
To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 20 May 2021

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Scottish Attainment Challenge Mid-Year Report

1. Summary

- 1.1. This purpose of this report is to inform the Education and Children's Services Policy Board of the continued progress made in relation to the Scottish Attainment Challenge.
 - 1.2. Renfrewshire became one of nine challenge authorities in 2016. The overarching aim of the Attainment Challenge is to close the poverty-related attainment gap.
 - 1.3. As part of the grant requirements, a bi-annual report is submitted to Scottish Government which outlines progress towards three long-term outcomes. The outcomes are to improve learning and teaching, improve health and well-being and to close the poverty-related attainment gap.
 - 1.4. This session has undoubtedly been one of the most challenging we have ever experienced. The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic has been profound and has presented us with unparalleled challenges. The school and early learning and childcare closures in March 2020 resulted in significant changes in working practices and routines.
 - 1.5. Despite these challenges, the Attainment Challenge continues to build on the excellent progress as reported by Education Scotland. All workstreams have successfully adapted and continued to deliver high quality, evidence-based approaches which are having a positive impact on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and the health and wellbeing of Renfrewshire children and young people.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Education and Children's Services Policy Board is asked to note the contents of the report.

3. Background

- 3.1. There are five main work-streams within the Attainment Challenge. These are: data analysis, learning and teaching, families and communities, leadership and care experienced children and young people.
- 3.2. In recognition of the challenges presented by Covid-19 and the resultant closure of schools since late March, the Scottish Government adjusted the reporting process and requested a mid-year update in April 2021.
- 3.3. This report will summarise the key messages from the end of year report.

4. Progress

- 4.1. As a result of Covid-19, there has been no update to the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) collection of data which is used centrally to support the analysis of improvements in attainment and achievement in the broad general education (BGE). However, our qualitative evidence continues to demonstrate the strong impact that the Attainment Scotland Fund approaches, including Pupil Equity Fund (PEF), is having on improving learning and teaching, health and wellbeing and raising attainment for all while closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- 4.2. In line with Scottish Government guidance, challenge authorities have been using the funding in flexible ways in order to respond to the needs of children and young people and to support establishments in closing the poverty related attainment gap during this challenging time.
- 4.3. We recognise that the needs of children and young people may now look different and in order to better understand this, the central team conducted a local equity audit. The findings of this audit are summarised in a sketch note in the full report (attached as appendix) and have been used to develop a responsive support package for establishments. These findings will also inform SAC planning for 21/22.
- 4.4. As identified in our equity audit, health and wellbeing being is a priority and we continue to focus relentlessly on improving the mental and emotional wellbeing of children, young people and families. This has been particularly important in light of the current pandemic which has exacerbated the mental health challenges experienced by some individuals and families. Improvements are evident in practitioner's confidence, knowledge and practice in supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people. This has been achieved through a range of high-quality professional learning opportunities, support services and through the development of supportive strategic policy and guidance.
- 4.5. The use and availability of data is fundamental in driving forward improvement. Analysis has been improved following the launch of interactive data dashboards, created using PowerBI data visualisation software. These dashboards have replaced PDF reports which were previously shared via email. The initial phase on dashboards includes analysis of attainment,

attendance, exclusions and demographics. The benefits of these dashboards are that staff are now able to produce their own analysis using report filters, can visualise key trends, and have easy access to all information provided by the team.

- 4.6. This session, young people have received a combined 270 hours of supported study aimed at helping them maximise their attainment. In order to target this support to those who need it most, 15 care-experienced young people have been identified for one-to-one or small group tuition.
- 4.7. Schools have accessed a bespoke website designed for self-isolating learners. Created and maintained by Development Officers, the website contains a range of literacy and numeracy resources and supports for children and young people and is used in conjunction with support from a team of dedicated teachers.
- 4.8. The Families and Communities workstream has delivered a range of supports this session. Inclusion Support Assistants and Transition Teachers are working with over 300 identified children and young people to improve attendance and attainment in curricular areas such as literacy and numeracy.
- 4.9. Despite restrictions, much of the planned leadership work for this session has gone ahead using a virtual platform, ensuring we continue to build on existing leadership capacity in our schools and early years centres. Plans for our pupil leadership programme have had to be postponed until restrictions are lifted.
- 4.10. All projects within the care experienced children and young people workstream have continued this session with some adjustments undertaken to ensure they are compliant. 61 children and young people are currently being supported by the Aberlour Attain mentoring programme. 72 volunteers are currently available with 28 being Renfrewshire Council staff. The SPACE team is currently working at full capacity supporting over 60 cases with daily engagement with young people. Extensive feedback and evaluation demonstrate the positive impact these projects are having on our most vulnerable children.
- 4.11. Despite the challenges with ongoing restrictions, we continue to be focused and committed to closing the poverty related attainment gap while raising attainment for all. The full report demonstrates the extensive work which has been achieved this session. Feedback, case studies and sketch notes provide further evidence of the impact that each project is having on attainment, achievement and health and wellbeing. In Renfrewshire, our children, young people and staff are at the heart of everything we do and we will ensure that there is no poverty of aspiration, ambition or opportunity for children and young people.

Implications of this report

1. **Financial**
None
2. **HR and Organisational Development**
None.

3. Community/Council Planning

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Our Renfrewshire is fair | - | <i>The appendix details a range of activities which reflect local community planning themes</i> |
| Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all | - | <i>The appendix details a range of activities which reflect local community planning themes</i> |
| Working together to improve outcomes | - | <i>The appendix details a range of activities which reflect local community planning themes</i> |

4. Legal None.

5. Property/Assets None.

6. Information Technology None.

7. Equality and Human Rights

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. Health and Safety None.

9. Procurement None.

10. Risk None.

11. Privacy Impact None.

12. Cosla Policy Position Not applicable.

13. Climate Risk None.

List of Background Papers

(a) Background Paper 1: None.

The foregoing background papers will be retained within children's services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Lauren Johnston, Project Manager, 0141 618 4023, lauren.johnstone@renfrewshire.gov.uk.

Children's Services

LJ/JC

13/04/2021

Author: Lauren Johnston, Project Manager, 0141 618 4023.



Renfrewshire



Attainment



Challenge

Literacy, Numeracy, Health & Wellbeing

Mid-Year Report

September 2020 – February 2021

Contents

Programme Overview	3
Programme flexibility	5
Workstream highlights.....	7
Data Analysis	7
Learning, Teaching and Assessment	8
Families and Communities	11
Health and Wellbeing	14
Leadership.....	18
Care Experienced Children and Young People.....	19
Conclusion.....	22

Programme Overview

This session has undoubtedly been one of the most challenging we have ever experienced. The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic has been profound, and presented us with unparalleled challenges. The school and early learning and childcare closures in March resulted in significant changes in working practices and routines.

