

Report

Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	19 May 2020
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources) Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Excellence and Equity – Quality Improvement Officer Post
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ seek approval to convert a temporary post of Quality Improvement Officer post to permanent on the establishment to take forward the equity and health agenda in order to support the most vulnerable learners

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that approval be given to convert a temporary 1 FTE post of Quality Improvement Officer to permanent on the establishment to take forward the equity and health and wellbeing agenda to support the most vulnerable learners throughout South Lanarkshire, as detailed in paragraph 5.1 and;
- (2) that the initial progress made with regards to changing practice in reducing some aspects of the costs of the school day and on measures being taken to achieve excellence and equity in terms of improved outcomes for children, young people and families, be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Education Resources Committee will be aware of the National Improvement Framework which sets out the Scottish Government's vision to close the attainment gap, delivering both excellence and equity. In South Lanarkshire schools, educational settings and services are focused on improving outcomes and support the delivery of excellence and equity through approaches to meeting the needs of all children and young people, no matter where they live or their family circumstances.
- 3.2. To support schools in the drive to improve outcomes and to close the poverty-related attainment gap, funding has been made available through two funding streams namely, the Scottish Attainment Challenge Fund (12 primary schools and 8 secondary schools) and Pupil Equity Funding.
- 3.3. Inclusion and equality is at the heart of the work in schools, educational settings and services, where there is a shared belief that all learners should be included and treated equally.

- 3.4. A key strand of the equity agenda is the opportunity to review the cost of the school day by looking at the impact this can have on the wellbeing of children and young people and on reducing the financial implications for families, some of which may have unintended consequences, which limits or inhibits participation in supporting learning and their involvement in activities.
- 3.5 In October 2015, the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) launched a 'Cost of the School Day' report in Scotland. The report highlighted the following key considerations to be taken forward by local authorities:-
- ◆ the key financial barriers affecting participation throughout the school day for children and young people from low income households
 - ◆ good practice measures which children say help to reduce costs, ensure equal access to opportunities and reduce poverty related stigma
 - ◆ resources to support poverty proofing in schools and local authorities along with examples of simple changes made by schools participating in cost of the school day
- 3.6 Education Resources through the Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service took an action to address the findings which local authorities were asked to do in respect of the cost of the school day and to look further into the impact on the wellbeing of children and young people in order to effect change for those affected by poverty.
- 3.7 The activity to lead the Council's 'Cost of the School Day' strategy for schools commenced in April 2019.
- 3.8 The work undertaken to date by Education Resources has centred on the following:-
- ◆ engagement and consultation with staff on the 'Cost of the School Day' through planned research and initial inquiry
 - ◆ working with Head Teachers to identify priority referrals for 'Money Matters' (to support families in accessing benefits and advice on financial matters)
 - ◆ shared working with facilities management to change practice and procedures for the redistribution of left-over food
 - ◆ planning and organising the 'Cost of the School Day' conference to raise awareness and share resources for schools around how to make the school day more accessible for low income families
 - ◆ production of resources adapted from CPAG toolkit
 - ◆ development of training for staff
 - ◆ effecting cultural change

4 Proposal

- 4.1 It is proposed, given the extent of change that can be derived with a continued focussed approach to the 'cost of the school day' in order to effect cultural change, and to assess and monitor what works well, based on lessons learned, and to achieve identified positive outcomes for children, young people and families, that a post of Quality Improvement Officer (Equity and Health and Wellbeing) be established, on a permanent basis, to enable this work to continue and to take forward both the equity and health and wellbeing agenda.
- 4.2 The impact of Covid19 on the economy and the impact on individual family income will require a further sustained approach to reducing the cost of the school day, right across our communities in South Lanarkshire and on the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

- 4.3 It is recognised that the scope of this work requires to be sustained, if it is to achieve the outcome of reducing some of the financial aspects of schooling which are impacting on children, young people and families and in supporting their health and wellbeing.

5 Employee Implications

- 5.1 It is, therefore, proposed that the temporary Quality Improvement Officer Post (Equity and Health and Wellbeing) be made permanent to the establishment. The employee implications are detailed in the table below.

Post	Current number of posts	Proposed number of posts	Grade	SCP range	Annual salary	Gross cost (inc. On costs 28.3%)
Quality Improvement Officer (QIO)	1 Temp	1 Perm	Quality Improvement Officer SNCT	Pt 1-3	£59,580 - £66,780	£76,441 - £85,678
Total	1 Temp	1 Perm				£76,441 - £85,678

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Quality Improvement Officer post is currently funded from existing budgetary resources through the Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service and will continue to be funded in this way.

7 Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 7.1 There are no implications for climate change, sustainability or the environment associated with this report.

8 Other Implications

- 8.1 There are no significant risk implications. The recommendations in the report are in line with national excellence and equity agenda as well as helping to take forward the Council's tackling poverty agenda which is aligned to the work of the child poverty action group.

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 or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required.
- 9.2 Engagement and consultation has taken place over the last 18 months on equity and the cost of the school day with schools, services, children, young people, families, elected members and other stakeholders.
- 9.3 Consultation has taken place with the Trade Unions in regard to the recommendations contained in this report.

Tony McDaid
Executive Director (Education Resources)

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Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

5 May 2020

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- ◆ Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning
- ◆ Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults
- ◆ Deliver better health and social care outcomes for all
- ◆ Support our communities by tackling disadvantage and deprivation and supporting aspiration

Previous References

- ◆ Education Resources Committee 1 October 2019

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Child Poverty Action Report 2015
- ◆ Excellence and Equity 2016

Contact for Further Information

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

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