



Report by Senior Education Officer Educational Services

Management Group: 19th November 2020

Subject: Pupil Equity and Care Experienced Children's Funds Update

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) inform members of practices to narrow the poverty related attainment gap resourced from the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) and Care Experienced Children's Fund; and
- b) update members on how we have ensured adherence to policy and guidance.

2. Recommendations

2.1 CPWD is asked to:

- a) discuss and note West Dunbartonshire Council's (WDC) practices in relation to PEF; and to
- b) discuss and note West Dunbartonshire Council's governance of PEF.

3. Background

3.1 The Scottish Attainment Challenge is about achieving equity in education. This can be achieved by ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

3.2 The Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched in February 2015. It is underpinned by The National Improvement Framework, Curriculum for Excellence and Getting it Right for Every Child.

- 3.3** Every council area is benefitting from Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) as part of the Attainment Scotland Fund. 95% of schools in Scotland have been allocated funding for pupils in P1-S3 known to be eligible for free school meals.
- 3.4** PEF is allocated directly to schools. This funding is to be spent at the discretion of the head-teachers working in partnership with each other and their local authority. School communities will be responsible for identifying, planning and implementing interventions.
- 3.5** The Care Experienced Children's Fund which is also supported by the Scottish Attainment Challenge, also targets inequity with a focus on children and young people who are care experienced.
- 3.6** The Chief Education Officer and Chief Social Worker plan with partners to improve outcomes, informed by assessment information. Partners are expected to collaborate to agree funding and plans to close the gap and overcome barriers to accessing education.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** WDC is committed to working with a range of stakeholders, to ensure positive outcomes for those most at risk of missing out as a result of poverty. We ensure all of our schools are clear about the steps they need to take to actively promote and monitor high quality learning experiences; reduce the poverty related gap and increase attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and well-being.
- 4.2** Senior managers in school and at central level are clear of their roles in planning, managing and monitoring interventions to address inequity in a range of ways such as:
- Planning support focussed on the twelve interventions for inequity as identified by Scottish Government (Appendix 1 twelve interventions model);
 - robust tracking and monitoring at class and school level focussing on individual pupils; knowing their gaps and plans to address;
 - ensuring targeted and timely interventions using existing school resources such as support staff, supported study, mentors and buddies.
- 4.3** Continuing staff development is integral to supporting and ensuring appropriate targeted interventions and scrutiny of impact and spends. Governance arrangements ensure joined up and collegiate approaches to this. (Appendix 2 PEF governance)

4.4 In session 2019 -2020 all of our schools successfully engaged in a range of interventions to narrow the gap; reflecting the twelve identified interventions for equity. The number instigated depended on the financial allocation to the schools and the costs associated with individual plans. It is difficult to attribute impact on attainment to any one intervention as these form part of the bigger picture of school improvement and its many facets. It appears that many of the main themes of intervention/projects overlap between different areas – for example literacy and family learning, HWB and family learning, play pedagogy and professional learning.

4.5 Some examples of effective PEF planning and spending are:

Additional Support Needs Settings

1. The Choices Programme delivered an art intervention aimed at promoting well-being, improving learner engagement and attendance. Staff and pupils report improvements in engagement with learning and in pupils' abilities to engage in dialogue about feelings and emotions and strategies to support these. Attendance support is an ongoing issue individual to needs of these young people and will take time to demonstrate impact.
2. Kilpatrick delivered and developed Nurture interventions and approaches across the school. This resulted in an increase in the number of pupils who are able to stay in class for prolonged periods with their peers. A significant reduction in incidents of violence and aggression involving pupils receiving Enhanced Nurture support, increased attendance for almost all pupils receiving Enhanced Nurture, reduction in days lost due to exclusions for pupils receiving Enhanced Nurture, Assessments known as Boxall Profiles and Beyond are being utilised to identify the needs and plan for these children.

Primary Schools

1. Gavinburn Primary School delivered an intervention aimed at supporting a number of children for whom there is an identified attainment gap in maths and numeracy. This involved using specific resources targeted at supporting learners with concepts and providing additional small group teaching support in basic number bonds, addition and subtraction. It is being evidenced that almost all learners are improving in their development of counting verbally, Counting objects, Reading and writing, using hundreds, tens and units, estimation, word problems, translation, remembered facts and derived facts and ordinal numbers. This will lead to raised attainment in these areas.