In response to the pandemic and as part of our local recovery planning, the governance board reviewed the SAC plan to assess the feasibility of all projects. While some priorities shifted as a result of Covid-19, there is still a clear commitment and expectation within Renfrewshire to raise attainment for all whilst closing the poverty-related attainment gap. As a result, project leads reviewed their own plans and explored different ways in which projects could still be delivered and adapted to respond to the pandemic.

Many of our projects have successfully adapted and have continued to provide critical support. However, other projects, mainly face-to-face professional learning, was postponed or cancelled due to other pressing priorities and planning.

This session, our 5-year impact report was completed. Key themes from the Attainment Advisor led report included;

- Renfrewshire are continuing to close the poverty related attainment gap
- Strong approaches to governance and use of data has maximised the programme
- Partnership working has enhanced approaches
- A strong central team is critical
- There is a continued focus on learning and teaching, health and wellbeing and leadership

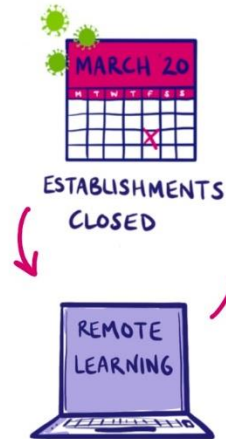
As part of this, a series of case studies were submitted demonstrating collective impact across workstreams (appendix 1). The case studies highlight the impact that collective and collaborative working can have on the outcomes for children and young people.

The authority also participated in the national Equity Audit. However, in order to understand the gap at a local level and to further support our schools, a local Equity Audit was conducted. The key themes from the audit are detailed in the sketch note on the following page. While our data is not comparative, it does demonstrate that all children and young people in Renfrewshire have been affected and not just those from the most deprived areas. However, the rate of recovery may be different for children in the most deprived areas compared with those from more affluent areas. Our data also suggests that missed physical transition opportunities between early years and P1 and P7-S1, may have a long-term impact on children and young people as they move through stages. A central planning day was hosted in December to ensure that approaches and interventions are adding value and addressing the identified gaps.

Unfortunately, our Attainment Advisor left her post to take up a new headship in December. We now have a vacant Attainment Advisor position and while we would want this support to be provided as soon as possible, there is a recognition that this will probably not be possible. Interim arrangements are in place.

We continue to have very good engagement with the West Partnership. We are actively in engaging West OS and have representation across each of the workstreams. In particular, there is very strong collaboration ongoing with the Families and Communities and Health and Wellbeing networks.

BUILD BACK BETTER: RENFREWSHIRE'S EQUITY AUDIT

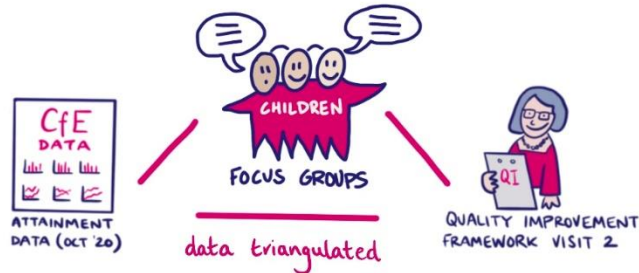


WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON OUR
ATTAINMENT GAP?

AIMS

- What does the attainment gap look like now?
- Who has the pandemic had the biggest impact on?
- Why might the gap have widened?
- What should the next steps be?

HOW WE CONDUCTED THE AUDIT?



KEY FINDINGS

ATTAINMENT GAPS BETWEEN ALL QUARTILES

- greatest gap in literacy (especially writing) in P4 & P7
- gaps have emerged in social & emotional development and listening & talking attainment in P1s

BIGGEST ↓ IN ATTAINMENT SEEN IN CHILDREN WITH

- additional support needs
- behavioural issues
- entitlement to free school meals & clothing grants

IMPACTING ON HEALTH & WELLBEING



STEPS TAKEN

schools working with children to narrow the gap through supports & interventions
AUG 2020

Significant investment in digital infrastructure

A wide range of high quality services & resources available to support the health and wellbeing of all children, young people and families

Planning Day

DEC 2020

short-term
medium
long-term
OUTCOMES

LOCKDOWN RETURNS

CLOSED

JAN 2021

PRIORITY REMAINS TO CLOSE POVERTY-RELATED ATTAINMENT GAP, WHILE RAISING ATTAINMENT FOR ALL

Programme flexibility

Following the Deputy First Minister announcement regarding funding flexibility, all project leads revised their plans to ensure responsiveness in the current climate. This section provides detail on how funding has been used to continue supporting the needs of all children and young people.

While the main activities of providing analysis and data literacy support have not changed, the focus and delivery methods have been adapted. Training and support have moved online and there is a greater focus on 'self-serve' materials (e.g. training videos, dashboards). The types of support provided has also been adapted for the changing circumstances facing schools, for example, the team have developed an engagement tracker to support with monitoring of remote learning. The team has also provided support with allocating school places and monitoring attendance during lockdown periods.

In response to the logistical problem of hosting supported study sessions in school, centralised Higher Mathematics sessions have been offered online. So far, young people from 8 secondary schools have received a combined 270 hours of Maths supported study aimed at helping them maximise their attainment. In order to target this support to those who need it most, 15 care-experienced young people have been identified for one-to-one or small group tuition with the first sessions taking place in late January.

One commercial partner, La Salle Education, was unable to fulfil an agreement for face-to-face CLPL sessions due to lockdown. They instead offered a suite of online facilities which meant that all secondary maths teachers in the authority were given access to the Online Teacher CPD College. Additionally, all S1 pupils were given access to the "Ready for Secondary" online course to help address gaps in learning that may have been formed during lockdown.

Almost all schools have accessed a bespoke website designed for self-isolating learners. Created and maintained by Development Officers, the website contains a range of literacy and numeracy resources and supports for children and young people and is used in conjunction with support from a team of dedicated teachers.

Transition teachers have adapted to work more closely with schools around supporting more non-target children to engage in learning. The team also keep in touch with target families on a weekly basis offering support, advice and signposting families to appropriate help. They also feed into school tracking systems looking at which pupils have experienced barriers to online engagement. The intended impact is to maintain positive home-school relationships and to identify and support children and families who need greater targeted intervention on return to school.

