

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Education Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>1 June 2010</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Education Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Schools of Ambition Project - Lanark Learning Community</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide information on the progress achieved within the Lanark Learning Community through the Schools of Ambition project

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the progress achieved by establishments involved in the Schools of Ambition project be noted;
- (2) that the actions proposed within paragraph 5.2 to sustain key aspects of the Schools of Ambition project be noted; and
- (3) that this report be referred to the Clydesdale Area Committee for information.

## 3. Background

3.1. The Schools of Ambition programme was first launched in 2005 by the then Scottish Executive. It links very well with national developments within education including *Curriculum for Excellence*, *Ambitious Excellent Schools*, and *The Journey to Excellence*.

3.2. The Lanark Learning Community bid for inclusion within the Schools of Ambition Programme was approved in February 2007. The Lanark Learning Community comprises Lanark Grammar School, 12 associated primary schools, 1 nursery establishment and 4 primary based nursery classes. Involvement in the programme enabled the Lanark Learning Community to address challenges particular to the wider rural community and to enhance education provision. Since gaining approval the Lanark Learning Community programme has focused on the themes of:

- raising ambition and broadening horizons
- empowering pupils to make successful decisions in a variety of contexts
- enhancing pupil-teacher sharing of responsibility for learning

#### **4. Progress Update**

4.1. Implementation of the programme was managed by a coordinator supported by a core team of heads of establishment and class teachers. Specific projects and activities were taken forward by a network of focus teams involving early years, primary and secondary practitioners. The following provides a progress update in relation to each of the three themes described within paragraph 3.2.

#### **4.2. *Raising ambition and broadening horizons***

4.2.1. This theme focused on building leadership capacity for employees and pupils; engaging teachers in professional development; and on further developing the broad partnership support for schools. Specific activities included:

- leadership training for staff and pupils
- the delivery of continuing professional development programmes for teachers and other staff (examples include the Forest Schools Leader Training, media training and sharing good practice through workshops led by teachers within the learning Community)
- ensuring parental support for the programme through discussion with Parent Councils
- the development of further contacts with outside agencies, colleges, South Lanarkshire Councils "What's with Work" team, Equality and Diversity Advisor, Forest Schools' leaders and the Rural Development Agency

4.2.2. This theme also involved the following activities focused on children and young people:

- delivering additional transition activities for pupils as they prepare to move on to secondary school
- the further development of careers education
- significant enhancement of ICT through GLOW (the Scotland wide intranet for pupils, teachers and parents)
- further enhancement of ICT provision to develop and enrich inter-school contact
- the teaching of rural skills, including the development of skills in co-operation, team working, self-esteem and confidence, through the Forest Schools programme

#### **4.3. *Empowering pupils to make successful decisions in a variety of contexts***

4.3.1. Children and young people were at the centre of activities delivered under this theme. Examples include:

- the enhancement of learning and teaching through use of collaborative learning techniques throughout the Learning Community
- use of the Hanen Programme, a research based developmental approach to promote children's social, language and literacy development in Early Years' establishments across the learning Community
- implementing active learning strategies across all establishments
- a system for learning community awards for pupils to recognise their leadership, personal responsibility, enterprise and ambition
- learning events for pupils in leadership, co-operation and team working
- an increased focus on the use of mentoring by teachers through a learning community wide programme of 'in-house' opportunities to gain relevant experience

#### 4.4. *Enhancing pupil – teacher sharing of responsibility for learning*

- 4.4.1. This theme enabled the project to introduce strategies to enhance the partnership between pupils and their teachers as a key element of successful learning. Examples of specific activities include:

- the use of rich tasks for children and young people from P6 through to S2 further supporting their transition to secondary school. Rich tasks were also used to support learning within the middle stages of primary school
- the establishment of a pupil led film company, “1183 Media Productions”, at Lanark Grammar School
- delivery of “hands on” training for pupils, covering various aspects of media, giving them a voice through use of media
- provision of opportunities for meaningful peer mentoring
- introduction of a gender imbalance programme, designed to make pupils think at an early age about gender choices in careers
- developing in pupils, a “can do” attitude where pupils are making informed choices while gaining in skills and knowledge, through the teaching of decision making skills in primary and secondary sectors

### 5. **Proposal(s)**

- 5.1. The Lanark Learning Community Schools of Ambition Programme provided the opportunity to improve aspects of the delivery of education within the Lanark area. The project sought to raise ambitions; develop self confidence and self-belief; extend teacher capacity through professional development and sharing practice; and build leadership capacity throughout the Learning Community.
- 5.2. As a result of the three year programme there is a heightened sense of excitement about learning within establishments. Given the positive experiences the following actions are proposed to sustain and build on the progress achieved so far.
- each establishment will sustain and further develop their learning links through GLOW
  - establishments within the Learning Community will use the experience of the Schools of Ambition Programme as they implement Curriculum for Excellence
  - continuing professional development activities will continue to focus on sharing good practice and enhancing leadership capacity

### 6. **Employee Implications**

- 6.1. None

### 7. **Financial Implications**

- 7.1. None

### 8. **Other Implications**

- 8.1. None

### 9. **Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 9.2. Consultation has taken place with the Trade Unions.

**Larry Forde**  
**Executive Director (Education Resources)**

11 May 2010

**Link(s) to Council Objectives**

- Raise educational attainment for all

**Previous References**

None

**List of Background Papers**

- Transformational Plan
- DVD on 'Telling the Story'

**Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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