

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL****Report by Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer****Educational Services Committee: 5 December 2018**

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**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 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 February 2015. It aims to accelerate the pace in which Scotland closes the poverty related attainment gap in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing through leadership, families and communities and learning and teaching. West Dunbartonshire became a Challenge Authority in 2015 receiving additional funding to deliver projects in primary and secondary schools. Over the course of the Scottish Attainment Challenge to March 2019 it is estimated that we will secure **£4.458m** for primary and **£2.053m** for secondary.
- 3.3** In December 2017 HM Inspectors and professional associates, working in partnership with Audit Scotland evaluated the education service strategies to improve learning, raise attainment and narrow the poverty-related attainment gap. It was reported that West Dunbartonshire is making very good progress with improving learning, raising attainment and narrowing the poverty related attainment gap.

**4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** Project implementation needs to be on track to ensure outcomes for young people and families are delivered. The Attainment Challenge features as a strategic risk in the local delivery plan.

**4.2** The funding stream post 2019/2020 when the five years of the Attainment Challenge funding ends. There is no guarantee of continued funding post 2019/2020.

**4.3** In September an annual highlights and challenges report was submitted to Scottish Government reporting on project progress and budget spend. (Appendix 1).

#### **4.4 Primary School Attainment Challenge Projects**

##### **4.4.1 Transitions 1**

We have supported the development of teacher professionalism in health and wellbeing by the delivery of training on Building Relationships and Resilience using the Solihull Approach in Primary schools. The Solihull Approach is a way of supporting and working with children and families to promote emotional health and wellbeing. It does this through discussion around early brain development and attachment. Training in the approach helps staff become reflective practitioners and can be particularly useful in their work with children with emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties. We know that we can alter some of the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES) by being ACE aware, but also by responding in an informed way to the children and young people in our schools. At the core of the Solihull Approach is the importance of developing containing, reciprocal relationships sensitive to each individual child's mental and emotional development. Training has been delivered in 23 schools this includes most primaries and 2 secondary and Kilpatrick The level of demand for further training is high and plans to invest in this are in place.

##### **4.4.2 Primary/ Secondary Maths**

Across all schools, maths champions are driving improvement through peer support and challenge building on effective networking. At P7 achievement of a level in numeracy in P7 has increased steadily over the three years of the attainment challenge (2016 -18) from 61% to 64% to 66%. At S3 achievement of a level in numeracy has remained steady over the 3 years (2016-18) at 83%. Case studies of 7 schools engaged in SEAL (Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning) showed more than a 10% increase in attainment in core aspects of numeracy. The number of secondees appointed to lead on maths attainment work has been reduced. Funding has been re-distributed to second experienced and successful headteachers to lead on West Dunbartonshire's School Improvement Framework as part of our drive for empowered schools. This group of seconded heads will provide support and challenge to schools. They will also participate in thematic reviews focussing on the impact of the maths attainment project in each Local Learning Community in partnership with central officers.

##### **4.4.3 Health and Wellbeing**

Our Health Development Officer is a member of the national working group developing a curriculum programme for schools and early learning and childcare centres. This is due to be completed in September 2019. The national development group has shared materials with schools to pilot and evaluate. This evaluation will inform decisions about the final programme content.

New research by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in partnership with Allergy UK and the Anaphylaxis Campaign) has found that many young people are too embarrassed to talk publicly about having a food allergy or intolerance especially when in a social setting, risking allergic reactions or even more fatal consequences. We have produced a bank of resources for establishments to help them teach this sensitive topic to their pupils. Guidance for schools and a parent information leaflet on food/home baking at school events is being produced.

A new Ourcloud Website has been developed to support establishments to deliver Cyber Resilience and Internet Safety education. It is in line with the Scottish Government's National Action Plan on Internet Safety for Children and Young People and contains links and resources to support teachers in the delivery of cyber resilience and internet safety. It also contains links to materials for parental engagement.

#### **4.4.4 Assessment and Moderation**

Staff continue to engage nationally through the Assessment Coordinators' Forum and The West Partnership (WP) Moderation Group. Staff from our five LLC's will take part in training and inter-authority moderation events in reading, numeracy/maths with colleagues from the West Partnership. We have 13 schools and 33 teachers signed up to participate.