A pack of material to support P7-S1 induction has since been developed into a digital Wakelet to support both transition and induction moving forward. The intended impact is to make available resources to support sustainability and build capacity in curricular transition. The resource will support professional learning and thinking, share practice and ideas and support transition planning.

The team have continued to work in the secondary sector, rather than moving to support a new cohort in primary. The intended impact is to ensure that the progress of S1 pupils and families who have not had a good start to their secondary career, are supported to settle into high school learning.

Renfrewshire EPS began adapting RNRA materials in March 2020 producing a suite of trauma-informed resources, 'Nurturing Wellbeing to Build Back Better (BBB)' which are designed to be easily accessible and supportive of establishments to improve staff, pupil and parents/carers wellbeing

during the period of remote learning, return to establishments and recovery from Covid-19. These resources were central to Renfrewshire's wellbeing response to Covid-19. Many establishments have used the resources and have included resulting actions and impact in their RNRA Action Plan. These resources include the 'Skills for Recovery' programme, a 6-week PSE wellbeing programme for upper primary and secondary pupils, produced in association with Renfrewshire's HWB officer and available on the HWB Website and EPS Blog.

As a result of COVID, Parents in Partnership schools have adapted plans to reflect current needs of families and provide support to any age/ stage. Schools have responded to the changing landscape and provided support to families where there is greatest need. Some schools plan to provide activities to support a more family-centred transition in 2021. They will work with children and families term 3 and 4 to ensure families feel well supported and positive about the transition. One school has already moved family learning online by providing outdoor learning opportunities such as, family nature walks and family language quizzes. This has allowed more families to have access to opportunities. Learning packs have been provided for participants and digital skills support has been provided to promote engagement.

The Inclusion Support Assistant (ISA) team have worked flexibly with other partners and agencies to support young people and families in hubs and at home experiencing anxiety relating to Covid. They also focussed on ensuring equity by supporting vulnerable young people to set up and use Chromebooks to aid remote learning.

In order to move Pizza Learning online, this required a complete re-design and upskilling of staff in digital literacy. All staff completed Connecting Scotland Digital Champions training to allow the re-design to be successfully progressed.

The impact of Covid restrictions on the Language Bank necessitated a shift from face to face interpreting support to telephone translation. Interpreters continued to provide vital welfare check in telephone calls to families and feedback support needs to the relevant agencies including Home-link and schools.

GSC Learning Lab programme being delivered entirely online has allowed full participation. At a time when excursions and visitors to schools are not permitted, even expert engagement sessions became virtual to ensure all children had the opportunity to participate.

The HWB Development Officer collaborated effectively with the Educational Psychology team to develop the 'Skills for Recovery' programme and related self-isolation resources to promote the wellbeing of pupils, staff and parents during the pandemic.

Place2Be quickly adapted their services to respond to the Co-Vid 19 pandemic providing telephone and online consultations and supports for children, young people and parents.

Delivery of 2 universal seminars were delivered as part of the Seasons of Growth programme to support loss and change experienced as a result of Covid. Workshops for children and young people support them to identify strategies and people who can help them manage their feelings. and adjust to our changed lives. 50 staff were trained to deliver the workshops across Renfrewshire schools. PSE resources tailored for remote learning have been identified.

Leadership programmes have continued to be delivered remotely and all care experienced fund projects have continued to operate with minimal changes.

Workstream highlights

This section provides an overview of key activities and highlights from each workstream. Project leads have shared what has worked well during this period including positive feedback as well as detailing any areas for improvement.

Data Analysis

The data team have continued to deliver on key actions, providing analysis and support to schools and workstreams.

The availability of analysis has been improved following the launch of interactive data dashboards, created using PowerBI data visualisation software. These dashboards have replaced PDF reports which were previously shared via email. The initial phase on dashboards includes analysis of attainment, attendance, exclusions and demographics. The benefits of these dashboards are that staff are now able to produce their own analysis using report filters, can visualise key trends, and have easy access to all information provided by the team. It also improves the turnaround speed from the team receiving data and being able to share it with schools. To support the rollout of the data dashboards, a number of online demo sessions were delivered by the team. These sessions aimed to inform staff about the types of information available on the dashboards and to provide advice and support on how they could best utilise them. The team ran 7 sessions for 63 members of staff, with 73% of schools attending. Feedback on the dashboards and the training sessions were positive with staff citing benefits of ease of use and a greater focus on visuals rather than tables.

In addition to dashboard demo sessions, a small number of pilot online training sessions were delivered with teaching staff. The purpose of these sessions was to progress the Dive into Data training programme and develop materials that could be used with class teachers. The sessions were delivered online via Teams and covered the key principles of how data could be used at a class level. A template for data conversations was also developed and shared as part of these sessions. Feedback from these sessions was positive however technical challenges and staff absences/lockdowns have prevented further rollout of these materials.

Further support has been provided to schools on request during this period. The team have provided assistance with updates to authority attainment trackers, managing data in health and wellbeing profiling tools and have developed engagement trackers for remote learning. 88% of primary schools have requested and received support from the team since August, although all have had access to shared tracking templates. In addition, analysis of historic trends in SQA data has been collated and shared with all secondary schools to support moderation activity for the 2021 alternative certification model.

Online training videos developed by the team in previous years have been updated to improve accessibility. For example, short demo videos which were previously included in a wider course have been split to allow quick access. In addition, Dive into Data training materials have been shared on the Data Literacy Glow page, which can act as a refresher to the course or as a starting point for discussions within schools. These videos all have associated guidance and datasets to allow for them to be followed as a package.

Reflections on what has worked well

The move to data visualisation software in place of static reports has been a significant improvement. Data dashboards have allowed the team to increase the scale of the analysis that is shared without creating large reports that are time consuming to read. Feedback from head

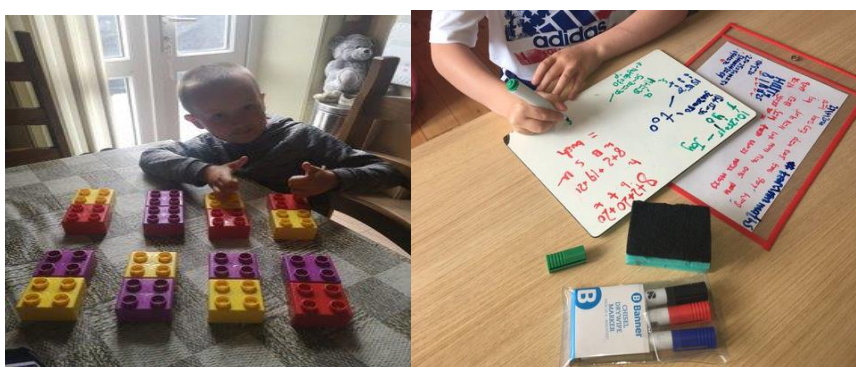
teachers indicates that having data displayed visually is easier to interpret and use and that having all analysis in one place is more manageable than multiple reports. This is an area of work which can be progressed further to improve the availability of evidence across the authority.

