

## **West Dunbartonshire Council**

### **Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services**

**Education and Lifelong Learning Committee: 9 November 2011**

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

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** This report up-dates 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.
- 2.2** The Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire has been designed in response to the Standard Tables and Charts (STACS) for the period 2006-2011. The 2011 STACS report will be presented to this November Committee.

#### **3. Main Issues**

##### **3.1 Authority STACS Session**

An Authority wide STACS Session took place in October 2011. This had been organised in conjunction with Stewart Jardine who has completed the analysis for and supported West Dunbartonshire over a number of years. This session was attended by the Directorate, the Quality Improvement Service, the five secondary Head Teachers and five Depute Head Teachers.

Mr Jardine led us through an objective analysis of our relative performances, our strengths and our weak areas.

He then led discussion sessions and shared practice from across Scotland. He has given us excellent support materials which will be taken forward by the QIS and the secondees.

### **3.2 Seconded Teachers**

Each of the five secondary schools have now appointed secondees to give focussed support to the implementation of the strategy. These teachers will work with guidance and support from the Quality Improvement Service. Specific action plans are being drawn up to address the priorities emanating from the meetings between the Directorate and the SMT of each secondary school.

### **3.3 STACS Meetings**

A revised format for individual school's STACS meetings has been put in place. (Appendix 1)

The revised format requires the entire Senior Management Team to be present and to give account of their specific remit to raise attainment in departments and throughout the school. The Head Teacher presents to the Directorate outlining the areas of good practice and identifying the aspects which require further improvement.

In addition to the input from the Head Teacher and the Depute Head Teachers, a Principal Teacher joins the meeting with a group of senior pupils. This brings a sharp focus to the impact of learning and teaching. The Principal Teacher is able to describe how improvement has been achieved in higher department. The inclusion of senior pupils is of immense benefit. The young people have brought a most important perspective to the proceedings. They have told us what works, what could be improved and also of their hopes and ambitions for the future.

### **3.4 Parental Involvement Strategy Group**

The Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement was discussed at the recent Parental Involvement Strategy Group. The parents on the group are very supportive of the action being taken and have asked for a presentation at their next meeting.

### **3.5 Literacy**

West Dunbartonshire has been recognised nationally for its approach to early literacy. This work will be reviewed and developed to incorporate Higher Order Skills for senior pupils. It has emerged from the individual school's STACS meetings that pupils in some subjects require further support to use literacy skills across the curriculum.

### **3.6 Principal Teachers' Business Meetings**

Each subject area has a business meeting to discuss aspects pertinent to individual subjects. The current format tends to operate on a voluntary/good will basis. This will be reviewed to enable meetings to take place which will seek attendance from all relevant staff. The agenda will follow a consistent approach across subjects and will include a section on attainment issues. This will be subject to further consultation.

### **3.7 Study Support**

An allocation for Study Support has been downloaded to each school. (Appendix 2) An instruction was issued with the allocation stating that this funding must be targeted towards raising attainment. Individual schools will determine their own arrangements and will be asked for a progress report in due course.

### **3.8 Consultation**

The strategy will be subject to on-going discussion and consultation. The seconded teachers will action further communication of the strategy for staff pupils and parents in individual schools. In addition to this, Educational Services will link with Corporate Communications to share the message widely.

## **4. People Implications**

- 4.1** A communication campaign will be developed to target staff, pupils and parents.

## **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.

## **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, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment**

- 7.1** No issues were identified in a screening for potential equality impact of 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 January 2012 meeting.

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**Appendices:** Appendix 1 - Raising Attainment and Achievement  
Appendix 2 - Study Support Allocation September 2011

**Background Paper:**

**Wards Affected:** All Wards