

ANGUS COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

20 JANUARY 2011

SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This report advises the Education Committee of the nature and impact of Curriculum for Excellence support delivered to Angus schools in the period August – December 2010.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Education Committee:

- (i) note the terms of this report;
- (ii) note the scope and impact of two recent support programmes to assist Angus schools with their formal introduction of the new curriculum.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 25 November 2010, the Education Committee considered a report detailing major developments in relation to the organisation and operation of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (Article 8 refers).
- 2.2 That report set out an outline support programme which I had agreed with the District Inspector in response to the Cabinet Secretary's expectation that tailored support be provided, in particular, to secondary schools in relation to key aspects of Curriculum for Excellence.
- 2.3 The agreed programme was delivered by teams of inspectors in the period 9 September 2010 – 8 November 2010. The main details of that programme, a summary of which is provided in the Appendix, and its impacts are provided in the following section of this report.
- 2.4 On 12 July 2010, Directors of Education received notification of grant support to local authorities to support quality assurance and moderation of Curriculum for Excellence assessment approaches in school session 2010-2011.
- 2.5 On a related note, the Cabinet Secretary authorised an extra in-service day for Scottish schools to support the implementation of this fundamental aspect of the new curriculum. Related arrangements were the subject of a report considered by the Education Committee at its meeting on 26 August 2010 (Article 6 refers). At that meeting, the Education Committee approved the proposal to schedule the additional in-service day on Thursday 25 November 2010, thereby allowing teachers three consecutive in-service days to support the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence.
- 2.6 In light of that decision, arrangements were made for every Angus teacher to take part in a 1½ hours workshop on 25 November 2010, with an expectation that workshops, led by centre-based staff and Head Teachers, be followed up by a set of standard activities in each school.
- 2.7 The focus of the in-service workshop and related activities and the impact of that in-service support are considered in the section 4 of this report.

3. OVERVIEW OF HMle CFE SUPPORT PROGRAMME TO ANGUS SECONDARY SCHOOLS SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 2010

- 3.1 Aside from the details of the schedule provided in the Appendix, HMle undertook a support visit to the authority's Extended Support Provision. That visit was, in part, a follow-up to the inspection exercise undertaken in January 2010, but also in part, a contribution to the Curriculum for Excellence support programme agreed with the District Inspector.
- 3.2 The following paragraphs provide details of the different activities undertaken by HMle in delivering this support programme as well as feedback about the various activities/sessions based on comments received from participants.
- 3.3 **Information gathering exercises** – HMle undertook two information gathering visits to Brechin High School on 9 September 2010 and Webster's High School on 8 November 2010. Both visits were half day visits which comprised detailed discussions with, in the main, promoted staff.

Feedback from the Senior Management Teams of both schools indicate that they and their colleagues found the discussions with HMle to be helpful and indeed reassuring in respect of progress to date in delivering the new curriculum.

Informal feedback from the Visiting Inspectors indicates that both schools have well constructed plans for the implementation of the new curriculum and both are making sound progress in delivering those plans.

- 3.4 **Literacy/Numeracy across the curriculum** – separate workshops for secondary senior management colleagues and for Principal Teachers (Language and Communication) and Principal Teachers (Mathematics) took place on 22 September 2010. Reassuringly, in preparing their inputs, the Inspectors drew significantly upon Angus Council's Literacy and Numeracy Strategy documents, updated to take account of the new curriculum. HMle have commented very favourably on the value and impact of these documents which were the subject of a report considered by the Education Committee at its meeting on 20 October 2010 (Article 9 refers). Head Teachers, Depute Head Teachers and Principal Teachers were appreciative of the opportunity to have an extensive dialogue with HMle colleagues about arrangements being made locally to promote literacy and numeracy across the curriculum and, equally, about related national expectations. Feedback suggests that the dialogue with HMle in relation to this activity reassured them that commitments to date in Angus in this key area of the new curriculum are well considered. Colleagues, however, suggested that they would have found it helpful to have concrete examples from HMle about emerging good practice in other local authorities.
- 3.5 **Leadership and Management support** – HMle led a full day seminar and related workshop in Carnoustie High School on 19 November 2010. The purpose of this activity was to enhance the confidence of colleagues with leadership responsibilities in managing self-evaluation procedures, partnership working and procedures for supporting pupil transitions. As was the case with the whole school literacy and numeracy activities, this activity attracted favourable comment from participants in respect of the opportunity to engage in depth with HMle colleagues about generic leadership issues and about specific leadership challenges in relation to Curriculum for Excellence. Colleagues also commented very favourably about the opportunity to take part in a dialogue about leadership challenges with managers from the Education Support Services who had also been invited to attend this leadership event. Notwithstanding the overall positive response to this exercise, most participants indicated a degree of disappointment that HMle did not offer specific examples of good practice observed elsewhere in Scotland.
- 3.7 **Visit to Forfar Academy** – A visit to Forfar Academy was arranged in the context of this support programme with a view to providing assistance to a senior management team which has experienced significant personnel changes over recent sessions. The main focus of the dialogue and related deliberations with the school's senior management team and with Principal Teachers was the need to develop mechanisms to promote and ensure consistency by promoted staff in managing quality improvement procedures. Feedback from the Head Teacher indicated that the nature and outcome of the various engagements with the visiting inspectors were helpful to him and his senior colleagues in reviewing their leadership support priorities and related quality assurance procedures.

