



**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES: EDUCATION**

INSPECTION OF THE EDUCATION FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

ACTION PLAN

The following stakeholders were consulted in the process of developing this action plan. Their contributions, ongoing involvement and support are welcomed and greatly appreciated in its implementation.

- The Education Spokesperson and Elected Members
- The Director, Community Services and Heads of Service
- The Quality Standards Manager and Quality Improvement Officers
- Head Teachers
- Council Staff in Community Services and Partner Services
- Professional Associations
- Parent Representatives

SEPTEMBER 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HMIE found that Argyll and Bute Council demonstrated good and improving performance across many different aspects of its work. Overall, from a sound base, the Education Service was strengthening its impact on meeting the Council's key aim of being recognised as Scotland's leading rural area.

The overarching challenge the Council needs to meet is to further improve the existing high levels of attainment, particularly in secondary schools and to continue to monitor the impact of the teams of Quality Improvement Officers on raising pupils' attainment, broadening their achievements and improving learning and teaching.

The underlying purpose of this Action Plan is to ensure that the key elements of this challenge will inform and have significant impact on the delivery of outcomes from:

- the Service Improvement Plan 2005-8
- the annual Improvement Objectives of the Education Authority, 2005 and 2006
- School Improvement Plans 2005/6 and 2006/7

on continuing improvements in:

- monitoring the implementation of key policies, initiatives and priorities and evaluating their impact on learning improvement
- promoting and supporting a culture of 'improvement from previous best'
- engaging with stakeholders in gaining views on aspects of educational change and influencing decision making
- recognizing and undertaking effective or innovative practice and school and pupil achievement

and on addressing the main points for action identified by HMIE.

Implementation of the action plan will be given major priority and will be closely monitored by the Strategic Policy Committee, Education Spokesperson, Director and Heads of Service in Community Services.

The Education Service's Management Team and Quality Improvement Officers will provide clear direction and support to ensure that Head Teachers and schools address the key priority of continuous improvement and will monitor the effectiveness of schools in securing raised attainment for children and young people in Argyll and Bute.

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Action Plan following INEA Inspection

Main Point for Action 1 : Establish closer integration between service and budget planning

Areas for Development	Impact	Strategy to Support Improvement	Persons Responsible	Timescale
<p>Improve the collation and presentation of information matched to Budget and Service Plan priorities.</p>	<p>Budget allocations are matched to priority areas to secure planned developments.</p> <p>A more robust system of monitoring budget spend and impact as priorities are achieved is in place.</p>	<p>Ensure overall budget statements are applied to each priority area of operation.</p> <p>Apply financial resource requirements to all National Priority areas of development.</p> <p>Identify all specific grants applying to SEED initiatives.</p> <p>Ensure budget monitoring includes information on progress in meeting service plan targets.</p> <p>Ensure spending plans refer to agreed service plan priorities.</p>	<p>Heads of Service – Education, Quality Standards Manager, Accounting Services Manager, Quality Improvement Officers.</p>	<p>Current service planning cycle, completed by March 2006.</p>

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Main Point for Action 1: Establish closer integration between service and budget planning

Areas for Development	Impact	Strategy to Support Improvement	Persons Responsible	Timescale
Service Improvement, Planning and Reporting.	<p>A more cohesive approach to planned services and improved joint working across Council services is evident.</p> <p>It can be seen that strategies to ensure a Best Value approach to service planning are agreed and established.</p>	<p>Review the framework for reporting progress on key priorities to include more information on the impact and effectiveness of agreed practices.</p> <p>Further develop effective joint working between the Quality Standards Manager and the Council's Policy and Strategy Manager to improve consistency between Corporate and service planning processes.</p> <p>Explore the development of Best Value approaches to Service Planning with a focus on consultation, sound governance, effective resource management and sustainable development.</p>	Quality Standards Manager, Policy and Strategy Manager.	By July 2006.

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Main Point for Action 2: Address the issues of capacity and the physical environment in schools

Areas for Development	Impact	Strategy to Support Improvement	Persons Responsible	Timescale
Addressing overcapacity in primary schools.	The profile of the school estate presents as having available capacity fully and appropriately utilised for the benefit of all pupils.	Develop within the School's Estate Strategy, clear and practical procedures to address increasing overcapacity in primary school buildings.	Head of Planning & Performance.	Session 2005/2006 and ongoing.
Achieving an improved environment for learning.	<p>A more systematic approach to planning and implementing improvements in the schools' estate is in place with high levels of satisfaction from users.</p> <p>There are effective and smooth transitions from old to new buildings.</p>	<p>Identify priority decisions relating to the management of the school estate and the need to respond timeously to improving the environment for learning in specific schools.</p> <p>Support the effective implementation of the NPDO initiative for replacing identified schools within the authority.</p> <p>Ensure effective working relations between the NPDO staff, property services and senior managers in schools over the ongoing school building improvements.</p>	<p>Head of Planning & Performance.</p> <p>Head of Capital Funding Project Head of Planning & Performance</p>	Session 2005/2006 and ongoing.

