Inverclyde
council

Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	06 September 2016
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/53/16/RB
Contact Officer:	Ruth Binks Head of Education	Contact No:	01475 712891
Subject:	Attainment Challenge Update		

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update the Committee in respect of the progress and impact of the Attainment Challenge in Inverclyde.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 The Attainment Challenge has a focus on improving outcomes in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. This session we have worked with six primary schools, identified as having high numbers of children from SIMD 1 and 2 and/or LAC pupils. The Attainment Challenge team is working with school staff to identify children and families who would benefit from targeted interventions to support educational attainment. Family Support Workers are working alongside school staff within six focus schools, building relationships and providing support for vulnerable families. Training and resources are being provided to support staff in developing their knowledge and expertise.

2.2 Evaluations are very positive and early results show significant progress. There has been a commitment from class teachers to use most effective strategies to support learning, with an emphasis on measuring the impact of teaching approaches. The focus on ensuring that all children make appropriate progress is established and has resulted in professional dialogue and professional learning opportunities within and across schools. The role of Family Support Workers and Nurture Teachers in focus schools has led to more effective support for children and families.

2.3 Plans for Year 2 of the Attainment Challenge involve extending the project to include more schools, supporting more stages of the primary schools, sharing effective practice with all schools across the authority and including Early Years establishments in aspects of the Attainment Challenge work. We will also continue to promote the work of Inverclyde schools nationally, including at the Scottish Learning Festival in September 2016. The Secondary Project will follow a similar model to our current Primary project.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to note the ongoing progress of the Scottish Attainment Challenge Project within Inverclyde.

Wilma Bain
Corporate Director of Education, Communities & Organisational Development

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Scottish Attainment Challenge is a national initiative aimed at giving all primary-age children, regardless of background, the best start in life. Its aim is to drive forward improvements in educational outcomes in Scotland's most disadvantaged communities, therefore reducing inequity.

Inverclyde was named as one of the seven local authorities to receive money for the Attainment Challenge. The rationale behind the choice of authorities was the highest proportion of pupils in SIMD 1 and 2 in primary schools. The aim of the Attainment Challenge is to close the attainment gap linked to deprivation.

Inverclyde's vision is to develop practice which is both effective and sustainable through upskilling our permanent workforce as a result of training, coaching and modelling. We will also measure impact of current and new approaches to ensure effectiveness, before sharing across the authority.

Three work streams of Families and Communities, Leadership and Workforce and Meeting Learning Needs are further developing partnership working with services across Inverclyde.

The Attainment Challenge was launched at the Beacon Arts Centre in August 2015 when representatives from all schools and partner agencies shared in the key messages of Inverclyde's vision.

4.2 The end of year review was submitted to the Scottish Government at the end of March, along with the revised bid for Year 2. Feedback from the Scottish Government has been very positive and our proposal to extend the scope of the project and the associated additional funding was accepted in full.

4.3 The Attainment Advisor has been in post now for a year and continues to be a key link between Education Scotland and the Local Authority.

4.4 Over the course of Year 1, the Attainment Challenge Team has been invited to present at National Conferences. Case studies from Inverclyde have been highlighted as good practice nationally through the Education Scotland website and Teaching Scotland Magazine. Links have been made with other Authorities to share good practice and Inverclyde has visited, or has received visits from, several Local Authorities. It is worthy of note that the bid from Inverclyde has been highlighted as good practice and shared with other Local Authorities.

5.0 CURRENT POSITION

5.1 **Families and Communities**

Research shows that a strong factor in children's achievement is parental engagement in learning at home, however a range of barriers can hinder positive parental engagement with schools and children's learning. The role of a Family Support Worker is to build relationships with families, carry out assessments of need, provide a tailor-made package of support for individual families or facilitate group work programmes for families. Family Learning Groups incorporate the ethos of Nurture to include the child's key attachment figure. The parent/child relationships are fostered and developed with support from practitioners who have a knowledge and understanding of attachment theory and the development of attachment behaviour.

Our six family support workers continue to build on and scale up good practice. The team have shared practice through the implementation group and have co-produced activities and interventions with parents. Family engagement and intensive one to one support has increased over the course of the year with referrals and associated uptake having increased significantly. By the end of Year 1 of the Challenge in March, 114 parents and children had received support. By June 2016, this figure had increased to 143.

The Family Support Workers, in partnership with the school, have developed family learning events to incorporate the Five to Thrive approach. This approach identifies three key processes and five everyday activities that help children's development and promote positive parent/child interaction.

