



Renfrewshire



Attainment



Challenge

Literacy, Numeracy, Health & Wellbeing



**@AttainRen Blog:
Read all about it!**

August 2019



Renfrewshire
Council

Introduction

This year, we are delighted to share with you, a series of blogs, poems and illustrations which demonstrate the impact of the Attainment Challenge.

Improving attainment for all, while closing the poverty-related attainment gap continues to be a priority which we are committed to achieving in Renfrewshire. The purpose of this short booklet is to highlight a selection of the activity which has taken place this year showcasing approaches, projects and services.

Our children should have no poverty of aspiration, ambition or opportunity and this is why we are pioneering innovative approaches across our entire schools' community. We will continue to embed and support these approaches in our bid to make Renfrewshire the best education authority in Scotland.



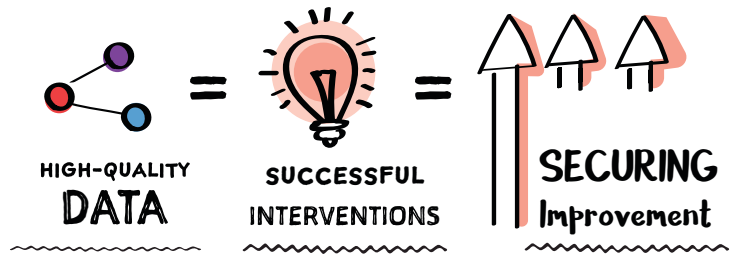


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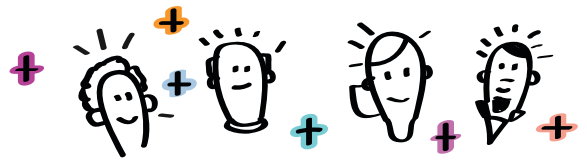
INSPECTION HIGHLIGHTS
EXCELLENT PROGRESS with
 IMPROVING LEARNING, RAISING
 ATTAINMENT and narrowing the
 POVERTY-RELATED ATTAINMENT GAP.

1 Very strong SELF-EVALUATION



WHAT is making a DIFFERENCE **FOR** CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE in RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL?

2 HIGHLY effective LEADER



IN RENFREWSHIRE
OUR CHILDREN
 should have NO POVERTY of
 ASPIRATION, AMBITION
 or opportunity
view from the service

SHARED VISION and an ETHOS of empowerment of staff

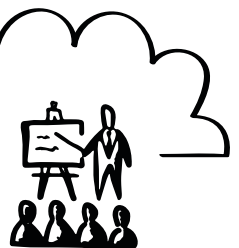
TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES

for children and young people, their families and communities.



4 CONSISTENT IMPROVEMENTS

3 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING



Governance of Scottish ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE

CLOSING the poverty-related ATTAINMENT GAP



High Quality **LEARNING & teaching** including special training for Classroom Assistants

Family and community **LEARNING** programmes

Promoting **Alternative THINKING STRATEGIES**



Being an Attainment Advisor in Renfrewshire

My name is Emma McGill and I am an Attainment Advisor working for Education Scotland in Renfrewshire Council. It's a very unique role. The Scottish Attainment Challenge is a programme to support schools and local authorities to focus on targeted improvement in learning and teaching; families and communities and leadership. It is focused on supporting pupils in the local authorities of Scotland with the highest levels of poverty and ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed. There are a team of Attainment Advisors working in every local authority in Scotland. We work with local authority staff, headteacher, school staff and staff in third sector organisations too. Every day is different.

In Renfrewshire, I am involved in a range of different activities. My day may involve a visit to a school to work with a headteacher looking at how well the children are achieving and how that can be improved. I can be leading a planning sessions for staff who are focussing on children as they move from P7 to S1. I also deliver training to groups of staff on topics like learning and teaching. Throughout all of this, my job is to keep a real focus on levelling the playing field for all children which will provide them with the education they deserve and the tools they need to succeed. The team in Renfrewshire have a real commitment to this and we work well in partnership towards delivering this outcome.



— ***Emma McGill***
ATTAINMENT ADVISOR

Why Pupil Leadership Matters

All children and young people regardless of their background, should have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Through leadership opportunities, pupils are supported and encouraged to develop the skills and attributes required to become future leaders within our society.

