

NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SCOTTISH EDUCATION

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This paper provides the Committee with an update on the Scottish Governments 2018 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education (Appendix A) and summarises the actions undertaken by the Education Service during the course of 2017 to secure educational improvement for all children and young people within Argyll and Bute.
- 1.2 The paper also provides an overview of the Primary and Secondary pupil's achievement in Literacy and Numeracy for P1, P4, P7, S3 in Argyll and Bute published by the Scottish Government on the 12th December 2017 in Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CFE) Levels 2016/17 (Appendix B).

1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Note the actions that Education Services planned and implemented in 2017 to secure educational improvement for all children and young people within Argyll and Bute;
- b) Note the overview of the Primary and Secondary achievement in Literacy and Numeracy for P1, P4, P7, S3 within Argyll and Bute;
- c) Endorse the actions to be undertaken by the Education Service in response to the 2018 revised National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education, and
- d) Request that further updates on progress in implementing the National Improvement Framework are presented to a future meeting of the Community Services Committee.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education was launched following consultation by the First Minister of Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, in January 2016. The Framework aims to raise attainment and ensure equalities of outcomes for all children and young people. As part of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, the reporting procedures for the Framework have been placed on a statutory footing.
- 2.2 In December 2017, the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, John Swinney MSP, published the 2018 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education replacing the 2017 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan.

On the same date, the National Improvement Framework evidence report for 2017 was also published (Appendix C) providing an overview of Scottish Education and the context in which children and young people learn. It details current evidence on achievement, attainment and health and well-being. The evidence report incorporates a range of evidence sources including the new Achievement of CfE Levels return (based on teacher professional judgements), Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN), Pupil Census, Teacher Census, Attendance, Absence and Exclusions, Growing Up in Scotland, 27-30 month Child Health Reviews, the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Scottish Health Survey, the Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) and HMI inspections.

- 2.3 This paper provides the Committee with an up-date on the 2018 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education and, importantly, outlines how Education Services will respond. It also outlines for Committee the actions that Education Services implemented in 2017 to secure educational improvement for all children and young people within Argyll and Bute.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Note the actions that Education Services planned and implemented in 2017 to secure educational improvement for all children and young people within Argyll and Bute;
- b) Note the overview of the Primary and Secondary achievement in Literacy and Numeracy for P1, P4, P7, S3 within Argyll and Bute;
- c) Endorse the actions to be undertaken by the Education Service in response to the 2018 revised National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education, and
- d) Request that further updates on progress in implementing the National Improvement Framework are presented to a future meeting of the Community Services Committee.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 In publishing the National Improvement Framework in January 2016, the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, reinforced the Scottish Government's commitment to continually improve Scottish Education and close the attainment gap, delivering both excellence and equity. The Framework identifies four key priorities in Scottish education notably:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children;
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing, and
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people.

4.2 The Framework builds on a strong record of improvement and will drive work to continually improve Scottish Education and close the attainment gap, delivering both excellence and equity. Alongside the Scottish Attainment Challenge, the Framework identifies the following 6 key drivers of improvement:

- School leadership;
- Teacher professionalism;
- Parental engagement;
- Assessment of children's progress;
- School improvement, and
- Performance information.

The Framework is central to the Scottish Government's commitment to raising attainment for all, and closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

4.3 In 2017 Education Services planned and implemented the following actions to secure educational improvement for all children and young people within Argyll and Bute:

- In June 2017, the Education Service participated in the second year of the Teacher Judgement Survey where the achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels were gathered Nationally across the four organisers of Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking and Numeracy at the stages of P1, P4, P7 and S3. The 2017 Evidence Report details the National picture of the percentage of P1, P4, P7 and S3 pupils who are achieving the expected CfE Level relevant for their stage in Literacy and Numeracy (Appendix C).
- All Local Authorities have direct access to a named Scottish Government Attainment Advisor who works collaboratively alongside Local Authority staff on agreed priorities which support the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC). The Attainment Advisor has supported initiatives in Rosneath, John Logie Baird, Luss and Colgrain Primary Schools, and more recently to the Kintyre Cluster.
- The Education Service recruited a team of Quality Assurance and Moderation Support Officers (QAMSOs) from within the central team and education establishments. These officers are released from the Authority to attend National Improvement Framework workshops in Glasgow and Edinburgh on sharing standards of attainment. The knowledge gained at these meetings by QAMSOs is being used to inform the Education Service's strategy for raising attainment in literacy and numeracy and to ensure standards of attainment are in line with National expectations.
- Key messages from the QAMSO events, as well as feedback from Education Scotland on school submissions were the focus for the agenda at an Authority Assessment Facilitator event attended by 51 practitioners from 41 schools in November 2017. Two events, focusing on achievement of a level for Literacy and Numeracy at P4 and P7 are planned for March 2018, supported by the Authority and the QAMSOs. This approach will allow us to continue to develop a shared understanding of expected standards, improve consistency as well as developing teacher confidence.
- The Education Service training for Assessment and Moderation Facilitators (AMFs) who build capacity in their establishments in order that teachers are confident in planning for improved attainment and making quality professional judgements on achieving Curriculum for Excellence levels was evaluated for impact. 100% of our AMFs reported that the training they had undergone from the Authority had impacted on teaching, learning, assessment and moderation in the classroom, 40% describing this impact as significant. In August, the Assessment Facilitators, using materials provided by the Authority, ran inset training for Clusters on assessment and moderation. The feedback from 42 participating schools was very positive, particularly in regard to the clarification of holistic assessments.

