

# **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

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

**Educational Services Committee: 11 September 2013**

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**Subject: Literacy and Numeracy - Benchmarking**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** This report advises Members on the baseline performance of literacy and numeracy in West Dunbartonshire at P3, P5, P7 and S2.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** The Educational Services Committee is recommended to

- (a) note the contents of this report; and
- (b) a further report on the 2014 assessment results will be tabled to a future meeting of the Educational Services Committee.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1** Curriculum for Excellence is now implemented in all West Dunbartonshire's schools and previous "5-14" measures are no longer a relevant indicator of attainment.
- 3.2** Members asked for a briefing paper in November 2011 which would give information as to how progress would be measured given the demise of the 5-14 indicators. This is included as a Background Paper for this report. At the meeting of the Educational Services Committee in August 2012, members asked that a further report on this matter be brought to Committee once the results of the 2013 assessments were known.

### **4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** Children's progress within Curriculum for Excellence is assessed using a range of strategies. Assessment is absolutely integral to the learning and teaching process.
- 4.2** In West Dunbartonshire we are committed to the individual learning journey of each child. The assessment of each child incorporates what they can say, make, do and write across the curriculum.
- 4.3** A further strategy to build an authority wide picture of progress was introduced in May 2012. This included a series of standard assessments at P3, P7 and S2. In March 2013 P5 pupils were also included. Members are asked to note that this strategy is but one in a range of approaches.

- 4.4** In these assessments, West Dunbartonshire pupils were benchmarked against a group of pupils chosen from schools across the UK whose performance was representative of a national standard. This is referred to below as the national benchmark.
- 4.5** The assessments produce standard age scores for pupils. These are created by converting the pupils' actual scores in the tests to standardised scores which take into account their age in years and months. This gives an indication of how each pupil is performing as compared to other pupils of the same age across the UK.
- 4.6** Support sessions for teachers were organised to discuss the process and purpose of the assessments.
- 4.7** Baseline assessment is already in place in nursery and P1 classes and the results are used to inform improvement planning and to support next steps in children's learning.
- 4.8** The new baseline measures for literacy and numeracy at P3, P5, P7 and S2 will be used to focus on specific areas requiring improvement across West Dunbartonshire.
- 4.9** The high level messages emerging from the standard assessments indicate the following:

#### Reading

At P3, P7 and S2 West Dunbartonshire performed higher than the national benchmark; at P5 performance matched the national benchmark.

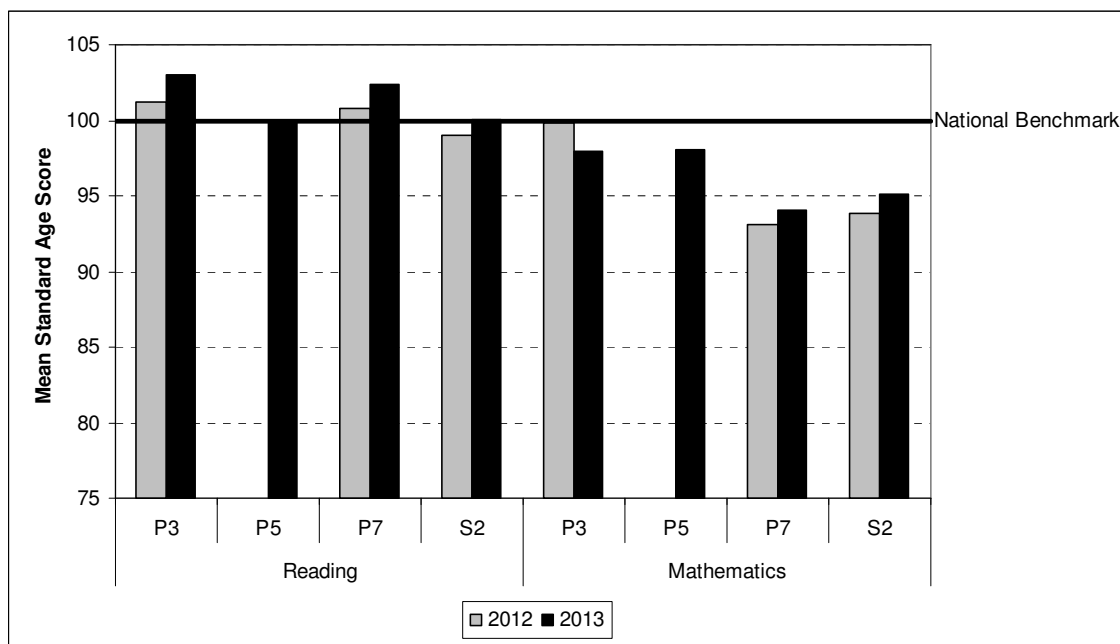
P3, P7 and S2 all improved on the results from the same age groups in the previous year. Members should note however that the children tested this year are different from the children tested in 2012 (P5 was not tested in 2012).

#### Mathematics

P3, P5, P7 and S2 in West Dunbartonshire all performed below the national benchmark.

P3 scored lower than the same year group in the previous year. P7 and S2 both improved on the results from the same year groups in the previous year (P5 was not tested in 2012).

Results can be seen in the chart below:



The chart shows the performance of West Dunbartonshire pupils by Mean Standard Age Scores for each tested stage in both Reading and Mathematics tests in 2012 and 2013 compared to the national benchmark for the same tests.

- 4.10** Further scrutiny of the mathematics scores will be undertaken to determine specific areas of learning requiring support and improvement.
- 4.11** Discussion will now take place between the Quality Improvement Service and Head Teachers to plan for improvement. The work being progressed within the Family Groups of primary schools with similar demographic and socio-economic characteristics to share best practice will be influenced from the findings of the standard assessments.

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** There are no personnel issues related to this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1** There are no financial implications related to this report.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** Failure to address issues relating to improving attainment and achievement will disadvantage our children and young people.

## **8. Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 8.1** An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out on the processes of administering the assessments. No significant issues arose provided pupils

with Additional Support Needs were in receipt of additional levels of support when completing assessments.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1** The introduction of a series of standard assessments as part of a range of approaches to assessment was discussed with Head Teachers, Quality Improvement Officers and teacher unions.
- 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 improve life chances for children and young people which is one of the strategic priorities for 2012 - 2017.

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<b>Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Paper:</b>	Briefing Note to Audit and Performance Review Committee, Subject: Reporting Pupil Attainment; Date: November 2011  EIA Literacy and Numeracy - Benchmarking
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All wards