

Report

Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 May 2019
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	School Improvement Update
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide an update on the progress of the Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service (CQIS) with regards to School Improvement work stream 2018/2019.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the progress in activities to support ongoing school improvement during 2018/2019 be noted.

3. Background

3.1. A focus on School Improvement is central to achieving the following Education Resources priorities:-

- ♦ to raise standards in attainment in literacy, numeracy and close the poverty-related attainment gap
- ♦ improve health and wellbeing to enable children and families to flourish
- ♦ support children and young people to develop their skills for learning, life and work
- ♦ ensure inclusion and equality are at the heart of what the Resource does

3.2. In order to deliver excellent outcomes for all learners, Education Resources' School Improvement strategy is centred on empowerment and capacity building at all levels. This is carried forward through a number of key work-streams; Teaching and Learning, Teacher Professionalism, Leadership and School Improvement.

4. Progress to date

4.1. Validated Self-Evaluation

Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) is a process which aims to support and challenge the work of establishments to improve the quality of provision and the outcomes for all learners. Members of the CQIS visit the school for 2 days to work in partnership with the school to participate in a range of self-evaluation activities in order to validate the work of the school. This is linked to an area that the school has identified and to 'How Good is Our School 4' (H.G.I.O.S.4)

This session, 22 establishments, across Early Years, Primary and Secondary sectors, have successfully engaged in VSE, with a further 8 expected to engage during the summer term.

Most establishments have focused on aspects of Quality Indicator 2.3 (Learning, Teaching and Assessment), with a few schools looking at aspects of leadership e.g. leadership of change or leadership of learning. Overall, evaluation results are very positive with 100 % of establishments stating that involvement in the VSE programme has helped to take the school forward in the chosen area of focus.

5. Teacher Professionalism

5.1. The National Improvement Framework includes Teacher Professionalism as one of the key drivers. Within this, there are three main areas:

- ◆ Students
- ◆ The Teacher Induction Scheme (TIS) which provides a guaranteed one-year training post in a local authority to every eligible student graduating with a teaching qualification from one of Scotland's universities
- ◆ Professional Update for fully registered teachers

5.2. Throughout the year, staff from the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), Glasgow University, Strathclyde University and local authorities within the West Partnership meet to review the Student Placement System (SPS) to consider its functionality and identify any development needs. Staff also discuss ways to improve communication and procedures in matching students between the various stakeholders. To date 139 Early Years, 575 Primary and 583 Secondary placements. The CQIS provides universal and tailored support to schools in managing SPS.

5.3. Two induction days are held before Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) start in August and each NQT is allocated a mentor to support their professional learning. In session 2018/2019, 191 NQTs were allocated to South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) and the CQIS have provided a comprehensive professional learning programme to all NQTs on themes such as Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing, Autism Awareness and Attachment.

5.4. The GTCS have set up a secure system to communicate with the CQIS with regards to staff who require to complete their 5 year Professional Update (PU). This information is issued to the relevant Head Teachers and the CQIS monitors staff undertaking PU to ensure that all eligible staff complete their PU to maintain full registration. In session 2017/2018, 100% of the staff required to undertake Professional Update were successful in maintaining their full registration. In 2018/2019, 665 teachers are due to complete their Professional Update by 1 July 2019. The CQIS provides individual staff support in order to complete their Professional Update.

6. Leadership

6.1. The National Improvement Framework recognises the development of school leadership as integral to building an empowered and collaborative system.

6.2. In order to build teacher leadership capacity, Education Resources has increased it's drive this session to recruit more teachers to participate in Education Scotland's Teacher Leadership course. The outcome being that approximately twenty staff will enrol for session 2019/2020.

6.3. To further enhance middle leadership capacity, 110 middle leaders have engaged in a series of collaborative leadership workshops to increase their knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities. This is a significant increase in participation from last year. In addition, this allows the Resource to further build the capacity of existing

Head Teachers (HT) and Depute Head Teachers (DHT) who facilitate this training and also marks an increase in participation from last year. To date, almost all participants have rated the sessions as very good and the programme continues to be well received.