Improvements

The model of training delivery used within the Dive into Data session in the 2019/20 session does not suit online delivery models and therefore adaptations have been required. Sessions delivered live were focused around group discussions of data trends and sharing of practices within schools. This has proved challenging to replicate online and time has had to be spent adapting and testing different approaches. This has limited the progress of the rollout of these materials.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Despite the restrictions on in-person provision, staff from almost all schools have attended CLPL on effective learning and teaching in numeracy and mathematics including Numeracy Across the Curriculum, Promoting Mathematical Thinking, Bar Modelling, Numbertalks and S.E.A.L. Staff from almost all schools have participated in a range of online workshops and webinars highlighting effective learning and teaching in literacy and English including those offered by Education Scotland, the National Literacy Network and various universities.



Almost all secondary NQTs have taken part in training to help them understand their responsibility towards developing the numeracy skills of the young people in their classes, regardless of their own subject specialism. Almost all primary NQTs have taken part in training to help them plan for numeracy in a range of curricular contexts. Almost all secondary NQTs have attended online training in relation to disciplinary literacy and developing literacy skills across a range of subject areas. Almost all primary NQTs have taken part in training on the Renfrewshire Literacy Approach with a specific focus on raising attainment in reading and writing.

Building on our partnership with Winning Scotland and reflecting on the needs of schools in the current climate, a new course has been developed to help practitioners bring the research behind Mindset to life in their classrooms. The course has been co-authored by Renfrewshire and we are the first and only local authority in Scotland to take part in it. The course goes live in February 2021 and among the delegates are the Transition Team, who will take their learning into almost all secondary schools.

In order to support practitioners in identifying and closing gaps in numeracy, a Numeracy Intervention Programme has been developed that focuses on the use of continual formative assessment to identify the learner's stage of conceptual development. The programme will run with 5 – 8 schools this session and will be opened up to all schools in the next session. Of the schools

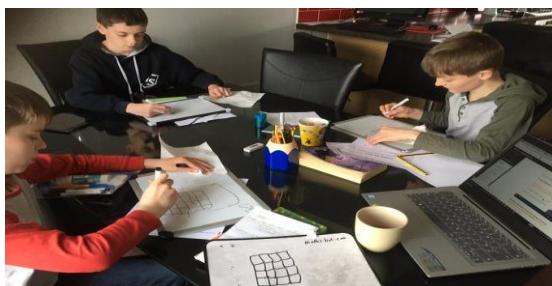
currently signed up, the majority are from quartile 2, where a gap in attainment has been highlighted.

A comprehensive programme of CLPL has been planned to embed and extend the Renfrewshire Literacy Approach between January and June. This includes courses on raising attainment in reading, raising attainment in writing, the Renfrewshire Literacy Approach and the Primary Literacy Coaching Programme. Professional learning has been targeted following analysis of attainment data.

Resources have been targeted to ensure greater support and challenge, particularly for S1 and S2 pupils, as the Dive into Reading approach has been extended to secondary practitioners.

Almost all primary schools have identified Literacy and Numeracy Champions, who support the development of evidence-based literacy and numeracy pedagogy within their school. Champions receive regular local and national updates.

A Secondary Moderation training pilot was planned to roll out across three participating Secondary Schools with an inter-school Moderation event in May 2020. Unfortunately, this was cancelled due to COVID 19. The education manager has been attending the West Partnership Moderation Network but much of the primary and secondary activity has been delayed due to the nature of this work.



Within the authority, education managers have been supporting Principal Teachers/Faculty Heads through the setting up of network meetings on a regular basis to facilitate the alternative model of certification for national 5, higher and advanced higher courses. This has included support in terms of moderation, assessment, cross marking and ensuring a robust system is in place regarding quality assurance across and within all schools.

Training has been put in place for formative assessment for all teaching staff across the authority. This included all sectors. This online support package was designed and developed in partnership with the Attainment Adviser and Education Scotland. This has been well received by a number of our establishments.

Building on the Exploring Pedagogy in Primary 1 training has taken place as planned, online rather than face to face sessions. 5 online sessions were delivered to Primary 3 teachers from 22 primary schools between Oct – Dec 2020.

Transition practitioners have received training in metacognition approaches and strategies, numeracy and maths learning and teaching and targeted intervention strategies. They have also engaged in a number of professional reading and dialogue sessions around assessment, transitioning back to school and the use of digital resources. They embed learned strategies into everyday practice.

The team are currently supporting 151 targeted pupils (cohort 4), as well as additional pupils identified as requiring 'catch up' support following the summer lockdown.

Development Officers continue to provide bespoke support to all schools and tailored support is requested.

Reflections on what has worked well

The uptake of online CLPL has been very positive with a combined attendance of 505 participants over 10 sessions. In post session evaluations 94% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the CLPL increased their knowledge of the content matter. 96% agreed or strongly agreed that attending the CLPL had developed their skills and abilities in relation to the session and 99% agreed or strongly agreed that attending the CLPL would have a positive impact on learning in their classroom.

The online model of supported study has been successful with those who have attended. There have been 148 unique attendees from 8 out of the 11 secondary schools. 94% of attendees said that the session they attended deepened their understanding of the concept being taught and 99% said they were likely or highly likely to attend future sessions. Some of the feedback from young people:

"Thank you so much for developing our understanding, it has helped me so much and has given me a bit more confidence in myself."

"The worked solutions for each question are super helpful to see where I've gone wrong. The pop quiz was also great for interaction and refreshing last week's work. Very grateful for this."

"Thank-you so much for coming online to help us, some people in my year have been self-isolating this week so being at home trying to learn maths has been so difficult but tonight has definitely helped me. I have a bit of belief in myself that I can do this, thank you."

Transition teacher data shows that for most literacy and numeracy indicators, the team have been successful in maintaining cohort 4 levels of achievement from baseline (February 2020) to review 1 (December 2020), despite lockdown. Although achievement levels have not increased greatly.

Team and school observations have shown that their expertise in targeted intervention is an essential service, especially for those children and families where engagement has been a barrier this year.

