

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Lifelong Learning Committee

9 March 2016

Raising Attainment for All

Report by Director (Education and Children's Services)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform and update the Lifelong Learning Committee (LLC) about the Scottish Government's [Programme for Government](#), specifically in relation to tackling inequalities and closing the attainment gap for all. It also provides information about Education and Children's Services on-going work and planned developments to address the requirements of new legislation and national expectations.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Raising attainment, ensuring wider achievement and inclusion for all children and young people are at the core of schools' and Education and Children Services' work. In September 2015, the Scottish Government's programme was published. At its centre was a commitment to introduce an Improvement Framework for schools, to help drive up attainment in all schools, and to close the attainment gap.
- 1.2. The final version of the [National Improvement Framework](#) for Scottish Education (NIF) was launched in January 2016. This framework is designed to build on improvements and reforms which have been taken forward across education and children's services in Scotland over the last decade or more.
- 1.3. The current priorities in the NIF are:
 - Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
 - Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.
 - Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing and;
 - Improvement in employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations for all young people.
- 1.4 It sets out expectations under the following headings, known as drivers for improvement:
 - School leadership
 - Teacher professionalism
 - Parental engagement
 - Assessment of children's progress

- School improvement
 - Performance information
- 1.5. There is a requirement for national annual reports on the priorities outlined in the NIF to be published. The first Interim Report was published in January 2016. The first full NIF report based on the new approach will be published at the end of 2017.
- 1.6 Through the new [Scottish Attainment Challenge](#) (SAC) there is a clear drive to target resources where they are most needed, scale activity and use innovation to raise attainment in schools. ECS has access to the universal support offer identified as part of the SAC, that offer includes the following:
- **Attainment Advisors**
The Attainment Advisor appointed by Education Scotland will work collaboratively alongside local authority staff on agreed priorities which support the aims and expected outcomes of the SAC.
 - **The National Hub**
A virtual centre of educational expertise, resources and research to help schools improve on educational outcomes.
 - **Support for inter-authority collaboration**
The Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) is developing inter-authority partnerships as outlined in its 2020 vision. Support will be provided for inter-authority improvement partnerships where the priorities are aligned with the SAC.
- 1.7 [The Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#). Its purpose is to create new education law and to change current education law. Significant aspects worth highlighting include:
- A clear focus on narrowing the educational attainment gap
 - New entitlements in respect of Gaelic medium education
 - A strengthening of children’s rights under Additional Support for Learning
 - The introduction of a post called the Chief Education Officer in education authorities
 - Registration of all practicing teachers with General Teaching Council for Scotland
 - Legislating for the minimum length of the school week in primary schools.
- 1.8 [The OECD Report 2015: Improving Schools in Scotland](#) was commissioned by the Scottish Government to inform the ongoing development of education policy, practice and leadership in Scotland.
- 1.9 The Accounts Commission Audit Scotland Report on “School Education” recommended that all Councils ensured that they fully understood why levels of attainment varied between their schools and different groups of pupils, and that they developed and implemented strategies to reduce gaps in

performance between the highest and lowest performing schools. ([Report No 15/112](#) referred to this in detail.)

2 PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Education and Children's Services (ECS) aims to improve life chances for all of our young people. High levels of attainment and achievement are fundamental to this. Developing the personal skills, talents and abilities of all of our young people - enabling them to be successful learners, effective contributors, confident individuals and responsible citizens – is crucial.
- 2.2 Year on year attainment in Perth and Kinross (PKC) has been increasing for our young people. However, some young people face disadvantage in their learning and are still not achieving their full potential. The reasons for this attainment gap are complex and varied and require innovative and collaborative working.
- 2.3 Over recent years ECS has had a clear focus on improving leadership, learning and teaching and early intervention and prevention approaches; all with a unified aim of breaking the cycle to reduce inequity in educational outcomes, addressing disadvantage and improving life chances to all.
- 2.4 Key developments leading to improvements and success in PKC are:
- Curriculum for Excellence
 - Teacher Learning Communities
 - Getting it Right for Every Child
 - Early Years Collaborative
 - Evidence2Success
 - Leadership Development
- 2.5 Notwithstanding the many improvements and successes that have been evident in recent years, there is still much work to be done to reduce the inequity gap that still persists. Sound foundations need to continue to be built within the early years and primary stages to support on-going attainment increases at all stages.
- 2.6 Therefore, building on all that has gone before, and importantly taking account of all statutory and other requirements in relation to tackling inequalities and raising attainment for all, a Raising Attainment for All strategic implementation strategy and plan for is being developed which will detail the planned actions and interventions designed to raise attainment and close the gap for all. This plan will include information about how progress will be tracked, monitored, recorded and reported. It is being structured round the NIF drivers for improvement:
- School leadership
 - Teacher professionalism
 - Parental engagement
 - Assessment of children's progress

- School improvement
- Performance information

2.7 In light of the information in the Accounts Commission report two key areas for further development and improvement were identified by Education Services as follows, the need to:

- Support schools in developing a coherent system of monitoring and tracking attainment and wider achievement from 3-18; and
- Ensure schools increase their use of research to inform practice, policy and strategy.

