
Report To:	Education & Lifelong Learning Committee	Date:	16 March 2010
Report By:	Acting Director of Education	Report No:	EDUC/23/10/AH
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Subject:	The Lowest Attaining 20%		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee regarding the performance of S4 pupils in Inverclyde who fall into the fifth quintile of national attainment.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Each year the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) results are analysed by the Scottish Government through the Scottish Exchange of Educational Data (ScotXEd). The resulting analysis is made available to schools and local authorities through a set of tables and charts called the Standard Tables and Charts (STACs).
- 2.2 STACs allow schools and local authorities to interrogate the examination results data in different ways. One interesting perspective is to scrutinise the performance of the least able, since these are the pupils who are most likely in the future to fall into the group not in employment, education or training. The Scottish Government has, for the past few years, paid close attention to the statistics demonstrating what proportion of results in any school or local authority fall into the lowest quintile nationally: that is, identifying those pupils whose attainment is in the lowest 20% of national attainment.
- 2.3 Inverclyde secondary schools' results on this measure compare very favourably with the national picture and the results of similar local authorities (Appendix 1). A report to Committee in 2009 highlighted the relevant figures, and the Convener requested that Committee be kept informed of progress.
- 2.4 Appendix 2 outlines some of the strategies used in Inverclyde to improve performance.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Committee is asked to note the statistics, which show Inverclyde schools in a very favourable light, and also to note the possible reasons.

Albert Henderson
Acting Director of Education

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 STACs shows the distribution of pupil numbers across five national comparison quintiles. Pupils are assigned to a quintile according to their overall attainment. Nationally, there are 20% of all Scotland's pupils in each quintile. Because of the levels of deprivation in Inverclyde, the logical expectation would be that here there would be more pupils in the fifth quintile than nationally. In fact the reverse is the case.

4.2 The appendix shows the figures from schools.

5.0 PROPOSAL

5.1 The figures for 2009 (attached) are compared with the 2007 and 2008 figures, some of which were already provided to Committee in a previous report.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications.

7.0 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications.

8.0 EQUALITIES

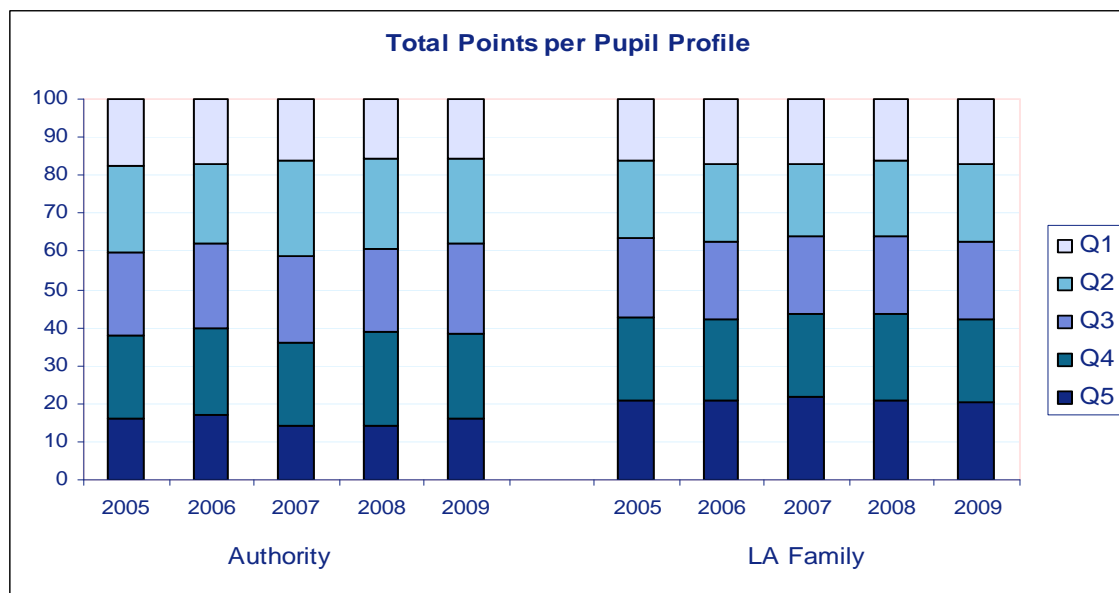
8.1 The fact that fewer pupils' results fall into the fifth quintile indicates that Inverclyde is having more impact on inequality in education than its comparator authorities.

Education and Social Care

APPENDIX 1

The lowest quintile in S4: 2009 results.

This first chart averages out national Standard Grade results and then sorts them. Over the whole of Scotland, 20% of pupils are in each quintile. You will note that Inverclyde always has fewer pupils in the fifth quintile - only 17% in 2009 - despite the fact that we would expect it to be higher in line with comparator authorities, who have 21% in 2009. Although there has been a slight rise in the number of Inverclyde pupils in the fifth quintile since 2007 and 2008, Inverclyde is still doing better than its comparator authorities.