Some parent comments are provided below:

"Haley has become more confident in herself and her learning is doing great in classes"

"Myself and my child have found the transition to high school difficult. However, the support we have received from the transition teacher has been second to none"

"I am very happy with the communication I am receiving from my son's transition teacher. She is keeping me well informed about my son's progress and he is happy with the support he is receiving also"

In a recent target pupil questionnaire, almost all children strongly agreed that the transition teacher helped them to settle into S1 learning and helps them to know what skills to work on.

Improvements

Engagement in Numeracy/Maths and Literacy/English CLPL is far higher in the primary sector than it is in secondary. One factor in this as reported by PTs has been the constant focus on SQA assessment arrangements and reacting to the changing landscape of the 2021 exam diet.

Although uptake in CLPL session has been fantastic, it is difficult to get into schools to see examples of good practice and the impact that the professional learning has had on children and young people.

The global pandemic, restrictions on visits to schools and the move to online CLPL have all created significant challenges around supporting schools and engagement. As we adapt to this new way of working and adopt greater flexibility in approach, this is gradually becoming easier.

The curricular transition workstream works well where there is successful collaboration with school practitioners and where the team are given the opportunity to share and model their expertise. For example, a couple of schools in particular, have used working together with the workstream as an opportunity to upskill support staff (e.g. classroom assistants), in offering high quality targeted intervention.

More work is required to ensure that the workstream build capacity in curricular transition by working more collaboratively to provide professional learning to practitioners through modelling, and coaching.

Families and Communities

The RNRA approach is well established in over 90% of educational establishments in Renfrewshire across all sectors. EPS continue to support establishments in developing the approach; attending Core Groups and providing training and coaching virtually. 25 establishments have now achieved awards at one of the 4 levels of the RNRA accreditation framework. The approach has been very successfully extended to include the implementation of 'RNRA for Parents' group work initiative to support parents / carers of children or adolescents with violent or destructive behaviours incorporating Non-Violent Resistance (VR) approaches.



30 Renfrewshire establishments continue to engage well with PATHS coaching support offered to In-school Co-ordinators. All activities have now successfully moved online such as team teaching, modelling lesson delivery, parent information sessions, staff training events for a range of staff including all NQTs and Buddies training for P6 and P7 pupils in many schools. 150 classes across RC have attended a series of PATHS virtual assemblies.

6 secondary schools and 1 ASN school have progressed Parents in Partnership (PIP) activities such as sharing information with parents about S1 learning, supporting parents to engage in option choices, family learning activities and providing family learning packs.

Pizza Learning has been re-designed to move online using devices and dongles secured from Connecting Scotland Digital Inclusion Initiative. All targeted families (18 families across 8 priority schools) have received learning packs and regular contact from staff to build relationships and maximise participation in the programme. Staff have trained as Digital Champions with Connecting Scotland to increase their own skill set to re-design the programme as well as being able to provide support directly to families. Story Videos have been recorded and uploaded to privately hosted YouTube Channel to allow participating families to view before sessions. Weekly phone calls for each family after sessions ensures feedback is collected re the new Pizza Reading Online Programme.

A full team of Inclusion Support Assistants are now working across 9 secondary schools, collectively they engage with 108 young people and families 85% of whom are from SIMD 1-3 group.

Quantitative data is collected and considered at an individual school and whole service level. This information currently demonstrates positive trends in all the key objectives of:

- Improving attendance
- Reducing exclusions
- Increasing parental engagement

To capture additional qualitative data case studies are currently being developed to demonstrate the impact these practitioners have on outcomes for young people and families. There will be a focus on individual work and also how this enhances and complements the work of wider pastoral care teams in schools. Case studies will also reflect the diversity of the ISA role which is considered a strength of the post.

In the period August 20 – January 21, the Language Bank has provided:

- 30 face to face interpreting interviews
- 25 written translations to enable families and schools to share information, report on pupil progress, facilitate 2-way communication, support access to benefits, and further develop language skills.

The Glasgow Science Centre Learning Lab provides a unique education programme that supports high quality STEM learning in the classroom and at home. All teachers involved have engaged in the CLPL activity integral to the programme to increase teachers' confidence in STEM learning. Highlights include:

- 10 primary schools participated
- 22 teachers and 530 pupils across Renfrewshire have completed the GSC Learning Lab's.
- 13 virtual engagement sessions with experts delivered; and
- An additional 10 schools involving 21 teachers and approximately 500 children are currently involved.



Reflections on what has worked well

An evaluation of RNRA indicated that the approach has had a positive impact on staff's practice; and a positive effect on the social, emotional and behavioural development of pupils in the primary and secondary sectors. RNRA continues to have a strong impact on wellbeing in the majority of establishments across Renfrewshire. Individual establishments are able to provide evidence of impact through their RNRA Action Plans and accreditation information. The aim is that all RNRA establishments will be confident in using Quality Improvement Methodology and applying impact evaluation measures in their action plans. Progress has been made, and this remains a focus for future development.

Initial feedback from The Skills for Recovery programme suggests that a high percentage of teaching staff have found this resource easy to use. A high percentage also report that pupils are using some of the wellbeing strategies taught. Similarly, a high percentage of children and young people report that they found the programme useful and have tried out some of the strategies suggested.

24 families have complete RNRA for parents' programme with a high level of engagement and success. This will now be extended to a further 24 families.

PIP Co-ordinators report that parents are being supported primarily through phone contacts and that, as a result of a renewed focus on the home-school relationship, positive relationships are being developed and nurtured. ISAs continue to support the work of pastoral care teams in supporting the most vulnerable learners.

Feedback regarding online Pizza Reading has been positive with Headteachers commenting:

"The new plan is really carefully thought out in terms of not only the content but also the supports and scaffolds to help engagement and build confidence"

"As well as all the usual benefits of the family learning programme, I think it will really help families to develop technical skills to support them navigating the new way of working we all find ourselves caught up in"

Parents have provided positive feedback:

"Really appreciated the resources as a working mum I wouldn't have time to make things"

"Been a boost for my wee girl"

"Had a great time, books great for bedtime stories"

“Kids love the books and are very into crafts”

“Read the books together as a family, brings family together”

In the GSC mid-term evaluation (Dec 20) all teachers said their expectations had been fully met, commenting that:

“The ‘ready to go’ resources were very well organised and structured”

“The lessons and resources were very varied and as a result, pupils remained engaged”

Improvements

The Build Back Better resources were mainly used by establishments to support children and young people. Some establishments used them to support staff wellbeing, and a smaller number to support parents’ wellbeing. In response to feedback EPS are streamlining the aspects relating to staff and parents’ wellbeing, making the existing materials as accessible and easy for establishments to use as possible. Adapted resources will be shared in the near future.

