

BUTE AND COWAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS REPORT 2007-8

1. SUMMARY

There are fourteen primary schools in Bute and Cowal, educating just over fifteen hundred children or 23% of the primary school population of Argyll and Bute. Three schools have over 200 children on roll, two have over 150 and nine have between 20 and 100. Nursery provision is well established within seven of these schools.

This report, presented by the Area Coordinator, Mrs Joni Halls, details the achievements of the primary schools in Bute and Cowal in 2007/8.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Area Committee are asked to note the excellent work being undertaken in their primary schools and to commend the pupils and staff for these outstanding achievements.

The Area Committee is also asked to agree to an annual presentation of an achievement report on primary schools in their area.

3. DETAILS

The co-operative structure was established in Argyll and Bute to address the needs of small schools in more rural areas to provide opportunities for staff to meet and share in strategic planning, to share ideas, train together, reflect on best practice and to manage change in a collaborative way thus ensuring rigour of educational improvement across all schools.

Coordinators were appointed from experienced existing head teachers to:

- Facilitate and support new developments;
- Organise area based in-service;
- Facilitate primary / secondary and pre-5/P1 liaison;
- Represent the interests of the co-operatives and area;
- Maintain information flow between area managers, the Head of Service and the Quality Improvement Team;
- Act as mentors for newly appointed head teachers.

This report is the first primary schools' report presented at the Bute and Cowal Area Committee. With members' agreement it is hoped to establish this as an annual presentation.

The details of the schools' achievements are included in the attached report.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Policy: None

Financial: None

Personnel: None

Equal Opportunities: None

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BUTE AND COWAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS
REPORT ON ACHIEVEMENTS 2007/08

INTRODUCTION

The Bute and Cowal area contains 14 primary schools:

- three with 200 to over 300 children;
- two with over 150 children; and
- nine with 20 to 100 children.

Nursery provision is well established within seven of these schools.

Because of a predominance of small schools in rather isolated rural areas the co-operative structure was established to provide:

‘Opportunity for staff to meet and share in strategic planning, share ideas, train together, reflect on best practice and to manage change in a collaborative way thus insuring rigour of educational improvement across all schools’.

The co-ordinator’s role is to:

- Facilitate and support new developments;
- Organise area based in-service;
- Facilitate primary / secondary and pre-5/P1 liaison;
- Represent the interests of the co-operatives and area;
- Maintain information flow between area managers, the Head of Service and the Quality Improvement Team;
- Act as a mentor for newly appointed head teachers.

This is accomplished through management of, and attendance at a series of annual meetings which include:

- Six head teacher meetings;
- Three pre-5 manager meetings;
- Two co-operative meetings;
- Three meetings with the Head of Service and Quality Improvement Team;
- Three meetings at the Cowal Children’s Forum. (Bute meetings are attended by a Bute H.T);
- Calling at individual schools when required.

Following head teacher and pre-5 manager meetings minutes are taken and collective agreements actioned by the co-ordinator.

The following report is about all schools in Bute and Cowal. Most statements apply to all schools, however some activities mentioned are specific to individual schools.

Information on which activity is specific to which school is available to councillors through the individual school Standards and Quality Reports.

COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AIMS 2007- 08

Continue to raise attainment in maths and language

Schools reviewed resources and made purchases which will support the development of language and mathematics in real contexts. A resource schools have viewed this session is produced by Edpax. This is a maths interactive resource which pupils can rub out, practice with and discuss. Children work collaboratively when using the material. It is a vast software package and teachers will take this year and some of next year to become skilled in its use.

To help establish high standards of written work, an area working group of P7 teachers and secondary staff was established to moderate P7 written work across schools. An authority moderation group will continue this work next session, selecting at random pieces of written work from across the authority. This work will be moderated and schools will receive feedback from the process.

Begin implementation of 'A Curriculum for Excellence'

Curriculum for Excellence is a huge national initiative containing fifteen national outcomes that schools must strive to achieve (Appendix 1). This year Bute and Cowal schools have begun implementation and made progress with a range of aspects, hitting directly on eight of the fifteen outcomes.

