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**REPORT BY POLICY LEAD FOR EDUCATION, & LIFELONG LEARNING**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This is my first Policy Lead Report on Education and Lifelong Learning and it covers the period from May to December 2015.
- 1.2 Since my appointment, several new changes to the delivery of Education have developed; principally, the Education (Scotland) Bill now moving to stage 2 and the announcement of the new national Improvement Framework.

Key issues which the Council will have to address include new duties to raise attainment and address education inequalities, further extensions to entitlement for early education and childcare, and the provision of Gaelic Medium Education.

While several urban authorities have received substantial financial assistance from the national attainment fund of £100m, in regard to raising attainment to date, Argyll and Bute's allocation has been around £20K for one school. We await judgement on how our remote and rural deprivation, which includes 2000 pupils in Island locations, will be addressed. The inclusion of the National Improvement Framework (NIF), as part of the Bill, includes proposals for standardised testing and reporting in primaries 1, 4, 7 and S3, which may well lead to a significant change in Scottish Education; possibly the most significant since the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence. It is perhaps worth noting one of the Governments ambitions within the NIF is to achieve an Equity of Service to ensure every child has the same opportunity to succeed.

In addition to the above challenges, Developing Scotland's' Young Workforce and the provision of Early Learning and Childcare to 1140 hours, will all need additional resources to be identified from an already fully committed budget. The detail included in the body of this report demonstrates the commitment and dedication of Education Services personnel to maintaining and building on the high standards already achieved.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Council note the report.

**3. DETAIL**

### **3.1 LEARNING & TEACHING**

#### **3.1.1 Attainment Challenge**

The “Scottish Attainment Challenge” aims to raise the attainment of children and young people living in deprived areas, in order to close the equity gap. It is an initiative to drive forward improvements in educational outcomes to ensure that everyone is encouraged to be the best they can be.

Within Argyll and Bute Council, the Attainment Challenge focusses on “aiming for excellence and improving outcomes for Argyll and Bute learners” in order to close the equality gap for all children and young people. Within Argyll and Bute, deprivation must not only be seen as based on identified deprived communities but needs also to address rural deprivation.

The strategy for improving learning outcomes will focus on the 6 key drivers identified by Scottish Government as areas which will have the biggest impact on “closing the gap”:-

- Increase the ambition, aspiration and expectations of every child and young person;
- Delivering excellent learning and teaching in every classroom, every day;
- Developing effective leadership at all levels;
- Engaging family and wider community;
- Focusing on literacy and numeracy as platforms on which to build future learning; and
- Using information intelligently to understand progress.

Within Argyll and Bute there has been considerable work undertaken in each key driver area to establish a secure foundation for any new developments during session 2015/16.

During session 2015/16, the following key drivers will be the main focus for new developments:-

- Developing effective leadership at all levels;
- Focusing on literacy and numeracy as platforms on which to build future learning; and
- Using information intelligently to understand progress.

#### **3.1.2 Attainment Challenge in the Primary Sector**

A programme of initial engagement with the attainment challenge began in September 2015.

From September to December all Primary Schools took part in an initial scoping day held centrally. Schools will then focus on developing a baseline starting point.

Schools will be supported by the Education Team to undertake a scoping

exercise to determine the attainment status within each school utilising the current data and evidence held within each establishment.

The priority of focus will be on literacy and numeracy.

## **3.2 INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

### **3.2.1 Kodu Cup Success**

Kodu is a game application developed by Microsoft to introduce young people to computer games design. The visual programming language allows students to design and build 3 dimensional games. Kodu helps young people to learn the core concepts of computer science through a project approach which includes narrative writing, design and maths. In 2014/15 Argyll and Bute had 3 schools in the Scottish Kodu final; Dunoon Primary, Cardross Primary and Rosneath Primary. Dunoon Primary School was crowned overall winners of the Scottish competition and impressed the judges with their computer game, presentation, business case and marketing plan. The school went on to attend and win the UK Kodu final at Microsoft Headquarters: the first Scottish school to win the overall category of the UK competition.

### **3.2.2 School Website Developments**

The project to provide schools with the opportunity to upgrade and refresh their school website, using the same website content management system used by the Council's website continues to be progressed. Over 50 schools have now migrated to the new website system. The project will continue until all registered schools are using the new system. The Council web team are continuing to provide training and support to our schools.