Three Community Learning and Development workers were appointed by June 2016 to support our work with families and communities. The workers have attended joint training with school staff on approaches to numeracy and literacy. In this way, we hope to promote a consistent approach and methodology to supporting children's learning.

Prior to full time workers being appointed, staff from Community Learning and Development ran three Saturday morning Family Fun Days in Larkfield in March. A range of activities was provided, as well as a light lunch. Attendance was far higher than anticipated, with many families from our focus schools attending.

CLD and Family Support Workers have provided support for the holiday lunch clubs. These have provided a meal for all members of a family and associated activities linked to the development of literacy. This has involved strong partnership working with Inverclyde Libraries and Family Support Workers form Early Years Establishments. An evaluation is currently being undertaken of the Lunch Clubs but initial feedback has been extremely positive.

Children from the Attainment Challenge focus schools have also accessed wider opportunities via Barnardo's, such as the drama group and kinship care group programme which add further resource to the support on offer.

Feedback received on Family Support includes:

- **Parents;**
  "I've noticed a difference since coming here, I've stopped shouting and he has got much better."
  "There has been a big improvement in J's behaviour in the house."
  "Things are the best they have ever been and for the first time since being 16, I don't feel depressed'.

- **Teacher:**
  "There has been a massive improvement in C's ability to cope in the playground".
  "J's confidence has improved and he is starting to be more focussed and contributing in the classroom".

- **Head Teacher:**
  "I've noticed that A has been more confident with G".
  "There are parents coming into the school with their children that never did before".
  "Family support worker is building positive relationships with teachers and parents. I am pleased with the support she provides within the school environment".
  "I think the key to our success as a partnership has been our mutual flexibility and openness to each other's ideas. We are coming at it from the perspective of mutual respect and I think that that will be the bedrock for all our future plans".

5.2 **Nurture**

Nurturing approaches in schools help children to build the social and emotional skills they need to cope with the expectations of school life. For some children, for a range of reasons, it is very difficult to make trusting relationships and respond appropriately in school. Within all of our schools in Inverclyde, we are working towards developing nurturing approaches. Our six Challenge schools have Nurture teachers based in school to support this development.

Our Coaching and Modelling Officer (CMO) for Nurture has worked with class teachers and Nurture teachers to identify children and plan appropriate interventions to support progress. The CMO provided appropriate language, maths and health and wellbeing assessments to carefully target and plan for the needs of the children and to allow for tracking and monitoring of progress. 23 children across the 6 schools are now included in morning nurture classes.

The CMO for Nurture has provided training, advice and support to Senior Management Teams, teachers and support staff. Teaching staff and support staff in several schools have been given training on the impact of insecure attachments on attainment and whole school nurture principles. A local interest group for Nurture has been revived and staff have attended national events and groups on Nurture.

Our CMO for Nurture has been working with several schools, looking particularly at Nurturing Playgrounds. A "Mix up Play" project at one school has allowed staff to focus on the developmental stage of children and provide appropriate play opportunities for children, grouping them developmentally, rather than by age. This has been another means of reinforcing nurture principles with teachers and support staff.

Staff in focus schools have an increased awareness of the socio-emotional development of children. Head teachers have commented positively about the immediate impact for individual children involved in groups and the positive effect of the nurture teachers on the school ethos.

Feedback received on Nurture includes:

