

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land and Environmental Services)

Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee: 4 April 2007

Subject: The 'Best of School Cooks' Event

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To advise the Committee that Margaret McGarry, Catering Manager at St. Mary's Primary School, Duntocher was selected as one of only five Scottish cooks to attend a high profile event to celebrate the work of school cooks across the United Kingdom.

2. Background

- 2.1** A high profile event to celebrate the work of school cooks was held in London on 15 February 2007. The School Food Trust in England was asked to invite School Cooks and Head Teachers from throughout the United Kingdom who that were considered to have made significant progress towards improving school meals.
- 2.2** A total of five school cooks from across Scotland were invited to attend this celebration. The event was not a competition for the best cook but was an opportunity to share some of the excellent practice in place throughout the country. Scotland is leading on the provision of healthy school meals in the UK through the Hungry for Success programme.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Interested participants were requested to complete a nomination form which was issued by the Chair of ASSIST (Association of Service Solutions in Scotland Today). The nomination form asked that nominees ensure their school met at least one or more of the following criteria:
- Shining examples of school food transformation
 - Schools which have made the most progress
 - Schools growing their own food
 - Schools sourcing food locally
- 3.2** The Catering Services team chose the Catering Manager from St. Mary's Primary School as the most suitable candidate to participate in the event and this was endorsed by her Head Teacher. A nomination form was completed and returned for consideration.
- 3.3** Representatives from the Scottish Health Promoting Schools Unit helped to select the schools who were chosen for their efforts to improve school food and educate children where food came from.

3.4 Following evaluation of all nominations received St. Mary's Primary School, Duntocher, was selected as one of the five Scottish schools and Margaret McGarry, Catering Manager and her Head Teacher were invited to attend schools the event on 15 February 2007

3.5 A reception was held at Clarence House, London, and was attended by the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, who both paid tribute to school cooks who are helping to provide healthier food for the nation's children. School Cooks and Head Teachers from 60 schools throughout the country were invited to attend the event to highlight the importance of providing pupils with nutritious meals.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 The Catering Manager and Head Teacher from St Mary's Primary School, Duntocher represented West Dunbartonshire Council at the reception in Clarence House on 15 February 2007.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The Scottish Executive funded the cost of attendance of Scottish local authority representatives.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 There are no risks associated with the content of this report.

7. Conclusions

7.1 This achievement highlights the excellent work being undertaken throughout Scotland and in particular, West Dunbartonshire Council, in the delivery of healthy eating initiatives within the school meal sector.

8. Recommendations

8.1 **The Committee is requested to commend Margaret McGarry, Catering Manager at St. Mary's Primary School, for her excellent quality of work and for achieving recognition for the Council in the national 'Best of School Cooks' event which was held recently at Clarence House**

Ronald M Dinnie

**Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services
(Land and Environmental Services)**

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All