Here's the same information in a table:

	Authority					LA Family				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Q1	18	17	16	16	16	16	17	17	16	17
Q2	23	21	25	24	22	20	20	19	20	20
Q3	22	22	23	22	23	21	20	20	20	21
Q4	22	23	21	25	22	22	21	21	23	21
Q5	16	17	14	14	17	21	21	22	21	21

APPENDIX 2

What are the possible reasons for Inverclyde schools' good performance in this area?

(Note: The possible reasons for Inverclyde's good performance on the measure were suggested to Committee in the last paper on this matter, and are repeated here as a reminder.)

Actions that are taken for all pupils in all schools (not only secondary schools) have a powerful impact on all pupils but are particularly important in supporting pupils who are likely to be not in education, employment or training after school (NEET), and those pupils who are looked after and/or looked after and accommodated (LAAC). Education Services and all schools are committed to "Building Inverclyde through excellence, ambition and regeneration".

EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Inverclyde Council has a very good PRESCAT (Pre-School Community Assessment team) system. A multi-agency approach is put in place at an early time in children's lives. Nurseries and family centres play an important part in early assessment. Primary and secondary schools keep checking to ensure that children do not 'slip through the net'.

TARGETING AND TRACKING

Once identified, certain pupils are tracked as they move through the school system. Certain teachers, including Pupil Support teachers and guidance teachers, are key in this process. If pupils are identified at an early stage, action will have to take place to support their learning, motivation and engagement as they develop through school. Pupils who are LA/LAAC will need to be carefully tracked to ensure that they attain to the maximum of their potential.

TRANSITIONS

Adequate and appropriate information has to be passed from pre-five to primary and from primary to secondary establishments to ensure that care and support continues uninterrupted. It is also important that standards of work, pupil commitment and motivation are maintained. Information about learning is carefully recorded and tracked within establishments. Cluster working between schools focuses on transition work for all children, but especially those most at risk.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance in Inverclyde schools is generally very good. However, the attendance of a very few children leaves them in no position to attain. Some potentially NEET children do not develop good work habits, as they do not attend school often enough or give themselves time to progress. It is fundamental that they complete units and courses and attend for external examinations, and the efforts of guidance teams in secondary schools are concentrated in this area.

TIME ON TASK

The more time given to certain pupils to study and complete tasks, the better will be their performance. The expansion of day time school clubs or possibilities of after school or holiday experience will all be of benefit. This is why focused study support, study weekends and a good homework policy reap rich rewards for some young people.

MOTIVATION

A fundamental challenge is improving the motivation of pupils, especially from certain homes. Inducements or rewards work for some pupils. A highly motivated school will more than likely be a high achieving and inclusive school. The key to success is that teachers have high expectations and inspire young people to have these high expectations of themselves. Responding to different learning styles, including the use of technology, can also provide better motivation to those pupils who might become disaffected, as can enterprise and citizenship events. Positive role models from business and industry come into schools to speak to pupils and, in some cases, act as mentors. *Determined to Succeed* aims to help young people develop self-confidence, self-reliance and ambition to achieve goals in work and in life. All pupils from P1 to S6 are involved in an annual enterprise activity. A careers education programme develops children's awareness of the world of work and different careers. All secondary schools have an excellent work experience programme.

SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES IN SCHOOLS

The course planning provided for pupils encourages flexible choices - including good vocational choices - and high attainment. Subjects are suitable for pupils: inclusive subjects such as drama and modern studies are important in improving confidence and achievement. Pupils receive good guidance at transition. School timetables provide maximum efficiency. In the curriculum, increased attention is being given to vocational experiences and the world of work.

CLASSROOMS AND TEACHERS

Care is taken over the planning of homework policies to ensure that homework is regular and appropriate. The pace of learning aims to meet the needs of all pupils and schools strive for consistency in assessment feedback and marking. Assessment is an important tool to inform pupils and teachers of progress. Formative assessment and personal learning planning is an integral part of the learning process and support areas of the learning process requiring attention. Good teachers have a major impact on children's lives. Other adults in school also engage with certain children and develop their potential. The main purpose of the new *Curriculum for Excellence* programme is to help young people realise their full potential. The aim is to turn out young people who are responsible citizens, effective contributors, confident individuals and successful learners. It identifies the three key areas to concentrate on in the future: environment for learning, the choice of teaching and learning approaches and the ways in which learning is organised.

FAMILY LEARNING

Acknowledging the importance of education comes from the home. The more positive the parental attitudes are to school, the more likelihood of commitment and success on the part of the child. Family Learning teachers and others are currently operating in

circumstances to give them access to targeting and supporting the parents who can have an impact on NEET pupils.

OTHER AGENCIES

The contributions that can be made by other corporate departments of the Council and by other agencies should not be underestimated. The current model of working is admirable in its focus on health, social work, careers support and family learning. Other departments and agencies contribute to protection and to care and welfare, including the development of life skills. Careers Scotland is a major contributor to success after school.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

A rigorous analysis of performance means that the performance of individual pupils can be tracked and an analysis can take place of areas of strength and improvement. Reviewing Pupil Support and Protection and Equality and Social Justice ensure that monitoring and support and challenge of schools takes place.