

The Aims of Argyll and Bute Council Education Service are:

- to strive continuously to improve the quality of education for all in Argyll and Bute
- to become a learning organisation that is outward looking and values creativity and shared reflection
- to actively promote partnership working and equality of opportunity
- to ensure that resources are managed effectively and that best value is secured
- to equip our children and young people with the skills and knowledge they require in order to become

Successful Learners with:

- enthusiasm and motivation for learning
- determination to reach high standards of achievement
- openness to new thinking and ideas

Confident Individuals with:

- self respect
- a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing
- secure values and beliefs
- ambitions

Responsible Citizens with:

- respect for others
- commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life

Effective Contributors with:

- an enterprising attitude
- resilience
- self reliance
- the ability to meet the demands of our changing world

Cowal and Bute area consists of 14 primary schools – 11 in Cowal and 3 on Bute – nursery provision is provided within seven of these schools. Gaelic Medium education is provided at Sandbank Primary School.

Curriculum for Excellence - the development of cluster working

Curriculum for Excellence is Scotland's first attempt to plan for the curriculum as a whole, from pre-school through to lifelong learning. The idea of continuity is central to its thinking. This emphasis on seeing the entire educational experience as a single coherent entity makes it inevitable that planning should take place at a level beyond that of the individual school. Cluster planning is intrinsic to this approach. In a time of curricular change, with the emphasis on local autonomy and creativity, it is essential to prevent isolation and to promote professional discussion and sharing of ideas.

Schools across Argyll and Bute are into their third year of developing work across their cluster areas. Within Bute and Cowal there are two cluster groups - one comprising all the head teachers on the Isle of Bute and one comprising all the head teachers of schools across Cowal.

Working together, primary and secondary head teachers have developed curriculum plans to address Curriculum for Excellence that ensure continuity, progression and the development of appropriate skills for all pupils. The plans have had a particular focus on the point of transition from P7 into S1. The Cowal transition project – On the Move - is model of good practice for the local authority.

Within individual schools this development work will continue by providing teachers and other practitioners opportunities to work collaboratively to develop approaches to monitoring, self-evaluation and improvement planning, building on the existing strengths of their practice. Learners will have a key role in moderation activities and teachers have an important responsibility in developing that role. Moderation activities will involve all teachers in engaging regularly in ongoing professional dialogue and collegiate working.

In addition, teachers need to have opportunities engage in professional dialogue to discuss and share ideas, developments and expectations across the curriculum with a view to achieving consistency. Such opportunities are provided through Teacher Learning Communities (TLC's) and through continuing professional development. These expectations also apply more widely at cluster level, where examples of standards and expectations can be shared, particularly in key areas such as literacy and numeracy.

Teacher Learning Communities (TLC)

A Teacher Learning Community (TLC) consists of a group of teachers who meet together regularly to improve teaching and learning. As a group they accept professional responsibility for supporting the development of each other as individual professionals.

The main focus of the work of TLC's this year has been the development of formative assessment in their own teaching practice. The 5 key strategies are:

1. sharing learning intentions and criteria for success
2. effective classroom discussions, questioning and learning tasks
3. providing effective feedback to learners

4. encouraging pupils as owners of their own learning
5. supporting pupils to develop skills that will enable them to assist other pupils in their learning.

There are TLC's operating in all our schools across the area. Smaller schools have joined together to implement TLC's, larger schools have a TLC based solely in their own establishment.

Personal Learning Plans (PLP's)

Schools across Bute and Cowal have introduced Personal Learning Plans. PLP's allow pupils to record their own learning on a regular basis and reflect on their next steps for learning. PLP's allow pupils to identify their preferred learning style, their strengths, their skills and any development needs. Pupils have the opportunity to share the plan and their future learning targets with their parents/carers.

Partnership working

Learning Teaching Scotland chaired a twilight meeting of key partner agencies Dunoon Grammar School during the last academic session. The focus of the meeting was Curriculum for Excellence's health and wellbeing agenda. Partners involved included Strathclyde Police, Social Work, NHS Highland, Education Psychology, Skills Development Scotland, Community Learning and Development and teaching colleagues from primary and secondary senior leadership teams. The event was an opportunity for the Cowal cluster to explain what the new curriculum may look like under CfE and how partners could be involved in helping teachers deliver the experiences and outcomes of Health and Wellbeing. Out of this meeting a partnership agreement has been written between Strathclyde Police and Education that states what each organisations roles and responsibilities are when working with young people.

Building the Curriculum 4 documentation focuses on pupils building skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. The development of skills is the responsibility of all teaching staff alongside the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding through experiences and outcomes. A number of local staff have been involved in the development of a Skills Framework for Argyll and Bute which has also attracted national attention.

Sandra Clarke, the head teacher at Lochgoilhead Primary and her pupils have been piloting a number of projects linked to the skills framework. The pupils have been discussing what a skill is and then recording the skills they are developing in their learning and through wider participation outside school using an ICT package. The skills framework will be used by all primary and secondary pupils and will help pupils as they make their onward transition from school to employment, training or further study.

