

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Education Officer

Educational Services Committee: 5 June 2019

Subject: Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update the Educational Services Committee on activity and progress with regard to implementing West Dunbartonshire's Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Educational Services Committee is recommended to note:

(a) the progress made in the past three months with the Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement in West Dunbartonshire.

3. Background

- 3.1** In line with the Strategy to Raise Attainment and Achievement the Committee receives a regular report outlining progress against this strategic priority.
- 3.2** The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) was launched in February 2015. It aims to accelerate the pace in which Scotland closes the poverty related attainment gap in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing through leadership, families and communities and learning and teaching. West Dunbartonshire became a Challenge Authority in 2015 receiving additional funding to deliver projects in primary and secondary schools. From its inception in 2015/16 to the end of 2018/19 we will have secured **£4.458m** for primary projects and **£2.053m** for secondary projects from the Scottish Attainment Challenge. It is envisaged that funding will continue until March 2020.
- 3.3** In December 2017 HM Inspectors and professional associates, working in partnership with Audit Scotland evaluated the education service strategies to improve learning, raise attainment and narrow the poverty-related attainment gap. It was reported that West Dunbartonshire is making very good progress with improving learning, raising attainment and narrowing the poverty related attainment gap.

4. Main Issues

4.1 Project implementation needs to be on track to ensure outcomes for young people and families are delivered. The Attainment Challenge features as a strategic risk in the local delivery plan.

4.2 Attainment Challenge funding is due to end in March 2020. There is no guarantee of continued funding post 2019/20. A funding bid for session 2019/20 was confirmed by Scottish Government in March 2019. This secured funding of £2.044 for one more year.

4.3 Attainment Challenge Projects

A detailed analysis of the impact of SAC in West Dunbartonshire is being conducted by the Senior Education Officer for Raising Attainment and the Education Scotland Attainment Advisor for the authority. Analysis started in April 2019 and will continue until October 2019. Information from this will inform decisions about interventions making a significant difference to attainment and a narrowing of the attainment gap. A report will be produced making recommendations on an exit strategy to inform future local funding allocations. This will be presented to the Raising Attainment Project Board in November 2019.

4.4 Early Years and Primary School Attainment Challenge Projects

4.4.1 Early Level Play and Learning

For the last four years, West Dunbartonshire Council has invested in learning through play training. All Early Stages Teachers, Early Learning and Childcare Officers (ELCO's) and primary 1 class teachers have now been trained. During this session a further , 33 Primary 2 and 3 class teachers, 30 learning assistants and 33 ELCO's and Primary 1 class teachers participated in the training. Practitioners now have an enhanced knowledge and understanding of the pedagogy of play based approaches. A consistent message to practitioners has been delivered throughout to ensure a continuous provision of child centered experiences. Practitioners have worked collaboratively across stages and professional dialogue has been evident between establishments. All course participants have completed two tasks involving literacy and numeracy play based approaches which was shared with colleagues. It has been recorded that staff feel more confident in delivering a balance of adult initiated and child initiated activities. There is some evidence of a skills based approach to play in ELC establishments and primary schools however this could be improved. Next session there will be a focus on outdoor learning and play based approaches in Early and First Level

4.4.2 Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing

Literacy

A short life working group of primary headteachers, a psychologist, a speech and language therapist and senior officers has been formed to review

assessment tools and learning approaches used to develop the range of talk strategies and vocabulary used by children. This is part of the next phase of the strategy to narrow the poverty related attainment gap in literacy.

Numeracy

The maths strategy group has conducted an analysis of attainment information for maths and numeracy across the Broad General Education. Data from local assessment and moderation activity and reports and the Scottish National Standardised Assessment highlighted key areas of maths requiring further improvement. The core areas are fractions, decimals and percentages, algebra, and geometry. A professional learning programme targeting these key areas has been planned with one member of staff from every school trained as a maths champion in these key areas. Teachers at P3, 4, 5 and P6, P7 and S1 will also be offered joint training. The programme will run from May 2019 until May 2020.

Health and Wellbeing

At the end of January 2019 a new strategic focus group for health and wellbeing (HWB) was established to oversee key national initiatives and programmes for health and wellbeing. The health and wellbeing strategy is under review with the new strategy to be launched at the end of June. Our HWB team attend national network events to discuss and share practice. The recommendations of the national Review of Personal and Social Education (PSE) were published by Scottish Government on 1st February 2019. While Education Scotland will lead on many of the recommendations from the report, our HWB team will take forward at local authority level. Workshops for school staff on the implementation of WDC HWB Progression Pathways are scheduled from May onwards. Education and West Dunbartonshire Leisure Team completed and signed off on their 2019-2023 partnership agreement with Sport Scotland.