### **3.2.3 MS Lync**

Initial feedback from the pilot project at Tarbert Academy to introduce MS Lync into the school has been very positive and the school continues to use the system successfully. The school has made innovative use of the system to enable them to deliver education to young people whilst at home due to ill-health or inclement weather.

If the approach is evaluated positively, all education establishments will be moved onto a new education domain. This project will bring a number of benefits to schools such as improved reliability, compliance with Asset Management Policy and improved collaborative working opportunities. The domain extension project will be trialled with 2 secondary schools and 5 primary schools.

### **3.2.4 Ipad Project**

Colgrain Primary School is undertaking a project to measure if iPads can help to improve pupils' literacy abilities. A member of the Educational Psychology team has completed a base line assessment of pupils using the York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC). There are two classes involved in this project; a class with iPads and a control group. The control group class will be given the opportunity to use the iPads after

the project has concluded. The project is progressing well and the pupils are enjoying using the iPads in all aspects of their learning. The project is due to run until the end of March 2016 when a re-assessment of pupils reading abilities will take place.

### **3.2.5 School Projects**

On Saturday 23th May 2015 Dunoon Grammar School hosted a very successful pupil led technology showcase event aimed at Cowal primary school pupils. This event was attended by 150 pupils and parents and provided an opportunity for young people to showcase their technology expertise. A similar event will run in the Helensburgh area during session 15-16.

### **3.2.6 Modern Apprenticeships**

The Education Learning Technologies Team is pleased to confirm the appointment of 2 young people under the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme. The young people will be based in Dunoon and Helensburgh and will initially focus on iPad support and helping to establish school computing clubs. The apprenticeships will last for a period of two years during which time the young people will complete a Diploma in IT and Telecommunications.

## **3.3 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION**

### **3.3.1 Headteacher Conference**

In September 2015 Head Teachers in Argyll and Bute attended an event in Inveraray with a focus on leadership development under the following themes:

- The Traits, Characteristics and Skills Associated with High Performing School Leaders;
- Civic Leadership and Leading Beyond remit;
- The Scottish College for Educational Leadership's Framework for Professional Development, and
- Leading with Courage.

A variety of contributors enhanced the event including Professor Clive Dimmock (Cambridge and Glasgow Universities), Iain White (Principal at Newlands Junior High), Sir Andrew Cubie (Author of the Cubie Report on funding in Higher Education) and John Daffurn from the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL).

At this event, Head Teachers were introduced to a model of leadership development which aims to focus leadership development opportunities from the student and probationer teacher experiences through to the highest level. As well as being asked for feedback, Head Teachers were also consulted on how we now move forward with educational leadership in Argyll and Bute. This data has now been gathered and compiled and will be used to inform next steps.

Attendance at the event was very high and feedback extremely positive.

### **3.3.2 Early Career Leadership Development**

Teacher Leadership has been incorporated into the Post Graduate Certificate in Education Programme, being delivered in partnership, between Argyll and Bute and Argyll College, University of Highlands and Islands. The input this year consists of a seminar and workshops exploring the definition and interpretations of teacher leadership as well as the skills, characteristics and traits associated with teacher leadership. This draws upon current knowledge and a range of recent academic papers.

Teacher Leadership has been incorporated into Argyll and Bute's Teacher Induction Scheme programme. Input this year takes the shape of a seminar, workshops and reflective sessions around how we develop and use teacher leadership for the good of all members of the school community.

### **3.3.3 Mentor network**

A network of probationer supporters has been established with a focus on mentoring newly qualified teachers and employing the principles of coaching to enhance professional development discussions. The network will meet twice a year to explore further coaching techniques and facilitate peer support. The aims of the network are to further enhance the support given to newly qualified teachers as well as to develop these leadership qualities in supporters.

### **3.3.4 Middle Leadership Network**

This network was established this year by an Argyll and Bute Head Teacher currently undertaking the Scottish College of Educational Leadership (SCEL) Fellowship Programme. It consists of eight non-promoted teachers from primary and secondary schools in Argyll and Bute who meet regularly to explore leadership theory and its applications to their practice. Each member of the network is leading aspects of their school's improvement agenda and the network provides them with the professional knowledge to take these aspects forward, as well as peer and mentor support. Feedback from participants so far has been very positive.