- 1) All staff have attended an authority managed in-service on Curriculum for Excellence. This has helped to raise awareness of new outcomes which are to lead our teaching and learning over the immediate and probably long term future.
- 2) This day linked with a locally managed in-service investigating approaches to working with pupils to encourage confidence, problem solving, discussion and development of pupil research skills. The method is called TASK. (Thinking Skills across the Curriculum)
- 3) Some schools have piloted or worked on Rich Task/ Interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning. This is also an authority led initiative directly beginning the implementation of

Curriculum for Excellence Outcomes in a way which requires pupils to:

- Research a current topic using a range of technologies;
- Organise and manage the material they collect;
- Negotiate with other people in the outside world plan, create and design;
- Evaluate, improve and present their findings.

Outcomes from this work have been impressive so far.

- 4) Assessment is for Learning has been a national programme of training implemented in schools over the last three years. All schools have worked on completing phase three of the programme. This has involved an area development of Personal Learning Planning formats. The pupils' personal learning plans will have been discussed with parents and will be sent home at the end of the school year. All schools have been engaged in an evaluation of where they are in terms of implementing the whole Assessment is for Learning Programme.
- 5) Having a smooth transition for pupils pre-5 to P1 and P7 to S1 is a major aspect of the delivery of a "Curriculum for Excellence"

Pre-5 to P1 One school within the area has been selected to pilot interesting practices which apply teaching and learning methodology used in the pre-5 sector to teaching and learning for P1 pupils. Other schools have partially developed good practice in this.

Pre-5 pupils are invited to joint P1's as part of induction processes and the pre-5 pupils share in and view school productions, such as an invitation to pre-5 children to view or take part in a nativity production.

Visits are made to pre-5 establishments by staff from receiving schools to ensure pupils are comfortable with the people they will be taught by. Smooth transition work will continue into next session.

P7 to S1 The transition practices developed and co-ordinated across all schools for our P7 pupils are extensive and commendable. They have included:

- Departmental liaison for:
 - An art link.
 - ICT link.
 - Language link.
 - One day P7 staff visits for information sharing and inservice.

- Visits by secondary school staff to the primary school from the guidance, mathematics, language and additional support needs (ASN) departments.
 - An initiative called the Vanguard Group for pupils with A.S.N;
 - Tri-annual liaison with between the primary and secondary co-ordinators to discuss and share operational information;
 - A Curriculum Link day for pupils for Science and PSD;
 - P7/S1 film making during the Easter holidays (Film may go national);
 - Residential Weekend for P7 pupils (Cowal);
 - After School transition club Home Economics, Art and Technical (Bute);
 - Breakfast clubs following swimming or boxersize;
 - Parent evening for parents at the secondary schools;
 - Three day induction programme;
 - Introduction of a blogging site for P7 pupils;
 - Joint disco for P7-S1 pupils.
- 6) As part of implementation of a Curriculum for Excellence and linked to the development of Personal Learning Plans, the authority has been piloting a revised reporting format. Two schools in Cowal have taken part in this initiative which is linked to the SEEMIS (Electronic Management of Information System). The new formats are more concise than those previously used. It is hoped other schools will use the revised forms next session.

Continue to implement the development of a Learning Culture.

Staff in all schools this session (teaching and non-teaching) have undertaken a needs analysis either through discussion with the Head teacher or via the authority Lana System. This has been followed by a Continuing Professional Development Interview.

The result of the process is attendance at a wide range of in-service events which are managed through the QIO and Co-ordinator systems, thus ensuring continued professional excellence within the work force.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| ▪ Curriculum for Excellence | all staff |
| ▪ TASK methodologies | all staff |
| ▪ Child Protection | all staff |
| ▪ Biannual Conference | head teachers |
| ▪ Small and Large School Conferences | head teachers |
| ▪ Development in the Early Years | head teachers and pre-5 |
| ▪ Management for head teachers in small schools | |
| ▪ Co-operative learning | many staff |
| ▪ Advanced Co-operative Learning | selected staff |
| ▪ Early Level Maths through play | |
| ▪ Early Level Science | |
| ▪ Raising attainment in mathematics | |

