

ITEM No ...5.....

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE –
7SEPTEMBER 2020**

REPORT ON: SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE - PROGRESS REPORT

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE

REPORT NO: 203-2020

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 2019/20 Dundee was awarded a grant of up to £6,323,910. Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the full year grant claims to 31 March 2020.

3.2 Dundee has been awarded a grant of up to £6,223,466 for 2020/21. The Challenge Programme will continue to be fully funded throughout the next two 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 £20.1m has been claimed by Dundee City Council to support the Attainment Challenge for 2015-2020 and £20.1M has been allocated in Pupil Equity Funding for the four financial years 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2021. 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 disadvantaged 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 6 bid are:
- Raising attainment for all
 - Closing the poverty-related attainment gap
 - Improving outcomes for children and young people
- 4.6 The overview of the SAC plan 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
- 4.7 One of the key workstreams within the Learning Provision lever is the 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 has supported targeted schools to improve the quality of learning and teaching, and to raise attainment across schools with a focus on children and young people in SIMD 1+2. In partnership with Dundee schools the pedagogy team promote excellence and equity in learning and teaching in order to raise attainment for all.

The team:

- provide targeted support
- promote the use of impact measures and evaluation tools
- build capacity through professional learning activities informed by research
- foster teacher agency by facilitating collaboration and networking.

In any engagement, whether universal or targeted, the team:

- Ensure Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) complies with Dundee's Standard for CLPL
- Build Measurement of impact into all training
- Use data analysis support as required
- Plan a training calendar, bespoke to the school where required

During session 19/20, the team set up a CLPL catalogue in which schools could see at a glance the training offer across the city and direct staff accordingly. A digital platform has been formed which includes;

- CLPL
- professional reading
- examples of blended learning
- a discussion forum for practitioners
- home learning activities.

Samples of bespoke work of the team includes:

- Literacy ESOs worked within a school to improve quality of learning and teaching in Literacy and Numeracy – school received a positive HMle report
- In a secondary school several departments engaged in 4 stage lesson study, cooperative learning sessions and CLPL in active learning to improve engagement and attainment. Evidence of improvement within identified departments was recognised at recent Extended review.
- Team supported a primary school to raise attainment through bespoke CLPL, team teaching/modelling and providing resources. Return visit from HMle very positive re improvements in learning and teaching
- Secondary school 4 x department engagement looking at the Moderation Cycle and Voice 21 listening and talking programme, extended to whole school engagement due to enthusiasm generated among the staff by high quality delivery from the pedagogy team.

The team has some strong network links and Microsoft Teams allow teachers to share resources, concerns and problems. The team has given presentations to Head Teachers and a variety of teaching networks and also planned and delivered training to the NQTs using a theory into practice model.

The team has developed a range of professional learning opportunities, supported by management tools to help school staff to identify and implement school improvement priorities. During the last few months of session 2019/2020 the work of the Pedagogy Team supported all schools across the city to develop effective home learning and to encourage the use of a range of digital platforms to support learning at home.

4.8 Complementary to the work of the Pedagogy Team is the partnership with the Robert Owen Centre (ROC) for Educational Change (University of Glasgow). This partnership provides targeted schools with support to build professional capital 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. Examples of ROC input and progress from last session include:

- Supporting input and workshops for school leaders and their inquiry teams in order to strengthen their skills in using collaborative action research, data/evidence and sharing each other's experiences to drive improvement efforts;

- Providing direct support (using email, telephone and face-to-face) and advice to each of the schools in designing and carrying out their inquiries in relation to their specific change agendas;
- Linking the work of the school partnerships to relevant development and research activities locally, nationally and internationally;
- Supporting the school teams in writing evaluative accounts of their CAR experience to inform their school planning but also to contribute to the Council's wider knowledge base on effective approaches.
- Organising regular meetings with school leaders and their, Local Authority personnel and Attainment Advisors to:
 - discuss progress and discuss how best to meet the developing needs of the schools within the context of local and National priorities and policies.
 - to explore the strategic implications from the action research and consider ways to sustain, develop and disseminate the lessons learned.

Examples of projects undertaken across the targeted schools include:

- Improving data literacy for classroom practitioners
- Improving the quality of feedback to raise attainment
- Literacy projects – improving comprehension, writing, vocabulary, and listening and talking skills to raise attainment in literacy
- Developing and embedding family learning approaches
- Improving attendance and engagement
- Developing play-based approaches to support raising attainment in primary 1
- Developing pedagogical approaches such as learning conversations to improve engagement and raise attainment

- 4.9 The Attainment Advisor recruited by Education Scotland to replace the previous postholder 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 is a key partner in supporting local authority staff to develop the SAC plan and its governance. She 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. The Attainment Advisor plays 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.
- 4.10 Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of the 108.9 FTE staff who have been appointed through the Attainment Challenge and are currently in post.
- 4.11 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 4.6.
- 4.12 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 is 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.

