



AGENDA ITEM

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**The Scottish Attainment
Challenge Schools Programme**

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Falkirk Council

Title: The Scottish Attainment Challenge Schools Programme
Meeting: Education Executive
Date: 6 September 2016
Submitted By: Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report is to inform and update elected members regarding The Scottish Attainment Challenge Schools Programme within Langlees Primary School and Falkirk High School.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Elected members are invited to:
- note that additional funds have been allocated to Langlees Primary School and Falkirk High School; and
 - request that the Director of Children's Services provide the Education Executive with regular updates on the impact and learning arising from the Attainment Challenge in these schools.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Scottish Attainment Challenge is a Scottish Government initiative which aims to raise the attainment of children and young people living in deprived areas, in order to close the equity gap.
- 3.2 Seven local authorities were initially identified in 2015 on the basis of high areas of deprivation, namely Glasgow, Dundee, Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire, North Ayrshire, Clackmannanshire and North Lanarkshire. They were awarded support and funding as Attainment Challenges authorities, as part of the first stage of the initiative.
- 3.3 A further 57 individual schools from authorities not identified in the seven authorities mentioned above were also identified on the basis of having a large percentage of pupils attending these schools who live in SIMD deciles 1 & 2. Langlees Primary School was the only Falkirk Primary school identified on this basis. These schools, along with the Attainment Authorities were all allocated a share of the £750m Attainment Fund over the next 5 years.

- 3.4 A bid was submitted to the Scottish Government in 2015 outlining initial aims and proposals as to how we would tackle inequality and increase literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing in Langlees Primary School. Our bid was ambitious and this was recognised by the Scottish Government and led to funding of £125,000 per year being awarded instead of the expected £70,000.
- 3.5 In June 2016 it was announced that a further two local authorities (East Ayrshire and Renfrewshire) would become Attainment Challenges and that individual secondary schools would also be included. Following this announcement Falkirk High School was identified as qualifying for Attainment Challenge funding. They will submit a bid by 31st August 2016 to secure their £100,000 to £150,000 annual allocation over the next 5 years.
- 3.6 In addition in June 2016, 6 schools have been successful in securing funding from the Attainment Challenge Innovation Fund (Appendix 2) totalling £171,200 to deliver local projects targeted to address poverty related attainment gap over the next year.
- 3.7 The desired outcome for the Langlees community is that the school is the hub; families see themselves as equal partners in their child's learning, the school listens and responds to the needs of the wider community and the children and young people in Langlees are literate, numerate and have ambition and aspirations.
- 3.8 Langlees has many challenges both as a school and as a community which the Attainment Challenge aims to support and develop to allow change to take place. Challenges range from low literacy and numeracy skills, low aspirations, unemployment, increased health issues, high areas of concentrated deprivation, high numbers of benefit claimants, high number of school placing requests and low level of pupils achieving 5 or more Highers (see appendix 1 for a current list of challenges).
- 3.9 The main focus was:
- Parental engagement;
 - School launch which was held on 28th April for families to find out more about the Attainment Challenge;
 - Residencies Programme using the arts as an intervention to increase engagement;
 - Onery (A transitional class blending Nursery and Primary 1);
 - Strategic Partnerships;
 - Cluster programmes – Scottish Waterways Trust;
 - School ground development;
 - Breakfast Clubs;
 - Professional Development Space.
- 3.10 Year two will see work across the two Attainment Challenge schools (Langlees Primary and Falkirk High School) support the aims of the Strategic Outcomes & Local Delivery Plan, in particular tackling the impact of poverty on children and improving mental health and wellbeing.

Falkirk High School's bid is due for submission at the end of August. Discussions are taking place with the management team to shape the bid. One of the focuses will be extending the Inspiring Learning Space which is a programme to support challenging pupils in the school and offer them bespoke curriculum which better supports their needs and builds life skills.

3.11 For year two in Langlees Primary the outcomes have been split across three sections:

- **Learning:** particular focus will be on numeracy and literacy;
- **Leadership:** in partnership with Tapestry and the Scottish Government;
- **Lifelong Wellbeing** – working in partnerships with services and organisation to reduce the impact of poverty;

3.12 Early indications are that for some the gap in literacy and numeracy is decreasing, however more intervention is required for a range of pupils, in particular the most vulnerable to reduce barriers which are preventing them from learning.

4. Considerations

4.1 This report is to advise elected members of the Falkirk schools involved in the Scottish Attainment Challenge Schools Programme which has been funding developments in Langlees Primary School from January 2016 and will fund developments in Falkirk High School later this year.

4.2 The funds are only temporary. We therefore need to measure the impact and plan how we can sustain the work to continue improvements. To do so we have set up a management group and implementation group to monitor funding, impact and progress. The management group will lead on sustainability and what resources will be required to continue work as well as training required for current staff in building future capacity.

5. Consultation

5.1 Consultation for Langlees Primary School is taking place throughout the programme to ensure that pupils, parents, partners and staff are involved, informed and engaged with the programme. There will be a similar consultation and engagement as the proposal develops.

6. Implications

Financial

- 6.1 All costs will be met using the external funding from the Scottish Government.
- Resources**

- 6.2 Currently at Langlees Primary we have increased staffing numbers to support the most vulnerable pupils.

Legal

- 6.3 No legal implications arise.

Risk

- 6.4 No risk arises.

Equalities

- 6.5 No Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment has been carried out. However the funds have been targeted to help those in areas of concentrated deprivation.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.6 Not applicable

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 Although the primary school programme has only been running for six months we have already seen impact on reducing the gap in literacy and numeracy for some of the pupils.
- 7.2 Further interventions need to take place in order to support the most vulnerable of families who experience barriers which prevent pupils from learning. We will work alongside partners to reduce barriers and offer support and services to families to allow pupils to become more engaged in learning.

Director of Children's Service

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Appendices

None

List of Background Papers:

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:

None