

## ITEM No ...3.....

**REPORT TO:** CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE –  
24 JUNE 2019

**REPORT ON:** SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE - PROGRESS REPORT

**REPORT BY:** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

**REPORT NO:** 229-2019

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report provides a progress update of the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) in Dundee. The Attainment Challenge is a centrally funded Scottish Government programme with the direct aim of closing the attainment gap by improving educational outcomes for children and young people living in Dundee's most deprived communities. The focus areas are literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and there is a specific emphasis on those living in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) Deciles 1 and 2.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Children and Families Services Committee is asked to:-

- i note the progress, success and impact to date;
- ii instruct the Executive Director of Children and Families Service to continue to provide annual updates with regard to the funding allocation and the implementation of the Scottish Attainment Challenge in Dundee.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising for Dundee City Council. The Challenge programme has been fully funded by a specific grant from the Scottish Government Attainment Fund. In 2018/19 Dundee was awarded a grant of up to £6,224,790. Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the full year grant claims to 31 March 2019.

3.2 Dundee has been awarded a grant of up to £6,323,911 for 2019/20. The Challenge Programme will continue to be fully funded throughout the next three year period, up to March 2022, from the Scottish Government Attainment Fund. The outcomes and impact of the programme will continue to be evaluated and an annual report will be brought back to the Children and Families Services Committee each year on the success, impact and sustainability of the project.

### **4.0 MAIN TEXT**

4.1 The First Minister announced the introduction of the Scottish Attainment Challenge during a visit to Dundee on 9 February 2015. A further announcement was made in June 2016 to increase the Fund to £750m. An additional two local authorities are now included in the Scottish Attainment Challenge. All nine council areas were selected because they had the highest concentration of children and young people living in SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) Deciles 1 and 2. Within this funding stream, Scottish Government has introduced Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) linked to schools' Free Meal Entitlement with funding going directly to schools to be managed by head teachers to help close the poverty-related attainment gap.

4.2 In total £14.5m has been claimed by Dundee City Council to support the Attainment Challenge for 2015-2019 and £15m has been allocated in Pupil Equity Funding for the three financial years 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020. The SAC funding targets early intervention

approaches in the early years and primary and the secondary sector. This builds on and complements existing activity at local authority level to tackle the gap in attainment between children and young people in our most and least deprived communities. The Scottish Government has recently confirmed that our Year 5 Bid has been successful and Dundee will receive the same level of funding as the 2018/19 allocation.

4.3 The Dundee Attainment Challenge Plan sets out an integrated, multi-sectoral and multi-agency approach to closing the equity gap in Dundee. The plan outlines the:

- rationale behind proposals and key drivers for change
- expected impact
- background context
- plans for implementation
- data and analysis
- proposed interventions - programmes and projects to address identified issues
- plans for measuring impact
- plans for local governance.

Progress of the plan is monitored with regular reports provided for the Scottish Government.

4.4 The Attainment Challenge in Dundee is underpinned by a belief that the educational problems facing local communities and children and families should be addressed at a local level through an integrated, multi-sectoral and multi-agency approach. To address the gap in attainment between our most and least deprived communities in Dundee, we are working in collaboration with targeted schools, key partners and Integrated Children's Services Strategic Planning Groups to identify both the right interventions and the factors which facilitates their implementation. This builds on and links existing services, plans and resources related to children, young people, their families and the communities in which they live.

4.5 The key drivers for change within the Scottish Attainment Challenge Year 5 bid are:

- Raising attainment
- Closing the poverty-related attainment gap
- Improving outcomes for children and young people

4.6 Following the Inspection of Local Authority in February 2018 the received feedback from Education Scotland suggested that our overall plan and related activity should be streamlined. As a result of this feedback we have reviewed our priorities and approaches within the SAC plan to provide a more coherent approach to achieving our stated outcomes.

4.7 The overview of the SAC plan now groups activity under three main levers for change:

- Learning Provision
- Families and Communities
- Leadership

Each lever has related workstreams/lead officers reporting to the Scottish Attainment Challenge Project Lead. Reporting under each workstream has also been streamlined to provide information using standardised measures in the following areas:

- Attainment
- Inclusion/exclusion
- Attendance
- Participation
- Engagement

The plan is now more coherent and focused and as such provides a more robust reporting structure.