2. St Stephen's Primary has invested in an Early Years Practitioner who is supporting the development of Literacy and numeracy skills of targeted children working at early level across all stages. The worker has focussed on targeted support for learners, developing skills in phonics, common words, reading and number work. She has been working with small groups of children to increase social skills through nurturing approaches. As the session progresses, she plans to work with the link early education centre working with pre-school children, forging valuable links with children and their families. The intervention has also supported the delivery of a range of outdoor learning opportunities.
3. Edinbarnet Primary has focussed on supporting engagement and attendance of pupils who are most at risk of missing out. They have employed a Pupil and Family Support Worker to build relationships with families, help them with issues arising which are barriers to attendance and engagement with school and to support children when in attendance. They have also developed their already well established Nurture approaches to reach a wider group of children. Both of these interventions will enable children to be more ready to learn in school, hence increasing engagement and attainment.

Secondary Schools

Vale of Leven Academy focussed support on the social and emotional wellbeing of young people and in developing engagement opportunities for those hardest to reach. As a result, they are seeing increases in attendance and reductions in exclusions; with revised support systems and resources promoting inclusion. By establishing a Breakfast Club, Uniform access, Nurture Room and enhanced pupil support areas, staff have ensured a broader reach of young people are enabled to feel safe, secure and ready to engage with learning.

Clydebank High School have developed teacher professionalism and leadership in implementing course structure and assessments overview to improve tracking and monitoring of successes and help plan appropriate interventions targeted at individuals.

They have worked on developing teacher confidence of CfE levels through moderation of literacy both within English and across the curriculum with targeted supports at transition for most vulnerable. This is to ensure progress made in literacy continues and develops appropriately and that those needing support with reading via the Reading Wise programme receive it. To develop pupil engagement and involvement, a programme of outdoor learning in literacy has been developed.

Local Learning Community example

St Peter the Apostle Learning Community have continued to implement a project which is developing Approaches to Enhanced Transition. This has resulted in a reduction in exclusion data and improved well-being outcomes for target groups with a specific focus on learners in SIMD 1 + 2. Improved

partnership working including health, social work, psychological services and 3rd sector organisations have been developed and improved parental engagement in supporting learner participation in enhanced transition opportunities.

4.6 The Care Experienced fund focussed on 6 main work-streams identified by multi-agency partners as addressing the needs of care experienced children and young people from Early Years to Senior Phase. (App. 3)

These included:

- Increasing mentoring opportunities via MCR Pathways and Y-Sort-it;
- Developing the Interrupted Learner Service to include community classroom approaches and increase engagement opportunities with school and community partners;
- Developing Family Group Therapy in order to support and maintain family placements;
- Supporting community engagement with Youth Alliance and development of Care Connectors programme;
- Supporting the language acquisition and development of 3-5 year olds and the capacity of their parents to help with this.

4.7 Measurements of success and impact have varied from project to project; containing a range of statistical and softer data. Realistically, it is expected that longitudinal analysis of impact is necessary to determine the success of most interventions in narrowing the gap. It is also apparent that no one intervention alone will raise attainment. It is also notable that COVID has impacted on school plans and as a result outcomes are harder to measure than previously anticipated due to move to remote supports, varying degrees of pupils engagement, staff re-deployment and re-focus on priorities for schools, pupils and families. Accordingly plans have been adapted to reflect the impact of COVID on children and their families and the most pressing current needs.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no people implications as a result of this report; however it is essential that robust systems are in place to ensure appropriate staff training and recruitment.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications for Community Planning West Dunbartonshire resulting from this report. All activities related to the implementation of these interventions are contained within PEF Budgets.

6.2 Total Pupil Equity Funding in West Dunbartonshire for Session 2019-2020 was £3,353 520 and the Care Experienced Children's Funding was £364 800.

6.3 By end of the reporting period to July 2020, funding for the session 2019-20 was fully committed and spent for both funding streams.

6.4 Financial scrutiny has been ensured via monitoring at school level, reporting updates to Senior Education Officers and WDC Finance Business Partner.

6.5 We are continuing work with Procurement partners to ensure compliance and scrutiny of all spends and that Head teachers have appropriate training to manage funds in line with Council policy.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 If the Council is unable to ensure positive outcomes for children, we will not be meeting their needs (Children and Young People Act 2014) (Equalities Act 2010).

7.2 If the Council is unable to narrow the poverty related gap this could result in reputational damage.

7.3 If the Council were not able to manage and monitor spends appropriately then there is risk of reputational damage and inequity.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 The supports and guidance enhance the quality of the service provided to all children and young people 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.

Claire Cusick

Senior Education Officer

Communication Bulletin

This box should contain a media summary of the decision made through the recommendation of the paper which can be used following the meeting

Person to Contact:

Claire Cusick, Senior Education Officer
Services for Children and Young People,
e-mail: claire.cusick@west-dunbarton.gov.uk
(tel: 01389 737304)

Appendices:

1. 12 Interventions for equity
2. PEF Governance
3. Care Experience Children Fund Overview

Background Papers:

Wards Affected: All wards