

ITEM No ...3.....

REPORT TO: CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES – 23 OCTOBER 2023

REPORT ON: LEADING LEARNERS PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 297-2023

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report provides an overview of the Children and Families Service’s Leading Learners programme which took place during academic session 2022/ 23 and gives an overview of the impact of the programme for the pupils involved.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a notes the contents of the report, and
- b instructs the Chief Education Officer to update Committee about the impact of the Leading Learners 2023/ 24 programme.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Leading Learners pilot programme was initially funded by Dundee Rotary Club who contributed £10,000 during financial year 2020/21 and £30,000 during financial year 2021/22.

3.2 The service spent £70,000 during financial year 2022/23 to enhance the programme and to roll it out to all eight mainstream secondary schools. This was from additional funding provided to Children and Families Service Revenue Budget specifically to “tackle the attainment gap by providing targeted support in our schools and communities.”

3.3 Funding of £95,000 has been allocated in financial year 2023/24. £45,000 was spent during April to June 2023 to continue the Leading Learners programme, this funding was from the Scottish Equity Funding grant from Scottish Government. The remaining £50,000 has been allocated from additional monies provided during the budget setting process to tackle inequalities in education.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Children and Families Service’s ‘Leading Learners’ programme was developed to support senior phase pupils in their learning, with a particular focus on those most at risk of not achieving their exam target grades.

4.2 The pilot project targeted senior pupils most affected by the pandemic in four secondary schools. In year two, a fifth secondary school joined the project. In year three the programme was rolled out to all eight secondary schools.

4.3 The programme is built on three core principles that support pupils to take a lead in their own learning:

- Partnering with pupils to remove any barriers to study.
- Partnering with pupils as they build the foundation they need to be ready to study.
- Partnering with pupils as they embed research informed study techniques as a part of their learning journey.

- 4.4 The Education Endowment Foundation, an independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement through better use of evidence, highlight that metacognition and self-regulation approaches have consistently high levels of impact, with pupils making an average of seven months additional progress. This is a core part of the Leading Learners programme.
- 4.5 The Leading Learners programme builds on learning from previous iterations in Dundee, as well as learning from similar projects elsewhere. It is underpinned by evidence and research. The programme involved all eight of Dundee's mainstream secondary schools and is led by the Children and Families Service's Pedagogy Team.
- 4.6 Teachers take on the role of a coach, partnering with pupils to build their learning capacity, release their potential and raise attainment in their chosen curricular areas.
- 4.7 92 teachers were initially trained to become Leading Learners coaches. All attended 3 learning sessions where they were upskilled in the retrieval and dual coding techniques to be used and the measurement tools that would be used to track and measure impact. Evaluations of the sessions showed that participants left with an 80% increase in knowledge of the subject, and that their skills and confidence had increased by 82%. A school lead role was created for each school as a link between the school and Pedagogy Team.
- 4.8 522 pupils were identified across the eight schools, using the criteria of those who were at risk of not achieving their full potential. 26% of these pupils were identified as having an additional support need (ASN). Over 31% of the pupils involved live in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) Quintile 1.

5 IMPACT

- 5.1 Data presented relates to 1746 exams sat cross Scottish Credits Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Pupils who were withdrawn from the course, or presented for units or national progression awards were not counted as no exam was sat.
- 5.2 Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the number of presentations per pupil at National 5 (Figure 1) as well as Higher and Advanced Higher (Figure 2).

