

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services

Educational Services Committee: 7 November 2012

Subject: West Dunbartonshire Numeracy Strategy

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report informs members about the activity and progress with regard to establishing a Numeracy Strategy for children and young people in West Dunbartonshire.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Educational Services Committee is recommended to:
- (a) note the progress made with the work to produce our Numeracy Strategy; and
 - (b) seek a further report in February 2013 with details of the final Numeracy Strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1** Members were presented with a report at the August 2012 meeting of the Educational Services Committee regarding attainment information for Literacy and Numeracy. It was recommended that both a Numeracy Strategy and a Literacy Strategy should be prepared for West Dunbartonshire Council and presented to future meetings of the Educational Services Committee.
- 3.2** Numeracy within Curriculum for Excellence is defined as the “responsibility of all” and should therefore take place across all subjects and contexts for learning.
- 3.3** Being numerate helps children and young people to function responsibly in everyday life and to contribute effectively to society. It increases their opportunities within the world of work and lays foundations which can be built upon through lifelong learning.

Numeracy is more than an ability to do basic arithmetic. It involves developing confidence and competence in using numbers which allows individuals to solve problems, interpret and analyse information and to make informed decisions. These skills are fundamental to the development of skills for learning, life and work.

- 3.4** Numeracy across learning includes numeracy activities in almost all subject areas. Measuring, calculating and weighing, feature in activities and subjects as diverse as cooking, craft and design, physics, physical education, chemistry, personal finance and accounting as well as mathematics. Understanding statistics and tables are essential skills across learning, from social studies to health and well-being.

Active and contextualised learning experiences which go beyond timetabled classes provide our children and young people with the opportunities to develop their numeracy skills and equip them to face the challenges in everyday life.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** A Numeracy Strategy Group has been established with representation from all sectors. Marion Burns, our District Inspector/Area Lead Officer from Educational Scotland is also a member of the group and is an invaluable source of support and guidance.
- 4.2** The group has taken an evidenced based approach to developing our Numeracy Strategy. Information has been gathered from the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN) and from the recent results of standardised assessment at P3, P7 and S2. In addition, we have scrutinised the Records of Inspection Findings (RIFs) to pinpoint where we do well and where we need to make improvements.
- 4.3** A Numeracy Event was organised by the Group and the Quality Improvement Officer with lead responsibility for numeracy and was held on 10 October 2012 (Appendix 1). In excess of 80 staff attended and this included Head Teachers, Depute Head Teachers, Principal Teachers and teachers from all sectors. The event was very well received and participants appreciated the opportunity to work together and to share good practice.
- 4.4** The Numeracy Group will continue to progress matters with the aim of launching the Numeracy Strategy in December 2012.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** Educational Services will continue to support staff to recognise the importance of numeracy as the “responsibility of all” through providing development opportunities.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1** Schools will use their devolved budget to progress numeracy through the improvement planning process.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** Failure to establish and implement a Numeracy Strategy will disadvantage our children and young people and will impact negatively on their potential achievement.

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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Appendices: Appendix 1 - Numeracy Conference Agenda
Appendix 2 - Glossary of terms used

Wards Affected: All