Tighnabruaich has just been taken onto the Crofting Connections project (run by the Soil Association) and will also be working in partnership with the local Kilfinan Community Forest Company through the Crofting Connections project, Forest Schools and other community projects. This will be a fabulous opportunity for pupils to understand one of the oldest, traditional forms of employment in Argyll.



Professional Achievements

Two members of staff from St Muns Primary completed and achieved the GTCS Certificate for Professional Recognition in Enterprise Education last year - Gillian Neeson, head teacher and Lorraine Fisher, classroom teacher. They were invited to a presentation evening at the Scottish Parliament where they were presented with their certificates by Tony Finn.

TEACHING AND LEARNING ACROSS BUTE AND COWAL

Eco schools

Most young people care deeply about environmental issues. They want to help, but knowing what to do is not always easy.

The Eco-Schools programme is an international initiative designed to encourage whole-school action for the environment. It is a nationally recognised award scheme that accredits schools who make a commitment to continuously improve their environmental performance. It is also a learning resource that raises awareness of environmental and sustainable development issues throughout activities linked to curricular areas.

The aim of the Eco-Schools programme is to make environmental awareness and action an intrinsic part of the life and ethos of the school for both pupils and for staff and to engage the wider community.

The Eco-Schools programme can help schools and pupils to:

- Improve the school's environment
- Reduce litter and waste
- Reduce energy and water use
- Devise efficient ways of travelling to and from school
- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Encourage active citizenship
- Build strong partnerships with a variety of community groups
- Develop international and global links

Across Bute and Cowal the following schools have gained awards:

Third Green Flag: Sandbank Primary and Strachur Primary

First Green Flag: Dunoon Primary, Rothesay Joint Campus and St Andrew's Primary

Silver: Clyde Cottage Nursery, Dunoon Grammar, Innellan Primary, Kilmodan Primary, North Bute Primary, St Mun's Primary, Strone Primary, Toward Primary and Tighnabraich Primary.

Bronze: Kirn Primary and Lochgoilhead Primary.

Rothesay Primary School held an ECO-Fancy Dress Show in partnership with Rothesay Cancer Shop. Pupils chose clothes and outfits from the merchandise available in store and then customized their own outfit to reflect their own personal style. A number of pupils had fun modeling their creations on the cat walk while raising awareness of the eco message – reuse, reduce, recycle.

Tighnabraich Primary had a very successful weekend working with parents and the local community in order to assemble their new polytunnel and work on the school garden. The tunnel has now been planted with fruit and vegetable crops.

Sandbank Primary has taken the eco message one step further and assembled a greenhouse that the pupils built by recycling empty 2 litre soft drink bottles. The local community donated seed for the pupils to grow in the greenhouse and the vegetable produce will be used in the school kitchen, while plants will be resold at a local community event to raise additional funds for the school garden.

Outdoor Learning/Forest Schools



A number of the local schools are developing the time pupils spend outdoors. Kirn Primary offers a 6 week block of experiential learning for pupil in their local, natural environment. Pupils are developing their personal and social skills, problem solving and team building.

North Bute Primary and Strone Primary have involved the local community in improving their school playground areas. Pupils and helpers have been busy painting murals and developing play materials for use both in class and play time. In addition the schools have built and pupils maintained planters and wormeries.

A number of our local primaries are developing teachers, helper and pupils' skills using the Forest School Training Programme. Pupils have the opportunity to learn about the natural environment, how to handle risks and most importantly to use their own initiative to solve problems and cooperate with others. Toward Primary is currently working in partnership with Castle Toward, Kilmodan Primary is using a local field and Sandbank Primary is using the school grounds to deliver the programme.

Enterprising Teaching and Learning

Lochgoilhead pupils have been involved in an enterprising teaching and learning project involving Barnaby Bear. Barnaby has been travelling around the world and reporting on his adventures. These adventures have then been built into pupils' learning experiences. E.g. Barnaby went on a plane and visited Bowmore Primary on Islay to find out more about island life. His journey home was made with the assistance of Strathclyde Police who had recently appointed a new Police Constable to Lochgoilhead and the bear was used to build a relationship between the new Police Officer and the pupils.



Social Enterprise

The Social Enterprise Academy (SEA) ran a CPD course for staff across Argyll on Understanding Social Enterprise. This course examined what a social enterprise was and how schools could become involved in setting up their own social enterprise. Five local staff attended the course and subsequently these schools have set up or are in the process of setting up their own social enterprise companies.

Rothesay Primary has Young Green Fingers and received a Primary Social Enterprise Award (SEA) in June 2010 for their work on their school fruit and vegetable garden. Strachur Primary has Room 13 – an art based project and St Mun's Primary has the Book Saving Club.





The local authority is keen to promote social enterprise due to the strong social enterprise network that is operating across the local area. We were asked to make a presentation on the success of implementing social enterprise at the Scottish Learning Festival and this involved pupil representation from Rothesay and St Muns Primary Schools.