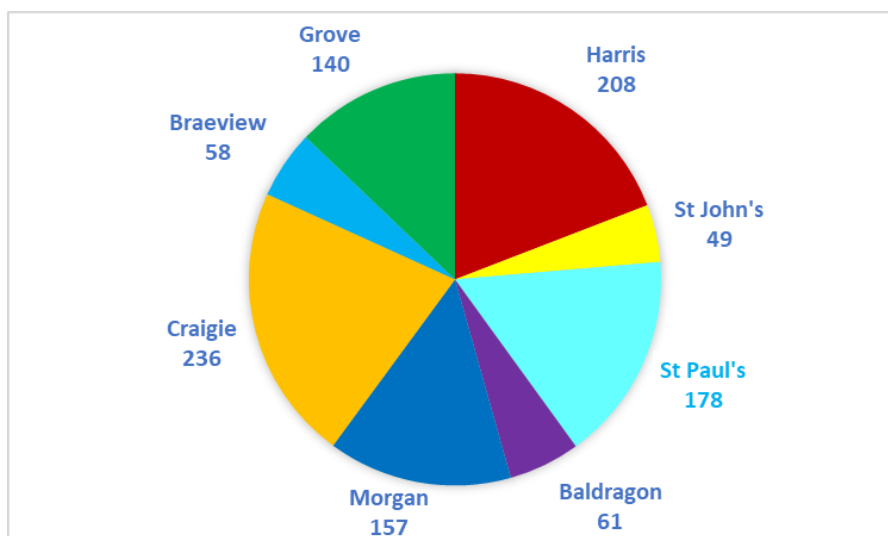


Figure 1 Number of presentations by school at National 5 level

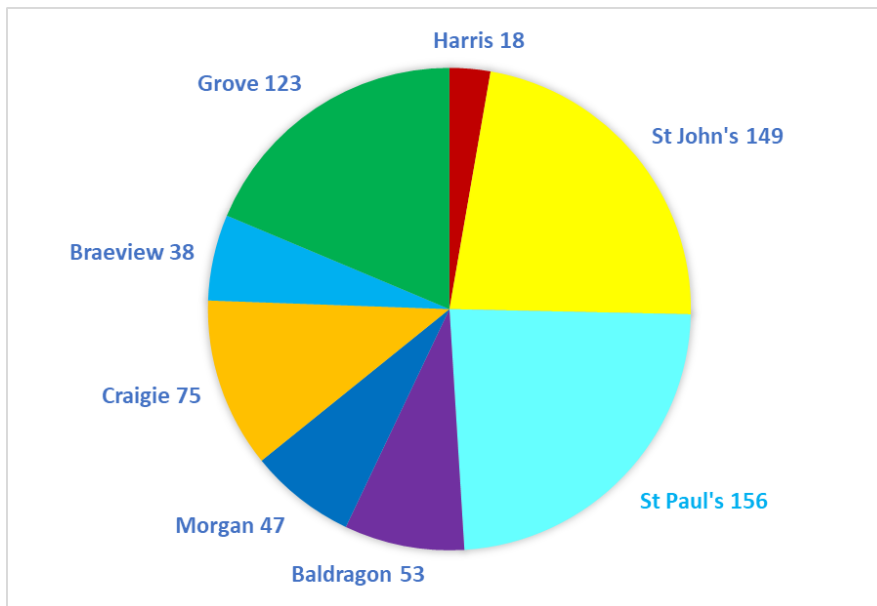


Figure 2 Number of presentations per school at Higher and Advanced Higher levels

- 5.3 Pupils involved in the programme were identified as at risk of not achieving their working grade (WG) in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) exams. Figure 3 evidences the overall impact at citywide level, with 75% of young people either achieving or exceeding their working grade. *It is important to note that these young people will also have benefitted from other interventions and so the success cannot necessarily be attributed to this programme alone.*

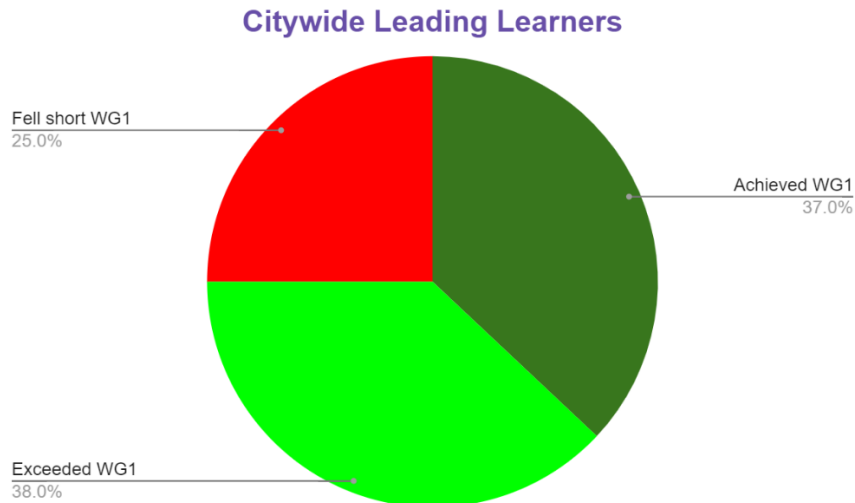


Figure 3 Achievement of Working Grade - National 5, Higher & Advanced Higher combined

- 5.4 Figure 4 illustrates the impact of the Leading Learners programme on Higher and Advanced Higher attainment at school level. It evidences that the programme was impactful in all schools with the percentage of pupils achieving/ exceeding (combined) their working grade ranging from a minimum of 66% (St John's) to 92% (Morgan). It should be noted that the demographics of the cohort of pupils taking part in each school varied. For example, 61% of the pupils in the St John's cohort live in SIMD Quintile 1 areas of the city, compared to 42% of the pupils taking part in Morgan.