- Enriching emergent writing
- Programmable and remote control technology in the early years
- Enterprising your playground
- Health Promoting Schools
- Learning through play in the early years
- Art and Craft Development Day
- Meeting Pupil Needs selected staff
- Samba drumming selected staff
- Creativity selected staff
- MLPS Refresher Course
- Making the Primary School More Interesting
- Digital filming and editing
- The Web
- Probationers seminars 1 & 2
- ICT and numeracy
- ICT animation
- Working with interactive whiteboards
- Leadership certification selected staff
- Eco developments selected staff
- Health promotion selected staff
- Challenging the more able pupil selected staff
- Meeting Pupils Needs : Autism
- ICT and Dyslexia selected staff
- Alert selected staff
- A Positive Approach to Children's Behaviour
- Meeting pupils needs ADHD

In total 350 staff attended at least two or more courses and, in addition, Child Protection Training.

Twilight events at a local level have enabled collaborative practice to take place between staff from differing schools. The following proved very successful and directly benefited learning and teaching for our children:

- Art Activities at Benmore
- Kodaly, three sessions, resulting in the implementation of an exciting music programme in schools for all our children
- ICT and the SNH site access
- Edpax and the interactive white board
- French keeping it alive in classrooms
- Behaviour Management
- Bute Landscapes Focus Group
- Restorative Practice
- Promethean/Smartboard Training
- Ollie the Enterprising Octopus

Implement accreditation for the Health Promoting School's project.

Health Promotion is a National and Authority priority. All of schools have taken this area of education very seriously over many years. Meals and the importance of good nutrition are discussed at pupil, parent and staff level. Outside agencies, the Health Board, dental hygienist and school nurse visit all schools annually, delivering health promotion messages and curriculum activities. This important work has been ongoing for so long in Bute and Cowal that when the government created an accredited Health Promotion School Programme to be implemented by Dec 2007 I have pleasure in informing you that 8 out of our 14 schools engaged immediately at the highest level, level 3 and achieved it.

Of those schools who engaged at level 2, six will become accredited at level 3 by next session.

A number of particular health promotion events this session have resulted from partnership with FUSIONS, Active Schools and liaison with the PE specialists Mary Galloway, Fiona McLean and Jane Sinclair. They have included:

- A football coaching scheme which culminated in a joint school football match to launch the opening of the new astro-turf pitch at Innellan Primary School.
- Two to three formal Health Promotion Days/week in each Primary School
- Out of hours clubs including Shinty and an 8 week outdoor learning programme at Benmore
- Volleyball Tournament (P7)
- Safe Kids a partnership with police colleagues
- Police sports and 5- a-side annual event
- Cycle proficiency courses in each school
- Orienteering at Glenbranter (P6)
- Swimming blocks for every P6 –P7 pupil
- Extra swimming for pupils with A.S.N.
- Celebration of walk to school week.
- A joint school orienteering event
- A fizzy programme for pupils with A.S.N.
- All school Pupil Councils received £200 from FUSIONS to put to health promotion development.
- Healthy school tuck shops
- After school emotional literacy group
- Choices for Life (Glasgow)
- Daily tooth brushing programme
- Increased P.E. within the curriculum
- Playground games development
- Smoothie making and selling
- Healthy Eating Cafe
- Breakfast clubs
- Sunhat purchases for pupils

- High viz waistcoats to encourage walking to school
- Participation in National Smile week and visits to the dentist
- Cyber Safety Seminars (A community event managed by the Police)
- Gardening Club P4,5) held at Ardnahein, Home for the Elderly
- Invitation to Kilmory - Excellence as a Health Promoting School
- Weekly riding for the Learning Centre
- Supporting Fair Trade
- Heartstart training
- Nick Nairn visited Bute during 'eatBute08' encouraging the island to use locally produced produce, he offered tips on how school meals could be improved
- Visitors promoting a Healthy Living Initiative and Healthy eating

Support the authority in establishing parent councils

To date all schools in Bute and Cowal have established new Parent Councils and these have their new constitutions in place. Most councils are now inputting their views as to next years improvement planning requirements.