- 3.8 I have made arrangements to meet with the District Inspector to review in some detail the delivery of this CfE support programme and, indeed, to agree the scope of future engagement between HMIE and the authority in support of our continuing implementation of the new curriculum.

4 OVERVIEW OF 25 NOVEMBER 2010 IN-SERVICE PRESENTATIONS/WORKSHOPS

- 4.1 The main focus of the centre-based workshops and presentations were the arrangements made by the education authority to (a) enhance Angus teachers' understanding of the national framework for assessment within Curriculum for Excellence, published as, "building the curriculum 5" and (b) deliver key messages to all Angus teachers about procedures to moderate Curriculum for Excellence assessment approaches. Those procedures had already been the subject of extensive discussion with Head Teachers and teachers' representatives. They had been favourably received by both groups.

- 4.2 The standard presentation used on the day was devised and delivered jointly by Quality Improvement Officers and by Secondary and Primary Head Teachers representatives from each school cluster. That presentation made it absolutely clear that the aims of the dedicated in-service workshops were to:

- provide practical updates in relation to national and local guidance about assessment within the context of Curriculum for Excellence
- share and clarify the authority's proposals for moderation (standardisation) of Curriculum for Excellence assessment activities
- promote ownership by staff of the moderation procedures by:
 - exploring arrangements currently in place, including arrangements based on the very well received Angus repackaged 'Experiences and Outcomes' documents
 - identifying the support needs of school clusters and of individual schools
 - seeking staff comments on the moderation procedures

- 4.3 Reassurance was offered to staff about a major commitment by the authority to support efforts within schools and across schools to achieve a shared understanding by teachers of the assessment implications of the new curriculum and of related standards which pupils can be expected to attain in relation to CfE published 'experiences and outcomes'. The support provided by the authority includes financial support amounting to £7,000 per cluster, designed in the main to facilitate the release of teaching staff to participate in exercises organised to meet cluster needs and priorities.

- 4.4 Feedback from staff participants to the in-service presentations and workshops has been overall very positive. Colleagues welcomed:

- the opportunity for schools to come together within clusters to receive the same key messages at the same time
- the clear articulation of Angus Council's plans to support moderation of assessment procedures
- the emphasis on broad and deep learning as opposed to learning designed simply to rush pupils through Curriculum for Excellence levels
- the clarification of Curriculum for Excellence assessment terminology and nomenclature
- confirmation, as indicated in the preceding paragraph, that funding would be devolved to clusters to promote moderation of assessment commitments
- the commitment to ensure that procedures built on the already established good practice

- 4.5 Head Teachers and teachers were issued with follow-up activities designed principally to assist schools and clusters to strengthen and support new assessment procedures including moderation procedures. Arrangements have been made to ingather the outcomes of these exercises with a view thereafter to ensuring that any emerging anxieties can be addressed promptly.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 While there are no financial implications arising directly from the consideration of this report, it should be noted that £56,000 of the Scottish Government CfE Assessment grant of £68,100 has been devolved to school clusters in support of cluster-based assessment priorities. The balance of that funding is being used to support the further development of the authority's pupil tracking resource, 'On Track with Learning', and meet the costs of updating the Angus Assessment policy.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising from consideration of this report.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective. An [equalities impact assessment](#) has been undertaken.

8. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

- 8.1 This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Single Outcome Agreement:
- young people and adults in Angus maximise their potential through learning opportunities (National Outcome 3)
 - children and young people in Angus will have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their skills, confidence and self-esteem to the fullest potential (National Outcome 4)

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Finance and Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

**NEIL LOGUE
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

CFE: CABINET SECRETARY'S TEN POINT PLAN – SCHEDULE OF HMIe SUPPORT TO ANGUS SECONDARY SCHOOLS

AUDIENCE	TOPICS	DATES/TIMES	HMI	ANGUS CONTACT	VENUE
Brechin High Staff	Information Gathering Exercise	9 September 2010	Moira Cummings	Steve Dempsey	Brechin High School
Secondary HTs and 1 Depute HT per school	Literacy/Numeracy across the Curriculum	22 September 2010	Douglas Cairns Chris Webb	Trish Torz	Canmore Room, The Cross, Forfar
Principal Teachers of Language Communication and	The use of Literacy Es and Os	22 September 2010 2pm – 4.00pm	Chris Webb	Trish Torz	Canmore Room, The Cross, Forfar
Principal Teachers of Mathematics	The use of Numeracy/Maths Es and Os	22 September 2010 2pm – 4.00pm	Douglas Cairns	Trish Torz	Boardroom, Ravenswood, New Road, Forfar
Head Teachers QIOs CLD Managers Fiona Robertson Gillian Strachan Audrey Jenkins Paul Meighan	Self-Evaluation Leadership School Improvement Transitions Partnership Working	19 October 2010 9am – 4pm	Nigel Lawrie Patricia Watson	Trish Torz	Carnoustie High School
Forfar Academy	Support to SMT	21 October 2010	Nigel Lawrie	Melvyn Lynch Susan Duff	Forfar Academy
Webster's High School	Information Gathering Exercise	8 November 2010	Douglas Cairns	Eric Summers	Webster's High School