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Main Point for Action 3: Strengthen procedures for monitoring and evaluating the performance of all schools including secondary schools

Areas for Development	Impact	Strategy to Support Improvement	Persons Responsible	Timescale
Planned review of aspects of school performance.	Continuous improvement in school leadership, teaching and learning and attainment and achievement is evident in all authority schools.	<p>Quality Improvement Officers (QIOs) will further develop positive and open relationships with link schools in relation to challenge and support.</p> <p>Monitoring and tracking performance through analysis of attainment information, Key Area Visits, School Reviews and HMIE school inspections.</p> <p>Identification of areas of curriculum where attainment and achievement requires to be improved across the authority and in individual schools.</p> <p>Monitoring the effectiveness of the role of school managers in securing improvement.</p>	Quality Standards Manager, Quality Improvement Team.	From Session 2005/2006.

Performance at S1/S2.	Improved attainment and achievement in 5-14 national assessments, in particular the achievement of level E in S1 and by the end of S2.	<p>Link QIOs to focus on measures to support schools in increasing 12-14 attainment in writing and mathematics.</p> <p>Discussion on 5-14 results to be included in monitoring visits by QIOs.</p> <p>QIOs to support school managers in auditing, reviewing and delivering S1/S2 course plans.</p>	<p>Quality Improvement Team.</p> <p>Quality Improvement Team</p>	<p>Session 2005/2006 and ongoing.</p> <p>Session 2005/6 and ongoing.</p>
Performance in SQA examinations.	Improved SQA examination results at all levels.	<p>Continue formal meetings with head teachers and SMTS involving Heads of Service, Quality Standards Manager and link QIO to review performance in SQA examinations and school strategies for improving on previous best.</p> <p>Review arrangements for head teachers to present Standards and Quality Reports on an annual basis to elected members at area committees.</p> <p>Training of principal teachers to interpret examination results data and to use the Standard Tables and Charts (STACS) and Fyfe Analyses to improve subject performance.</p> <p>STACS interactive training package made available to all secondary schools.</p>	<p>Head of Service – Secondary, Quality Standards Manager.</p> <p>Fyfe Consultancy.</p> <p>Quality Standards Manager.</p>	<p>Session 2005/6 and ongoing.</p> <p>Session 2005/2006.</p> <p>August 2005.</p>

<p>The development of strategic management in secondary education.</p>	<p>Improve standards incorporate leadership in secondary schools and roles of head teachers extended at authority level.</p>	<p>Continue to involve the secondary head teachers in regular forums to further develop school leadership, raising standards and further development of head teachers' roles as senior managers in the authority.</p>	<p>Head of Service – Secondary Quality Standards manager.</p>	<p>Session 2005/2006 and ongoing</p>
<p>Develop procedures for systematically maintaining the extent of policy implementation and the impact of policies on pupils' experiences.</p>	<p>Improvements in teaching and learning. Central authority staff are aware of school performance and provide appropriate support and challenge to secure improvement.</p>	<p>Implement procedures for monitoring the impact of key policies in schools. Ensure the impact on pupils is monitored through classroom observation, Key Area Visits and School Reviews. Review 'Teaching for Effective Learning' to reflect both the broader and specific aspect of 3-18 language and culture and improve the impact of the policy in secondary schools.</p>	<p>Heads of Service – Education, Quality Standards Manager, Quality Improvement Team.</p>	<p>Session 2005/2006 and ongoing.</p>

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Main Point for Action 4: Ensure more effective support for the curriculum and learning and teaching in secondary schools to achieve the Council's aim of raising attainment and achievement further.

Areas for Development	Impact	Strategy to Support Improvement	Persons Responsible	Timescale
Identify and disseminating good practice.	Improved standards in teaching and learning in all subject areas will be ensured through effective networking that shares good practice amongst all schools.	<p>The education authority will support education authority and school staff to access nationally recognised centres of effective practice and effective provision in other authorities.</p> <p>Education staff will acknowledge and disseminate effective practice in Learning and Teaching and curriculum delivery identified through: Key Area Visits; School Reviews and HMIE Inspections.</p>	<p>Heads of Service – Education.</p> <p>Quality Standards Manager.</p> <p>Quality Improvement Officers.</p>	From session 2005/2006 and ongoing.
Increase focus on pedagogy in securing high quality Teaching and Learning in every classroom.	High standards in teaching and learning and improved pupils' experiences.	<p>QIOs will use the authority's 'Learning Plan' as a framework for leading and supporting the development of a professional learning culture.</p> <p>QIOs to support effective networking with subject leaders and PTs to agree priorities for development and secure appropriate staff and curriculum development support within in-service provision and CPD programme.</p>	<p>Quality Improvement Officers.</p> <p>Quality Improvement Officers.</p>	<p>From September 2005.</p> <p>From session 2005/2006 and ongoing.</p>