ATTAINMENT

Attainment is measured by applying National Assessments in English and Mathematics to recognise progress pupils make. The progress is benchmarked with 17 other authorities (consortium) at Levels A through to E.

Within Bute and Cowal results are notable:

2005	Bute&Cowal	Authority	Consortium
Reading	84	83	81
Writing	81	78	74
Mathematics	84	84	84
2006			
Reading	84	84	83
Writing	82	80	76
Mathematics	86	86	85
2007			
Reading	86	84	83
Writing	82	78	76
Mathematics	89	85	85

SUCSESSES AND ACHIEVEMENT

Parent Partnership

Some schools have merged PTA and Parent Councils and others have kept these remits separate. Partnership with parents is a strength in all local schools and permeates activities related within this report. School dances and sports are managed within the context of this partnership. Of particular note is the parental and staff efforts in ensuring library books are available. The cuts over recent years have meant that schools can no longer afford to restock library book provision. All schools with help from parents do this through liaison with a commercial company called Scholastic. Every book sold earns a book. It is this work which now fully stocks our school libraries.

It is of further interest to note how pro-active all of the primary schools in Bute and Cowal are in making use of both the local environment and in planning and self funding out of school educational experiences.

The following is a list of places visited this year which have required transportation of pupils out with their schools, fund raising and parental support:

- Benmore Gardens: who provide an education day for pupils P1 – P7
- Ardentinnny Beach with National Park Wardens
- Auchindrain: where a special day provided opportunity for pupils to have hands on experience of Gaelic waulking and activity, organic gardening in the historic kailyard, blacksmith demonstration, spinning demonstration and activity and opportunity to see a working Clydesdale horse
- Oban Sea Life Centre
- Glasgow BBC Centre
- Glasgow Science Centre
- Finlaystone Park
- Amazonia
- Tall Yachts
- Vikingar
- Visit to Paris to meet with a partner school
- Day Visit Forestry Commission 'Leave without a trace'
- Kelvin Art Galleries
- Ardentinnny/Toward Outdoor Centres
- Dalguise, Perthshire – weekend activities for P5,6 & 7s
- Geology Field Trip
- Edinburgh Science Festival
- School visit to Chemical Connections
- Three day cultural/social visit to Stirling
- Greenock – arrival of the QE2
- Celtic Connections
- Glenbranter Forest
- Post Office
- Standard Office

- P7 Cross Country Championship Inverclyde
- Funworld, Greenock and Cinema

Out of school trips have been complemented by a range of visitors to schools. This session this has included:

- Pantomime performances from the Hopscotch Theatre
- Visits from the Glasgow Science Circus
- Presentations from the Loch Lomond National Park Wardens
- Introduction to P1 – 3 of the Dundee Daily Physical Activity Pack by the Active Schools Co-ordinator
- Chemical Connections a link with Edinburgh Chemistry Department
- Fiddle Workshops
- RSPB Birdwatch
- Participation in the Big Draw connection
- Enterprise week : fireman, doctor, policeman, local businessman, hotelier etc

ECO Schools

All schools within Bute and Cowal are aspiring to become, or are maintaining themselves as ECO friendly schools. The ECO schools programme is designed to promote environmental awareness and to raise the profile of the school within the local community. It is an accredited scheme. It takes two years to gain an ECO flag and schools can only retain their ECO status if they succeed in gaining four flags. A new project has to be undertaken each year and some projects have to become embedded in school activity.

ECO projects have been very diverse and include:

- Monitoring paper collection
- Litter picking
- Recycling plastics, glass, paper and card
- Monitoring the use of electricity and switching off lights
- Composting
- Organic gardening/Working with Beechgrove Garden and the secondary school to create a 'Grow our own vegetable garden'
- Creation of an orchard
- Art activities which express the importance of sustainability
- Inviting different agencies in to talk about environmental issues e.g. National Park
- Purchase of outdoor clothing for working outside
- Emphasising the importance of plant and animal protection through the curriculum.
- The practice of using the environment in a careful and considerate way
- Fund raising to support endangered species
- Pupil presentation of important ECO messages to parents.

