NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

10 November 2020

Cabinet

Title:	**Scottish Attainment Challenge in North Ayrshire – Progress Report**
Purpose:	To inform Cabinet about the impact of the Scottish Attainment Challenge on improved outcomes for learners in North Ayrshire.
Recommendation:	It is recommended that Cabinet: (i) Notes the progress made to date. (ii) Agrees to receive a further progress report in one year.

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Following the fifth year of working as a Challenge Authority, North Ayrshire Council is making very good progress towards improving learning, raising attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap. Improvements can be seen across a range of overarching indicators for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. These improvements also compare well when benchmarked nationally.

1.2 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting closure of education establishments on the 20th of March 2020, it was not possible to implement all planned Scottish Attainment Challenge activity. This included the collection of performance measures to evidence further progress. This Cabinet paper reports available evidence of impact.

1.3 Despite Covid-19 circumstances, individual Attainment Challenge workstreams continued to make good progress and are adapting delivery approaches to continue to meet learner needs across the local authority. This support continues to make a strong contribution towards the overall success of the Attainment Challenge in North Ayrshire.

2. Background

2.1 In February 2015, the Scottish First Minister launched the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) and the £750m Attainment Scotland Fund. This initiative aims to provide targeted support to increase the educational attainment and outcomes of children in Scotland's highest concentrated areas of deprivation.

2.2 North Ayrshire is one of nine Challenge Authorities, identified as facing the most challenges as a result of deprivation. The other Challenge Authorities are Glasgow, Dundee, Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire, Clackmannanshire, North Lanarkshire, East

Ayrshire and Renfrewshire. The Fund targets improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

2.3 The work of the Attainment Challenge in North Ayrshire is governed by the Attainment Challenge Programme Board (ACPB), which is chaired by the Head of Service (Education). The ACPB reports to the Children's Services Strategic Partnership Board (CSSP). In October, a range of relevant outcomes linked to Attainment Challenge work were reported to Cabinet in the Integrated Children's Services Plan Annual Performance Report and the Child Poverty Action Plan and Report.

2.4 The workstreams established to deliver improvements and reduce poverty-related attainment gaps are:

- Improving learning and teaching through the establishment of a Professional Learning Academy.

- Creating nurturing schools.

- Developing and maintaining good mental health and emotional wellbeing.

- Supporting enhanced family learning.

- Developing and embedding quality leadership at all levels.

- Developing data literacy skills in our staff to support targeted improvements.

2.5 Impact of Covid-19
Due to the closure of education establishments on the 20th of March 2020, the ACPB was unable to implement all planned activity in terms 3 and 4 of the 2019-20 academic year. Where appropriate SAC interventions and supports were delivered remotely with additional supports provided by workstreams to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on learners. This included:

- Redeployment of PLA teaching staff to establishments to support with core service delivery.

- Creation of the Nurturing North Ayrshire Recovery framework and resources during school closures.

- Development of a family learning website for families to access a wide range of online resources. This website had over 1000 visits during school closures.

- Trialling online parental family learning support sessions which have been implemented in the current academic year.

- Creation of learning at home resource booklets for families with children attending ASN, primary and secondary settings.

- Delivery of 286 learning at home resource packs to families across North Ayrshire, with a focus on supporting families living in the highest areas of deprivation.

- Piloting online leadership development opportunities for education practitioners.

2.6 Evidence of impact
In 2020, the national data collection exercise for overall curriculum for excellence attainment levels in literacy and numeracy was suspended, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, we are unable to provide an end of year picture for session 2019-20 of improvements in attainment and the impact on the poverty related attainment

gap using that measure. Nevertheless, since our last report in October 2019, updated national statistics have been published and our performance compares favourably to the national picture as follows:

2.7 Literacy
Regional and national comparator statistics are available for 2018-19. In literacy, 68% of North Ayrshire's primary school learners living in the most deprived areas (SIMD 1&2 – as determined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)) achieved the expected levels of literacy. This is up 2 percentage points since the previous year. This also compares favourably with the regional and national figures of 63% for the same measure. In secondary schools, 89% of S3 learners living in the most deprived areas (SIMD 1&2) achieved the expected level or better in literacy. Again, this is above the regional figure of 86% and the national figure of 81% for the same measure.

2.8 Numeracy
In comparison to the regional and national performance (2018-19), a greater proportion of North Ayrshire's most deprived primary school learners (74%) achieved the expected levels of numeracy than regionally (70%) and nationally (72%). In secondary schools, 87% of S3 learners living in the most deprived areas (SIMD 1&2) achieved the expected level or better in numeracy. Again, this is above the regional and national figures of 83% for the same measure.

