

# Community learning and development in Inverclyde Council

11 March 2019

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# 1. Context

Community learning and development (CLD) partners within Inverclyde Council and the area of Inverclyde Central were inspected by Education Scotland during January and February 2019. During the visit Education Scotland staff talked to children, young people, adults and community organisations. We worked closely with local CLD managers, CLD providers, partners, paid staff and volunteers. We wanted to find out the quality of the strategic leadership of CLD and the quality of CLD provision in the area. We also looked at how well paid staff and volunteers are developing their own practices and building capacity. We looked at how partners are contributing to current and evolving national policy objectives such as closing the poverty-related attainment gap; prevention; reducing social isolation; tackling health inequalities; and empowering communities.

## 2. How good is the strategic leadership of community learning and development?

Leaders across Inverclyde Council demonstrate strong leadership in relation to CLD. Governance arrangements are clear and generally understood by staff and partners. CLD partners are appropriately represented on the Strategic Implementation Group, chaired by the Head of Education. Reporting arrangements are robust and change is managed well. The CLD Plan 2018-21 links well to the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) and is based on effective analysis of Inverclyde's population. However, the CLD plan would benefit from more specific and measurable outcomes. Elected members and senior officers are highly supportive of CLD. They value its key role in engaging with communities and in particular young people. There is strong commitment for the Year of Young People and its ongoing legacy. A strong culture of partnership working is evident amongst partners working in CLD related activity. CLD is actively engaged in the Scottish Attainment Challenge and work with schools is becoming more embedded. The authority is investing in family learning approaches and this is starting to lead to improvements and better engagement with parents. Visions, values and aims are well understood across senior leaders, elected members and partners. Leaders are working well with staff and partners to identify and mitigate risk. However, community engagement requires strengthening. Young people were consulted about CLD priorities through 'Clyde Conversations' although there is more work needed to strengthen community ownership of CLD priorities.

Inverclyde Council CLD staff have a strong commitment to continuing professional development. Time is set aside regularly to help staff reflect on and develop their practice. They have good access to training and development opportunities and are highly motivated. Training for youth workers and adult learning staff is regular, helping them to reflect on and improve their practice. Adult learning volunteers receive effective support with good access to training, leading to good progression for individuals. Many are members of the CLD Standards Council. Partner agencies also encourage staff to develop their practice. Belville Community Garden encourages reflective practice to support their learning offer and CLD and Jericho House staff are learning from each other's approaches.

### 3. How good is the learning and development in this community?

Partners use a range of methods to demonstrate improvements against aims, outcomes and targets. There are clear links between the delivery of CLD provision by partners and the strategic priorities in the LOIP and the CLD Plan. The Family Hub at Kings Oak Primary School is improving life chances for families. Increasing numbers of adults are participating in learning programmes leading to achievement of SQA awards, engagement in further learning and employment. Increasing numbers of children are also gaining Dynamic Youth and Hi5 awards. Children are more engaged in their learning and exclusions at the school are now nil. The partnership team at Kings Oak Primary School meet weekly to track children's participation in out-of-school learning, using research and intelligence to target specific groups, for example, Syrian families. Partners across Greenock share effectively analysis of data and achievement outcomes for young people. Almost all school leavers now achieve a positive post-school destination, a significant improvement over recent years. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award sustains high levels of participation with growth in the number of awards achieved in the past three years. Participation in Active Schools groups is improving. The Fife Online Referral Tracker (FAST) system used in the IDEAS project is generating important data on participant data and client referral. Health-based programmes are targeting groups most in need and this is starting to lead to improvements in physical and mental health. All adult learners have individual learning plans, helping them to track their progress. However, partners recognise the need to improve the analysis of data. More rigorous and regular self-evaluation would help improve partners' understanding of outcomes and their collective ability to monitor progress against shared objectives. Progress reports are currently focused mainly on levels of participation. These need to contain better partnership analysis of impact and outcomes.