In Renfrewshire, children and young people are encouraged to develop their leadership skills through various programmes supported by the Attainment Challenge. These programmes enable pupils to develop greater self-awareness by bringing their personal values into focus. They support pupils to create positive and sustainable relationships with peers, staff and family members by having self-worth and respect for others. Pupils are supported to manage change, deal with conflict, develop resilience to learning, increase confidence and self-belief through continual self-evaluation towards self-improvement.

The quote below from a staff observer demonstrates the impact that such opportunities can have on our young people:

'The young person came to Columba 1400 already having some leadership skills and inner confidence, but they really grew in their understanding of these things and how to allow them to flourish and come to the fore. A highlight for the young person was when in the 'Search and Rescue' task they saw the need within the group for a strong leader and the young person stepped up and put themselves forward. The young person later reflected that this was the first time they had ever done this and that it was something they enjoyed and would do again. The young person talked about understanding that as a leader it is ok to not have all the answers and that by empowering their team, they were able to lead effectively.'

Following participation, this 'Hero's message' was delivered by one of the young people:

'Columba 1400 has been one of the best experiences of my life and has changed my outlook on life. Enjoy every moment of it even when it becomes hard.'

— Julie Colquhoun
EDUCATION MANAGER





Putting Social & Emotional Wellbeing First

The **PATHS® Programme** allows teachers to deliver lessons focused on identifying different feelings. Pupils are given an opportunity to explore what these feelings look like and share their personal experiences of different emotions. Having this emotional awareness helps pupils to build skills in emotional regulation and self-control.

Through PATHS®, pupils learn that all feelings are OK and it is our behaviours that can be OK or not OK when we experience particular emotions. The PATHS® Programme provides the pupils with strategies they can use when dealing with uncomfortable feelings. Pupils are encouraged to follow a series of steps called 'Doing Turtle' in P1 and P2 and 'Control Signals' in P3 and beyond. This gives pupils a guided response to support themselves when they are faced with a problem or difficult situation.

Across the 23 schools that are implementing the PATHS® Programme, there is a Pupil of the Day selected in every class. These pupils are given a special identifier and given compliments from their teacher and peers in an effort to boost self-esteem. Pupils are also encouraged to compliment themselves during this process.

PATHS® provides lots of opportunities for children to explore their friendships including how to make new friends and important skills for making up with friends. The class teacher can then assist pupils with these skills in a safe and supportive environment.

PATHS® is taught through structured lessons by the class teachers. However, for the programme to be most successful, it is fundamental for both school and parents to work in partnership to support its key concepts.

The comments below showcase the impact of the programme:

"I have been able to use the shared language on a number of occasions to help two children in my class who struggled previously to communicate how other pupils' actions made them feel"
– Teacher

"PATHS® has taught me motivation – everything is possible" – Pupil

– Katrina McGovern & Kristy Fotheringham

PATHS® COACHES



Family Learning – A Poem

A parents perspective of taking part in the Pizza Family Learning Project

**Come to family learning they said
It'll help with the reading and you'll get fed**

How anxious
How nervous
What do they want with me?
Why won't he behave?
Sit up! Be quiet! Look happy!
They can see

**Now we're standing in a circle
The lassies laugh
Join in they say
Have fun they say
Stomach lurching, hands shaking
Let me go
Don't make me stay**

Every week I get the same feeling like I'm going to be sick
But the wee one, he's excited
I'm going to have to stick

**Weeks go by
I feel less and less shy
I love all the crafts and games we've done
I'm different but still me
I chat to the parents, the lassies, join in**

It must be the endless cups of tea
But wait
It's more than that
I'm valued
I'm listened to
I'm seen and that's a fact

**Come to family learning they said
You'll change, you'll grow
What' next?
Who knows where you'll go**

— RACHAEL KERR





Getting Curricular Transition Right

Research suggests that a focus on transitions can have a positive impact on the learning progression and outcomes for children and young people. It also tells us that there is a link between low economic status and less positive transition. As such, Renfrewshire Attainment Challenge is supporting curricular transitions as a priority, in order to support closing the poverty related attainment gap and raise attainment for all.