### **3.3.5 Argyll and Bute's Educational Leadership Programme**

This new programme was established this year. It is aimed at teachers who currently lead aspects of their school or who are seeking to lead. It has been designed to fit neatly with University of Highland and Islands (UHI) Masters Programme as well as Into Headship (the new national qualification for Head Teachers) so that successful candidates can use the Argyll and Bute Educational Leadership Programme as relevant prior learning when applying for either of these two development routes. A cohort of 22 teachers is currently half way through the first programme and feedback from participants, so far, has been very positive.

### **3.3.6 Into Headship**

The new national qualification for Head Teachers (Into Headship) is being delivered in partnership, between SCEL, Local Education Authorities and University Providers. The programme is in its first year and Argyll and Bute are working with UHI to deliver training to 6 candidates. Argyll and Bute

provide candidates with access to network events, coaches and a Head Teacher mentor.

### **3.3.7 SCEL Fellowship Programme**

SCEL completed its inaugural Fellowship Programme for serving Head Teachers this year and launched its second cohort. Argyll and Bute currently has one SCEL Fellow and another currently undertaking the programme. As part of the programme, successful candidates have to take forward an aspect of wider leadership development and demonstrate the impact this has. As a result two schools within Argyll and Bute have established clear pathways for developing teacher leadership and a Middle Leadership Network has been established. In addition, two staff members have been asked to submit and present a paper at the forthcoming International Congress for School and Educational Improvement (ICSEI 2016) as a direct result of involvement in the Fellowship Programme.

### **3.3.8 SCEL Framework for Professional Development**

In recent months, SCEL has rolled out a new Framework for Professional Development. This tool is aimed at all pre-school workers and teachers to help them further develop leadership skills in their contexts. A Development Officer from SCEL is delivering a series of training sessions in the use of the tool in the coming weeks.

## **3.4 SHARED HEADSHIPS**

### **3.4.1** The shared headship policy continues to be active in our schools and in January 2016 the following shared headships will be in place:

Carradale and Drumlemble Primary Schools  
Small Isles and Keills Primary Schools  
Luing and Easdale Primary Schools  
Minard and Furnace Primary Schools  
Clachan and Skipness Primary Schools  
Craignish and Kilninver Primary Schools  
Glassary and Tayvallich Primary Schools  
Lochdonhead and Ulva Primary Schools  
Innellan and Toward Primary Schools  
Achahoish and Kilmartin Primary Schools  
Rhunahaorine and Gigha Primary Schools  
St Andrew's and St Mun's Primary Schools  
Inveraray and Dalmally Primary School  
Strone and Kilmodan Primary Schools

The Shared Headship Head Teachers meet with the Education Manager Learning and Achievement on a regular basis this has allowed a continual review of the process for Shared Headships and the impact on learning & teaching. The impact to date has been very positive with all Head Teachers acknowledging an improvement in the leadership of teaching and learning and a greater emphasis on their ability to monitor the progress of young people.

### 3.5 SCHOOL ESTATE

#### 3.5.1 Capital Investment

Significant capital investment in the school estate has continued over this year. Programmed works have taken place in a number of schools including: Ardrishaig, Bowmore, Castlehill, Clachan, Colgrain, Dalintober, Glassary, John Logie Baird, Kilcreggan, Kilmodan, Lismore, Park, Parklands, Port Charlotte, Rosneath, Salen, Islay High, and Tarbert.

**Campbeltown Grammar** – Stage 1 approval has been received. The Council is working closely with the hubNorth design team to bring the project to a Stage 2 Close, with Commercial and Financial Close on the project programmed for February 2016. Work on site will follow shortly after Close.

**Oban High** – Stage 1 approval has been received. The Council is working closely with the hubNorth design team to bring the project to a Stage 2 Close, with Commercial and Financial Close on the project programmed for February 2016. Work on site will follow shortly after Close.

**Kirn Primary** – Stage 1 approval has been received. The Council is working closely with the hubNorth design team to bring the project to a Stage 2 Close, with Commercial Close on the project programmed for February 2016. Work on site will follow shortly after Close.