The barriers around online family learning continue. This is an area that PIP coordinators and ISAs are attempting to improve through sharing practice and supporting families to access platforms confidently.

The lack of corporate IT equipment for Pizza Learning staff working remotely has been a huge barrier as sessional staff had to use their own personal devices to engage and work with families in virtual groups. Limited or no family IT devices and/or internet access has been a significant barrier, preventing families from fully participating in online programme. The anticipated delivery of devices and dongles from Connecting Scotland for Pizza Learning families should address this. It is planned when devices are delivered to families, each family will have an online session with a digital champion to help them build their skills and confidence using laptop/chrome book.

Health and Wellbeing

We continue to focus relentlessly on improving the mental and emotional wellbeing of children, young people and families. This has been particularly important in light of the current pandemic which has exacerbated the mental health challenges experienced by some individuals and families. Improvements are evident in practitioner’s confidence, knowledge and practice in supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people. This has been achieved through a range of high-quality professional learning opportunities, support services and through the development of supportive strategic policy and guidance.



Place2Be continue to provide very good school-based counselling services in 7 primaries and 1 secondary school. These services are supporting improvements in the emotional wellbeing of

children, young people, staff and families. Furthermore, Place2Be provided highly evaluated professional learning and consultation sessions on 'Creating a mentally healthy school' for senior leaders and class teachers in targeted primary and secondary schools.

Place2Be have reviewed their processes and policies to provide a flexible service to ensure continued support for children and young people during this period of remote learning. For primary-aged children receiving 1-1 therapeutic counselling, individual discussions have taken place with the parents/carers to set up virtual or remote engagement sessions to meet the needs of children and their families. Where it is safe to do so, for vulnerable children in primary schools, there may continue to be delivery of face to face therapeutic intervention for those children still attending school during lockdown. The work of Place2Be in secondary schools was showcased at an online webinar in December 2020 at which both the Place2Be CEO and the Regional Director for Scotland joined school staff and pupils of to highlight the positive impact of the service in Paisley Grammar school.

Almost all teachers who delivered the 'Living Life to the Full' (LLTFF) programme in 7 targeted secondary and special schools have emerging skills and confidence in using this cognitive behavioural therapy approach to develop emotional literacy and resilience in young people through the life skills programme. Feedback from the teachers and young people involved in the lessons has been largely positive and has allowed schools to work together with the HWB Development Officer and our Educational Psychology Service to evaluate the programme and make adaptations to the materials to meet the needs of each context this session. LLTFF will now be delivered in all of our secondaries after our remaining schools completed their leadership training online in September 2020. Staff trained included pastoral teachers, senior leaders and colleagues from Educational Psychology. Our new schools will be mentored by colleagues from our cohort trained last year.

Last session 7 schools and over 200 staff received LGBT training as part of their work towards the Charter award. Evaluations indicate an improvement overall with staff reporting an increased understanding and awareness of what LGBT young people experience, particularly with regards to their identity and the language used. In addition, staff stated an increase in their confidence in how best to support an LGBT young person. The Education Capacity Building Officer from LGBT Youth Scotland shared that "it's genuinely inspiring how hard all the teachers are working. I can see the commitment from the staff and pupils driving this work forward is seen as valuable, which in these times is such a testament to each school community and their values." Our schools have developed LGBT inclusive curricular work, inclusive picture story books, updated their libraries and are collaborating with local community groups. Junior pupils in one of our secondary schools linked with pupils from P5-7 in one of their feeder primaries to run a joint 'Rainbowfest' event. To date, 3 of our schools have achieved the Silver Award and 3 schools have achieved Bronze. New schools are coming on board to begin their Charter journey while current schools are progressing to the next stage of the award.



The HWB Development Officer continues to impact very positively in identifying Renfrewshire mental health and wellbeing priorities, working to address priorities, and in forging effective

partnerships. The work has included increasing staff knowledge, skills and confidence when delivering the HWB curriculum through a variety of professional learning experiences for staff and pupils including understanding self-harm and suicide (Ask,Tell), Hive of Wellbeing, Seasons for Growth, CEOPS and Mentors in Violence Prevention. All sessions have been evaluated highly. Very strong connections have been established with key partners across Children's Services, Health and Social Work as well as external agencies who support our ambition to improve HWB outcomes for children and young people. Our Health and Wellbeing [blog](#) as well as monthly health and wellbeing [newsletters](#) and Twitter page @RenEdHWB are used to signpost school staff to professional learning opportunities, share good practice, provide information about services and celebrate successes.

To support the wellbeing of children, young people, staff and parents on their return to school after the summer break, the HWB Development Officer collaborated with the Educational Psychology team to develop a 'Skills for recovery' programme for use in primary and secondary schools. This digital 'lift and go' resource laid out in 6 weekly themes, was carefully considered to communicate what it is that we wanted adults and children to hear and feel from their school environment in the weeks following their transition back from lockdown. As well as content for children and young people, this resource also focussed on the wellbeing of staff and parents. Links to Skills for Recovery resource: [staff](#), [pupils](#) and [parents](#). Initial feedback from schools has been very positive. An evaluation of the impact of the resource is currently underway.

For children and young people who are self-isolating/remote learning, further support resources have been developed which focus on regulating feelings and specifically 'What you need to know' and 'What you need to do'. There is also information which signposts supports available to young people. A version suitable for sharing with parents was also developed providing information and signposting for help.

[Wellbeing when isolating – Pupils](#)

[Wellbeing when isolating – Parents](#)

The resources have been developed on Sway and can therefore be shared easily on schools' digital platforms. Since the launch of the self-isolation Sways in mid-November they have been viewed over 3,000 times by young people and parents. Pastoral support is available for secondary young people who require to self-isolate through our Subject Support Surgery. Our Health and Wellbeing Development Officer is available to support any young person who wishes wellbeing support from a Pastoral Support Teacher.

Effective collaboration between the HWB Development Officer, Attainment Advisor and Renfrewshire Youth Voice, led to an extensive consultation exercise being carried out with over 350 children and young people across primary and secondary schools in relation to Personal and Social Education (PSE). Findings have been collated and are being used to inform the development of a 'Framework for Personal and Social Education in Renfrewshire' in collaboration with other local authorities across the West Partnership. The HWB Development Officer leads a subgroup of the West Partnership HWB workstream to develop this PSE framework further. In order to support staff delivering remote learning around health and wellbeing, resources have been identified that contain 'lift and go' lessons which can be delivered virtually or shared via digital platforms. The can be viewed here: [PSEresources](#).