Kilmodan Primary School has a very successful market garden which has been in operation for a number of years. This year the school expanded the project and sold produce to a local hotel, raising more than £1200 in profit. The pupils have reinvested the money in the garden to pay for future crops and have also purchased 4 DS Nintendo's to use in maths and bought permanent basketball stands for the school playground.

During the winter months Kilmodan pupils run a very successful tearoom at least once a term for the local community and also provide entertainment. The event has proved immensely popular as there are limited opportunities in the Glen for the elderly residents to meet and have a chat.

On the Move and transition

In light of the changes education was facing with the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, the transition programme between all of the cluster primaries and Dunoon Grammar School was reviewed during session 2008/09. New materials were written that reflected a more holistic approach to the transition stage, unfortunately the material could not be written due to the outbreak of Swine Flu. Instead, the programme was piloted during session 2009/10 instead. The pupils participated in a variety of experiences including health awareness sessions and an outdoor education weekend at Benmore.



The main part of the programme comprised P7 pupils and their teachers attending Dunoon Grammar School for a week in order to follow what would be their new timetable come August. All of the subjects delivered lessons based on the theme of health and wellbeing. Teachers from the primary and secondary sectors had the opportunity to work together delivering lessons and benefit from the sharing of professional expertise across the teaching sectors.



The event culminated with a performance at the Police Sports Event on the Friday where the pupils performed a song and dance routine. A comprehensive evaluation was carried out with pupils, teachers and parents/carers. The response to the programme from all parties involved was extremely positive and the programme planned for this coming June has been altered to reflect the evaluations.

Health Promotion

Health Promotion Days are run in partnership with Active Schools staff and NHS colleagues. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a range of physical activities, health and wellbeing workshops and food preparation.

Active Schools and the Peripatetic PE teachers has made a huge contribution to ensuring Bute and Cowal pupils get active and stay active. A vast array of activities have been offered to pupils including rugby, golf, football and dance along with a number of inter-school tournaments including volleyball, orienteering, swimming and football.

Active Schools, on behalf of Sport Scotland, are currently working with local community clubs to promote school-club links. The aim is to encourage pupils to try a sport or an activity in school and then, if they like it, participate more regularly in a local club.

In addition, primary pupils have been able to access the cluster HUB Clubs that are run afterschool in Rothesay Joint Campus, Dunoon Grammar School and Strachur. Active Schools also run a Zone Club for pupils with additional support needs one afternoon a week.



Strathclyde Police hosted a 5-a-side football tournament and school sports day in May for all of the Cowal schools and pupils are able to enter events at the Cowal Games Sport day in August. The small schools in Cowal held their second School Highland Games in June at the Queens Hall in Dunoon.

Primary 7 pupils had the opportunity to attend the Choices for Life event at the SECC. The event focuses on positive lifestyle choices using music, games, positive role models and pupil interaction. The Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency host this event.

Gaelic Medium Education

Sandbank Gaelic pupils have been very busy participating in a variety of events. The whole school had a visit from the Feis who held workshops on traditional storytelling and the Clarsach. The primary 6 and 7 pupils spent a week residential at Glencoe with Stramash, who also hosted a day event for all p3-7 pupils to develop their kayaking skills. Primary 7 pupils participated in the Scotland wide Gaelic school quiz show on Gleusasa for BBC Alba – they won!

Community Links

All of our schools benefit from strong links with their own individual local community. However a number of the benefits are replicated at a number of the schools. These include programmes such as

- Scottish Country Dancing Association offering instruction to pupils and culminating in an afternoon of dance at the Queens Hall
- Cowal Schools Speech competition – 60 children competed from P6 and P7.
- Fiddle and Chanter Clubs



Innellan Primary has been involved in a local community project based on the history of Innellan and the village hall. Local archivist, Margaret Hubbard and her team of enthusiasts researched the history of Innellan from 1898 (when the hall was built) to 1920. This period included the First World War and featured stories of Innellan residents whose names are on the Innellan War Memorial.

The school was fully involved in the project culminating in contributing to an archive exhibition at the hall and holding a special Edwardian Day at the hall at which pupils and staff all in period costume, presented a day of performance and entertainment. The school meals service provided an Edwardian meal and pupils sang a song first written in 1898 to support fund raising for the hall.

The project will continue for two more years. This year the focus will be on 1920 to 1960 which includes the Second World War but stops just prior to the arrival of the Americans at Holy Loch.

Children/schools contributions to charities etc

All schools across Bute and Cowal have spent some time during the last year raising money for local and national charities using a variety of fun and exciting activities. Charities supported include:

Calums Cabin
Children in Need
CLIC Sargent
Comic Relief
RNLI
SCIAF
Scottish International Relief and Marys Meals
World Book Day
World Vision

Pupils fundraising success has been widely reported in both local newspapers and on the Argyll and Bute Council Education webpage.

