



## **Collaborative Improvement Summary of Findings Clackmannanshire Council, ADES and Education Scotland May 2022**

### **Aim of Collaborative Improvement**

The purpose of Collaborative Improvement is to share what works well at a local authority level and to support improvement in identified areas of local authority activity, which will also help address issues of variability. Collaborative Improvement aims to promote partnership working to ensure sustainable improvements for all children and young people, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### **Focus for Clackmannanshire:**

- How effective is collection and analysis of data to inform improvement priorities and are these the right priorities?
- How can quality assurance processes support improvements at school and establishment level?
- What is the evidence for success of these two named recovery approaches?

### **Dates:**

- Tuesday 1 March 2022
- Wednesday 9 March 2022
- Wednesday 16 March 2022
- Monday 21 March 2022

### **Background**

Over a period of four dates in March 2022, colleagues from Clackmannanshire Council, Education Scotland, ADES and Forth Valley & West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative engaged in professional discussion as part of collaborative improvement, with a specific focus on data for analysis, quality assurance and recovery approaches.

### **Planning and process**

Planning for the process, including the scope of the programme, had been underway with ADES, Education Scotland and the Chief Education Officer in early 2022, however due to exceptional circumstances, the agreed dates and times had to be revised, resulting in unavoidable changes, including the number of staff able to participate

The scope of the collaborative improvement approach appeared much wider, which is reflected in the findings of this report. The team could only see a snapshot of the work underway and so there were areas not covered during the visit which may have been helpful to the team in developing their findings. In addition, the balance of presentation from the authority versus dialogue with the team did not allow the team to fully explore the issues as was intended.

The Collaborative Improvement Team members from ADES, Education Scotland and the Forth Valley & West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative are noted below, followed by the names of the Clackmannanshire Core Team, which, in the spirit of collaboration and to exemplify work undertaken, also included practitioners from our establishments and the wider centre team. Data Packs and key information were shared in advance, alongside several iterations of a timetable for the four day programme. The visit was carried out entirely remotely due to Covid restrictions.

| <b>ADES Team</b>                                   |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Organisation                                       | Title                             |
| ADES   | ADES Officer                      |
| Inverclyde Council                                 | Head of Education                 |
| West Dunbartonshire Council                        | Senior Education Officer          |
| Dundee Council                                     | Chief Education Officer (Interim) |
| <b>Forth Valley and West Lothian Regional Team</b> |                                   |
| Falkirk Council                                    | Acting Head of Education          |
| Stirling Council                                   | Quality Improvement Officer       |
| West Lothian Council                               | Quality Improvement Officer       |
| <b>Education Scotland Team</b>                     |                                   |
| Senior Regional Advisor                            |                                   |
| NIF Officer  |                                   |
| Attainment Advisor (Clacks)                        |                                   |
| Attainment Advisor (West Lothian)                  |                                   |
| Senior Inspector                                   |                                   |
| <b>Clackmannanshire Team</b>                       |                                   |
| Strategic Director (People)                        |                                   |
| Senior Manager (QIM)                               |                                   |
| Senior Manager (QIM)                               |                                   |
| Senior Manager (QIM)                               |                                   |
| Data Improvement Analyst                           |                                   |
| Principal Education Psychologist                   |                                   |
| Quality Improvement Officer                        |                                   |
| Quality Improvement Officer                        |                                   |
| Quality Improvement Officer                        |                                   |
| Principal Teacher                                  |                                   |
| Acting DHT Alloa Academy                           |                                   |

In the initial meeting of all participants on 1 March 2022, colleagues from ADES and Education Scotland outlined the process of the Collaborative Improvement and stressed that this was an opportunity to work together as professionals of equal status not about hierarchy, but rather an opportunity to work together as professionals of equal status, each having the opportunity to contribute and learn throughout the process, underpinned by an overarching theme of collaborative working and professional dialogue.

Lorraine Sanda, Strategic Director of the People Directorate, presented to the team, outlining the context of Clackmannanshire and the background to our improvement journey since 2016, which included the profile of our learners, the impact of poverty and our commitment to health and wellbeing, closing the equity gap and improving outcomes for all young people. This was followed by a short presentation from each Focus Group lead from Clackmannanshire, who would then go on to lead the discussions in the groups noted below, which took place on 9 and 16 March respectively and included colleagues from both the Collaborative and Clackmannanshire teams. A minute of each session was taken by the Educational Psychology team and shared with all participants thereafter.

#### **Focus Area 1 Data Analysis**

#### **Focus Area 2 Support and Challenge Processes**

#### **Focus Area 3 Recovery Approaches – Literacy and Numeracy**

#### **Focus Area 4 Recovery Approaches – Health and Wellbeing**

### **Arriving at conclusions**

Overall feedback from the Collaborative team was shared as part of a full group meeting on 21 March, where areas of strength and ideas for consideration were discussed. This was followed by a written overview on 22 March, which was then utilised to inform this summary report of findings, further to extensive scrutiny and analysis by the management team of the People Directorate.

### **Findings**

#### **Strengths Identified:**

##### **1. Collection and analysis of data to inform improvement priorities**

#### **Strengths Identified:**

- Clackmannanshire has a clear commitment to improving outcomes and officers are working collaboratively to support this.
- Collection of data and improvement processes appears to be embedded, as are the tracking tool and school profiles.
- There is a commitment to empowering head teachers, who are growing in confidence around their use of data, working with the centre team and other establishments.
- Clackmannanshire has developed the approach to support and challenge via data for improvement visits.
- Consideration has been given to approaches to moderating support and challenge visits, to improve consistency.