Easter Sports Camps

Spring sports camps took place for a third year during the Easter Holiday. These were delivered in:

- Skypoint for pupils from St Joseph's and Edinbarnet
- Bonhill CE Centre for pupils from Lennox and St Ronan's
- Balloch Campus for pupils from Balloch, St Kessog's and Levenvale
- The HUB Clydebank for pupils from Kilbowie, St Eunan's and Linnvale
- St Michael's Primary for pupils from St Michael's and Dalreoch

For the first year we offered free places at Sports Development Sports Camps delivered in Dumbarton Academy and Vale of Leven Academy and a dance workshop at The Stand for pupils attending Our Holy Redeemer and Whitecrook Primary. Places were offered to pupils from Bellsmyre Campus, St Michael's and Dalreoch, Renton, St Martin's and St Mary's. The camps offered multi-sports and football. Camps were delivered to pupils from P1-3 and P4-7. The numbers attending the camps have increased from last year with almost 75% of available places taken up with children attending the free camps. We offered a free packed lunch at the Easter camps and the majority of children attending stayed and ate lunch.

Nine primary schools are involved in a pilot project called Active Play. Active Play helps children be more physically active and contributes directly to Curriculum for Excellence outcomes in health and wellbeing. Research has shown that children who are more physically active perform better in school and are more likely to have a healthier lifestyle into adolescence and adulthood. Pupils in primary 3 and 4 take part in weekly one-hour outdoor play sessions comprised of 30 minutes of fun active games with 30 minutes of free play. The programme lasts 10 weeks and helps to increase physical activity levels during the school day. The programme is delivered by the charity Y Sort It in partnership with school staff.

Upstream Battle

A learning for sustainability working group is planning a pupil led Upstream Battle Conference for next session to promote citizen science, STEM and sustainable living. Schools participated in a CleanUp Campaign run by Keep Scotland Beautiful on 10 May. The CleanUp took place at Dalmuir Drop Lock and Bowling Basin.

Dumbarton Academy is involved in the Young Reporters for the Clyde project. This is a film project to help young people engage with the Upstream Battle campaign to help raise awareness of the issues of marine litter within the Clyde, its impact and its causes. The young people will develop skills in film making, interviewing and editing and their finished work may be submitted to the international Young Reporters for the Environment competition and published online as a resource for other schools across Scotland to use, to develop their understanding of sustainability.

Schools are being invited to participate in engineering challenges which promote STEM skills being developed in the context of the campaign to tackle 'plastic pollution' in the Clyde. Dumbarton Academy, Kilbowie Primary, Gavinburn Primary and Kilpatrick schools have signed up to take part in "Be Drastic on Plastic" engineering challenge project delivered in partnership with Jacob's engineering. The challenge invites our young people to develop an engineering solution for either collecting plastic rubbish that has already been dumped in the River Clyde or which prevents plastic pollution getting into the River Clyde. West Dunbartonshire's Teams will compete against other teams, from other local authorities within the West Partnership, at a celebration event in June.

4.4.3 School Improvement Partnership Project (SIPP)

West Dunbartonshire's strategy and framework to support teachers to collaborate in schools, across sectors and local learning communities was presented at The West Partnership Conferences in March and to headteachers in Dundee in April. Consequently our lead headteacher for SIPP has been seconded to The West Partnership to lead on the implementation of the workstream to forge collaborations between schools and staff across the West Partnership using West Dunbartonshire's model.

4.4.4 Assessment and Moderation

From August 2018 to March 2019 WDC education staff took part in a working group with our Scholar - SNSA Support Officer to identify how the Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) can be used for school improvement. WDC was chosen specifically due to our previous highly effective collaboration with Scholar on the implementation of SNSA. The outcomes from the working group highlighted the potential to use these assessments for improvement with individual pupils and groups, school, local learning communities and at a local authority level. Headteachers engaged in professional learning sessions in May on using SNSA data and other assessment information to support rigorous analysis and target setting for attainment and improvement.

4.4.5 Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)

In response to The STEM Strategy for Scotland a revised draft strategy has been produced by the lead officer for STEM. The national strategy identifies key actions for progress: equity, inclusion, connection, excellence. An audit of progress in West Dunbartonshire is attached in (Appendix 1). A key focus of work this session has been the promotion of improving the gender balance within STEM subjects. Four members of staff are trained as gender balance trainers.