Teachers, pupils and parents have commented on improved confidence and social skills for targeted pupils:
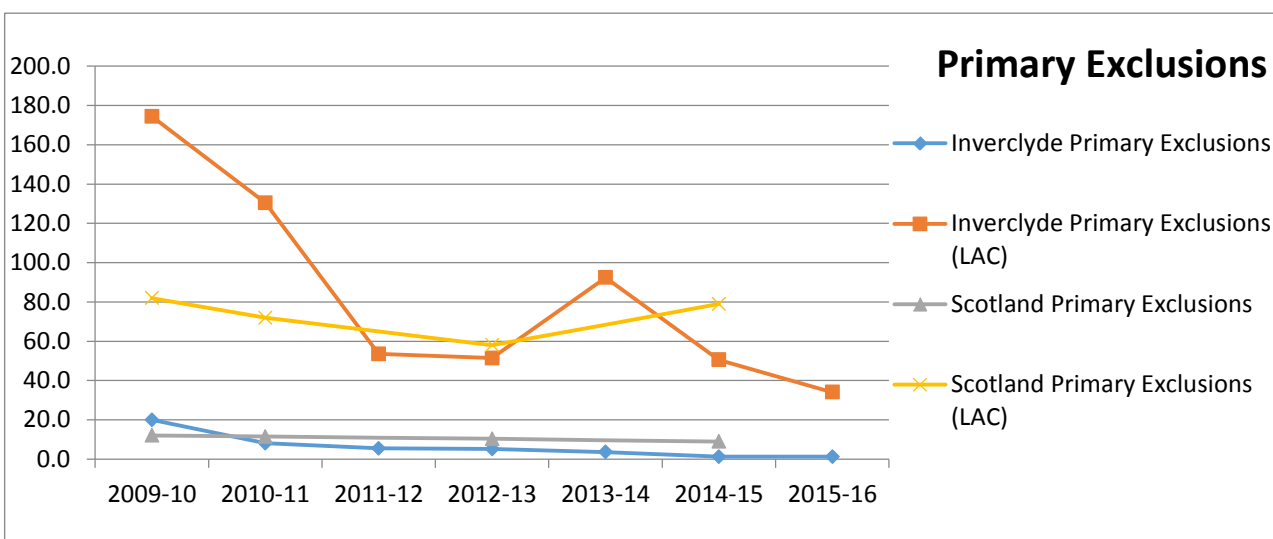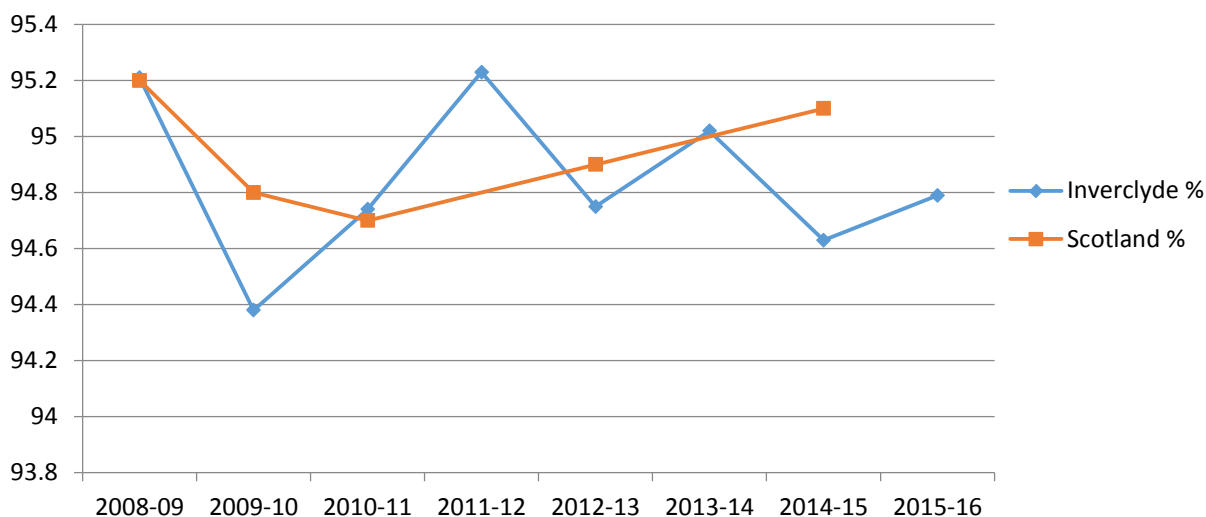
"I am learning to concentrate now and getting better at not shouting out".
"I feel happy when I am here; the pains in my tummy go away".
"He's much less emotional, having fewer tantrums and talking more about his day – he is much clearer now". (Mum)
"You can tell when she has The Den; she goes to school with a smile on her face". (Mum)

Summary of Primary School Attendance Rates 2008 - 2016

Legend: Inverclyde %, Scotland %

Primary Exclusions

Legend: Inverclyde Primary Exclusions; Inverclyde Primary Exclusions (LAC); Scotland Primary Exclusions; Scotland Primary Exclusions (LAC)

Year	School Roll	LAC Roll	Pupils Excluded	LAC Pupils Excluded	Exclusions Rate per 1000 pupils	LAC Exclusion rate per 1000 pupils	National Rate per 1000 pupils	National LAC Rate per 1000 pupils
2009-10	5553	86	59	15	20.0	174.4	12.1	82.0
2010-11	5536	92	45	12	8.1	130.4	11.5	72.0
2011-12	5478	112	30	6	5.5	53.6	10.9	65
2012-13	5435	136	28	7	5.2	51.5	10.4	58.0
2013-14	5502	119	20	11	3.6	92.4	9.7	68.5
2014-15	5482	99	7	5	1.3	50.5	9	79
2015-16	5477	88	7	3	1.3	34.1		

5.3 **The Development of Leadership and Workforce**

The quality of leadership and the quality of learning and teaching in the classroom will have a significant impact upon the attainment of all children. As we have analysed data we have asked staff to focus particularly on the attainment gap and to identify and implement best practice that will reduce this gap in their schools and classrooms.

