

# The Attainment Challenge: Leadership, Learning and Success

## Dunfermline, October 1<sup>st</sup> 2015

### Welcome to Dunfermline

- Serve your Community
  - Generations who have experienced school at the heart of their community. Scotland retains strong community education.
- Find your Passion
  - When a young person is encouraged to find their passion it can be the beginning of a lifelong personal journey
- Celebrate Successes
  - Within every community there are success stories. Scots have not been great at sharing and enjoying each other's successes

### The Attainment Challenge

- Identify the Challenge
  - The gap in educational attainment between low-income and high-income households in Scotland starts early. By age 5, it is 10–13 months. Lower attainment in literacy and numeracy is linked to deprivation throughout primary school.
  - Parental socio-economic background has more influence than the school attended.
- Reframe the Opportunity
  - It is easy to capitulate and outsource all responsibility for effecting change
  - To help colleagues reframe how we perceive this context knowing that there are interventions which will make a sustainable difference
- Park Pre-Judgments
  - The most worrying situation arises when we make premature judgments about a child's potential based on factors over which they have no control
  - Elect to use positive language avoid negative stereotyping and over-use of 'inhibitory' labels
- Support your Parents
  - Successful parental involvement programmes include providing parents with effective strategies to tutor their children, making a good space for homework, and providing enjoyable books

### Lessons from Elsewhere

- Evidence Informed
  - There is a growing body of well-researched, readily accessible evidence on what interventions work in schools
  - We should be guided – not shackled - by a professional understanding of what works
  - We should apply our professional knowledge and experience to research evidence to bespoke solutions for each unique context
- Sharing through Trust
  - There is strong evidence that sharing best practice requires mutuality and high level of trust
  - Primary Perspectives DVD strategies from 4 schools
- Pursuit of Core Purpose
  - Leaders are most effective when they are clear about 'core purpose' and bring energy to its pursuit
  - There is more variance within schools than between schools – leaders need to be bold in addressing this challenge
- Model Collaboration
  - Both the London and City Challenges provide models of how significant school improvement can arise through collaboration, strong local ownership and a focus on solutions

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- Collaborative practices can and should be modelled within and between schools

### Lessons from Fife

- Climate for Improvement
  - Schools which are organised in 'silos' are difficult to improve
  - Leaders need to be visible in their support for developing professional dialogue especially around pedagogy
  - School staff need to fully understand and be involved in dialogue around the purpose and audience of any research activity
- Shared research approach
  - The lesson study method was effective in improving classroom practice in a Fife Schools pilot
  - Lesson study was effective because it focused on pupil outcomes not teacher performance
  - Research can be sharpened when there is a demonstrable purpose and a clear target audience
- Beneficial outcomes
  - Each of the 24 research projects involving the lesson study method in Fife had very specific benefits for pupils written into their design
  - A Teachers as Trainers programme is being implemented to help enhance capacity for improvement
- Social and Professional Capital
  - There was evidence that the Fife research activity enhanced social and professional capital within each school where staff fully understood and were involved in dialogue around the purpose and audience

### Lessons in Leadership

- It's a Moral imperative
  - It's really hard to work in challenging contexts over any length of time if it's only a job'
  - Issues around recruitment, retention and rejuvenation of staff will threaten success
  - The London Challenge experience showed that some local autonomy in allocation of resource was important
- Constructive Alignment
  - The Five C's fundamental to change are: Core Purpose, Clarity, Coherence, Consistency and Community
  - Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development has a strong positive impact on school performance
- Role Clarity First
  - The main Lesson from Mercedes F1 is role clarity – 'know your job, do your job'
- Commit beyond the Role
  - The main Lesson from Les Miserables is to 'manage the people but prepare for the performance'
- Stand back to Reflect
  - The main Lesson from the Freeman Hospital Cardiac Unit is to 'walk away and reflect'