Colleagues from the central team as well as many school staff have participated in professional learning, provided by Education Scotland, on the 'Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile' tool. This is a tool to measure a young person's motivation and sense of wellbeing in the learning context

linked to GIRFEC SHANARRI indicators. Several schools were keen to use the tool this session and as a result, the HWB Development Officer is coordinating primary and secondary focus groups who are sharing information around its implementation and the use of wellbeing data to inform and improve our practice.

In partnership with colleagues from Health and Choose Life we have developed a guidance document to support establishments 'Guidance for adults working with children and young people at risk of self-harm and suicide' and updated our policy for educational establishments on 'Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood Education'.

Reflections on what has worked well

In the period August - December 2020, Place2Be have provided:

- 849 drop-in sessions for 468 pupils;
- 447 one-to-one intensive counselling for 56 pupils;
- 133 sessions for parents and
- 339 consultation sessions for staff.

Some feedback is detailed below;

*"Talking to Place2Be during lockdown helped me feel less worried and more calm."
(Primary Pupil)*

"I have never been able to share this with anyone before now. It feels such a relief, like a weight has been lifted from my shoulders." (Secondary Pupil)

"I'm so happy he has you in the school. I don't have to worry as much knowing he can come talk to you." (Carer of a pupil who uses Place2Talk)

"It was so good to know you were there for that phone call each week, even through the chaos of lockdown. I had my parents to talk to, but they were going through their own stresses so knowing that there was someone who cared and would listen really helped me during that time." (Secondary Pupil)

Through review of establishment improvement plans, and qualitative evidence gathered during Quality Improvement visits to all establishments, it is clear that improving mental and emotional wellbeing is a priority for all establishments. Effective and interesting practice is gathered and shared through our highlights video in the monthly Health and Wellbeing newsletter. Find here

All providers of professional learning have carried out evaluations to assess the early impact of their work:

- Both staff and pupils who have participated in MVP training report an increased knowledge around issues related to gender-based violence and coercive relationships with pupils sharing their previous lack of knowledge around the law in relation to consent.
- All participants in the Ask,Tell sessions rated the experience very useful or extremely useful. Participants of 'ASIST a conversation', developed over the past few months, valued the opportunity to refresh their knowledge around the ASIST model in order to build staff confidence and skills in relation to supporting those experiencing suicidal thoughts.
- 50 staff were trained to deliver the Seasons for Growth seminars across Renfrewshire. 150 staff and over 1000 pupils participated in the seminars.

3 schools have achieved the Silver Award and 3 schools have achieved the Bronze Award as part of the LGBT Charter Award.

Leadership

Despite covid restrictions, much of the planned leadership work for session 2020-21 has gone ahead using a virtual platform, ensuring we continue to build on existing leadership capacity in our schools and early years centres. Plans for our pupil leadership programme have had to be completely postponed.

Both secondary and primary Aspiring PT courses were cancelled following consultation with all those involved in the delivery of the programmes. It was overwhelmingly felt that the value of these courses would be diminished if not delivered face to face with participants. Workload, in relation to the ongoing covid pandemic, was also a concern at the beginning of the session.

It was hoped at the outset that by postponing the delivery of the Aspiring DHT course until January 2021 that face to face delivery would be possible. However, a change to online delivery was agreed in December 2020 following the Scottish Government's announcement of ongoing restrictions. This course will now run between Jan- Apr 2021. 26 staff have signed up for the course – 8 secondary, 14 primary, 1 ASN and 3 early years.

2 external education consultants are providing 7 online Leadership Learning sets to groups of primary and secondary deputies – 1 set will be HTs who have not participated previously (44 participants in total).

4 primary headteachers are participating in the bespoke one to one coaching sessions (online) with James Keegans.

As a support to our leaders during the initial months of the pandemic, informal, online drop-in sessions were provided by Drew Drummond of Drummond International. This allowed leaders across all establishments to discuss issues/concerns/difficulties they were experiencing in a safe space with their peers and Drew. Where necessary, these were followed up with one to one coaching sessions with Drew.

Step Back podcasts were made available to senior leaders from August to November 2020. These were short 10-minute podcasts, interviewing a variety of education staff. They were all asked the same 3 questions in order to provide their reflections, thoughts and support on the pandemic and its ongoing impact in our education settings. The podcasts could be accessed at any time, to remind senior leaders of the conversations and themes which were helpful on the initial Step Back Programme.

4 Step Back Virtual leadership workshops have been provided for those who have previously participated in the Step Back workshops. These include:

- The Moral Purpose of Education with Norman Drummond
- Permission to Feel with Sarah Philp
- Dealing with Trauma with James Docherty
- Holding onto the silver linings from the Covid-19 cloud with Daniel Goodwin

Between Aug 2020- Dec 2020, 4 schools participated in a reconnection day with Derek Gall as part of the CANI Pupil Leadership Programme to create a well-designed structure to build leadership capacity within the school community.

7 secondaries signed up for the 2020-21 residential programme which we were hopeful would take place early 2021. As it became clear this was not going to happen due to the ongoing covid-19 pandemic, in-school Goal Attainment Programmes were established for Jan-Mar 2021. However, due to the current further lockdown, all pupil leadership plans have been postponed until session 2021-22

To date, no progress has been made in relation to the proposed Leadership Sustainability work.

Reflections on what has worked well

Formal evaluation of all leadership activity will take place from March 2021.

Due to the online nature of most of the leadership work this session, technical difficulties are regularly encountered e.g. participants not being able to get into meetings, break out rooms failing and screen sharing difficulties. The digital team have been very supportive in helping to resolve issues.

Online delivery of the one to one coaching sessions and Learning Sets is going well with only slightly less time required as it is difficult to engage with a screen for lengthy periods of time. Due to the necessity to use online platforms, staff have become much more familiar and confident in their use since August.

Those delivering the above and the Aspiring Deputes course, do acknowledge the limitations of working online and feel that relationships cannot be built with participants to the same degree. Similarly, relationships between participants in smaller break out groups are not as successful as they would be if delivered face to face.

The first virtual Step Back session was extremely well received by Heads. The timing of the session allowed Heads to discuss a variety of issues and successes over the period Aug – Dec 2020. Informal feedback from Heads also reaffirmed the feelings of being valued and supported by the local authority

Improvements

Technical issues and knowledge have improved since August 2020, making online leadership sessions more successful. The digital team has been extremely supportive with the virtual Step Back work.