## **2. Quality assurance processes to support improvements at establishment level**

- Strong sense of collegiality and commitment from the centre team and a desire to do the best for learners, along with a transparency and openness in sharing current context and outcomes with the Collaborative Improvement Team.
- Ongoing approaches to support and challenge schools to use data in a more analytical and evaluative way at both leadership and class teacher level to identify trends, gaps and overall priorities.
- Increased focus on using this data picture to target support and creating bespoke packages.
- School profiles are being used to support schools with data for improvement.

## **3 Recovery approaches**

### **Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing**

- Literacy and numeracy interventions appear to be having a positive impact on children's participation and progress, with staff reporting that children enjoy the small group input they receive and are becoming more confident, particularly in numeracy, where early indications suggest that 55% of learners living in SIMD 1/2 are predicted to achieve First Level in June 2022; an increase of 5 percentage points on the previous year.
- Small group interventions for literacy and numeracy have a rationale and are set within a clear, structured framework.
- Learning Assistants receive high-quality professional learning in order to deliver the interventions. They feel upskilled, empowered and enjoy the sense of autonomy in the work that they do.
- There is a positive, proactive and collaborative approach, with system level development and collective commitment.
- Realigning Children Services in 2016/17 allowed Clackmannanshire to gather vital information on children's wellbeing. Useful surveys showed gaps in support around anxiety, mental health and trauma, which were used to inform goals.
- Health and Wellbeing programmes are in place to support learners and families.
- Digital services are on offer through 'Shout' and 'Kooth', which support children and young people who are struggling to cope or having suicidal thoughts.
- Creative therapies include music and art, with the next step possibly including animal assisted support.

## **Summary**

Clackmannanshire People Directorate asked the Collaborative Improvement Team to focus on the three areas noted in the introduction to this report.

As well as the strengths identified above, there are also points for consideration, which have informed the Action Plan below. The Directorate appreciates the various offers of support from the Collaborative Improvement Team, which are outlined in the Action Plan. Work to take forward the recommendations has commenced and will be reviewed regularly.

### **Next Steps - Action Plan 2022/2023**

- Continue to develop the Local Authority strategy to ensure attainment and other data is robust and staff are confident in using it to identify strengths and areas for development.
- Continue to develop stretch aims for Clackmannanshire with support from Education Scotland, in terms of tackling the poverty related attainment gap.
- Further work to be taken forward on the empowerment agenda.

### **Further collaboration and support**

A number of offers for further collaboration and support were identified during the visit.

Support with moderation and assessment. Sharing of school data packs/Sharing of BGE data tracker and dashboard, increasing confidence and consistency in Teacher Professional Judgement (Inverclyde, Education Scotland, RIC)

Capacity building for Headteachers and centre teams, further developing an empowered system.

### **Progress and Actions Overtaken**

- Data for improvement meetings between QIOs and SLTs have continued as planned this session, to include challenge around ACEL data. Rigorous evaluation of all stages to identify cohorts of children who are off-track requiring intervention. Looking at which schools need centre support from SAC.
- Inverclyde also made contact with Clacks to ask for advice regarding practice on the use of SNSA data, leading to mutual collaboration with Inverclyde on data, use of SNSA, BGE Tracker and Dashboard.
- QIM (LMc) made contact and has identified two officers to come to Clacks with data packs and share their BGE tracker and dashboard.
- We have a draft SAC refresh until 2026 which will go to Council on 23 June 2022 and then be shared with Headteachers.
- QIM (LM) meeting with Education Scotland to ask for Quality Associates programme from ES.
- Ongoing dialogue with QIOs, QIMs, data analyst, attainment advisor to develop the stretch aims. Draft stretch aims will be shared with HTs to identify the level of improvement required at school level.
- Plans in place to extend the scope for the QIO visits – Performance and improvement meetings, including for priority schools, a triangulation of evidence involving focus groups and observations.
- Officers have worked with the attainment adviser to refresh PEF planning and guidance and QIOs have followed this up in their data for improvement meetings, to ensure that priorities are evidence based.
- Started to write 3 year strategic plan.
- Short term outcomes - we have identified schools at risk.
- Based our draft targets for next year on the most up to date ACEL data we had in May and these will be finalised when we receive the final ACEL data on 13 June 2022.

- Working with the RIC to identify areas of shared improvement goals. e.g. attendance.
- Quality Assurance calendar now in place for HTs. Data calendar for schools is under development.
- Revised SAC Plan Ongoing with Attainment Advisor.
- QIM (LMc) from Clackmannanshire has met with Chief Education Officer in Falkirk Council.
- Plan to write an assessment and moderation framework in summer 2022. Engaged with ES to support approaches to moderation across LA and RIC.
- Collaborative sessions for heads planned and underway to ascertain that what HTs say is agreed consistently.
- SEF interventions – greater scrutiny in terms of impact.
- QIM from Clackmannanshire has met with Chief Education Officer in Falkirk Council.
- Engaged with West Lothian and finalising dates.
- QIO (KH) has engaged with West Lothian Literacy team
- QIM (CS) from Clackmannanshire has made contact with NIF Officer and a meeting arranged to discuss the NIF.
- Link with other LAs has commenced – LA Buddy from the RIC to work with Clacks.
- Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks developed with draft stretch aims and will be updated over summer 2022.