- 4.8 One of the key workstreams within the Learning Provision lever is the establishment of a new Pedagogy Team through the assimilation of a number of existing central officers in key areas including literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and digital learning. Led by an Education Officer the team will target and support schools to improve the quality of learning and teaching leading to raised attainment. The team will focus on developing professional capital in each school to better target children and young people in SIMD 1+2 to achieve improved outcomes and raise the numbers of children and young people achieving expected levels of attainment.
- 4.9 Supporting and complementary to the work of the Pedagogy Team is a new partnership with the Robert Owen Centre for Educational Change (University of Glasgow). This partnership will provide targeted schools with support to build professional capital within the school through a process of collaborative practitioner enquiry. The Robert Owen Centre team has worked across a number of other attainment challenge authorities to build professional skill and expertise within and across schools resulting in improved attainment.
- 4.10 A recently appointed Attainment Advisor (August 2018) has been recruited by Education Scotland to replace the previous postholder. He has a clearly defined focus on working with the local authority, schools, and local communities to support raising attainment of children from more socially disadvantaged backgrounds in order to close the equity gap. The Attainment Advisor has been a key partner in developing the revised SAC plan and will continue to work collaboratively with local authority staff and partners on agreed priorities which support raising attainment in the key areas of literacy, numeracy, and health and well-being. He will play a strong role in linking the work of Education Scotland, Scottish Government and Local Authorities that supports the range of strategies and initiatives in place to improve educational attainment and close the gap.
- 4.11 Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the 118.18 FTE staff who have been appointed through the Attainment Challenge and are currently in post.
- 4.12 The Challenge Programme involves the tailoring of support solutions to the needs of individual schools including extra staffing and resources to support learning within and beyond the classroom and an agreed commitment to the gathering of data to evaluate the impact of interventions. This year the gathering of data and the use of standardised measures is more robust and based on the five key measures as outlined in paragraph 4.7.
- 4.13 The proposed interventions outlined are designed to achieve long term educational transformation for young people requiring additional support living in areas of Dundee experiencing economic and social deprivation. This is an essential component of the City Council's Fairness Strategy and The Fairness Commission. The programme of proposed interventions are now supporting work already underway to narrow the attainment gap in Dundee and predominantly prioritise continuity of learning and progression in Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing focusing on improvements in pedagogy and professional collaborative enquiry.

The plans link to the following national/local policies/plans:

- The National Improvement Framework
- Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education
- The Scottish Attainment Challenge
- Action plans following the inspection of children's services in Dundee
- Service standards outlined within HGIOS4
- Building a Fairer Scotland and Tackling Equality
- Children and Young Persons Act/GIRFEC
- Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative
- Equally Well

Through the Attainment Challenge we have been working at a strategic, operational and community level with all Children and Families Services, Health, Local Community Planning Partnerships and the Voluntary sector, building on the existing positive relationships and

model of strong partnership and multi-agency working. This is strengthening our capacity to work together to effectively tackle the inequalities for our young people in Dundee. Approaches to interventions are building sustainability, increasing workforce capacity and developing shared accountability. Opportunities have been provided to increase employability through the use of the Modern Apprenticeship programme.

- 4.14 The Dundee Challenge Programme initially involved 11 primary schools and 5 nursery schools; a total of 2,600 primary pupils, 985 nursery pupils, and now also includes our secondary sector. The introduction of the Pupil Equity Fund has extended the work of the Scottish Attainment Challenge to all schools and all establishments including nurseries. The Children and Families Service's Framework for School Improvement supports schools to work collaboratively in school improvement partnerships which are a mix of attainment challenge and non-attainment challenge schools and this underpins the sharing of learning, and spreading of practice to support interventions paid for by PEF.

#### 4.15 **Cost of the School Day**

A practice sharing network has been established to share successful practice across the city and will be one of the elements of sustainability as the project moves into its final year. Each school will continue planning to mitigate the impact of school costs for vulnerable families. As part of new session planning it is intended to include key slides relating to Cost of the School Day within the mandatory equalities presentation given to staff, an additional element of sustainability.

Over the next few months the project team, supported by Children and Families Service staff will plan strategically for sustainability, focusing on ways in which we can impact on the wider range of school costs outlined in the 2018 report whilst maintaining progress with the statements of intent and progress made to date by schools.

- 4.16 School and Family Development Workers (SFDW) in primary schools have provided support to our most vulnerable children and families providing a range of supports such as family learning, signposting to third sector services and access to benefits, foodbanks and employability resources. Across the city they provide access to holiday clubs, supported by Dundee Bairns who provide meals for the programmes.

SFDWs are supporting the most vulnerable children and families to: improve attendance; reduce exclusions and improve inclusion; encourage and support participation including family learning; improve learners' engagement in learning; and support children to attain and achieve in school.