Sharing content and presentations with participants beforehand has also supported the success of online leadership sessions.

Care Experienced Children and Young People

All our projects have continued during the current pandemic with some adjustments undertaken to ensure they are compliant with Health and Safety requirements and Covid restrictions.

Key highlights from the Aberlour Attain Mentoring Service include:

- 61 children and young people are currently being supported
- 72 volunteers are currently available with 28 being Renfrewshire Council staff
- 10 further volunteers who began virtual training in January

Aberlour Mentors have continued to work with all the children referred to them, and have tailored the support to suit their needs, and current circumstances including face to face when restrictions permit. More recently, they held a 'Big Night In' where we invited all the supported children and

young people to join us online for an evening of games, activities, and the chance to give us feedback on the Attain Service. 16 children and young people from 8 – 18 years joined us, and everyone engaged so well. The team have supported some further applications for the Urgent Assistant Funds which were successful. The team also sourced two tablets for young people as well as a mobile WIFI device and some data, for children who had no access to a laptop or tablet at home.



The SPACE team has continued to deliver a service to young people and work in partnership with schools and parents throughout the pandemic and has been flexible and responsive to an ever-evolving situation. The team is currently working at full capacity supporting over 60 cases with daily engagement with young people which has been very positive. Staff have provided support such as transporting young people to school during lockdown restrictions. Over the last year, 20 cases have closed with positive outcomes and 4 progressing on to further education.

NVR which is an approach to reduce child to adult violence and relational aggression has continued to be rolled out in selected schools and social work teams. Foster carers and other social work staff have attended training courses. In addition to the staff who are being trained as accredited NVR trainers we are also putting some staff through a training for trainers' approach to boost capacity. In addition, 24 parents recently completed the training virtually and a further 24 parents will be involved in upcoming training. Parents feedback of the experience will contribute to the overall evaluation.

Extensive feedback has been received from young people, practitioners and families and the impact of the service is demonstrated through these quotes:

"The flexibility of approach, even with the pupils themselves has led to success for pupils in our school e.g. supporting complex hub needs in school setting, taking time to speak to the child in their home setting and getting to know them better, taking the child out into the community to help build their cultural capital with experiences they may have missed out on due to circumstances" (Depute Head Teacher)

"Since meeting K. F. I have been calmer and happier, K. F. has taught me new coping skills she makes me feel safe and less anxious about high school, she helps me when I feel down I trust her and confide in her. I still need Katie and would like to keep working with her she understands me very well she's amazing." (Young Person)

"Having worked with the SPACE project with one of my families, the difference the support has given them has been fantastic. With many services, the worker is there to support the either the parent or child. With this project, the worker supports and advocates for both the

*Mum and child which has been a real asset to the family and indeed the wider care plan”
(Social Worker)*

Dolly Parton Imagination Library has grown significantly:

- 255 children benefit from the programme.
- 188 children currently registered
- 67 have graduated from the programme (on their 5th birthday)

We continue to get new requests from Social Workers and from our pilot pre 5 centres. Riverbrae was added to pilot centres in November and the children started to get books in December. The Depute Head of Centre in Riverbrae is carrying out a survey with the parents to get feedback on this.

It is unfortunate that as a result of the pandemic we have not been able to engage with the pilot sites due to Covid as there were lots of small events planned in connection with the books.

Comments from those participating are detailed below:

“Thank you for your time and this excellent opportunity. Some of our children are not at their chronological/developmental age, developmentally they are younger. A picture book a flap lifting book, a touch and feel or interactive books are always a safe resource. The books look great and I think if we go with the year below their chronological year then that will be fab they will be able to get the most out of this programme. We are very grateful for this lovely opportunity” (Head of Centre)

“I have been receiving the imagination library books for my wee boy they have really helped with his speech delay. I have moved address and I would really appreciate it if the books can be sent to my new address. My wee boy absolutely loves them and the difference in his speech since getting them is just amazing. It really is brilliant he gets excited for them coming in the post his favourite so far is gorilla loves vanilla” (Parent)

In addition to the main workstreams outlined above, work has continued in relation to planning a service wide conference albeit this will now be on a virtual platform. Plans have significantly developed and keynote speakers are now being identified to host their themed session.

We are also in the initial stages of setting up a tutoring bank and have delivered several bespoke interventions for young care leavers which includes Samba La Bamba and online art courses.

Reflections on what has worked well

Effective partnership working between education and social work continues to be the key to the success of our work to date. The implementation of NVR is a good example of how we have taken a system-wide approach to reducing the incidence of child to adult violence. By having teachers, social workers, parents and foster carers all trained in the same approach, we can ensure consistency of response to these challenging behaviours.

As projects have bedded in and become established, we have begun to see the real benefit of the these.

In particular it has been heartening to see the progress that the Aberlour mentoring support project has made after a difficult start overall in terms of recruitment. Children have fed back to Aberlour that their mentors have been a “lifeline” to them and have been someone they could turn to when things got really difficult at home and at school. This has been especially important when other

services that they normally access face to face are not currently being delivered in the same way (i.e. CAMHS, family support services, Young Carers groups).

The S.P.A.C.E team focus on improving attendance and health and wellbeing. A sample of 11 children and young people indicated that prior to S.P.A.C.E intervention, attendance ranged from 0%-90% which increased to 59%-100% post-intervention. For example, one young person was out of school for over and year half and returned to fulltime education in January after intensive intervention with the S.P.A.C.E team. Along with attendance, the number of exclusions for some children also dropped. Case studies have been developed and can be shared to demonstrate impact for each young person.

One of the most important reflections to make is that the workstreams are progressing because the individuals involved are passionate and committed to improving outcomes for care experienced young people. The Pandemic perhaps hasn't had the impact it might have as a result of this and also because of the things we choose to focus on which in the main were relationship-based activities.

Improvements

There remains concern about the temporary nature of the funding but all involved recognise that there is little that can be done about this although it is a particular issue for staff retention.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges with ongoing restrictions, we continue to be focused and committed to closing the poverty related attainment gap while raising attainment for all. This report demonstrates the extensive work which has been achieved this session. Feedback, case studies and sketch notes provide further evidence of the impact that each project is having on attainment, achievement and health and wellbeing.

The programme has successfully adapted to ensure the needs of all learners, practitioners, families and communities are supported. The central team have engaged in a series of intensive planning days which are designed to identify priorities for the next financial year. In Renfrewshire, our children, young people and staff are at the heart of everything we do and we will ensure that there is no poverty of aspiration, ambition or opportunity for children and young people.