### Lessons in Learning

- Know what Impacts
  - The work of academics such as John Hattie, Robert Marzano, Dylan Wiliam, Robert Coe and others suggest that we can identify high impact teaching interventions
  - Cognitive science helps us understand how pupils access, store and retrieve information

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- Teachers ought to have an informed view of what has the most positive impact on their own pupils' learning
- Focus your Interventions
  - Schools should agree which teaching interventions are viable and impactful and focus on those only
  - In Fife we agreed to focus on: Task Design, Feedback and Marking, Questioning and Metacognition, Collaborative Learning, Memorability and Growth Mindset
  - [http://issuu.com/alistairstmithlearning/docs/primary\\_perspectives\\_dvd\\_contents](http://issuu.com/alistairstmithlearning/docs/primary_perspectives_dvd_contents)
- Offer a Structure
  - Rather than encourage lesson plans as to-do lists provide a systematic approach based on learning sequences; focus on learning not activities
  - Use a language of learning such as that used by Kelty PS
- Share planning and Moderation
  - Shared planning and moderation of children's work is one of the most effective development activities, especially across year groups and involving TA's
- Develop your Teaching Assistants
  - Teaching Assistants are often culpable of disempowering children – without training they can be ineffective.

### Lessons in Success

- Measure through childrens' experience not just their performance
  - Evaluate the success of any staff training or new initiative by identifying recognisable changes in pupil experience
- Enable through the Environment
  - Utilise the BASICS (Belonging, Aspiration, Safety, Identity, Challenge, Success) model to create a positive, purposeful learning environment
- Define and Capture Success
  - Identify the great Learner Behaviours in and around classrooms and reinforce these on an everyday basis and in communicating to parents. We used the following:
    - Noticing
    - Explaining things
    - Asking good questions
    - Learning something new
    - Practising hard till you get it right
    - Thinking carefully
    - Listening carefully
    - Trying different ways of doing things
    - Being a *learning* friend who helps others learn
    - Making someone else happy
    - Becoming better at sharing
    - Reading every day
- Win the H Factor
  - The H - or Happiness Factor – underpins a successful school culture. Look after the well-being of staff as well as students.
  - Relational 'trust' is related to academic success
  - Encourage well-being targets for all staff and classrooms

### On leaving Dunfermline

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- Summary of What I'd Do Next
  - Model the learning behaviours you wish from others
  - Explicit guidance and support for parents
  - Revise CPD and build around key themes: expectation, differentiation, questioning, feedback and marking, task design
  - Focused Lesson study for influential staff teams
  - Integrate Teaching Assistants into shared planning
  - Track pupil progress more methodically
- Become Leaders of Learning and Promoters of Success

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#### Lessons from Elsewhere

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#### Lessons from Fife

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#### Lessons in Leadership

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#### Lessons in Learning

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### **On leaving Dunfermline**

*What works best in education: the politics of collaborative expertise John Hattie, June 2015*

*Using collaboration and enquiry to tackle educational inequality, School Improvement Partnership Programme, SIPP, November 2014*

# **The Attainment Challenge: Leadership, Learning and Success**

## **Dunfermline, October 1<sup>st</sup> 2015**

**Which recent educational ideas and researchers might you source for further information?**

1. Drafting and Re-drafting based on peer feedback - Ron Berger
2. Interleaving and Desirable Difficulties - Robert Bjork
3. Applications of neuroscience – Sarah Jayne Blakemore
4. Highly structured lesson observation – Robert Coe
5. Metacognition and Learning to Learn - Guy Claxton
6. Nurturing Growth Mindsets - Carol Dweck
7. Developing Social Capital – Hargreaves and Fullan
8. Evidence Based Interventions - John Hattie
9. Co-Operative Learning – Spencer Kagan
10. Peer Influence in Classrooms - Graham Nuthall
11. Purposeful Formative Assessment - Dylan William
12. Applying Cognitive Science - Daniel Willingham
13. SOLO taxonomy and Constructive Alignment – John Biggs
14. Learning Re-Imagined – Graham Brown Martin