Work in relation to the first bullet above is well underway as the case study included in the recent Standards and Quality Report outlined. The Educational Psychology Service have been working with targeted schools to develop their approaches to using research to inform practice in relation to improving levels of pupil engagement with their learning.

2.8 The strategic implementation plan will develop a range of approaches to:

- ensure authority wide understanding of the issues relating to raising attainment for all and closing the gap;
- ensure that data is understood, able to be interrogated and used to plan for further improvements;
- improve the prominence and quality in the teaching of literacy and numeracy;
- ensure professional assessment judgements are supported through the effective use of national standardised assessments in literacy and numeracy at P1, P4, P7 and S3 (from August 2017);
- support a research project that works closely with identified schools (primary and secondary) to address the attainment gap in relation to their own context and measure the impact of intervention¹ (PKC funding will be used to support this work);
- support an intervention to embed self-regulation based² teaching, with the potential for targeted work with identified groups of pupils;
- ensure support and guidance for senior leaders, teachers and support staffs' professional learning linked to school and classroom strategies for raising attainment and closing the gap;
- further develop approaches to collaborative learning, peer tutoring and mentoring with a focus on ensuring quality interventions are embedded and sustainable, and
- facilitate collaborative working with other services and partners including, for example, Health and community learning and

¹ 16 primary schools and 4 secondary schools have been identified. All have 16% or more of their school roll within Acorn Category 5; Urban Adversity

² Self-regulation is the behaviour we see when individuals are able to engage successfully with tasks that require the ability to hold onto and work with information, focus thinking, filter distractions and switch strategy if necessary

development, to help address inequalities and improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

3 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION(S)

3.1 ECS is working to build on our progress in raising attainment for all and closing the gap. There will be a continued focus on all schools and partners working collaboratively to bring about improvements and evidence progress and impact. This work will be shaped and informed by the strategic implementation strategy and plan. A full update on progress will be reported to this Committee.

3.2 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Notes the range of national guidance and new legislation which set out new expectations of Education Authorities and schools.
- (ii) Instructs the Director (Education and Children’s Services) to bring the Raising Attainment for All Strategic Implementation Plan to Lifelong Learning Committee in May 2016 for approval.

Author(s)

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Rhona Jay	Quality Improvement Officer	rjay@pkc.gov.uk 01738 476360

Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Sheena Devlin	Director, (Education and Children’s Services)	22 February 2016

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	None
Financial	Yes
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	None
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	None
Consultation	None
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	None
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This section should set out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

This report relates to Objective No (i).

Corporate Plan

1.2 This section should set out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives.

The Perth and Kinross Community Plan 2013-2023 and Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Plan 2013/2018 set out five strategic objectives:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;

- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No(i).

- 1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Policy Framework in respect of the following key policy areas:
- Leadership and Management
 - Maximising Resources

2. Resource Implications

- 2.1 Section 2.8 of this report makes reference to a range of approaches to raising attainment and closing the gap. Perth and Kinross Council has allocated a fund of £150,000 to support this work.

Workforce

- 2.2 The Head of Human Resources has been consulted on all proposals contained within this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 Non applicable

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 The proposals in this report have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- (i) Assessed as **relevant** and the following positive outcome is expected following implementation:
 - The proposal will promote equal access and inclusiveness for all.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

This section should reflect that the proposals have been considered under the Act no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.3 Non applicable

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted on all proposals contained within this report to ensure this proposal complies with the Council's duties as contained within the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006.

Risk

- 3.6 Non applicable

4. Consultation

- Head of Finance
- Head of Democratic Services

Internal

- 4.1 Feedback on the content of the report was obtained from Early Years and Primary and Secondary and Inclusion Teams.

External

- 4.2 Non applicable.

5. Communication

- 5.1 If the proposals contained within this report are approved the communication plan will be included as part of the full strategic implementation plan

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

3. APPENDICES

There are no appendices