Community groups and organisations across Inverclyde Central are confident, active and skilled. Supported by CLD staff and Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) Inverclyde, they provide a range of good quality provision for local people. Members of community groups and organisations demonstrate a strong sense of place and high levels of resilience. CVS Inverclyde supports around 125 organisations and through their networks, promote good practice, share information and make referrals. Adults dealing with addiction issues are well-supported by the Recovery Café to reconnect with their local community. Community groups such as Broomhill Tata, Belville Community Gardens and Knit and Natter are addressing social isolation and building resilience. Most community groups are open and inclusive. Craigend Resource Centre is tackling inequality in the community through developing a range of services. Diversity is recognised and welcomed in programmes at Auchmountain Community Centre. The Inverclyde Men's Shed is developing new facilities to help build social skills and tackle loneliness. Through Clyde Conversations Steering group, young people inspire others to influence practice in their schools and the wider community. The group is now more able to hold agencies and partners account for progress in tackling identified priorities for young people. Leadership of capacity building is not yet sufficiently clear. Delays in implementing locality planning is hampering the development of shared priorities at a local level. Whilst the Community Engagement and Capacity Building Network has plans to take forward locality planning and participatory budgeting, it is at an early stage.

Learners are well supported to progress their learning and achieve their goals. Almost all learners are progressing well and opportunities for achievement are key to the learning offer. Family learning work in All Saints and Kings Oak Primary Schools is helping adults and children to gain awards, improve confidence and apply their learning in other settings. Kings Oak Primary School provides outstanding learning opportunities. Pupils operate the credit union, promote road safety and participate in the life of their community. Many parents are gaining qualifications or

employment. A few are now leading programmes such as a toddlers' group and Bookbug sessions. Young people are involved routinely in the design of their learning programmes. Relationships with staff are of high quality. Young people benefit from safe and accessible learning places to meet and learn together. Examples include the Recruit Programme, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award and the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender group. Young people on the autistic spectrum are well supported to learn at their own pace through the Connect Youth Group. The curriculum for young people in the Wider Achievement Scheme at Inverclyde Academy is built around learner need and interests. Whilst the majority of young people have good access to award schemes, there is scope to ensure that this is available for all. Adult learners are achieving through a wide range of activity such as English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classes, information, communication and technology (ICT), Play and Stay and Eat Better/Feel Better classes. Almost all adult learners reflect on their learning through individual learning plans. CLD staff and partners consistently use participant feedback to plan future programmes. However, progression routes for adult and ESOL learners to further and higher education are limited. Those facing challenges in their lives are supported well to engage in learning. Online modules provided by West College Scotland for literacies learners and the Greenock Recovery Alcohol Support Project are examples of this. The achievement of learners is recognised and celebrated. Many adults and young people are gaining national recognition.

### What is the capacity of the local authority and CLD partners to further improve?

This inspection of CLD in Inverclyde Council found the following key strengths.

- Strong partnership working in relation to the Attainment Challenge.
- Community planning partners' understanding of the essential role of CLD.
- Strong culture of mutual support amongst organisations and groups.
- Strong and effective leadership for CLD.
- Evolving youth voice.

We discussed with partners how they might continue to improve their work. This is what we agreed with them.

- Implement locality planning.
- Improve joint self-evaluation across strategic partners in CLD.
- Implement the CLD plan with a focus on outcomes.

## 4. What happens at the end of the inspection?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the local authority's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result we will make no further evaluative visits in connection with this inspection. During the inspection, we identified an aspect of interesting practice which we would like to explore further. As a result we will work with the local authority in order to record and share more widely the interesting practice.

Sheila Brown  
**HM Inspector**  
11 March 2019

Quality indicators help CLD providers, partners and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved. You can find these quality indicators in the publication [How good is the learning and development in our community?](#).

Education Scotland evaluates four important quality indicators to help monitor the quality of CLD across Scotland. Here are the results for this inspection.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Impact on the local community</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Delivering the learning offer with learners</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Leadership and direction</b>	<b>very good</b>

**This report uses the following word scale to make clear judgments made by inspectors.**

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

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