- Development of play areas within the community as part of school / community partnership work
- Money raising for the Hedgehog Preservation Society
- Gardening sessions with Parent Volunteers
- Mini beast studies
- Sunflower Competitions
- Caring for indoor plants
- Presentations from Alienergy
- Horticultural Show Entries by Gardening Club
- Growing our own potatoes and vegetables for soup
- Beach clean
- Friday ECO club
- Mount Stuart Ranger – Wild life Crime

Three schools have one or more Green Flags all other schools have bronze or silver and are working towards their first Green Flag.

Scottish Country Dancing Partnership

Each year Cowal Primary Schools link with the Scottish Country Dance organisation. Members of the organisation work with school pupils teaching a range of Scottish Dances. The training session is then celebrated by a coming together of all Primary Schools to produce a Dance Festival. Children are given an opportunity to show off what they have learned to their parents and invited members of the public.

Samba Drumming across all schools

At the beginning of the session Bute and Cowal schools had a small amount of Enterprise funding held by the Area Co-ordinator. It was agreed to match this funding into money available through the Cultural Co-ordinator budget. This enabled the provision of Samba Drumming workshops for all schools, sets of Samba Drums for local schools and training of at least one person in each school to ensure continued development of this exciting musical experience.

A selected number of pupils had the opportunity to attend a concert in Glasgow joining the Beats of Brazil in an exciting Samba Drumming presentation.

Charity Work

Bute and Cowal schools have donated to the following charities this session.

- Sports relief
- MacMillan Cancer Research
- Children in Need
- Kings Court
- Blythwood Shoe Box Appeal

- Ragbag Collections
- Age concern
- British Heart Foundation
- Actionaid – Child Poverty day
- Sponsored event by parents to support Meningitis and Septicemia research
- Poppy Day collections
- National Doodle Day (Epilepsy)
- Children’s Hospice Association (CHAS)
- Yorkhill Children’s Hospital (Rainbow Group)
- Cowal Hospice
- Royal Scottish Country Dance Society
- Maggie’s Caring Cancer Centre, Glasgow (£2000)
- Leukaemia Research £1185
- Scottish International Aid Fund
- RNLI
- Range of local Bute Charities
- Robin’s Play Frame
- Calum’s Cabin
- Spirit Aid
- Red Cross
- Breast Cancer Care*
- Scottish International Relief*
- Bute’s Children in Need*
- Sciaf*
- Anthony Nolan Trust * (1716.89)

Residential Weekend and visits

As part of Cowal’s P7 transition programme the residential weekend managed by Mary Galloway is very worthy of note. This weekend provides all pupils in P7 with an opportunity to meet and live with pupils who they will be working with throughout their first year at the Grammar School. Mrs Galloway gains funding through a range of grants and the pupils pay a small contribution. During the weekend the pupils not only mix socially with each other, they also interact in problem solving activities and challenges. On Bute P7 residential experiences have included visits to Stirling, Edinburgh, Paris and Castle Toward.

Rich Tasks

Although piloted at present in only a few schools the outcomes of the Rich Tasks are impressive. Pupil presentations to parents have been lively, enterprising, creative, packed full of fascinating information and provided parents with a useful insight into the depth of learning intergrated into the use of modern technologies.

School Community Partnerships

All schools within Bute and Cowal have very good community links. The depth of the links vary from year to year depending on initiatives current at the time.

An annually maintained link by all schools is through dramatic performance and fayres.

This year schools have presented the following major productions:

- Carol services linked to nativity presentations
- Singing at the opening of the Christmas Lights in Dunoon
- Choir, Guitar club and instrumental presentation at Rothesay Pavilion
- Christmas concerts with varying presentations within schools
- Choir Christmas Service in St John's
- Spring Concert
- Halloween and Spring Disco
- Christmas Fayre
- Carol Service in Sandbank Church
- Choir presentation in the Inverek home for the elderly
- Summer concerts

One primary school is currently involved with the designing and fund raising for a Community Regeneration Programme. Schools also work with the Police and Community Council in running Anti-Vandalism campaigns. Two schools directly participate in an annual community Gala Day. Another school is currently working with the community and National Park at weekends to create an outdoor classroom, polytunnel/gardening shop, and bog garden. Next year they hope to be enterprising in adding a bird nesting box with a solar powered wireless camera in order that children can watch the occupants of the box live from a computer.