The Senior Phase Team continue to raise the profile of STEM in Broad General Education through engaging with employers to support events and classroom activities and support the sharing of practice across all schools and learning communities. Opportunities to link with STEM business partners is gaining high profile in our schools through career events, industry specific events and taster sessions. A key focus is the promotion of local and national industry growth sectors. Highlights for this session include working in partnership with Developing the Young Workforce West to deliver the STEM West Event, Bloodhound Event and Incredible Innovations Industry competition. There is also increased delivery through our strong partnership working with the NHS, Jubilee Hospital and West Dunbartonshire Council HSCP who support work placements and careers events for our senior students, including Midwifery and General Surgery.

In partnership with schools & West College Scotland, the Senior Phase offer continues to be developed and expanded with the inclusion of new exciting STEM courses at various SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) levels. These include the expansion of the Greenpower Challenge Course from one school team to three school teams this year. We have also introduced a new Level 4 course for 2019/20: Introduction to Animal Care & Environmental Science. New SCQF Level 5 Courses courses planned for session 2019/20 include Games Design, Construction & Engineering Skills and Cyber Security

4.5 Secondary Attainment Challenge Projects

4.5.1 Multi Agency Hub

In both Clydebank High School (CHS) and Our Lady and St Patrick's High School (OLSP) there is a positive impact on the young people identified for targeted intervention and also on the strategies used to support the emotional and social well being of pupils, parents and staff. In OLSP 60% of the young people engaged in the first year SAC project and 75% of young people engaged in targeted support have either maintained and or achieved higher rates of attendance. One second year pupil has improved their attendance by 50%. This group also recorded improvements in their attainment in literacy and numeracy. There is a 45% reduction in the number of young people in CHS spending extended periods of time in the school's alternative to exclusions base. In 2017 /18, 1.04% of the whole school population had been excluded in 2018-19 the number has reduced by 50% to 0.54% of the whole school population being excluded. The number of young people being referred for an alternative educational provision out with Clydebank High was reduced by two thirds between 2017 and 2019.

Nurture and Mindfulness training are supporting staff in both schools to reflect on the impact of poverty and disadvantage on mental well being and child development. Both schools have committed to engaging all staff in training in modules by the end of the session. 78% of staff between the 2 schools engaged in professional learning. The Mindfulness programme is being offered to pupils receiving a personalised model of support. One young person gave permission for her reflections on Mindfulness to be included in this report. She had been suffering from extreme anxiety but is now self managing. She advises: 'Don't worry about things to come in the future or things in the past. Don't let that snowball get bigger. Keep happy and don't let people talk you down, if they do get back up again'. The programme is also being offered to pupils sitting exams who are exhibiting anxiety or stress linked to exams.

Twelve young people in Clydebank High have completed 2501 hours of volunteering as members of the Police Scotland Youth Volunteer Programme. The programme is led by school staff and a police constable and encourages young people to work to support improvement in their local community. They have been involved in a wide range of services and events including: St Margaret's Hospice Bus, Parklife Sports Events, Scottish Pipe Band Championships, Loch Lomond Highland Games and being marshalls at concerts and events.

The numbers of families engaging with the family support teams in both schools continues to increase. At the time of writing this report 318 families have engaged.

4.5.2 Skills Academy

To promote the wider curriculum offer provided in the Skills Academy in Vale of Leven Academy (VOLA) staff worked in partnership with parents and pupils

to produce advertising materials. This provides information to support young people and parents when making choices about the learner pathway from BGE into Senior Phase. A copy of the literature produced by the school is attached in (Appendix 2). The school was selected for filming by the BBC who recently filmed interviews with pupils and staff in the Hairdressing Department, School of Dance and Construction Class. The film will feature on a new BBC online resource.

A review of attendance rates of pupils attending the School of Football was conducted with the average attendance rates compared to those of the rest of their year group. The average attendance rates for pupils at School of Football is higher than the average for their year group. The first year group is 3.5% higher, the second years 5% higher and third year group 6% higher. The numbers of young people choosing to participate in the Skills Academy courses is increasing every year. The DEC (Design, Engineer, Construct) course on offer has increased the number of pupils choosing to participate by almost 70%. This STEM project integrates literacy, numeracy and technologies. As part of the project the school has been adopted by an architectural, engineering company. VOLA has been adopted by the global engineering company Arup. Young people were invited to work closely with architects, engineers and civil engineers at Arup Offices. The staff advised the young people about the importance of developing different skills for learning, life and work to be successful in the work place. The school is scaling up this project to involve primary 7 and first year pupils in a joint DEC transition project.