SFDWs work with individual children and families as well as groups of children and families. A recent review of the group interventions specifically set up to support children and families living in SIMD 1 would indicate that in the last year SFDWs have delivered over 200 group sessions to over 1000 children (some children attended more than one session) and 600 adults (again some attending more than one session). These sessions were set up around a range of contexts with the objectives of improving family and peer relationships, conflict resolution, improving attendance, emotional well-being and dealing with family breakdown. The outcomes of each of the sessions were evaluated using a range of relevant indicators including wellbeing wheels, participant feedback and attendance statistics. Key stakeholders including Head Teachers and parents continue to report positively on the quality and level of support they receive from this group of workers.

#### 4.17 **Early Years Interventions**

The attainment challenge work in Early Years settings has been developed through interventions that support the development of language and communication skills in our youngest children, and interventions to help families support their child's early learning. Development of language and communication skills in nursery aged school children is achieved by:

- Increasing preventative work within the speech and language therapy intervention
- Increasing staff professional capacity in addressing speech, language and communication difficulties
- Improving language, communication, vocabulary skills of children in 16 targeted nurseries.
- Improving parental capacity to support their child's early learning at home.

Data trends show two Speech and Language programmes used as part of the Attainment Challenge in 16 nurseries are having a positive impact on Children's performance.

### **Nursery Narrative**

#### **2016/17**

Children had increased their Age Equivalent level by 8.2 months for Information and 0.6 months for Grammar assessments.

#### **2017/18**

Children had increased their Age Equivalent level by 6 months for Information and 4 months for Grammar assessments.

### **Teaching Children to Listen**

#### **2016/17**

The average score pre the TCtL programme was 11.2. Post the TCtL programme this increased by 1.3 points to an average of 12.5.

#### **2017/18**

The average total score pre the TCtL programme was 11.4. Post the TCtL programme this increased by 1.2 points to 12.6.

### **Family Learning**

Currently there are 166 family learning projects including:

- 50 literacy family learning projects with a total of 723 families participating.
- 22 maths family learning projects with a total of 171 families participating.
- 60 health and well-being family learning projects with a total of 502 families participating.
- 34 mixed focus projects with a total of 159 families participating.

There has been significant impact across all settings on staff confidence and skill levels related to the delivery and evaluation/measurement of family learning projects leading to more effective interactions with families and improved outcomes for children.

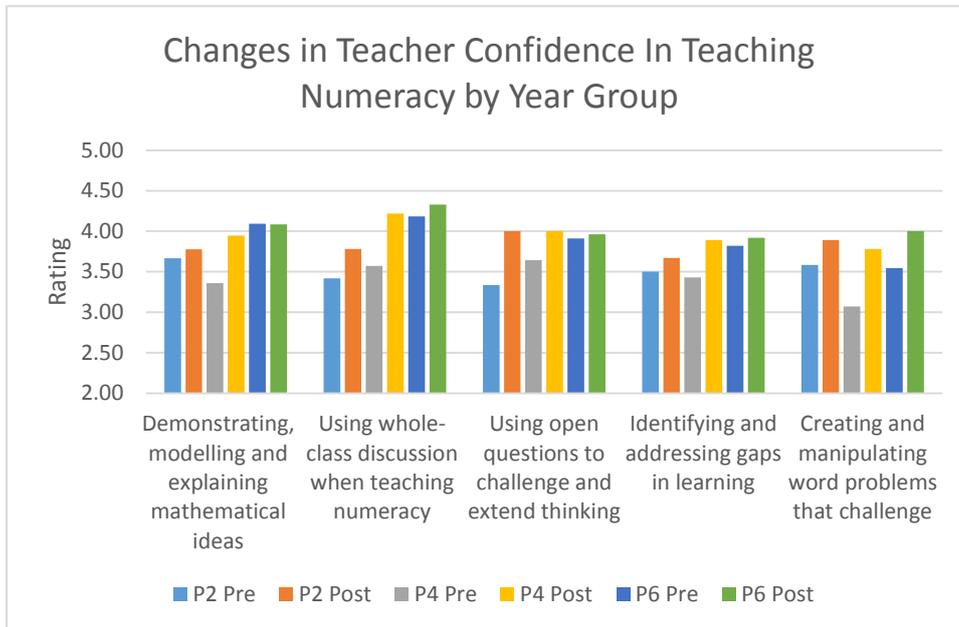
- 4.18 **Conceptual Development in Number Training – Evaluation of Intervention**  
 Significant investment has been made in training all primary school teachers in Conceptual Development in Number (CDiN) to build skills and knowledge in teaching numeracy in schools across the city to raise attainment. The following evaluation conducted by Dundee Educational Psychology Service demonstrates the extent to which the first outcome has been achieved:

The data gathered through this research has suggested that training in CDiN has resulted in:

- increased teacher confidence in using approaches which support the effective teaching of numeracy

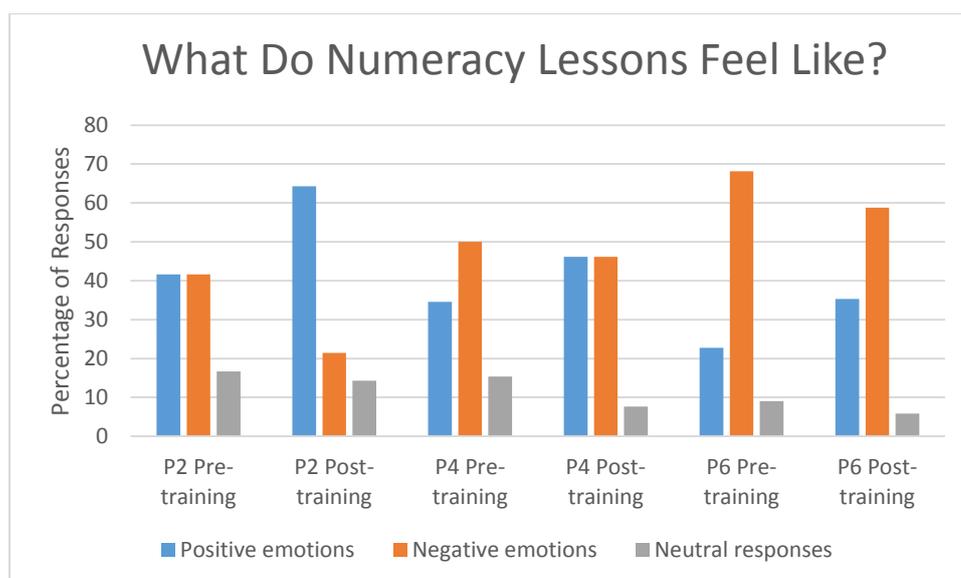
- Increased teacher confidence in assessing children’s progress, including in identifying and addressing gaps in learning

There is some evidence from this research which indicates this increased confidence has impacted on teacher’s practice, for example in the questioning used, a potential increase in the use of visual strategies when teaching numeracy, and greater use of diagnostic assessments to identify gaps in learning.



The data gathered for this evaluation suggests that teachers training in CDiN has had a positive impact on pupils’ experience of numeracy lessons. This evaluation suggests that following teachers undertaking training in CDiN:

- Pupils in all targeted year groups feel more positive about numeracy lessons.
- Pupils perceive teachers as more involved during numeracy lessons.
- There is greater communication between pupils and teachers.
- There are more discussions taking place during numeracy lessons.



#### 4.19 Secondary School Interventions

- 4.20 A number of now established secondary school interventions in key areas including literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing continue to support closure of poverty related outcome gaps in wellbeing, health and attainment. Such interventions include:
- the provision by Education Support Officers in literacy of staff training and resources to support literacy interventions for S1-S3 pupils residing in SIMD 1 and 2
  - the augmentation of secondary school staffing budgets to support the provision of numeracy interventions for pupils in S1 – S3 residing in SIMD 1 and 2
  - the provision of youth work small-group activities and targeted study/learning activities by 3 youth workers across secondary schools in raising attainment and closing poverty-related attainment gaps through the adoption of a youth-work approach
  - the allocation of a 'test of change' Pupil Support Worker to the Craigie cluster of schools to provide alternative curriculum approaches to targeted pupils.
  - the provision of additional study/learning support funding to all secondary schools to support the provision of additional learning/study opportunities for looked after/care experienced young people including examination preparation
  - the employment of English and Mathematics teachers to support the delivery of literacy/English language and numeracy/mathematics programmes to senior phase pupils attending the Future Skills College
  - the participation of 24 S2 pupils and 6 S3 pupils from each secondary school in Skillforce/Outward bound programmes aimed at raising and improving targeted pupils' aspirations, wellbeing, emotional resilience and confidence.