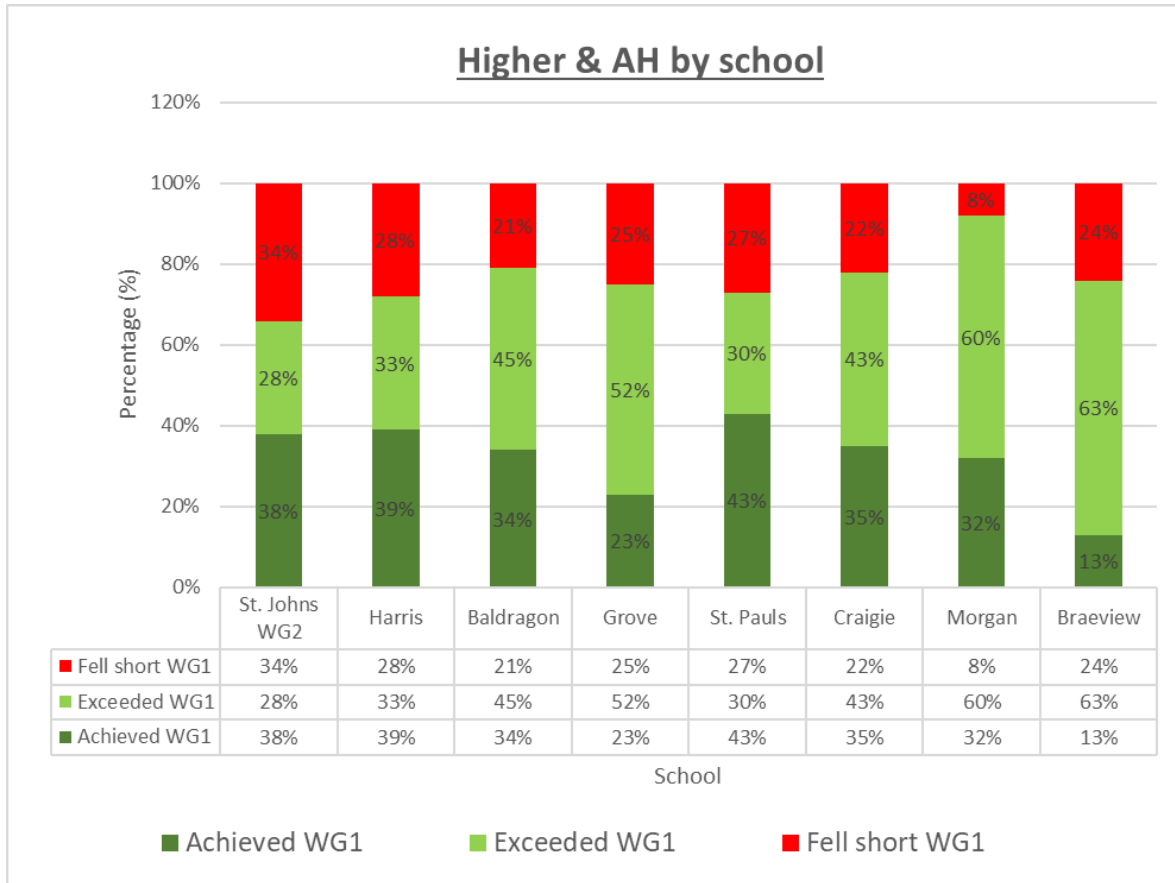


Figure 4 Citywide data at Higher and Advanced Higher level by school

6 NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 The Leading Learners programme is focused on evidence informed effective pedagogy, including retrieval technique and dual coding technique. The Pedagogy Team has a professional learning offer available to all teachers to develop practice in these areas. As well this universal offer, the Pedagogy Team provides targeted support to schools to help enhance the quality of learning and teaching.
- 6.2 The Pedagogy Team has presented the impact of, and learning from, the Leading Learners programme to the Secondary Head Teachers, to inform individual improvement plans.
- 6.3 The Children and Families Service will implement a Leading Learners programme for this academic session building on the learning from last year’s programme. This offer will likely focus on S4 pupils who are identified as being at risk of not achieving their full potential, with a specific focus on inequalities e.g., pupils living in the most deprived areas, pupils with additional support needs and pupils who are care experienced.

7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate Senior Manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

8 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The Council Leadership Team has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None.

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