4.5.3 Enhanced Broad General Education

In Dumbarton Academy 9 members of staff are now qualified in Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA). 6 members of staff have completed ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) this session. Several members have already supported young people expressing suicidal ideation and have also supported untrained members of the Pupil Support Team on effective ways to support young people. In June, a group of new sixth year pupils will complete their Safe Talk (suicide prevention) training, 60 will be trained in total. These young people will then complete the SMHFA training later in the session. ASIST training is being offered to staff in all secondary schools with dates planned for August 2019.

The school also runs a daily Toast Club which continues to be a great success. The club invites young people to attend before the school day, at interval to enjoy free breakfast and snacks in a relaxed, informal nurturing setting. The club is run by staff volunteers and supported by partnerships with the Parent Council, Dumbarton Rotary Club and a range of local business which donate food and other items for use at the Toast Club. Numbers have increased from 10 pupils attending daily to between 70-80 pupils attending each day.

In St Peter the Apostle High School 58 young people in second year have engaged in a personalised literacy, numeracy, health and well being programme delivered by 3 raising attainment teachers. Transition data from

primary was used to identify the young people to participate. Attainment, attendance and exclusion data for this group is showing a positive impact on the young people. 75% of the group have maintained and or improved their attendance at school. Last session there were no pupils from this group excluded from school and this positive trend has been maintained this year. In terms of attainment over 75% of the group have improved attainment in literacy and numeracy. The rates of progress in numeracy are slightly higher than literacy.

The school is also planning a summer events programme for a second year. The programme will run over a 3 week period offering activities in the school, World of Golf and the new Leisure Centre. Individual young people will be provided with vouchers to give them access to the fitness centre and swimming pool at the Leisure Centre. School staff will deliver games and fitness activities with a free lunch provided at the World of Golf café.

4.6 Attainment Programme

A thematic review of maths and numeracy in the Broad General Education is being delivered between May and June with a report produced in August 2019. The review involves 85% of schools and ELCCs. The review teams comprise headteachers, deputies, principal teachers, class teachers, parents and pupils. The review teams are led by headteachers. Briefing sessions have been delivered to the review teams by senior education officers. Each team will report their findings to senior officers and produce a report of their findings.

5. People Implications

5.1 The additional funding from Scottish Government has supported the secondment of officers and teachers assigned to raise attainment and narrow the poverty related attainment gap. Exit strategies are being developed prior to funding streams ending in 2020.

6. Financial and Procurement Implication

6.1 For primary challenge projects we have claimed full year costs of £1. 168m to March 2019. For secondary challenge projects we have claimed full year costs of £0. 876m to March 2019.

6.2 If the grant award is not spent in full the unspent sum must be returned to the Scottish Government – it is not permissible to carry forward unspent grant funds. However, as indicated in the table below the full award of £2. 043m for 2018/19 was spent.

	2015/16 actual	2016/17 actual	2017/18 actual	2018/19 actual	TOTAL
Primary	£778,595	£1,322,450	£1,189,844	£1,167,572	£4,458,461

Secondary	n/a	£353,019	£823,264	£876,243	£2,052,526
TOTAL	£778,595	£1,675,469	£2,013,108	£2,043,815	£6,510,987
Grant awarded	£1,024,856	£1,895,410	£2,013,108	£2,043,815	£6,977,189

6.3 There are no procurement implications as a direct result of this report. Ongoing scrutiny ensures that project wide the service takes account of procurement process.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 Failure to implement an authority-wide strategy to raise attainment and secure improvement will disadvantage our young people and may become a reputational risk to the Council

7.2 The Committee will be provided with regular update reports advising of progress.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 There was no requirement to undertake an EIA for the purposes of this report as it is providing an update to Committee.

9. Consultation

9.1 A meeting has taken place with our link officer in Corporate Communications to alert them to the national project and to discuss how we promote this good news for West Dunbartonshire. Subsequently, there has been positive coverage of the project in the local media.

9.2 Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

9.3 In developing these proposals there has been consultation with Education Scotland, the Scottish Government and Parent Councils.

10 Strategic Assessment

10.1 This report reflects the Council's 2017-2022 overarching priority to reduce inequalities for the people of West Dunbartonshire which supports improved outcomes for all learners in our community.

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May 2019

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – STEM Strategy
Appendix 2 – Skills Academy

Background Papers:

Wards Affected: All wards