- Two P1 Authority Pilots, involving 21 schools commenced this session; the Early Acquisition of Literacy and the Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning. NIF data was used for the selection of schools for these pilots. These pilots are improving learning for our children through the development of teacher pedagogy and the promotion of active and experiential learning. Early indications are showing a high engagement of both pupil and teacher, with teachers reporting that the pupils are attaining their expected progress or above.
- Specific, directed support and training has been offered to schools in response to NIF data by the Principal Teachers of Literacy and Numeracy. For example, 27 schools were supported through Numeracy training and 24 schools were supported through Literacy training. Twilight training on gathering assessment evidence and how to use the Benchmarks to make a judgement about progress was also delivered to 10 identified schools from October to November 2017.
- In November the Principal Teacher (PT) of Literacy led a small working group to look at approaches to writing across the authority with the intended aim of creating guidance and training resources to support schools. Writing moderation sessions have been held at 5 identified schools. The PT is working with the English Teachers' network on to discuss approaches to level 4 assessment to tackle the wide variations in results. Key messages relating to level 4 assessments from the National moderation events that have so far taken place have been disseminated with all English departments.

4.4 Within Argyll and Bute, the percentage of P1, P4, P7 and S3 pupils who are achieving the expected CfE Level relevant for their stage in Literacy and Numeracy is outlined in the Achievement of CfE Levels 2016/17 document (Appendix B) and is summarised below:

CfE Levels	2016/2017	P1	P4	P7	S3	S3
		Early Level	First Level	Second Level	Third Level	Fourth Level
Reading	Argyll & Bute	84%	77%	75%	91%	45%
	Scotland	80%	77%	76%	90%	51%
Writing	Argyll & Bute	80%	70%	67%	91%	40%
	Scotland	77%	71%	69%	89%	48%
Listening and Talking	Argyll & Bute	89%	82%	81%	95%	44%
	Scotland	85%	83%	81%	91%	51%
Numeracy	Argyll & Bute	85%	73%	72%	95%	72%
	Scotland	83%	75%	70%	88%	56%

The path most children and young people are expected to follow through the above levels reflects the stages of maturation and how they engage with learning as they develop. Some children and young people will start learning at these levels earlier and others later, depending upon individual needs and aptitudes. The table below outlines the National expectations of when most children and young people may achieve each level:

CfE Level	Stage
Early	The final two years of early learning and childcare before a child goes to school and P1, or later for some.
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.
Third and Fourth	S1 to S3, but earlier or later for some.

4.5 Analysis of the Achievement of CfE Levels 2016/17 for Argyll and Bute compared with the National picture indicates that:

- In the primary stages, the percentage of pupils **nationally** achieving the CfE level relevant for their stage was highest for listening and talking (85%) and lowest for writing (69%). In **Argyll and Bute** the percentage of primary pupils achieving the CfE level relevant for their stage was highest for listening and talking (89%) and lowest for writing (67%).
- P1 pupils in Argyll and Bute are performing better than the **National average** in all organisers (reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy).
- The percentage of pupils **nationally** achieving the expected CfE level for their stage in each of the four organisers declines throughout the primary stages. **This is reflected in Argyll and Bute** throughout the primary stages.
- In the secondary stage (S3), the percentage of pupils **nationally** achieving the CfE level relevant for their stage was lowest in numeracy (88%). In **Argyll and Bute** the percentage of S3 pupils achieving the CfE level relevant for their stage was lowest in reading and writing (91%). However, these percentages were above the National percentages (90% and 89%).
- The percentage of S3 pupils **nationally** achieving CfE Third Level or better is between 88 and 91 per cent for all organisers (reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy).
- In **Argyll and Bute**, the percentage of S3 pupils achieving CfE Third Level or better is between 91 and 95 per cent for all organisers (reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy).