- 4.13 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.

4.14 **Cost of the School Day**

This project is now complete and the citywide statements of intent, the establishment of an annual Cost of the School Day action plan for each school, robust and comprehensive guidance for schools, and a practice sharing network are evidence of the impact and sustainability of this project. The work of Dundee City schools on the Cost of the School Day project has been featured in national good practice sharing initiatives from Child Poverty Action Group, who was our partner in this work.

- 4.15 School and Family Development Workers (SFDW) in primary schools provide support to our most vulnerable children and families across 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 2018/2019 review of the group interventions specifically set up to support children and families living in SIMD 1 would indicate that in that year SFDWs delivered over 200 group sessions to over 1000 children and 600 adults. 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. 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. In session 2019/2020 the numbers of children and families requiring this support remains consistent, however, the number of families requiring foodbank support, signposting to third sector agencies and financial support has shown a significant increase.

4.16 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 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.

2018/19

Children had increased their Age Equivalent level by 8.3 months for Information and 4.1 months for Grammar assessments.

2019/20

Children had increased their Age Equivalent level by 7.9 months for information. Due to the limited assessment period, Grammar scores remained at -0.1 months.

Teaching Children to Listen (TCtL)

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.

2018/19

The average score pre the TCtL programme was 10.2. Post the TCtL programme this increased by 1.6 points to 11.8.

2019/20

The average score pre the TCtL programme was 10.4. Post the TCtL programme this increased by 2.8 points to 12.9.

During the period of lockdown and education closures the Speech and Language Therapists in the Attainment team:

- were in contact with all the nurseries involved with this project to discuss what support the staff needed from the team in order to support the families at home. It was really positive to see and hear how many of the nurseries from cohorts 1 and 2 have been able to produce their own resources for the programmes for sharing with families,

- linked with the family learning leads to consider quantity and quality of information shared with families, mindful of financial and digital capabilities of families in our nurseries.
- provided scripts to use and video clips explaining activities from our programmes for sharing with families on social media.
- produced new resources for the programmes for nursery staff to use with children as the nurseries reopen.
- will access online training from the programme authors regarding adapting delivery of Teaching Children to Listen.
- linked in with other SLT services across the UK to keep up to date with ideas for family support.

Family Learning

Due to Covid 19 and an interruption to service delivery, the collection of a full data set for family learning activity in 2019/2020 has been delayed. However, during the summer term of 2020 and whilst children were learning at home, a range of creative activities to support families were undertaken by all local authority nurseries, with responses being matched to local need. A range of engagement methods were used to stay in contact with families and provide support for learning at home, this included telephone conversations, emails, Class Dojo and twitter. Many nurseries distributed learning at home packs with resources and these proved very useful and popular with families. Nurseries also supported families to access any additional support they needed, for example, financial help and food support.

All Early Years Educator (EYE) Families staff have participated in Solihul Approach training and will be beginning to use this approach in their work with families. It was evident that the Solihul Approach was being used by practitioners in their work with families during the stressful first few months of the pandemic. All EYE Families staff recognised that this training had helped them understand how best to respond to families in this challenging situation.

Between April and June 2020 All EYE Families staff continued to use their knowledge of families and consulted with families to ensure what they offered would be of most use to families.

All EYE Families staff used sound values, skills and knowledge to carefully plan a considered response to support families at this challenging time. Settings demonstrated that they were flexible and adaptable. Practitioners also worked well to share practice and experience across settings, learning from their own reflections and the reflections of others.

4.17 Numeracy

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 data gathered through 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

To support and enhance this pedagogical approach all schools have had access to Sumdog, an online numeracy resource which develops proficiency in basic numeracy skills and knowledge. The following outcomes were achieved during session 2019/2020:

Sumdog Summary Report - February 2020

No. of schools using Sumdog	39		
No. of schools with average Proficiency increase over 100%	21	Particularly high increase >500%	8 primary schools
No. of schools with average learning rate poor <20%	2	No/little impact on learning rate	1 primary 1 secondary
Average sessions per month	1-9		
Time used in school per month >60mins	9	Time used in school per month <15mins	2 primary 1 secondary

Main messages: -

- One primary school continues to use well and maintains a high proficiency rate increase.
- More primary schools are seeing a proficiency increase of >500%
- One primary school has a particularly high increase, 851%, and pupils are accessing for over 60 mins per month in class, but also accessing at home.
- Almost all schools, have pupils accessing Sumdog at home.

