

OUR CHILDREN, THEIR FUTURE: EDUCATION VISION AND STRATEGY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 At their meeting of 9th March 2017 Community Services Committee noted the official launch of *Our Children, Their Future (OCTF)*, the new Education Vision and Strategy, which is now the main driver for delivery of the Education Service in Argyll and Bute. It was also noted that all new and future policy and procedures within the Education Service will be based on the Education Vision and Strategy within *Our Children, Their Future*.
- 1.2 The purpose of this paper is to report on progress within the *Our Children, Their Future* engagement timeline and to inform the Community Services Committee of next steps for the Education Vision and Strategy in improving outcomes for children and young people in Argyll and Bute

This paper sets out:

- The Central Education Team's use of the 'Model for Improvement' in developing robust measures and ensuring change leads to improvement;
- The development of 4 key drivers to ensure sustainable engagement of all stakeholders in *Our Children, Their Future*, and
- Next steps to measure the impact of *Our Children, Their Future* on improving outcomes for children and young people.

1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Note the effective use of improvement methodology by the Central Education Team in monitoring progress and measuring impact within the engagement of *Our Children, Their Future*.
- b) Note the evidence of improved engagement of all stakeholders in *Our Children, Their Future*.
- c) Note the ongoing work of the Service to further engage all stakeholders in *Our Children, Their Future*.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 At their meeting of 9th March 2017 Community Services Committee noted the official launch of *Our Children, Their Future*, the new Education Vision and Strategy, which is now the main driver for delivery of the Education Service in Argyll and Bute. It was also noted that all new and future policy and procedures within the Education Service will be based on the Education Vision and Strategy within *Our Children, Their Future*.
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4.0 DETAIL

4.1 Model for Improvement

Despite a great deal of effort, it was agreed that existing systems were not effective in engaging all stakeholders in the Education Vision and Strategy. This was highlighted through self-evaluation carried out by the Education Service and within the Education Scotland Inspection of Argyll and Bute's Education Service. The Central Education Team agreed to make use of the 'Model for Improvement' in order to ensure improvement in engagement of stakeholders. This improvement methodology is used in industry, Health and Education to ensure changes made within an organisation lead to an improvement. The first step in this process was to identify a measurable aim – identifying what was to be achieved, by how much, by who and by when. The following aim was identified to ensure successful engagement in *Our Children, Their Future*:

'95% of educational establishments in Argyll and Bute are engaging with 'Our Children, Their Future', by the end of June 2017'.

It was also important to have an operational definition in order to be clear about what was meant by 'engaging' within our aim. The operational definition of 'engaging' is as follows:

- Key objectives are areas of priority within improvement plans;
- Key objectives are on display in the school and stakeholders can talk confidently about them, and
- OCTF Vision, Values and Aims are incorporated into school Vision, Values and Aims.

4.2 Engagement Drivers

Following the official launch of *'Our Children, Their Future'*, the Central Education Team carried out an exercise to identify 'key drivers' to successful engagement of stakeholders. These key drivers are:

- Shared Vision;
- Leadership;
- Self-Evaluation, and
- Engagement and Collaboration.

The Education Team was divided into sub groups for each key driver, with one member of each group tasked with leading developments. The sub groups also developed measures for each of the key drivers and reported on progress at each Education Team meeting between January and June 2017. Following the development of measures, each officer engaged with schools in their cluster to test change ideas – engaging children, young people, partners and their parents. One officer worked with young people from the Hub to develop an *Our Children Their Future* 'app' for the Service. Another officer engaged the IT team to develop a strategy screen saver. Our establishment Standards and Quality and School Improvement Plan template was revised ensuring that there were explicit links to the 6 key objectives within OCTF. Following consultation with Head Teachers, the revised template was approved for implementation in Session 2017-18. Having OCTF at the heart of

establishment strategic improvement planning will allow the Service to evaluate the impact of the improvements being implemented across the Authority. Officers fed data back to their sub group leaders and together they studied their data to identify next steps.

4.3 Evidence of Engagement

When evaluating evidence of engagement we asked ourselves key questions, for example, “*How do we know we have engaged our practitioners, our parents, our partners and our young people?*” To answer this we examined data from the measurement plan which indicates improvement ie by the end of June 2017:

- 100% of school standards and quality reports submitted are explicitly aligned to the *Our Children, Their Future* vision;
- 77% of settings are displaying *Our Children, Their Future* in a public area within the school, and
- 100% of settings have engaged in *Our Children, Their Future* by the end of June 2017 – exceeding our aim of 95%.

One Head Teacher stated, ‘Thanks to *Our Children, their Future*, we are much clearer about how we as an authority are going to close the attainment gap.’ One parent stated, ‘The consultation felt like a token gesture – we now feel like our voices matter.’

4.4 Planning for Sustainability in Engagement

- a) In order to ensure continued engagement with of all stakeholders in *Our Children, Their Future*, additional targets are being used to capture progress throughout 2017-18:
- 200 downloads of the ‘*Our Children Their Future*’ app by end of December 2017;
 - 500 downloads of the ‘*Our Children Their Future*’ app by end of June 2018;
 - By the end of December 2017, 75% of settings sampled will evidence leadership of OCTF, and
 - 75% of corporate Education Service computers will display ‘OCTF’ vision as a screensaver by end of June 2018.

4.5 Next Steps – Ensuring Impact

It is important to ensure engagement leads to action - empowering practitioners, parents, young people and partners for broad based action which will lead to impact. The Model for Improvement has been used effectively by the Central Education Team to evidence improvement in engagement with the Education Vision and Strategy. This improvement methodology can now be applied to measuring the impact of the Strategy on

improving outcomes for our children and young people. Next steps will be to measure the impact of '*Our Children, Their Future*' through its six key objectives:

- Raise educational attainment and achievement for all;
- Use performance information to secure improvement for children and young people;
- Ensure children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed;
- Equip young people to secure and sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life;
- Ensure high quality partnership working and community engagement, and
- Strengthen leadership at all levels.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This paper sets out the introduction of '*Our Children, Their Future*' and how the Service has and will continue to use our vision and strategy to monitor and improve outcomes for children and young people. Through effective use of improvement methodology, the Central Education Team has increased engagement of all stakeholders in the Education Vision and Strategy.
- 5.2 Establishment Standards and Quality and School Improvement Plans, through the use of our revised template, make links to the 6 key objectives within OCTF. The revised template was approved by Head Teachers following consultation.
- 5.3 Having OCTF at the heart of establishment strategic improvement planning will allow us to evaluate the impact of their work. The Central Education Team will continue to ensure sustained engagement with the Strategy via quality improvement meetings with establishments and will go on to ensure '*Our Children, Their Future*' leads to improved outcomes for the children and young people of Argyll and Bute.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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| 6.1 | Policy | This strategy presents an opportunity for the Education Service to effectively respond to the changing policy context at both National and Local levels. |
| | | The strategy makes an effective contribution to SOA outcomes 3 and 4. |
| 6.2 | Financial | None. |
| 6.3 | Legal | None. |
| 6.4 | HR | None. |

- 6.5 Equalities The Education Vision and Strategy clearly sets out the contribution Education Services will make contribution to the main tenets of the Scottish Government's vision for Education to address educational inequalities.
- 6.6 Risk None.
- 6.7 Customer Service Compliance with statutory guidance under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 and Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 to consult with parents and pupils.

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24 July 2017

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1:

https://www.argyllbute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/argyll_bute_vision_strategy_final_web.pdf