- 6.4. Education Resources continue to build the capacity of Head Teachers and prospective Head Teachers. At present, 11 candidates are in the process of completing 'Into Headship' as part of the 2018/2019 cohort and those involved report high levels of engagement and enthusiasm. There has been an increasing interest from promoted staff members in engaging with the 'Into Headship' programme. Following receipt of 24 applications for the 2019/2020 cohort, an increase of 60 % in comparison with applications received last session, 11 candidates will now progress to participate in session 2019/2020.
- 6.5. 10 Head Teachers have enrolled to participate in this session's 'Excellence In Headship' cohort. Education Resources were granted an additional 4 places for 'Excellence In Headship', following the level of interest exceeding the original number of spaces allocated by Education Scotland. Taken together with the previous three cohorts who continue on the programme, there are now a total of 34 Head Teachers engaged in 'Excellence In Headship'. One serving Head Teacher who will go forward on 'In Headship' for the forthcoming session and for the first time, 4 who will go forward to participate in the 'Towards Headship' training.
- 6.6. In order to support leadership succession planning, there is in place Acting Pools for HTs and DHTs. Acting pools include staff who are seeking experience in a promoted position and have successfully demonstrated via the recruitment process, their ability to undertake appropriate acting roles. Plans are in place to continually refresh the pools as required.
- 6.7. Engagement with colleagues responsible for leadership and succession development across the Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) is ongoing and is beginning to support consistency of approach in both recruitment and training opportunities.
- 6.8. To further develop an empowered and collaborative approach to school leadership and improvement, the Biggar and St John Ogilvie Learning Communities are participating in a Systems Leadership pilot with an external consultant. This is a project which aims to build capacity within Learning Communities to develop sector led school improvement. To date, this has been positively evaluated and there is potential to expand this work into other Learning Communities.

7. Teaching and Learning

- 7.1. The quality of teaching is a key factor in improving children's learning and the outcomes they achieve. There is a strong link between teachers' professional skills and competences and the quality of children's learning experiences. Ensuring the highest professional standards for all teachers in Scotland will help to ensure the highest standards and expectations for all children.
- 7.2. South Lanarkshire's current Policy on Leading Learning provides an overall purpose and direction for the work of all establishments and services within Education Resources, whilst recognising that a key component in providing education of the highest quality is the career long professional learning of practitioners in all sectors. Everyone should have a personal and collective commitment to, and be supported in, career long professional learning. By engaging with this policy and the values,

purposes and principles of Curriculum for Excellence, all learners in South Lanarkshire have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

- 7.3. This year's Tapestry programme, Leading Learning: Improving Pedagogy for Equity, is a rigorous approach to career long professional learning that encourages and requires consideration of research, professional reading, professional dialogue and essentially, professional action to improve pedagogical practice through a teacher learning community approach. 36 primary and 8 secondary schools are taking part with 88 staff undertaking the role of a Tapestry Leader within their own schools.
- 7.4. Tapestry Leaders have taken part in 4 workshops and led follow up sessions in their own schools. Senior Managers have attended two information sessions and both groups have attended a Masterclass. Early indications show that all practitioners rate the training as Excellent or Very Good. Evidence from Link Officer visits to schools indicates that the programme is impacting on learning and teaching, through the consistent use of learning intentions, success criteria and learner feedback. In a recent survey conducted by the West Partnership, the Tapestry Programme was highlighted as a strong example of collaborative learning and one that is positively influencing practice.
- 7.5. The newly formed strategic group for Learning and Teaching have delivered training to all NQTs this year on pedagogy and digital technology. Resources have also been completed and made available to schools through the SLC Glow site to support establishments with aspects of pedagogy such as; Assessment is for Learning (AifL), differentiation and collaborative learning. Curriculum for Excellence progression pathways have also been created and are available for schools to access.

8. Self-improving attainment Family Groups

In a self-improving school system, schools are empowered to develop their own solutions with the role of the local authority providing appropriate support, challenge and resources to facilitate ongoing and sustainable improvement. Education Resources recognises that collaborative working between establishments provides valuable opportunities for Head Teachers and other staff to share, reflect, support and learn from each other.