Authority moderation reports in writing and numeracy/maths have been issued to schools.

Key messages include:

- Regular moderation within the school, LLC, West Partnership and nationally, along with a clear working knowledge of the Moderation Cycle, will support individuals and schools to develop an understanding of standards and it will evidence reliable teacher judgement.
- In writing, there is evidence of high expectation and challenge within tasks with evidence of high quality writing particularly at second level. Staff training will be arranged for the introduction of the new WDC writing criteria to ensure a consistency of approach across the authority.
- In numeracy/maths - the majority of the pupils who participated were willing and able to talk about their number work. Schools are encouraged to use WDC's Progression Pathways and approaches to learning and teaching guide to support dialogue with learners about their understanding using a problem solving approach.

#### **4.4.5 School Improvement Partnership Project (SIPP/CAR)**

The SIPP project has established collaborative approaches to school improvement in West Dunbartonshire. The first 2 years focussed on teacher collaboration with an increased focus in 2017 on headteacher collaboration. Conditions for effective collaboration and school improvement have developed well as a result of Collaborative Action Research (CAR) across the majority of schools. This has been built upon in the delivery of school improvement programmes involving head teacher trios, peer head teachers and peer schools. Headteachers in West Dunbartonshire are keen to work in partnership with colleague headteachers to support continuous improvement. The conditions have been created for the implementation of a robust model of improvement led by headteachers using collaboration, practitioner enquiry and research as a key driver for change to support the delivery of excellence and equity.

#### **4.4.6 Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)**

Current education research into teaching approaches for STEM was shared with all our headteachers at a recent Education Leaders event. Current research promotes the development of a Science Capital Teaching approach building technology and mathematics aspirations in children and young people. Building STEM skills also builds employability skills amongst our young people so it is important for all – not just those destined for STEM related careers in the future.

In order to further develop the skills and knowledge of staff there are many professional learning opportunities available across WDC primary and secondary schools. These include: Single Steps in STEM learning, twilight sessions funded by the Primary Science Teaching Trust and delivered by external providers. Participation in STEM learning for STEM learning mentors happens in each LLC and they are working together on developing materials and resources for schools.

There are many opportunities for WDC children to partner with external organisations. This includes “Energise The Future” workshops based in the Denny Tank Museum (with travel grants available delivered in collaboration with National Museums Scotland; an ongoing programme of free events and workshops at Glasgow Science Centre as part of our ongoing partnership; Keep Scotland Beautiful Eco workshops (we are a targeted authority for partnership); STEM Ambassadors; Agrekko, have just enrolled a number of Ambassadors and are developing resources to deliver within primary schools.

#### **4.5 Secondary Attainment Challenge Projects**

##### **4.5.1 Multi Agency Hub**

Evidence from project implementation shows improved attendance for individual children and young people as a result of high quality individual family support provided by pupil and family support workers. One school reported a reduction in exclusion from 0.07 to 0.04% of school openings and one reported a significant increase in attendance of a number of targeted

young people. We have strong case study evidence that parents value and have gained confidence in their ability to support their children at home through pupil and family support. For example, in one school 37 families have engaged with the family opportunities team providing advice on employment pathways, early years' qualification and digital technology. 40 families in one school have engaged in adult learner courses provided by school staff, West College Scotland and Working 4 U with 2 parents securing employment. We plan to increase the number of pupil and family support workers and support engagement with more families.

#### **4.5.2 Skills Academies**

Last session a group of students took part in the Green Power Challenge as part of the skills academy in Vale of Leven. The team were involved in Planning, Design, Construction, Testing, Promotion, Sponsorship, Communication and Racing. Apart from building and racing their car, the team secured sponsorship from a number of companies and developed a team identity on popular social media platforms. This team received high praise from their lecturers and they were invited to present at a number of events attended by engineers, aeronautical experts, professors, lecturers and their peers. Of the 12 students in the team, 11 of them now have full-time college places or Modern Apprenticeships and the 12th has stayed on at school. Two students from the "VOLA Racing" team, along with their lecturer, talked about their experiences and displayed their Greenpower car at the WDC stand at the Scottish Learning Festival which took place on 19 - 20 Sept 2018.