**Dunoon Primary** School refurbishment. The overall cost of the project is currently estimated at £7.4M. Since the funding award was announced, the refurbishment of Dunoon Primary School has received official Scottish Government status as a Pilot Refurbishment Project. The Scottish Government (represented by Dr Alastair Allan, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages) launched a Guide to Refurbishment in Dunoon Primary School on 2 September. I was delighted to attend this event with Councillor Walsh and officers; and to speak with the Minister about the pilot project. The next meeting with Historic Scotland and hubNorth design team is scheduled to take place in late January.

### 3.6 DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE

3.6.1 Argyll and Bute Council's Lead Officer for Developing Young Workforce and Education Scotland worked together with partners such as Generation Science, Young Enterprise Scotland, Young Engineer, Skills Development Scotland and Close the Gap to host a conversation day in Lochgilphead on 20<sup>th</sup> May, involving 10 schools and 78 pupils from local primary schools.

The event for teachers, pupils and practitioners aimed to start conversations about career ideas much earlier in young people's education and to show the variety of choices that are open to them. Through hands on workshops and activities, the primary pupils were able make the

connection between their learning, at the event and in class, to the world of work.

It is hoped that there will be a presentation from Skills Development Scotland at a future Community Services Committee meeting.

### **3.7 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL (O4A)**

#### **3.7.1 Sharing Good Practice Event – September 2015**

On 10 September 2015 the Opportunities for All Team, in partnership with Youth Services, ran an event that brought together 40 partners from various organisations including Skills Development Scotland, Argyll College UHI, Jobcentre Plus, WorkingRite, Young Carers and many more. The focus of the event was to bring together members from local Opportunities for All groups and give them the opportunity to highlight and share good practice in their own area and get help or support from other areas on barriers they may be facing. The event was very well received by all and through the evaluation process it has been established that there is a will to make this an annual event.

#### **3.7.2 Argyll and Bute Summer Internship Programme – 2015**

Following on from the success of the 2014 Summer Internship Programme the Opportunities for All team set out to further improve the opportunity for young people to participate. A total of 7 young people were put forward and of those, 3 successfully completed their placement and 2 of these young people returned to school. A special “thank you” must go to the all of the Council departments which became involved in the programme; and especially to the staff who mentored / supported the interns (in Fleet, Early Years, Transport, and Leisure).

### **3.8 PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES**

#### **3.8.1 Validated Self Evaluation update**

As outlined at the Community Services Committee on 12 June 2015, Education Scotland undertook a process of Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) with all Scottish Educational Psychology Services.

In consultation with a national reference group and the wider educational psychology profession, Education Scotland identified two key themes, which will guide the selection of key areas to be explored through VSE.

These are:-

- **Learning and teaching**, exploring EPS contribution to learning and teaching with a focus on raising attainment and achievement for all and closing the poverty-related attainment gap, and
- **Partnership working/Impact on the wider community** to capture Health and Wellbeing, Getting it Right for Every Child and partnership working.



The VSE process took place in Argyll and Bute over October / November 2015. Within Argyll and Bute, the following themes were explored by the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) and partners.

<b>VSE National Themes</b>	<b>Argyll and Bute Focus</b>	<b>Focus of the VSE process</b>
<b>Learning &amp; Teaching</b>	Impact of EPS on addressing literacy difficulties	To review the impact of the EPS on the implementation of the Reading Initiative and to clarify the EPS role moving forward to improve outcomes for learners
<b>Partnership working</b>	Impact of EPS in early intervention at the early years	To evaluate the impact of the EPS involvement in the roll out of the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) curriculum across ELCC and primary schools

Themed groups were established to allow educational psychologists to work in partnership with education colleagues and partner agencies to undertake a programme of self-evaluation under the two themes. The activity was aimed at informing next steps for both PATHS and Literacy developments, as well as forming part of the ongoing process of continuous improvement for the EPS.

The initial engagement between Roslyn Redpath, Nicola Robertson, Lead Facilitator from Education Scotland, and Ann Marie Knowles took place on 29 September 2015.