- S3 pupils in Argyll and Bute are performing better than the National average in all organisers (reading, writing, listening and talking and numeracy) relative to their stage.
- There is a higher percentage of S3 pupils who are performing better (achieving fourth level – 72%) than their expected level in S3 numeracy, compared to the National average (achieving fourth level – 56%)
- There is a higher percentage of **Argyll and Bute** pupils in P1, P7 and S3 who are performing better than the National percentage in numeracy.

4.6 In December 2017, the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, John Swinney MSP, published the 2018 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education. This plan replaces the 2017 plan and identifies both ongoing and new improvement activity that the Scottish Government will take forward and support at National level. The improvement activity also draws on the 32 Local Authority 2017/18 improvement plans which identified the need for:

- Greater professional development and collaboration, both in terms of supporting school leaders to lead the raising attainment agenda and in the development of shared approaches to assessment and moderation;
- The poverty proofing of improvement activities to ensure engagement and participation of all children and young people;
- Improving data literacy to support more effective planning to achieve improvements in learner outcomes and ensuring the substantive resources being made available through the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) and the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) are used effectively to close the attainment gap;
- Providing access to mental health and wellbeing support and advice in schools for those at risk and who most need it;
- Expanding outreach services to increase support for children and young people with additional support needs at the point of need, and
- Focusing on delivery of Developing the Young Workforce as a key element of the curriculum to increase the number of young people reaching a positive and sustained destination.

4.7 In 2018 the Authority will be required to respond to the new improvement activity within each of the 6 key drivers (Appendix A), in collaboration with the Regional Improvement Collaborative, as summarised below:

- School Leadership – the establishment of a Headteacher charter;
- Teacher Professionalism – ensure that teachers have the range of skills they need to do their jobs as effectively as possible;
- Parental Engagement – develop a long term action plan on parental engagement and family learning;
- Assessment of children’s progress – continue to improve literacy and numeracy, improve information sharing in early years to improve support

and protection for our most vulnerable children and focus on the quality and consistency of data collections for attainment and health and wellbeing;

- School Improvement – support leaders and practitioners, working with the Regional Improvement Collaborative, to further develop their skills to drive innovation and improvement in learning and teaching and to use data to raise attainment and close the poverty-related gap;
- Performance Information – use the Insight Senior Phase benchmarking tool and, when launched, the BGE benchmarking tool to support focused dialogue on school improvement and continue to carry out our statutory duties to plan and report on the National Improvement Framework, and
- Following the analysis of the NIF data from June 2017 Education Officers have been supporting schools to improve their tracking and monitoring to ensure that young people are making good progress within levels. All schools will be asked to provide an update of Literacy and Numeracy levels in February 2018 for pupils in P1, P4, P7 and S3.

4.8 The Education Service will continue to plan for and implement both the ongoing and new improvement activity within the 2018 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education to secure educational improvement for all children and young people within Argyll and Bute whilst meeting our statutory duties as defined within the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 This Report outlines the steps taken by Education Service to implement improvement activity within the 2017 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education securing educational improvement. It also outlines how the Education Service will continue to plan for and implement both the ongoing and new improvement activity within the 2018 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education to secure educational improvement for all children and young people within Argyll and Bute whilst meeting our statutory duties as defined within the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy The development of the National Framework for Scottish Education supports the central purpose of the Scottish Government and the delivery on the National outcomes. The Framework will support delivery of SOA Outcomes 1 and 3.

6.2 Financial Potential resource implications arising from the introduction of the NIF. Specifically around the standardised testing and assessment, collation of data, additional reporting at class,

school and authority level.

- 6.3 Legal As part of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, the reporting procedures for the Framework have been placed on a statutory footing placing further duties on Argyll and Bute Council.
- 6.4 HR There are potential workload issues for teaching staff that should be considered within school working time agreements.
- 6.5 Equalities One of the two main tenets of the Scottish Government's vision for Education is to address educational inequalities. There is no current evidence base that standardised assessments leads to a reduction in inequalities and can only be viewed as one element that contributes to professional teacher judgement and assessment.
- 6.6 Risk There is a potential reputational risk for the Council if there is failure to secure improvements/close the attainment gap for children and young people.
- 6.7 Customer Service The NIF is clear around the expectations for parental involvement and engagement which should provide positive benefits in supporting their role in their children's education.

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Appendices

Appendix A: 2018 National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education –
<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/2018-national-improvement-framework-improvement-plan/>

Appendix B: Achievement of CfE Levels 2016/17 document -
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00529096.pdf>

Appendix C: National Improvement Framework – 2017 Evidence Report -
<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/national-improvement-framework-scottish-education-2017-evidence-report/>