2.9 Progress made within individual workstreams
Sections 2.10 – 2.15 provide a summary of key operational activity and progress made in each of the key workstream areas. These workstreams are a significant part of our targeted interventions, which together contribute to the overarching indicators of progress described in 2.7 – 2.12.

2.10 Professional Learning Academy
- Between August and December 2019 interventions and training was delivered to 325 practitioners and this benefitted 903 learners. There were 31 twilight events which were attended by 729 practitioners. Evidence of the positive impact of the 2019-20 programme prior to the COVID-19 pandemic is attached at Appendix 1.

2.11 Nurture
- Primary nurture group provision was enhanced in 25 nurture groups. This year, 195 children were supported across both core nurture and afternoon wellbeing groups. The total number of children supported by primary nurture provision since the Scottish Attainment Challenge commenced has risen to 525.

- Secondary nurture group provision was also enhanced with every secondary school in North Ayrshire providing targeted nurture provision. There were 9 groups in total which supported 180 pupils.

- Early years nurture groups continued to support young people in 9 establishments and practice evolved to meet the changing demands of early years' expansion to 1140 hours. Early years nurture groups supported 50 children.

- North Ayrshire launched its promoting positive relationships policy underpinned by the Nurturing North Ayrshire approach to further empower staff confidence in the use of nurture and restorative approaches. The PPR policy is the foundation for the continued development of universal nurture approaches and whole school nurture.

- A comprehensive CLPL programme was delivered to nurture practitioners to enhance their practice through a deepened understanding and application of the nurture principles.

2.12 Family Learning
- Delivery of planned programmes was strong and consistent while requiring a degree of flexibility from both staff and schools in response to the changing needs of the families and school setting. Programmes were delivered to 2703 families in 2019/20 term 1 – 3.

- Over 1389 evaluations linked to programme outcomes were completed, which indicate good progress towards outcomes being achieved across almost all programmes.

- The use of data and evaluation to inform next steps was embedded in the work of the Family Learning Team. This is now collated using the Power Bi data system which will help increase access for all schools to their individual data related to programmes delivered, families participating, and outcomes met.

- A Secondary Network was established and will aim to meet 2-3 times per session. Key staff from each secondary school are invited to share what has worked well in their school as well as the challenges. This has already resulted in a successful programme being trialled in another school.

- Adult learning was delivered with support from Ayrshire College. Last session, 7 accredited learning courses were delivered in community settings. A parent focus group shared their experiences of Adult Learning and how this has led to progression in their leadership skills and improved confidence. The workstream developed further links with Skills Development Scotland and 2 parents were selected for the Skills for Life programme.

- The 'Read, Write, Count' initiative continued in the 25 schools in Quartile 1 and 2. 333 families in North Ayrshire were supported to utilise the resources at home. Some schools are now delivering these sessions themselves, which is promoting sustainability of the programme.

2.13 Mental Health and Wellbeing
- The workstream identified and implemented a wide range of strategies and resources in order to improve the access that children and young people have to supports for their emotional wellbeing.

- Counselling services continued to be delivered in primary and secondary schools in this reporting period. Place2be's primary school counselling service operated in six primary schools and pupils in all secondary schools were provided with access to a school counsellor. Since June 2017 the secondary counselling service has been accessed by 659 young people

2.14 Data Analysis
- All schools were provided with access to Power BI dashboards which replace paper-based school data packs. Dashboards provide schools with enhanced tools to utilise pupil level data to inform school improvement planning.

- Almost all school leadership teams received data driven dialogue input to support the enhanced use of data in relation to school improvement agendas.

2.15 <u>Leadership</u>
- A range of leadership opportunities were provided during the last academic year with a key focus on enhancing school led leadership opportunities through facilitation. This provided staff with the skills in designing and delivering high quality professional learning to develop the leadership of others in their schools. Last year, seven schools and 24 practitioners were involved in facilitation training, which has helped schools in taking forward identified areas of school improvement by supporting the development of leadership skills. Furthermore, the workstream established a network for Facilitators of Andragogy which is focused on enhancing the skills of our facilitators to ensure we are continually supporting a sustainable model of leadership development.

3.   Proposals

3.1   It is proposed that Cabinet:

(i) Notes the progress made to date

(ii) Agrees to receive a further progress report in one year

4.   Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

4.1   Scottish Attainment Challenge activity is funded through the Attainment Scotland Fund and there are no additional costs that required to be funded by North Ayrshire Council. The Deputy First Minister has indicated that current levels of funding will be sustained until March 2022 and work is underway within the Education Service to develop an exit strategy.