There has been expansion from one team last year, to three teams within West Dunbartonshire and we are also supporting a collaborative venture at Mirren Park where they are developing a team spanning more than one authority. One of our three teams is based at West College and is made up of students from across our schools. The other two teams are school-based. As with much of senior phase progression, we are hoping to raise awareness and build skills within Broad General Education in order to better prepare our young people for a more diverse range of progression opportunities. Plans are already taking shape for developing the first phase of the Greenpower Challenge (Formula Goblin) aimed at 9-11 year olds in Primary Schools.

#### **4.5.3 Enhanced Broad General Education**

The Enhanced Broad General Education has led to improved attendance of the young people involved. Parental engagement has improved with 72% parental attendance at targeted parental workshop sessions to support home learning. ICT (Sumdog) assessments have been used for numeracy and show an improvement in numeracy attainment, with an increase of 10.7 % in 6 months. Literacy attainment has increased with reading ages improving for 25 % of the target group. The parents of 15 pupils who attended the Columba 1400 Leadership Academy have given positive feedback on progress of these young people alongside evidence of increased pupil confidence. This project has enabled three teachers to increase their knowledge of the six nurture principles, Responsibility of All and Leadership, which has in turn led to

improvements in literacy, numeracy and the health and wellbeing of targeted pupils.

#### **4.6 Attainment Programme**

A new Attainment Advisor has been appointed to West Dunbartonshire. The advisor will support schools with strategies to raise attainment and narrow the gap. To support the empowerment of headteachers professional learning sessions have been delivered on outcome focussed planning and writing evaluative statements using quality indicators.

Session 2018-19 is year three of The Attainment Challenge. To evaluate impact in advance of 2021 our SAC data and performance officer is conducting research with pupils, families, schools and staff to report on:

- Impact of the projects on attendance, exclusion and engagement rates
- Levels of participation and engagement in family learning opportunities.
- Attainment data in literacy, maths and numeracy.
- Quality of delivery in schools and local learning communities using thematic reviews, school improvement framework and annual moderation reports.
- Number of schools evaluating as good and above across the national indicators in standards and quality reports
- The quality of outcome focussed planning in schools based on effective use of data
- Numbers of young people securing positive destinations.

### **5. People Implications**

**5.1** The additional funding from Scottish Government has supported the secondment of officers and teachers assigned to raise attainment and narrow the poverty related attainment gap. Exit strategies are being developed prior to funding streams ending in 2020.

### **6. Financial and Procurement Implication**

**6.1** For primary challenge projects we have claimed part year costs of £0.584m to September 2018. For secondary challenge projects we have claimed part year costs of £0.438m to September 2018.

**6.2** As indicated in the table below it anticipated that the full award of £2.043m 2018/19 will be spent.

	<u>Primary actual exp</u>	<u>Secondary actual exp</u>	<u>Total actual exp</u>	<u>Award</u>
2015/16	£778,595	n/a	£778,595	£1,024,856
2016/17	£1,322,450	£353,019	£1,675,469	£1,895,410
2017/18	£1,189,844	£823,264	£2,013,108	£2,013,108

2018/19      £1,167,572                      £876,243                      £2,043,815                      £2,043,815  
(est)

**6.3**      There are no procurement implications arising from this report

## **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**      A meeting has taken place with our link officer in Corporate Communications to alert them to the national project and to discuss how we promote this good news for West Dunbartonshire Subsequently, there has been positive coverage of the project in the local media.

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

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

## **10     Strategic Assessment**

**10.1**    This report reflects the Council's 2017-2022 overarching priority to reduce inequalities for the people of West Dunbartonshire which supports improved outcomes for all learners in our community.

Laura Mason  
Chief Education Officer  
November 2018

**Person to Contact:**      Julie McGrogan, Senior Education Officer, Department of Education, Learning and Attainment, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, G82 3PU  
Telephone No: 01389 737316  
Email: [julie.mcgrogan@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:julie.mcgrogan@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**Appendix**

Highlight report submitted to Scottish Government

**Background Papers:**

**Wards Affected:** All wards