The first full briefing and discussion took place on Wednesday 7 October 2015 and was attended by Ann Marie Knowles, the EPS team, members of the central education team and thematic group members across education and partner agencies. This was a very constructive meeting with the commitment and quality of engagement of the EPS, education staff and partners commented on positively by Nicola Robertson.

During the week of focused activity (w/b 2 November 2015), Nicola Robertson, Lead Officer, and two Associated Assessors, Jacqui Ward and Paula Dudgeon (currently employed as principal psychologists in other Scottish local authorities) joined with the themed groups to undertake self-evaluation activity.

During the VSE week, in order to ensure that the process helps to close the gap between where we are now and where we want to be and assess our capacity for improvement, the EPS aimed to ensure:-

- there was a reflection of the EPS team's commitment to self-evaluation;
- an appropriate range of activity planned;

- a full and appropriate range of stakeholders involved;
- a range of evidence explored;
- strong evaluative questions asked;
- there was appropriate challenge, and
- there was a sustained focus on outcomes for children and young people.

During the sharing of learning from this process, the EPS, partners and the Education Scotland team agreed that these aims had been met. The Education Scotland team confirmed that the service's self-evaluation had been validated.

Education Scotland will produce a short, written report that will be published on Education Scotland's website around the end of January 2016. Argyll and Bute EPS will also produce a report on the experience and outcome of the VSE activity that will be made available on Argyll and Bute's website. Formal feedback will be provided to elected members by the EPS at the Community Services Committee in March 2016.

A number of features contributed to the success of the service's engagement with the process of VSE, including:

- The psychological service's commitment to ongoing self-evaluation over time;
- The chosen themes reflecting a point in time on the service's self-evaluation journey;
- Willing and reflective engagement by partners across education, social work, health and community learning and development;
- Rigorous preparation in advance of the week of focused activity;
- A range of well planned, meaningful self-evaluation activities taking place;
- The preparation of effective documentation to support the process, and
- Rigorous support and challenge from colleagues within the Education Scotland team.

### **3.8.2 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) delivered by Psychological Service**

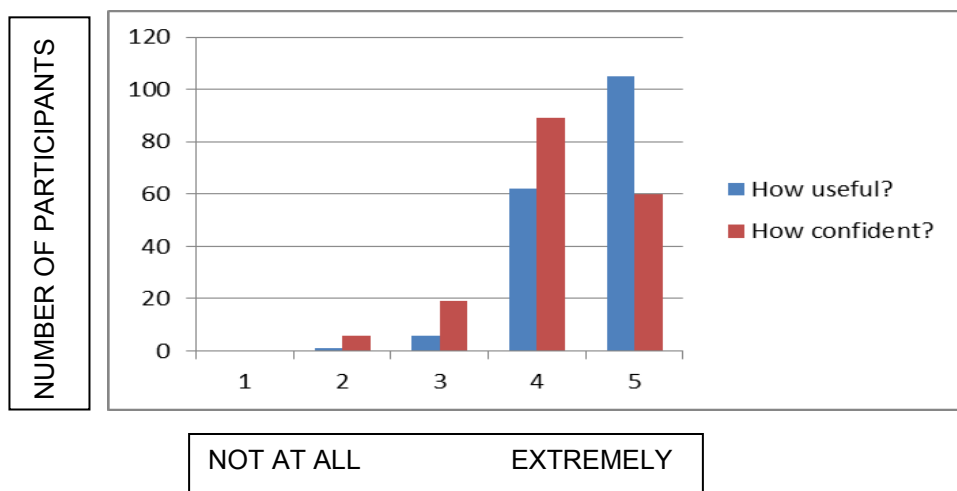
A wide range of staff development is delivered by educational psychologists to increase staff skill and confidence to meet the needs of children and young people in an effective way. The staff development activity delivered this session has included:

- Contribution to the launch of the Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Guidance;
- Attachment in the early years;
- Attachment theory;
- Autism awareness;
- Autism Spectrum Disorder – An introduction;
- Bereavement in the school context;

- Professional development award for support staff;
- Child development; Role of support staff in support ASN;
- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Homunculi approach;
- Health and Wellbeing: A view from Health Psychology;
- Homunculi approach – introduction;
- Leading solution oriented meetings;
- Mental health in children and adolescents in the school context;
- Nurture group training;
- Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS);  
Solution Oriented approaches;
- The autism spectrum: The current state of knowledge and practice,  
and
- Working with children with additional support needs.

