

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services

Education and Lifelong Learning Committee: 14 March 2012

Subject: Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire - Update

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report updates Members on activity and progress with regard to implementing West Dunbartonshire's Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement.

2. Background

- 2.1** The Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire was agreed by the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee in September 2011. A further recommendation was agreed that a report on progress with the implementation of the Strategy should be presented to every Education and Lifelong Learning Committee as a standing item. This is the third such update.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Each update report to Education and Lifelong Learning Committee has highlighted specific action taken during the short time span between the ongoing cycle of Committee Reporting.

3.2 Communication

On 3 February the service launched its Learn, Achieve, Succeed campaign. There are now buses and posters across West Dunbartonshire featuring our commitment.

- 3.3** The website is now live and can be viewed at learnachievesucceed.co.uk. This gives information to young people about support available for them.

3.4 Study Support

A wide range of activity is programmed for each of the schools. This includes after school study sessions across the range of subjects and lunch-time sessions where departments have an "open door" approach where young people may seek further help with studies.

In addition to the term time additional study support, the 5 secondary schools host “Easter Schools” and young people attend tutorial sessions prior to the exam period. Members should note that many of the study sessions are led by staff volunteering to provide this service. The Quality Improvement Service in conjunction with the seconded teachers will ensure that best practice in relation to study support is shared across schools.

- 3.5** A final download of Study Support Funding has been made available to the 5 secondary schools.

3.6 Master Classes

West Dunbartonshire is holding a series of master classes in April to enhance the support available to young people. These will run in Clydebank High School and Dumbarton Academy. Young people may attend either venue and select Maths and English, History or Geography and Physics or Chemistry. The classes are open to all young people and the seconded teachers are identifying and encouraging particular young people to attend.

3.7 Post appeal data (February 2012)

The post appeal data indicates the following changes in performance in the 2011 SQA examinations.

- 5 + level 5 in S4 2% increase; this has taken us from 29% to 31%.
 5 + level 5 in S4 Vale of Leven Academy 3% improvement
 Dumbarton Academy 4% improvement
 St Peter the Apostle High 3% improvement
 Our Lady & St Patrick’s High 3% improvement
 Clydebank High unchanged
- 3 + level 6 in S5 1% increase overall
 5 + level 6 in S6 1% increase overall

3.8 Sharing Good Practice

In the report on the HMIE inspection of Our Lady and St Patrick’s High School, also presented to this Education and Lifelong Learning Committee, it was noted that the school should share its good practice both locally and nationally. The Head Teacher of Our Lady and St Patrick’s High School has agreed to work with the authority to support improvement across the secondary sector in West Dunbartonshire.

3.9 Raising Attainment Teachers in Secondary

The seconded teachers have individual meetings with the Quality Improvement Team in their schools. The seconded teachers also meet together centrally. They have examined the results for their school supported by the Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) who is the SQA authority contact.

This has enabled the seconded teachers to ask relevant questions about attainment back in their own school, supported them in looking at departmental results and areas for improvement and built their skills in supporting teachers in their schools. They have shared their practice in a number of areas including supported study, tracking and monitoring progress, target setting and mentoring. The individual Raising Attainment plans for schools have been shared and discussions on how to monitor and measure improvement have taken place. Central meetings also allow the seconded teachers to influence authority plans on Raising Attainment. Future meetings will look at literacy across the curriculum and higher order skills.

3.10 Raising Attainment in West Dunbartonshire Primary Schools

5-14 results in Reading, Writing and Mathematics are no longer collected locally or nationally. However, CfE principles demand that 'young people should experience continuous progression, their learning'. To ensure consistency and a rigorous system to record progression, in WDC primary schools have been divided into 4 'family' groups with similar Free Meal Entitlement. The groups meet with the Quality Improvement Manager. They are supported and challenged to raise attainment through:

- Sharing good practice
- Developing systems for recording and monitoring the progress of individual pupils
- Sharing planning resources for CfE
- Sharing the standard within the levels of CfE

Schools are recording, on an authority data base, the levels in Reading, Writing and Mathematics for each child. This will enable us to track progress as an authority. Head teachers welcome the opportunity to share with colleagues. The Quality Improvement Officers support and challenge schools during ongoing quality visits.

- 3.11** Education Services is introducing standardised testing at P3, P7 and S2. This will enable the service to overview levels of attainment alongside national benchmarks. It will not interfere with current systems to assess progress and next steps in learning.

4. People Implications

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues emerging as a result of this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The costs of the Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement have been agreed by Education and Lifelong Learning Committee in September 2011 and will be met from within existing budgets. In addition, the Council's budget for 2012/13 includes £80,000 for the appointment of 2 FTE teachers to assist with raising attainment and £9,000 to develop materials to assist with improving higher order reading skills.

6. Risk Analysis

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

7. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1** No significant equalities issues were identified in relation to this report.

8. Strategic Assessment

- 8.1** The Council has identified four main strategic priorities for 2011/2012, namely Social & Economic Regeneration, Financial Strategy, Asset Management Strategy, and Fit for Purpose Services.
- 8.2** Raising expectation and aspirations with our young people will ultimately lead to regeneration. Investing in their future is fundamental to the values of our Council. Our staff are our most valuable resource and they have the skills to improve outcomes for young people. Success in improving attainment and achievement will impact positively on Educational Services and West Dunbartonshire Council.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 9.1** The Education Service and Lifelong Learning Committee is recommended to:
- (a) note the progress made in the past two months with the Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire; and
 - (b) seek a further update for the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee at its June 2012 meeting.

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Appendices:

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected:

All wards