Nurturing Educational Establishments in Inverclyde

In recent years Inverclyde Council has adopted an approach to service delivery known as '*Nurturing Inverclyde'*. The vision and practices set out in this approach seek improved outcomes for all children, citizens and communities through aligning all planning processes with the Wellbeing Indicators from Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC).This means that services are expected to evaluate their impact in relation to the wellbeing outcomes.

This approach recognises the significant challenges faced by Inverclyde as evidenced through the following indicators:

- 24% of children in Inverclyde are growing up in poverty, compared to the Scotland wide figure of 20%.
- In half of the wards in Inverclyde over a quarter of children are growing up in poverty.
- Around 1,000 children in Inverclyde live in severe poverty - 11% of all children in the area.
- The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Index (SIMD) denotes Inverclyde as amongst the most deprived areas in Scotland with a category 1 classification.
- At age 16, there is a 16% gap in attainment levels between the poorest pupils and their classmates in Inverclyde.

http://www.childreninpovertyinverclyde.org.uk/child-poverty-in-inverclyde.html

Evidence strongly suggests (Doyle, 2003) & (Reynolds, MacKay & Kearney 2009) that an approach based on nurture principles is well placed to meet these challenges. This also acknowledges research that has long standing recognition, that education establishments in similar economic catchment areas can have vastly different outcomes for their pupil population (Rutter et al, 1979). In relation to learning and teaching a significant evidence base has been established over time that improvements are maximised in this domain through improvements in classroom climate resulting from adult attunement and knowledge of child psychological development (Dion & Evans, 1991).

A key development in Inverclyde that has taken nurture forward in its establishments has been the completion of the Positive Relationships & Positive Behaviour Policy (2013). This document draws it key tenets from the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act (2004 & 2009), Included, Engaged & Involved (parts 1 &2) and the Children & Young People (Scotland) Act. To support operationalising the goals of this policy, the local authority established the Nurture Support & Development Group. At the present time membership of this group includes 4 nurture class teachers, 4 primary head teachers, Acting Quality Improvement Manager, Barnardo's Nurture Service Inverclyde, 1 secondary Pupil Support Principal Teacher, 1 maingrade educational psychologist and a senior educational psychologist.

The Nurture Support & Development Group has developed its planning over time, starting as a group that emphasised its training role into one that now emphasises its role in relation to:

- The establishment of a process that can support establishments self-evaluate, plan, implement and evaluate impact in relation to nurture based approaches with the assistance of the Nurture Resource that it has created.
- The embracing of implementation science (Kelly & Perkins, 2012) as a key methodology in supporting establishments.
- Identification of best practice across the local authority and at a national level and feeding this into its ongoing work.
- Reporting on impact to the Head of Service (Inclusive Education) on an annual basis through the production of a standards and quality report that will feed into the local authority's own annual reporting process.

Several challenges have been identified, which also relate to IEPS service delivery, for the group and will be key in relation to its future focus. It will need to:

- Take cognisance of potential capacity issues i.e. the Nurture Support & Development Group does not have the capacity to support all establishments at the same time.
- Seek consistent linkages to all staff in the Quality Improvement Team in order to assist in the identification of need and targeting of support.
- The potential for roll out to early learning and childcare establishments.
- Maintain an emphasis on evidencing of impact.