The big transition periods for our children and young people happen between nursery and primary 1 and primary 7 to secondary. Over the past 2 years, transitions teams have been working to bring about sustainable change to our curricular transitions processes in order to show the impact which improvements to transitions can make to the overall outcomes of children and young people.

Early evidence from Renfrewshire's project shows that when children are given more targeted support with learning across these transition periods, there is a significant shift in their sense of achievement, confidence and improvement in key literacy and numeracy skills, as they move across transition and beyond.

The quote below demonstrates the long-term impact of the project:

"The transition teacher really helped me settle into high school and got me believing that I actually can do Maths... I am still doing well in Maths and am confident in asking for help when I need it. My reading has improved so much and I think that's because of the paired reading I was involved in, in S1 with the transition teacher...This all helped me to believe in myself. If I keep working hard, I can achieve anything at all."

— **Current S3 pupil in Renfrew High**

Renfrewshire's project has also been supporting professional dialogue and improved planning between nurseries, primary and secondary practitioners, in order to develop a shared understanding of expectations and teaching approaches to make learning more streamlined for our children and young people.

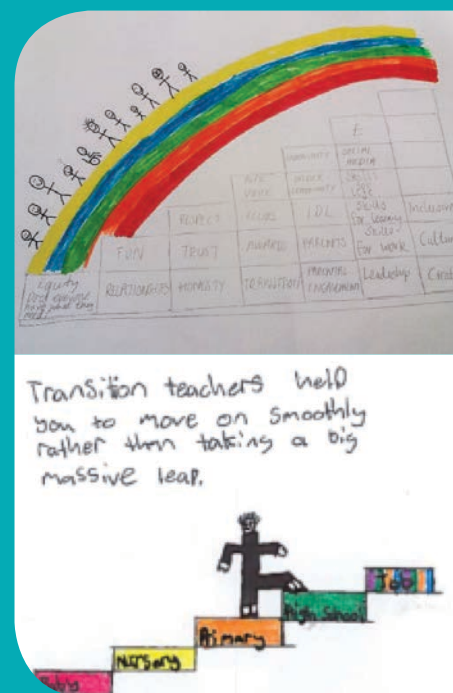
Staff who work in collaboration with the project have noted significant positive impact:

'The opportunity to engage in cooperative teaching has improved my pedagogy as I feel I am more sensitive to the needs of the BGE. I also think it has been beneficial for my primary colleagues to witness the learning and teaching in a secondary school, so that we can all negotiate the expectations and pace set for our pupils during transition.'

— **Secondary Teacher**

— **Zoe Inglis**

CURRICULAR TRANSITIONS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



Parents in Partnership

The transition from primary to secondary is seen as a big change for pupils, but it can also be daunting for parents. Some parents have had the opportunity to go back to school and experience S1 first hand through its Parents in Partnership programme.

Currently in all secondary schools, teaching staff prepare and develop a lesson representative of one that an S1 pupil would be taught, using the same teaching methodologies and curricular language. The aim is to familiarise parents with teaching practices and common language in the classroom, supporting them to gain a greater understanding of their child's experience in school. In certain subjects such as cooking, art, technical and PE, parents and pupils have had the opportunity to work together!

Staff also use this opportunity to explain to parents how they could support their child's learning at home, highlighting questions to prompt discussion. This approach allows for an increased understanding of how secondary schools work and aims to improve parents' confidence to support their children and provide an improved understanding of who parents can contact if they need advice or support to help their children.

The programme has also improved relationships between home and school, making parents and schools more comfortable with approaching one another.

Quotes below from our parents demonstrate the clear impact of the programme:

"Brilliant! Very worthwhile to be involved with. Personally, I have enjoyed it immensely and think what I have learnt and experienced will help my child in transition" – Parent

"I think the programme is really good...I just know more about everything and feel like I can actually talk to the school and ask questions. I don't want to stop - can I come back next week?" – Parent

"This has been a very worthwhile experience for me. With a very anxious child, worrying about starting high school, this has given me good insight into the school which I can use to ease the mind of my child. It has helped me to meet and get to know members of staff who have put my mind at ease about so many issues" – Parent

– Jessica Dradge

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER | ENGAGING LEARNERS



Aberlour Attain Youth Voice – Illustration