- 8.1. There are 125 schools represented within 37 self-improving attainment family groups working in trios across South Lanarkshire Council. Following consideration of each school's unique context and reflection on a wide range of data, attainment families were asked to identify a common theme for development. The programme is supporting schools to increase collaboration and look outwards. This programme will be evaluated in May 2019 and will continue to be progressed into the new school session.
- 8.2. Over the last 18 months, 12 SLC Primary Schools have been working in self-improvement attainment family groups with North Lanarkshire Council establishments. There has been a specific focus on tackling issues around raising attainment and closing the poverty-related gap. 2 of the family groups have also benefited from support from the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Research at Glasgow University (ROC), including training on Collaborative Action Research methodology (CAR). This programme comes to a conclusion in October 2019 at which point a full evaluation of impact will be undertaken.

- 8.3. Participating schools have commented that the programme is developing increased trust, collaboration, networking and sharing of practice across establishments. There is also a reported increased level of confidence in the use of data to inform next steps in practice.

9. How Good is OUR School? A resource to support learner participation in self-evaluation and school improvement

- 9.1. There is an expectation that young people are directly involved in influencing decision making and bringing about meaningful and sustainable change within their school in a wide range of areas. As a result, 'How Good is OUR school? A resource to support learner participation in self-evaluation and school improvement' was produced by Education Scotland to support schools to take this forward.
- 9.2. The CQIS has delivered training to a 48 staff ranging from class teachers to senior managers. The training has provided opportunities for colleagues to familiarise themselves with the materials in preparation for implementation and to share current practice in this area. It is important to note that South Lanarkshire schools already demonstrate strong evidence of pupil participation through e.g. Rights Respecting Schools Programme, pupil councils and committees etc. As part of the training, schools have been involved in reflecting on their current practice in order to identify areas to take forward within their individual contexts. A further training opportunity will be provided next term.

10. Next Steps

10.1. Validated Self-evaluation

Working closely with Professional Associations, class practitioners will be identified within each Learning Community to become VSE Ambassadors. The role of the VSE Ambassador will be to advocate the benefits of engaging in a VSE as a class practitioner and sharing their experience of the process with others.

10.2. Teacher Professionalism

To continue to engage with the West Partnership and the GTCS to fully support students, NQTs and Fully Registered Teachers.

- 10.3. To liaise with the GTCS and the teaching profession within SLC with regards to the revised Standards due for implementation in August 2020.

10.4. Leadership

Continue to refresh and enhance professional learning opportunities and evaluation of provision, in partnership with Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities, Education Scotland, Education Resources staff and other external providers, in support of the highest possible quality of leadership in South Lanarkshire Council schools.

- 10.5. Work in partnership with senior leaders to update SLC Leadership Framework, in line with the new national model for professional learning.

- 10.6. Increase the potential of the relationships made with other West Partnership Local Authority Officers, with a leadership focus, in order to provide leaders at all levels cross authority learning and networking opportunities.

10.7. Teaching and learning

The existing Tapestry professional learning model will continue into session 2019/2020. Education Resources will also continue to engage with the Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) to facilitate and deliver two programmes; one based on approaches to Collaborative Action Research and one on Improving Our Classrooms. The introduction of a Development Officer to support pedagogy across SLC will also allow the opportunity to focus more specifically on play based learning at the early stages.

10.8. The strategic Learning and Teaching Group will support the delivery of further career long professional learning focused on pedagogy and be instrumental in the structure and delivery of a new DHT Forum to support learning and teaching within secondary schools.

10.9. Self-improving attainment families

The existing SLC model of self-improving attainment families will continue into the new session 2019/2020.

10.10. How Good is our School? (Pupil Participation)

The key focus for 2019/2020 will be to organise an event for young people across SLC schools to raise the profile and importance of pupil participation and involvement in self-evaluation and school improvement. It is envisaged that young people will play a key role in leading this event.

11. Employee Implications

11.1. None

12. Financial Implications

12.1. Financial implications are within existing budgetary resources.

13. Other Implications

13.1. There are no implications for sustainability or risk in terms of the information contained in this report.

14. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

14.1. This report does not present a new strategy, policy or plan and is therefore not subject to equality impact assessment.

14.2. There was no requirement to undertake any formal consultation in terms of the information contained within this report.

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Executive Director (Education Resources)

11 April 2019

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

♦ Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning

Previous References

- ◆ Education Resources Committee – 19 June 2018

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

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

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