This staff development has predominantly been delivered to education and Early Years staff, however, training has also been provided to senior pupils, hostel staff and colleagues in social work and health services.

Staff development is evaluated using a questionnaire immediately after the training has been completed. There has also been a pilot this session, of follow up questionnaires to identify impact on practice. The results below are based upon the responses of 174 respondents over ten different training sessions who answered the following questions. The questions asked were: 1. “**How useful did you find this training?**” and 2. “**How confident are you that you will apply what you have learned from this training session?**” Participants were asked to mark their response to this using a Likert scale (1 – not at all useful/confident, 5 – extremely useful/confident). The results are in the table below.



Many positive comments were received, particularly on the interesting and informative content of the session. Participants also reported on the utility of the training content, e.g. “[it] gave me good ideas for working with young people”, “I have lots of children with whom I could use this programme”. In addition, participants talked about specific actions that they would be taking following the session, e.g. “... I now need to read the book to get some more ideas”, “[I will]...explore creating Homunculi characters to deal with difficult emotions and situations with a group of P4-7 pupils”. Suggestions

for improvement were largely around the practicalities of the session, including the room layout and the length of the session. In addition, one participant expressed a preference for an interactive training approach, while regarding the session content, several participants noted potential difficulties in implementation, e.g. *“I would like to [apply in my practice] however I don’t think I could fit into my working day/routine”*.

Both quantitative and qualitative data present a positive picture regarding the interesting and informative nature of training sessions provided by the EPS.

### **3.9 INCLUSION AND INTEGRATION**

#### **3.9.1 Additional Support Needs**

The ASN team have been supporting practice in the Learning Centres in Lochgilphead Joint Campus, Rockfield Primary and Dunoon Primary. Working with school practitioners, the staff are looking at existing good practice and suggesting ways in which this other practice can be improved.

As part of the ongoing ASN review, the two policy workstreams have produced draft policy documents on Staged Intervention and More Able pupils. The Staged Intervention policy will provide every educational establishment with an overarching framework for supporting pupils with additional support needs. It is hoped that following consultation, including with parents and pupils, these policies can be adopted as Education Service Policy early in 2016.

Once these policies have been adopted, the next two workstreams for policy development will be Learning Centres and Looked After Children. The former will be led by Gwen Gilmour, Head teacher, Parklands School and the latter will be led by Lena Carter, Education Support Officer ASN.

### **3.10 GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD (GIRFEC)**

#### **3.10.1 A new GIRFEC e-learning module has been launched to support practitioners in using GIRFEC. The module is in two parts. Part 1 has information on the practice model and Part 2 asks practitioners to reflect more deeply on this model and consider their own practice against it.**

To further support GIRFEC practice, a DVD resource has been produced to promote good practice in chairing Child’s Plan meetings.

The Area Principal Teachers continue to be trained as Education GIRFEC Advisers. This training develops the GIRFEC Advisers skills in supporting effective GIRFEC practice in schools, including provision of appropriate staff development and in advising head teachers on GIRFEC procedures and planning.

Work continues in engaging with SEEMIS to develop more advanced

electronic support for GIRFEC in order to reduce the time spent on paperwork and administrative tasks. An electronic plan has been developed which avoids the need for paper copies. Schools are also being trained on using SEEMIS more effectively to allow information to be shared electronically and reduce the need for paperwork.

### **3.11 CHILD PROTECTION**

- 3.11.1 A revised multi-agency course on Child Protection for Managers in Education, Social Work and Health has been introduced. This is presented by service leads from within these agencies.

### **3.12 EARLY YEARS SERVICES**

- 2.12.1 Delivery of localised training on Building the Ambition – national Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) practice guidance from the Children and Young People Act, as well as localised training for the Argyll and Bute Developmental Milestones Tool, resulting in a reach of 96% of ELCC settings. The Early Years Service CPD Programme won a bronze award for ‘Securing a Workforce for the Future’ as part of the Argyll and Bute Excellence Awards.

