivered an effective provision of support to schools.

4.5 Attainment Programme

4.5.1 The Attainment Challenge budget for West Dunbartonshire in 2017/18 is £2,013,108. This funding supported implementation of eight projects between primary and secondary with £250,000 of this budget allocated to support school improvement partnerships. It is proposed that a proportion of this funding will be redistributed between the multi-agency hub and family hub projects. This will reduce the budget available to release teachers to work in partnership on raising attainment activity but will increase the funding available to provide family support and outreach workers.

4.5.2 As part of our school improvement programme all schools will be visited for one full day this term. The full day visit is conducted by a team of two or three. The teams comprise SEOs, EOs, ESOs, Attainment Advisor and peer Head Teachers / Principal Teachers. Each member of the team works in partnership with the school Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team to lead on these aspects.

A clear focus on evaluating the quality of learners' experiences is central to the Improvement Framework and informs the provision of quality Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) opportunities facilitated by the local authority and at establishment level. The role of the Attainment Advisor is integral to the delivery of the Improvement Framework which provides a targeted, proportionate model of school challenge and support.

4.6 Secondary Updates on Strategy to Raise Attainment

4.6.1 Clydebank High School

Supported study is offered to all pupils who are sitting exams during February and March. Pupils who are working towards qualifications that are internally assessed have been offered support to complete any outstanding assessments. Targeted support is offered to pupils in literacy, numeracy and general support in the form of tutorials based on Mind Set, condensing information, time management, memory, stress and balance / perspective.

4.6.2 Dumbarton Academy

Staff will offer supported study to pupils identified as 'at risk', staff will mentor and encourage effective study skills through individual discussions. Supported study is offered in nearly all departments and the school uses parental engagement to encourage attendance. Exam preparation is offered to introduce senior phase pupils lessons on exam stress, determination and resilience, study skills and relaxation in the weeks after interim assessments.

4.6.3 Our Lady & St Patrick's High School

Supported study will take place during one week of the Easter holidays. Study classes will be scheduled during May exam leave for all subjects. A mentor group for candidates sitting 5 Highers has been set up so pupils can receive pastoral support. The school aims to incorporate supported study provision in our target setting and planning, with provision either after school or at the weekend.

4.6.4 St Peter the Apostle High School

The school offers an Easter revision week during the first week of the Easter holidays. This will run alongside Saturday classes. Each department in the school offers after school supported study if there are more than 10 pupils attending the session. Exam preparation classes are offered the day before an exam.

4.6.5 Vale of Leven Academy

Throughout the school session each department offers supported study sessions at times they feel it is most valuable. Staff use an OurCloud calendar to share dates of supported study sessions with pupils, this includes on Saturday mornings. The school will run an Easter Revision Programme offering extra support in a variety of subjects and will offer "day before" revision classes during the exam diet.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** A national project of this magnitude has staffing implications. We offer opportunities for leadership to experienced staff within Educational Services and provide new teaching positions across our Learning Communities. In addition to teaching staff we require posts which align to Local Government Employees (LGE) terms and conditions including key workers, outreach workers and pupil and family support workers.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** In December 2017 a quarterly report of project progress and budget spend was submitted with full commitment of our budget allocation projected for this financial year. The quarter 3 spend is **£489,738**; the total spend claimed in this financial year is **£1,466,158**; it is projected that the full year grant award of £2,013,108 will be drawn down. Scottish Government has reported positively on West Dunbartonshire's budget management and spend. Our proposals for Year 4 of the primary challenge and Year 3 of the secondary challenge will be submitted to Scottish Government in March 2017. (Appendix 1)

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** Failure to implement an authority-wide strategy to raise attainment and secure improvement will disadvantage our young people and may become a reputational risk to the Council

7.2 The Committee will be provided with regular update reports advising of progress.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 There was no requirement to undertake an EIA for the purposes of this report as it is providing an update to Committee.

9. Consultation

9.1 In developing these proposals there has been consultation with Education Scotland, the Scottish Government, headteachers and parent councils.

9.2 Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 This report reflects the Council's aspiration to have a strong local economy, improved employment opportunities and efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents. These are strategic priorities for 2017-2022.

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Scottish Attainment Challenge Quarterly Report

Background Papers:

Wards Affected: All wards