A camera club has been initiated to which members of the community are invited.

Pupils have presented views to community councils on their views of what is required as part of a 'Futures Reviews'

Other partnerships both within the community and beyond include:

- Partnership in Ardentinnny Snowdrop event
- Village Hall productions and coffee mornings
- Choir presentations re Marshall Court and Fountain Quay
- Hosting afternoon tea for the elderly
- Links with children in Malawi and fund raising to support Malawi pupils
- Cyber Safety Seminars (Police partnership)
- Non-Uniform Days
- Pyjama Day

- Tracksuit & Trainer day (announcement of 2014 Commonwealth Games)
- Easter Bonnet Parade
- Partnerships with individual members of the community who come into school on a voluntary basis to share their expertise with pupils
- Working with reps and video makers from the tourist information service to help produce information about the town
- Working with a professional accountant to help set up financing procedures for income earned by pupils
- Working with PTA and Polish community to host a family Scottish/Polish social evening

Forest Enterprise Partnership

For the last three years a Forest Education initiative has been co-ordinated. This has involved a 'Green Woodworking Group' visiting all schools over the three years engaging with children in how important our woods and forests are and providing first hand experience of the uses wood can be put to. Next year we plan to move on to engaging all Bute and Cowal schools, on a rotation schedule, in a Forest School programme. Through partnership with the EEBL (Excellence in Education Business Link) we are currently negotiating cover funding for every teacher to receive an introduction to the Forest School ideology and some training which will enable them to embed this ideology into the Curriculum. This will also help to consolidate the work taking place with selected pupils on the Forest School programme.

Enhancing Language Skills and associated Partnerships

Over the last four to five years schools have established a partnership with the Association of Speakers Clubs. In September pupils put together a speech they present to their peers. The best presentation is selected and members of the Speakers club then come into schools to train these pupils prior to selecting a finalist for the Local Area Speech Competition event. Finalists from this event enter a joint regional event with others from across the water.

The partnership provides a focus for improvement of all P6/7 pupils speaking skills.

Other events schools annually participate in are:

- National Poetry Day
- World Book Day
- National Poetry Writing Competition
- Visits from Professional Story Tellers

Winners from the latter of these events have their poems published in a book which is circulated to all schools in Scotland.

Gaelic Provision

Gaelic provision within our area has now developed to cover the seven stages within the Primary Sector and the first year of Secondary education. Next session there will be thirty seven pupils studying through the medium of Gaelic.

Owing to the importance of Gaelic for students an opportunity to mix with other Gaelic speaking individuals and gather experience of the Gaelic culture outwith school is very important. To ensure the development of this opportunity the pupils have participated in:

- Singing and reciting at our local Gaelic Ceilidh
- Gaelic singing and reciting in the Inverreck Eventide Home
- Exchanges with other Gaelic Units including school site visits and trips to Glasgow BBC and Science Centre
- Small productions by a Gaelic Choir for an Adult Gaelic Learning Group from Glasgow
- Participation in a Drama Feis in Oban
- A mini Gaelic Sports day in Oban

Every school bustles with activity all year round. I am sure that all councillors would be more than welcome to call in on any day to have a tour round. It is probable, with the number of events, as described, taking place, one or other activity will be in progress at the moment of your visit.

APPENDIX 1.

The Fifteen National Outcomes

• We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.	Enterprise Partnerships
• We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.	Links with community and the world of work
• We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation	Co-ordinator presentation and attainment
• Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens	Permeating theme and performance
• We live longer, healthier lives	Health and active school partnership activity
• We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society	Charity work , Additional Support Needs services
• We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk	Health and active schools work, links with social services and police
• We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger	Police and community partnership activity
• We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need	Community partnership and ECO activities
• We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others	Community council/parent council/school links
• We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations	ECO and Curriculum content
• We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity	School visits Local based projects Rich tasks
• We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production	ECO
• Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.	Multi – agency work and Community Partnership.