Early Years and Family Support Workers (EYFSW) delivered blocks of 6 weekly ‘Active Play’ sessions to engage families in early literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Activities were closely linked to ‘Play @ Home’ activities, enabling families to use these ideas for activities at home. EYFSW and Bookbug volunteers delivered 3465 Gaelic Bookbug and Bookbug sessions within each of the areas of Argyll and Bute. These sessions built confidence in early literacy skills for children and their parents. In addition to this, the EY Service delivered training to other agencies to support isolated families with Bookbug Assertive Outreach, resulting in bringing books, stories and rhymes to the homes of 12 families in one area of Argyll and Bute.

Development and testing of ‘Argyll and Bute Developmental Milestone Tool’ to support practitioners with the implementation of ‘Building the Ambition’- Early Learning and Childcare National Practice Guidance. The Developmental Milestone Tool was shared by Education Scotland through its ‘Early Years Matters’ magazine, referring to it as, ‘A comprehensive approach offering support to educators to understand how the different national frameworks connect together, with the aim of improving their confidence to see significant learning within the ‘whole’ child.’ The Developmental Milestone Tool won a gold award for ‘Service Innovation and Improvement’ as part of the Argyll and Bute Excellence Awards.

### **3.13 PROVIDING ALTERNATIVE THINKING STRATEGIES (PATHS)**

### **3.13.1 Background**

In partnership with Psychological Services, training to 20 settings in the use of PAThS has been delivered. This programme supports settings to build emotional literacy in children within Pre5. In addition to this, Early Years and Family Support Workers worked in partnership with Health Family Support Workers to deliver 'Roots of Empathy' within 10 primary schools. An evaluation of the programme was carried out and impact was shared at an evaluation session in June 2015. All schools commented on the positive impact of this programme on children's emotional literacy.

Twenty local authority settings and 10 commissioned provider settings accessed 'Sharing Practice' funding in 2014-2015, with approximately 100 practitioners participating in sharing practice activity. One practitioner stated: *'The visit has made me evaluate my own practice regarding the content of our Learning Journey folders'*. Another practitioner stated: *'The visit has helped with how we implement the Developmental Milestone Tool and also Numeracy.'*

### **3.13.2 Early Years Service Developments**

The Early Years Service has worked in partnership with Customer Services to increase and improve a number of local authority Early Learning and Childcare settings. Ardrishaig Family Learning Centre opened its doors in September 2015, offering English and Gaelic ELCC sessions in the morning and Family Learning activities in the afternoon. Dalintober opened a new 'Family Learning' room in August which will provide a cosy space for family learning in the Campbeltown area. This complements existing family learning provision in both Oban and Helensburgh.

### **3.13.3 Community Childminding Service**

The Community Childminding Service continues to provide crisis intervention, assisting parents alongside partner agencies when families may be experiencing illness or other complex needs. During session 2014-15, the Community Childminding Service supported 103 children aged under 5 across Argyll and Bute.

### **3.13.4 Children and Young People Act 2014**

As part of the Children and Young People Act 2014, Early Learning and Childcare provision was extended to two year olds whose families were entitled to free school meals as of August 2015. The Early Years Service carried out a scoping exercise to ensure there was sufficient ELCC provision for this new cohort of eligible two year olds across Argyll and Bute. As part of this process, the Service has also carried out a recruitment drive to attract more 'Partner Childminders' to provide Early Learning and Childcare for eligible two year olds. The Service also worked closely with a range of agencies to raise awareness of entitlement for eligible two year olds –eg. Health, Social Work, Job Centre Plus. As a result of extensive local media coverage and awareness raising last session, approximately 60% of eligible two year olds accessed their Early Learning and Childcare entitlement by August 2014. The average uptake of entitlement across Scotland is reported to be 20% against national estimated figures.

### 3.14 YOUTH SERVICES

#### 3.14.1 iLead Training

Twenty five young people took part on this year's iLead training, which was held at Route 81's premises at Garelochhead on the 18/19/20 September. The training was delivered in three stages and accredited with a Youth Achievement Award.



#### 3.14.2 AB Awards

I was honoured to give the opening address at the Argyll and Bute Youth Awards ceremony which took place at Oban Phoenix Cinema on Thursday 24th September to celebrate the achievements of Argyll and Bute young people. All the young people nominated, have made outstanding contributions to their local communities and are a wonderful asset to the area.