Human Resources

4.2   None.

Legal

4.3   None.

Equality/Socio-economic

4.4   The focus of the work of the Attainment Challenge is to reduce the impact of poverty on outcomes for children and young people

Environmental and Sustainability

4.5   A number of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) workstreams have develop digital ways of delivering support in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This will reduce the carbon footprint associated with SAC delivery in the current academic year.

Key Priorities

4.6   Council priorities:

- Children and young people have the best start in life.
- Active and strong communities.
- Inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy.

Community Wealth Building

4.7   The Education Service is committed to the principles of Community Wealth Building and where possible seeks to employ local employee and procure services and goods of local suppliers.

5.   Consultation

5.1   Regular consultation and evaluation from those engaged in Attainment Challenge programmes as participants, practitioners, partners and school leaders is collected and evaluated on an on-going basis to support future programme improvements and development.

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For further information please contact **Andrew McClelland, Head of Service (Education),** on **01294 324413**.

Background Papers
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Data & Impact Overview 2019-2020
Training, Interventions & Twilight Programmes

AUGUST - DECEMBER 2019

Training and Interventions:

ESTABLISHMENTS	64 -many establishments involved in more than 1 intervention-	STAFF	196	LEARNERS	950

Title - Team - Lead	Establishments - Staff - Learners		High Level Impacts
SHORS Strathclyde Higher Order Reading Skills (cohort 5) Literacy	E	4	**12 week intervention** ⇨ Pupil assessment data for **P5** showed significant increases in pupil performance. Average pre intervention score was **5.4**. This rose to **8.7** post intervention. Overall this resulted in an effect size of **1.6***. This is very significant. An effect size of 0.4 is above average for educational research. An effect size of 1.0 is typically associated with advancing learners' achievement by 1 year or improving the rate of learning by 50% ⇨ **Few (5%)** teachers rated the frequency of using visual organisational aids to support reading comprehension as **8-10 (High) (During most lessons)**. This increased to **All (100%)** post-intervention – an increase of **95%.** ⇨ **Less than half (24%)** of teachers rated their confidence in supporting vocabulary as **8-10 (High) (Very confident).** Post-intervention **All (100%)** rated their confidence in this aspect as **8-10 (High).**
	S	12	
	L	180	
Booting Reading Literacy -Primary & Secondary-	E	2	**2 training sessions for Classroom Assistants (in Secondary, Primary & ASN schools) and S6 pupils (IRA & Garnock Academy)** ⇨ Following the training sessions 95% of participants rated their confidence in planning a 15 minute Boosting Reading Session as 'High'. ⇨ 100% of primary Classroom Assistants strongly agreed or agreed that the strategies they had learned were having a positive impact on their practice. ⇨ Using video footage to analysing errors and identify strategies was seen as extremely useful in putting Boosting Reading into practice.
	S	52	
	L	20	
Reading Recovery Literacy -Primary 2-	E	15	**20 week intervention – this is the mid-point evaluation data** ⇨ The average improvement within 11 weeks is 10 levels of PM books when supported by a teacher in their 2nd year of Reading Recovery training. Learners being supported by teachers in their first year improved by an average of 7 levels. ⇨ All 64 pupils are now able to read familiar text without support and have made significant progress in writing. ⇨ Teacher midpoint evaluation will be carried out at IPD9 (22nd January 2020) to gather views of teachers in training.
	S	15	
	L	64	
Phonological Awareness Literacy -Early Years & Primary 1-	E	5	**12 week training** ⇨ Most significant increases for learners post-intervention were in the areas of syllable detection (61% increase in accuracy), onset & rime (64% increase in accuracy) and phoneme discrimination (72 % increase in accuracy) ⇨ All practitioners stated that their knowledge of the developmental stages of phonological awareness had increased and they now understood why this was so important at the early level.
	S	23	
	L	162	
Non-fiction Writing Literacy 1st Level – P.3	E	4	**10 week intervention: this is the August – November data** ⇨ There was an average increase of 70% in the number of pupils meeting the success criteria for Report Writing compared to those who met the criteria pre-intervention ⇨ There was an average increase of 90% in the number of pupils meeting the success criteria for Procedural Writing compared to those who met the criteria pre-intervention
	S	26	
	L	130	
Attention & Listening Literacy (S & L) St. Peter's Primary P.6 & 7	E	1	**6 week intervention** ⇨ Pre and post practitioner confidence ratings showed an increase of 100% in understanding of the developmental stages of developing attention and listening skills ⇨ Prior to the intervention no participants rated their knowledge of how to develop attention and listening skills in children as 'high'. This had increased to 100% post intervention ⇨ MORE ROBUST ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN'S PROGRESS REQUIRED as there were inconsistencies in the scoring. This has been addressed for the next cycle.
	S	5	
	L	66	
2nd Level Numeracy Framework Numeracy -PILOT-	E	2	**12 week PILOT** ⇨ 100% of participants rated their understanding of and confidence in using the framework as HIGH following the pilot ⇨ Pupils reported that they liked the range of strategies available to them as this gave them choice ⇨ Pupils reported that the 'Maths Journals' were useful in helping them explain and reflect upon their learning during plenary sessions.
	S	6	
	L	123	
Cooperative Learning: Maths into Science STEM	E	3	**8 week intervention** ⇨ The average increase in scores post intervention was 40% point increase in learners' knowledge and skills in cooperative learning, line graphs, bar graphs, ratios and mathematics. ⇨ Pre-intervention no practitioners felt confident in planning and delivering these experiences. Post intervention this had risen to 80%.
	S	5	
	L	105	
Excellence in Numeracy and Maths at Early Level Numeracy -Primary 1-	E	2	**11 week training & intervention** ⇨ Teacher confidence in bundling experiences and outcomes increased by 40% post-intervention. ⇨ Pupil assessments showed an average improvement of 19% over the course of the 11 week intervention.
	S	7	
	L	100	