4.18 Secondary School Interventions

- 4.19 A number of 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 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 Outward bound programmes aimed at raising and improving targeted pupils' aspirations, wellbeing, emotional resilience and confidence.
 - the participation of secondary pupils in a range of wellbeing projects including Anxiety in Motion (AIM) programme, designed to support young people whose emotional wellbeing impacts upon attendance, engagement and attainment at school.
 - Health and Wellbeing Workers in every secondary school who provide early intervention in S1/S2 to prevent disengagement with school for young people with emotional health and wellbeing needs – complementing the AIM programme.
 - Support for staff involved in these Health & Wellbeing programmes from Educational Psychologists who provide consultation in relation to practice issues, data collection and staff reflection.

4.20 Attainment

Overall Curriculum for Excellence levels and SQA qualifications were showing improving trends across most measures for the past 2 sessions. This year's data continues to demonstrate improvements across most measures. However, the disruption to learning caused by Covid 19, the subsequent lockdown, and the cancellation of the SQA examination diet has presented significant challenges in making comparisons to previous years.

4.21 Implications of COVID

The impact of COVID on Scottish Attainment Challenge work has been to create a degree of flexibility in how the spend is targeted to schools, children and young people. The emerging learning gaps due to school closures, and changes to learning approaches, levels of engagement and access to online resources has required this flexibility in the targeting and delivery of Scottish Attainment Challenge initiatives and programmes.

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
August 2020

Scottish Attainment Challenge
Challenge Authorities Programme 2019/20

Local Authority	Dundee City Council
Project Lead/Contact	Audrey May

Profile to 31 March 2020

Intervention	Allocation	Combined Q1 & Q2 Claim	Q3 Claim	End-year Claim (Qtr 4 Claim)	Total Spend to March 2020
Management & Governance	£852,424	£305,382	£187,278	£358,189	£850,849
General interventions - teachers	£1,086,184	£478,021	£228,240	£266,436	£972,697
School & Family Development Workers	£573,080	£207,617	£155,015	£145,349	£507,981
Interventions 2 to 5	£753,655	£321,835	£130,077	£122,684	£574,596
Literacy	£260,398	£96,927	£73,279	£88,613	£258,819
Numeracy	£362,240	£154,582	£90,019	£91,559	£336,160
Health & Wellbeing	£1,643,792	£679,775	£350,055	£357,795	£1,387,625
Supported Study / Learning	£289,328	£104,803	£25,073	£159,023	£288,899
Data Analysis & Support	£77,847	£18,286	£12,574	£8,396	£39,256
Pupil Support Interventions	£424,962	£180,770	£114,038	£79,207	£374,015
Authority Total 2019/20	£6,323,910	£2,547,998	£1,365,648	£1,677,250	£5,590,897

Staffing Breakdown	FTE planned	FTE in post at Dec 2019	FTE in post at Mar 2020	Planned Spend	Q1 +Q2 Claim	Q3 Claim	End-year Claim (Qtr 4 Claim)	Total spend to March 2020
Teachers	28.9	23.9	23.9	£1,575,392	£670,913	£332,499	£362,830	£1,366,242
Education / Development Officers	9.0	8.0	8.8	£619,883	£288,390	£152,088	£138,663	£579,141
Educational Psychologist	1.5	1.5	1.0	£111,699	£52,317	£27,351	£18,467	£98,135
Data Analysis Officers	4.6	3.6	2.6	£151,428	£35,715	£29,249	£30,336	£95,300
Family / Home Link Worker	18.0	16.7	15.1	£623,080	£222,959	£163,311	£156,617	£542,887
Speech & Language Therapist	3.5	3.5	3.5	£175,744	£86,135	£43,067	£43,067	£172,269
Early Years Professional	24.0	20.0	18.4	£437,706	£194,796	£60,248	£76,862	£331,906
Music & Others	6.5	6.0	5.2	£266,414	£101,207	£54,782	£47,577	£203,566
Support Workers	15.0	14.0	11.0	£564,507	£257,639	£120,758	£101,861	£480,258
Wellbeing Assistants	24.8	19.6	19.4	£546,826	£216,611	£113,948	£109,513	£440,072
Staff Total 2019/20	135.8	116.8	108.9	£5,072,679	£2,126,682	£1,097,301	£1,085,793	£4,309,776

