

# **W0EST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

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

**Educational Services Committee: 7 November 2012**

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**Subject: Literacy in West Dunbartonshire Council**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To inform Members of the Educational Services Committee of the actions being undertaken in the authority to improve levels of literacy.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** The Educational Services Committee is recommended to
- (1) note the contents of this report
  - (2) receive further information regarding progress in literacy developments in West Dunbartonshire in due course

### **3. Background**

- 3.1** The Scottish Government has published a Literacy Action Plan (2010) and an Interim Report (2012) which signalled a commitment to having a “more targeted focus for improving literacy skills in Scotland through better co-ordination and partnership working”.
- 3.2** Scottish Government have identified key components of success in improving literacy levels and have invited 5 key local authorities who have demonstrated each of these components to a greater or lesser extent to work as a ‘hub’ for sharing good practice and working in partnership with other local authorities. West Dunbartonshire is one of these ‘hub’ authorities.
- 3.3** Following on from the lessons of West Dunbartonshire’s Literacy Initiative (2007) and the impact of the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, Educational Services in West Dunbartonshire have reviewed literacy, audited practice across schools and developed an action plan to direct activities.

### **4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** In West Dunbartonshire we have recently conducted standard assessments in literacy and numeracy at stages P3, P7 and S2.
- 4.2** The results indicate that generally West Dunbartonshire Council is doing well when compared to the national benchmark in P3 but scores fall by P7 and even more by S2 when compared to the national benchmark.

- 4.3 In response to this we have identified schools where there is good practice currently, particularly with regard to the teaching of higher order comprehension skills and devised a project to develop this further and also to share this more widely within the authority and beyond.
- 4.4 The project proposal has been accepted by Scottish Government as part of its 'hub' initiative. Key to this is our working in partnership with other authorities and involving educational psychology services in assisting with project development and evaluation.
- 4.5 Inverclyde and Renfrewshire have agreed to work with us as partners on this.
- 4.6 Part of the 'hub' project will also be to explore how the approaches developed in the primary sector could be used to promote progression in learning through the transition from primary to secondary.
- 4.7 In addition we have updated our baseline assessment and reintroduced it within our early years establishments and early years of primary classes as a way of supporting the development of early literacy and identifying early, those children who are at risk of failing to learn to read.
- 4.8 Our current literacy strategy document will be revised in light of the above developments.

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1 There are no personnel issues.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The Scottish Government has awarded a grant of £42,000 in financial year 2012/13 to support the 'hub' project. This grant will be administered by WDC but will be used to support the work in all three Councils involved.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1 The Quality Improvement Service working alongside the Psychological Service will continue to develop the strategy for literacy to ensure improved outcomes for children and young people.

## **8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1 Educational Services has carried out a screening in equality for this report. The report was found not to be relevant to the specified equality duty because the content provides an update on service delivery rather than stating a change in policy.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1** 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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Terry Lanagan  
Executive Director Educational Services

**Person to Contact:** Shona Crawford, Principal Educational Psychologist  
Department of Educational Services, Council Offices  
Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU  
Tel: 01389 737387

E-mail: [shona.crawford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:shona.crawford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**Appendices:** None

**Wards Affected:** All