

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer****Educational Services Committee: 14th December 2022**

Subject: Services for Children, Young People and Families Update Report**1. Purpose****1.1** The purpose of this report is:

- a) to inform Educational Services Committee of progress on supports to children, young people and families.

2. Recommendations**2.1** Members of the Educational Services Committee are asked to:

- a) Note progress on plans to continue developing and improving supports.

3. Background**3.1** In January 2019 a national review of the implementation of Additional Support for Learning began. The subsequent report and action plan had nine key themes which set standards nationally, locally and at establishment level.**3.2** The national report recommends that local authorities must take account of the findings of the report to review and align their quality assurance processes. This must drive improvements in processes, practice and outcomes at all levels in the system.**3.3** West Dunbartonshire Council is committed to ensuring all children and young people are enabled to progress through Early Learning and School with the support they need.
When this support is more or different to what is generally provided for children and young people of the same age, then the child or young person is said to have additional needs.**3.4** The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 lists four interrelated factors which individually or jointly impact on ability to learn:

- Learning Environment
- Family Circumstances
- Disability or Health
- Social or Emotional Factors

Additional support may be required throughout a child or young person's

educational journey: others may only require additional support for a short period of time.

- 3.5** It is recognised that children, young people and families are best supported through effective multi-agency planning and delivery of services. Educational Services work in collaboration with a range of council, Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and third sector colleagues to support our families. This work is being developed via the Whole Family Wellbeing (WFW) planning, led by Educational Services on behalf of the Community Planning Partnership.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** There are currently 12, 226 school pupils in West Dunbartonshire Council. 5281 Pupils have Additional Support Needs (ASN) (43%), supported mainly in mainstream schools. 241 pupils are supported in our specialist settings as they require a more specific learning environment. We also have a small percentage of our children and young people with additional support needs supported by day or residential providers in external placements. These often involve young people separated from their peers and their community and can be expensive in comparison to supporting in-house. These costs have increased significantly over the past few years due to increased salaries and increased charges from partner providers for the range of specialist supports offered. This has resulted in budget overspends which we hope will be addressed to some extent by the strategy implementation.

Our ASN Estate consists of:

- 1 all through setting for 0-18 years supporting learners with complex ASN
- 2 Secondary Bases
- 4 Primary Bases

- 4.2** In response to projected needs in the secondary school estate, work is underway to expand the Kilpatrick School Campus with three additional classrooms. At the moment a contingency plan is in place using temporary accommodation until the planned building extension work is undertaken later in the school session '22-'23.
- 4.3** At time of writing, a public consultation is underway seeking views of a range of stakeholders on our plans to re-develop the former Riverside Early Learning and Childcare Centre (ELCC), creating a school for severe and complex learners. An update on the results of consultation will be brought back to committee.
- 4.4** We are currently undertaking developments on year two of our ASN strategy. This plan reflects the National Improvement Framework and has a range of work streams which ensure a broad reach of improvements to learning, teaching, attainment and achievement as well as considering the development of the ASN estate. A range of staff from all sectors and settings has been involved in planning and implementing the strategy.

4.5 Notable progress has been as follows:

- Planning and implementation of 2022-2023 Child Inclusion Research in Curriculum, Learning and Education (CIRCLE) Framework for developing Inclusive Practices is underway. This has involved every school in participating in in-service training, led by an identified CIRCLE Champion for their establishment. A Champions Forum ensures high quality professional development is taking place and that capacity of leadership in every establishment is being consistently developed;
- Implementation of Year 2 Social Communication Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support (SCERTS) Model: A comprehensive educational approach for children with autism spectrum disorders, has been undertaken in all of our specialist settings. This builds upon evaluation of Year 1 and includes further opportunity to develop collegiate working, developing shared planning processes and consistency in approaches. It will also support staff in developing parental involvement and engagement and in creating pupil plans which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART), reflecting the voice of children, young people and carers;
- The very good progress made in delivery of Year 1 SCERTS was featured recently as good practice in the National Autism Implementation Team (NAIT) newsletter;
- We continue to develop approaches to support for the Wellbeing and Care of our children and young people who are distressed and dysregulated via the roll-out of Safety Interventions Training; previously known as Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA). The training is a safe, non-harmful system designed to help professionals in any setting provide the best possible Care, Welfare, Safety and Security of individuals presenting a range of crisis behaviours. The course is aligned with trauma response practices which develops competencies in verbal de-escalation and physical supportive holds. Training is being promoted and targeted at all specialist setting staff and key staff in all mainstreams. Training dates are shared via our Continuing Professional Development Website and any member of staff (in addition to those mentioned), who wishes to attend can apply there.

4.6 We continue to support Education Leaders and all staff in understanding the importance and value of the Health and Safety 1 (HS1) Completion and Reporting of Violent Incidents Guidance via Figtree. This guidance which was updated in September 2022 in partnership with Health and Safety colleagues, specifically relates to managing aggression and violence and should also help to support planned responses to near misses, risks or challenges identified. Guidance is clear this should be used to report all such incidents and done in collaboration with staff involved. We will continue to monitor and promote this usage in collaboration with our Trade Union partners.

4.7 We have further developed supports for parents and carers, informed by feedback from them, regarding the challenges of keeping children and young people safe when online. As part of National Online Safety #WakeUpWednesday campaign a new platform has been shared with schools which includes a weekly guide they can share with parents highlighting online

risks and safety measures. These are easily accessible and early feedback is parents and carers find them most helpful.

- 4.8** As part of our staff development and focus on ensuring implementation of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Reach Advocacy Scotland have delivered a series of professional learning sessions to key identified staff from all educational establishments and some partner agencies. They in turn will lead on further UNCRC professional learning and implementation at establishment level. Feedback from training has been very positive with almost all participants reporting increased knowledge and understanding of UNCRC and their role in ensuring these. Plans are in place to develop professional learning across the broader Community Planning Partnership and to ensure children and young people are aware of and supported in ensuring their rights are upheld.
- 4.9** In June a cohort of 22 staff members completed Level 1-4 Makaton training. Makaton is a communication tool with speech and symbols which enables people with disabilities or learning disabilities to communicate. Feedback from staff who attended the workshops was extremely positive. This cohort are now using and practising their skills in their own settings, working with pupils, sharing their knowledge with their peers and providing access to materials.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There are no people implications as a direct result of this report. However it should be noted that in line with the recommendations in the ASN Review we must ensure we have a well -trained, high quality workforce who are equipped to support the range of needs and rights of our children and young people.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** The projected additional funding required for the learning estate expansion has been approved and planned for in current and future budgets.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** If the Council is unable to ensure appropriate support to children and young people, we will not be meeting their needs under the terms of the Children and Young People Act 2014 (Equalities Act 2010).
- 7.2** If the Council is unable to ensure appropriate support for all children, young people and staff this could result in reputational damage.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** As noted in the previously produced Equalities Impact Assessment, the ASN strategy and subsequent supports and guidance developed will enhance the quality of the service provided to all children, young people and staff and therefore can be seen to have a positive impact in terms of the equalities.

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 reduce inequalities for the people of West Dunbartonshire.

Laura Mason

Chief Education Officer

Person to Contact: Claire Cusick, Senior Education Officer
Services for Children and Young People

E-mail: claire.cusick@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Background Papers: Getting it Right for Every Child
[Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#)
[Additional Support for Learning Statutory Guidance 2017](#)
Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014)
Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2: A Positive to
Preventing and Managing School Exclusions (2017)
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
Implementation www.gov.scot
<https://nationalonlinesafety.com>

Wards Affected: All Wards