4.21 In addition to the above the secondary SAC funding stream has, with the support of matched funding from the Robertson Trust, implemented the Dundee and Includem Raising Attainment Project (Article V of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee of 29 October 2018 refers). Since January 2017 the project, through the provision of intensive support by Includem workers to targeted young people and families has aimed to support schools in reducing school exclusions and promoting pupils' attendance, wellbeing, engagement in learning and ultimately improved attainment. There have been 101 pupil referrals to Includem with more than half of the pupils male (61%). Three quarters of the pupils were referred when they were in S1 or S2, showing the continued shift towards earlier intervention. The majority (64%) of referred pupils live in SIMD areas 1 and 2. Key outcomes to date include:

- Improved attendance for some pupils
- More positive interactions with peers
- Increased pupil engagement with school and learning
- Reduction in violent incidents, demerits, exclusions and behaviour referrals
- Up to 7660 hours has been spent on direct planned contact with young people with an additional 673 hours of unplanned contact delivered to young people. To date, 1,875 calls have been made to the telephone helpline.
- The project is scheduled to conclude in June 2019 with a full report to Committee taking place in the Autumn.

4.22 Another major feature of last year's Scottish Attainment Challenge was the first full year implementation of the Corner Health and Wellbeing Team where one dedicated member of staff was provided for each secondary schools to support pupils mental health and wellbeing which complements our existing AIM programme, both of which are achieving good outcomes for young people in reducing their anxiety, promoting their attendance and for targeted young people improving their attainment. The PASS survey is providing data which contributes to other sources of evidence of the impact which these programmes are having. A full report around The Corner Health and Wellbeing Team work can be accessed at the following [External Link](#) .

Some of the highlights include:

- 1259 individual support session

- 219 S1/2 pupils were targeted for support
- 192 young people received ongoing support
- Support session covered areas such as, anger management, anxiety, confidence, eating disorders, low mood/depression, self-harm, self-esteem, bereavement, and suicidal thoughts.

Feedback from pupils has been very positive with 95% indicating that they felt more positive about receiving support as the sessions progressed, and 70% indicating that the sessions had helped reduce their anxieties.

## **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This Report has been subject to an assessment of any impact on equality and diversity, fairness and poverty, environment and corporate risk. There are no major issues.

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The Council Management Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 None.

PAUL CLANCY  
Executive Director of Children and Families Services  
June 2019

Local Authority	Dundee City Council
Project Lead/Contact	Audrey May

Profile to 31 March 2019

Intervention	Allocation	Q1&2 Claim	Q3 Claim	Total Spend to Date (Q1-Q3 total)	Q4 Claim	Forecast total spend to 31 March 19 (Q1-Q4 total)
1. Management & Governance	£727,309	£208,525	£151,986	£360,512	£366,171	£726,683
2. General Interventions - Teachers	£1,043,356	£483,331	£199,428	£682,759	£221,434	£904,193
3. School & Family Development Workers	£404,701	£166,630	£89,582	£256,212	£105,603	£361,815
4. Interventions 2-5	£1,181,884	£422,819	£222,602	£645,421	£290,626	£936,047
5. Literacy	£283,805	£104,359	£65,014	£169,373	£92,999	£262,372
6. Numeracy	£396,029	£147,952	£50,063	£198,014	£121,880	£319,894
7. Health & Wellbeing	£1,435,817	£572,711	£325,663	£898,375	£493,293	£1,391,668
8. Supported Study / Learning	£219,483	£43,497	£23,626	£67,122	£100,393	£167,515
9. Data Analysis & Support	£57,444	£22,423	£12,475	£34,898	£12,604	£47,502
10. Pupil Support Interventions	£474,962	£103,398	£167,355	£270,753	£199,676	£470,429
<b>Authority Total</b>	<b>£6,224,790</b>	<b>£2,275,645</b>	<b>£1,307,794</b>	<b>£3,583,439</b>	<b>£2,004,679</b>	<b>£5,588,118</b>

Staffing Breakdown	FTE planned	FTE in post	Allocated Spend	Spend to date (Q1-Q3 Total)	Forecast total spend to 31 March 19
Teachers	28.80	23.10	£1,455,694	£955,214	£1,296,135
Education / Development Officers	9.00	10.60	£571,828	£370,878	£549,424
Educational Psychologists	1.50	1.50	£97,831	£71,666	£99,456
Data Analysis Officers	3.60	2.63	£154,099	£78,114	£105,598
Family / Home Link Workers	13.00	11.60	£491,001	£292,767	£413,045
Speech & Language Therapists	4.00	4.00	£195,000	£100,550	£149,300
Early Years Professionals	35.00	25.80	£757,724	£458,037	£634,654
Others: - Music & Other	8.30	6.00	£311,184	£137,222	£212,892
Others: - Support Workers	14.50	14.00	£499,278	£289,198	£416,000
Others: - Wellbeing Assistants	23.00	18.95	£446,260	£323,370	£439,291
<b>Staff Total 2018/19</b>	<b>140.70</b>	<b>118.18</b>	<b>£4,979,899</b>	<b>£3,077,016</b>	<b>£4,315,795</b>