Thirty-two young people were shortlisted for eight award categories with the winners being announced on the night to a capacity audience. The ceremony was hosted by Naomi Campbell (Chair of the Argyll and Bute Youth Forum) and John Loughton (motivational speaker and former Big Brother winner). It was an excellent evening showcasing the amazing and talented young people we have in Argyll and Bute. It's also worth noting that the young people of Argyll and Bute Youth Forum were involved in every aspect of the organising and delivery of the AB Awards and were outstanding in their effort and enthusiasm.



### **3.14.3 CPD**

Youth Services team members participated in trainer training for an initiative called “Under Pressure”, which is about building the capacity of youth work staff to prevent abuse and exploitation in teen relationships. This training is designed to equip youth workers with the knowledge, skills and confidence to develop and deliver effective sexualisation awareness, abuse prevention and early intervention initiatives for young people.

Workshops to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) - Prevent is the UK’s counter terrorism strategy, preventing people from becoming involved in or supporting terrorism.

### **3.14.4 Consultations**

During November, Youth Service team members were involved in supporting the involvement of young people in research, which is being carried out by Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs (SFAD) on behalf of the Argyll and Bute Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. Key aims of the research are:-

- To recognise prevalence of alcohol related harm amongst young people
- Provide an insight into own substance use & accessibility of substances
- Identify appropriate support, advice and guidance for young people affected
- Challenge stigma as a barrier to accessing support in their own right
- Change social attitudes towards alcohol & drug use
- Support the development of future substance misuse projects/work.

Youth Services facilitated the involvement of Youth Forums in consultations to help the preparation of Argyll and Bute Licensing Board’s policy on the overprovision of alcohol licenses.

### **3.14.5 Twinning**

A delegation of Youth Workers from the twinning region of Amberg Sulzbach was hosted by Youth Services in October 2015. A very full programme of visits and activities were enjoyed by the group. The German group leader, Claudia Mai, was delighted with the trip and wrote – “Thank you very much for organising the programme, we had a wonderful time and are taking back many good ideas!”

## **3.15 OTHER NEWS**

### **3.15.1 Policy Lead and Depute Policy Lead Visits, Meetings and Celebrating Achievement**

In addition to attending COSLA and chairing the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers, as Policy Lead for Education and Lifelong Learning, I have been involved in many other visits and meetings. I provided details of two of these (one of which was attended by Depute Policy Lead, Donnie MacMillan) for information.



### **Parklands School Helensburgh – The Marjorie Boxall Quality Mark Award**

One of my first duties, upon appointment to this role, was to attend Parklands School in Helensburgh, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2015, where they were celebrating the presentation of the prestigious 'Marjorie Boxall Quality Mark Award'. The award is given in recognition of good practice within nurture classes and is awarded by the Nurture Group Network. Parklands School is the first school in Argyll and Bute to receive this accolade and joins only another 100 schools in the UK to be accredited with the award.

### **Furnace Primary School - TECHBOT Competition.**

In June 2015 deputy policy lead Councillor MacMillan attended Furnace Primary School on my behalf to congratulate eleven year old, Abbie Wallace who took the top prize in the nationwide TECHBOT Competition, after her artwork was selected from more than 4,000 entries. Abbie won for her school a brand new ClassBuddy™ 'Charge and Sync' trolley from LapSafe® Products, with her artwork displayed as a graphic on the doors. Abbie also won 5 brand-new iPad Airs complete with cases and an iPad for her school; and case for herself to take home.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 Argyll and Bute Council continues to strive for excellence in Education and Lifelong Learning. Developments within Learning & Teaching, Information Communications Technology, Leadership Development in Education, Shared Headships, School Estate, Developing the Young Workforce, Opportunities for All (O4A), Psychological Services, Inclusion and Integration, Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), Child Protection, Early Years Services, Providing Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS), Youth Services and Recruitment of Staff clearly demonstrate Argyll and Bute Council's continuing commitment to providing all children and young people growing up in this area with the best possible start in life.

**Councillor Rory Colville**

**Policy Lead for Education and Lifelong Learning.**

**7<sup>th</sup> January 2015.**