

## **Education Spokesperson's Report February 2012**

### **Congratulations**

I am sure all Members will join with me in congratulating the Head of Service in Education, the new Mrs Carol Evans,(Carol Walker) on her recent marriage and in wishing her and her husband every good fortune in the future.

### **Property Damage**

The resourcefulness and resilience of school staff at Ashfield and Sandbank primary schools were tested recently when both schools were affected by property damage. Ashfield had a small electrical fire which meant pupils being relocated to the nearby village hall for a few days whilst repairs were made. The games hall at Sandbank lost part of its roof in the recent storm weather but the School managed to continue to operate. A permanent repair to the roof of Sandbank was undertaken in January with support from the Council's Facility Services.

I am delighted to be able to commend the very prompt response during a holiday period by council staff, both in Education and in Facility Services, to the storm damage, a response which minimised any disruption to the pupils' education. There are so many individual examples of staff going the extra yard that I feel it might be unfair to single out any one individual.

### **New Appointments**

I have been heavily involved in the appointment of permanent head teachers recently, a process which is still ongoing.

As Spokesperson for Education and Lifelong Learning I would wish to extend my congratulations and best wishes to:

Mrs Gwen Gilmour, Parklands School

Mr Stephen Glen-Lee, Joint Headship, Easdale and Luing Primary Schools

Mrs Kathleen Johnston, Joint Headship, Keills and Small Isles Primary School

Mrs Maureen MacDonald, Port Ellen Primary School

Mrs Ruth Reid, Rhunahaorine Primary School

Miss Judith Frost, Port Charlotte Primary School (commencing in April)

Mrs Pauline Inglis, Lochdonhead Primary School

Ms Louise Paterson, Achahoish Primary School

A number of other appointments are being progressed at the time of writing the report with still more to do.

Interviews are in place for:

Sandbank – 31 January

St Andrew's and Tighnabruaich – 20 February

## **Education Strategy**

The Education Service is currently working on updating a range of key education strategies to present to Council an overarching vision for the future of education in Argyll and Bute. This integrated package of strategies will integrate fully and present a coherent approach for the service to take forward. They will respond to the further implementation of the Curriculum for Excellence; to the provision of Additional Support Needs for pupils following the conclusion of the current service review; to the further development of new partnerships around the senior phase in our secondary schools; to the Council's approach to validated Self Evaluation (VSE) in conjunction with Education Scotland and to the Council's approach to early intervention and preventative work which will involve staff from Education Services, Children and Family Services and partners in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector. It is expected that this work will be presented to Council in the summer of 2012 and will help the Education Services brief elected members on the challenges faced by the service and how these are being met

## **Performance Reporting Pilot**

Education Scotland has asked Argyll and Bute to take part in a project to develop examples of how authorities could fulfil their statutory responsibilities as regards reporting on the performance of children and young people given the development of *Curriculum for Excellence*. There are twelve authorities taking part in this project and one of our Quality Improvement Officers is taking the lead on this work which should be completed later in the year.

## **Mary's Meals**

After the presentation on Mary's Meals to Members I asked Education officers how Argyll & Bute schools could be involved with this locally based charity which places great emphasis on the importance of education. As a result of this, the week commencing Monday, 26th March (the last week of term) has been chosen as "Mary's Meals' Week" when a contribution will be made to Mary's Meals from every school meal served that week.

To increase the uptake of school meals that week we will need to market it well and plans are currently being worked on for this. The Mary's Meal representative will deliver a short presentation to all primary Head Teachers on Wednesday February 2nd and deliver the same to secondary Head Teachers at a date yet to be arranged.