Data & Impact Overview 2019-2020
Training, Interventions & Twilight Programmes

AUGUST - DECEMBER 2019

OLEVI International Outstanding Teaching Programme Pedagogy	E	8	**13 week training** ⇨ 100% of participants rated this course as being excellent. ⇨ Skill, knowledge and confidence in the following areas increased pre & post intervention: *Modelling metacognitive behaviours – 45% rated themselves as high pre-intervention, rose to 91% post* *Engaging all learners - 45% rated themselves as high pre-intervention, rose to 81% post*
	S	11	
	L	N/A	
OLEVI International Outstanding Classroom Assistant Programme Pedagogy	E	8	**5 week training** ⇨ 100% of participants felt inspired by the programme ⇨ Skill, knowledge and confidence in the following areas increased pre & post intervention: *Supporting independent pupil learning – 27% rated themselves as high pre-intervention, rose to 67% post* *Breaking down tasks - 45% rated themselves as high pre-intervention, rose to 75% post*
	S	12	
	L	N/A	
Visible Learning Pedagogy *-in partnership with psychological services-*	E	10	**11 week training on STRAND 1: VISIBLE LEARNERS** ⇨ Pre-intervention only 42% of schools rated pupil understanding of lessons as 'high', this had risen to 69% of schools post intervention ⇨ Pre-intervention questionnaires showed that only 48% of staff felt that pupils were comfortable articulating a lack of understanding, this had risen to 81%. Work on 'What makes an effective learner' was identified as having an impact here.
	S	22	
	L	N/A	

Twilight & In-service Training:

EVENTS	40	ATTENDEES	619	EVALUATIONS	616

Team & Lead(s)	Events - Attendees - Evaluations		High Level Impact
TWILIGHTS: **LITERACY** *Fiona Wyper PT* *Gillian Seaman PT* *Julie Auld PT*	E	23	⇨ 100% of attendees across all courses strongly agreed that the courses were very professionally relevant, increased their knowledge of the subject matter and provided them with opportunities for professional dialogue as well as practical ideas ⇨ All sessions delivered were praised for their clear links to research, practical activities, examples to use in class and high-quality professional discussion ⇨ Most popular twilights were based on speech and language, phonological awareness and writing.
	A	248	
	Ev	248	
TWILIGHTS: **NUMERACY & STEM** *Kirsty Stephen PT*	E	13	⇨ 100% of attendees strongly agrees or agreed that their knowledge and skills had increased as a result of the training ⇨ The practical activities and advice relating to the use of the numeracy frameworks were views most positively by participants. ⇨ The format of the sessions was also highly praised.
	A	183	
	Ev	180	
TWILIGHTS: **PEDAGOGY** *Dolina Rumbold PT*	E	4	⇨ Events were delivered in 5 primary schools to whole staff groups. ⇨ Again, differentiation was very positively received and the 'Advanced Differentiation' course gave participants the opportunity to learn about SOLO taxonomy.
	A	70	
	Ev	70	
INSERVICE: **NUMERACY** **Early Level Framework** *Kirsty Stephen PT*	E	3	⇨ Training for classroom assistants, lead practitioners in EYC settings and class teachers (ASN & mainstream) ⇨ 100% participants rated the training as excellent ⇨ Activities, video clips and support through GLOW site highly rated.
	A	51	
	Ev	51	
INSERVICE: **LITERACY** **Talk Boost 1 & 2** *Eileen Halbert* *Claire Morrison* *SaLT*	E	2	⇨ Between 97% and 100% of participants strongly agreed that their knowledge had increased and that the skills they learned would impact positively on their practice.
	A	67	
	Ev	67	