Over the course of the year the commitment of Head Teachers and the staff in our schools has been outstanding. They have willingly participated in all aspects of the Challenge and associated training. This is allowing us to develop and build on best practice in learning and teaching.

The Uplifting Leadership course was delivered to over 70 staff across all schools with a specific cohort for Attainment Challenge Schools. Feedback from this professional learning was very positive and those who attended completed a follow-up task, linked to raising attainment, closing the attainment gap and measuring impact. Feedback from teachers who attended this course highlighted the value of staff having time to discuss and debate educational issues. Comments included:

"The opportunity for professional reading and dialogue with teachers from AC schools. The reading was appropriate towards our objectives about raising attainment – loved all the case studies – led to further reading."

"Made me think more of what I am doing in class in terms of effective leadership and how am I helping the children to develop into leaders."

To support the teaching of numeracy the Authority has opted to use the Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning (SEAL) approach. SEAL training took place on a Saturday morning and two twilight sessions. Each session was oversubscribed. The CMO (Numeracy) continues to support the development of this approach in schools and classrooms.

Thirty-five staff have been training in understanding and using Stages of Early Arithmetical Learning and are beginning to implement in their classrooms with support from the CMO. Head Teacher's and staff are talking about the impact of differentiation on learning in numeracy and making changes to support raising attainment.

Comments from evaluations – staff report raised confidence and enthusiasm for the teaching of numeracy. This was exemplified by around 20 teachers attending the Scottish Mathematics Council Conference. Analysis of Primary 7 standardised assessments also shows improvement.

Approaches to the teaching of early literacy have been evaluated and best practice has been identified. Staff have been trained in the use of Active Literacy approaches, this has primarily taken place with the focus schools for the Attainment Challenge and is now being rolled out across the Authority. The Literacy Toolbox is an online resource to develop fluency in reading for older pupils. This has been piloted in six schools and is now being rolled out to all primary schools and 2 secondary schools. The Toolbox is popular with pupils and results are promising. Pupils using this online resource and following the high impact programme have commented on their increased confidence when attempting unseen texts. Teachers and parents have also noted that pupils are more motivated to read. We are now looking closely at the results from Literacy Toolbox. Feedback from teachers who have attended Active Literacy or Literacy Toolbox training included:

"It has given me new ideas and methods of approaching the teaching of phonics and spelling."

"Love the integrated approach to teaching literacy. Looking forward to implementing new strategies."

"Good practical ideas that will make a huge difference in the teaching of literacy. Excited about being able to use all the new ideas from the start of the new term."

"The structure given for teaching phonics will be extremely helpful to promote consistency of learning and teaching."

"The Literacy Toolbox programme has been an excellent way of further developing M's independence and confidence levels."

Visible Learning is an evidenced based approach to improve the impact of teaching strategies upon the attainment of learners. Our Project Leader and one of our Educational Psychologists delivered six Visible Learning awareness raising sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays between January and March. The sessions were oversubscribed and as a result were repeated. These sessions involved around 50 school staff attending all six sessions. An overview of the approach was provided for Authority staff and senior managers in schools who are not currently focus schools for the Attainment Challenge. Feedback from those who attended was very positive indeed, with requests for some ongoing input/support next session to ensure that planned changes take place and to ensure maximum impact. Staff from surrounding Authorities were invited to attend to training sessions and, as a result, Inter-Authority partnerships have been developed. Feedback from participants included:

"This course has very much inspired me to evaluate what I am currently doing with my class and has reassured me that this is good, but could have a bigger impact on pupils' learning."

"Information encompasses what a good practitioner endeavours to continuously undertake, so hopefully teachers will be happy to adapt aspects of their practice in order to better support children's progress and development."

"It has been really refreshing to put learning and teaching at the front and centre. A focus on this will reassure teachers that they are doing the right thing, what to do more of and what their next steps will be. It also allows us to refocus on the child being at the centre of what we do."

The regular meetings of the implementation group which comprises Head teachers of the challenge schools and other key personnel has been a key driver of the project for Year 1. The data officer has worked with the group to identify the most effective data to use in schools to measure progress. The implementation group allows the sharing of practice across the range of services supporting families and children. The group members provide feedback on what has changed in their establishments, service or organisation as a result of the Attainment Challenge and how this has impacted on children and families.
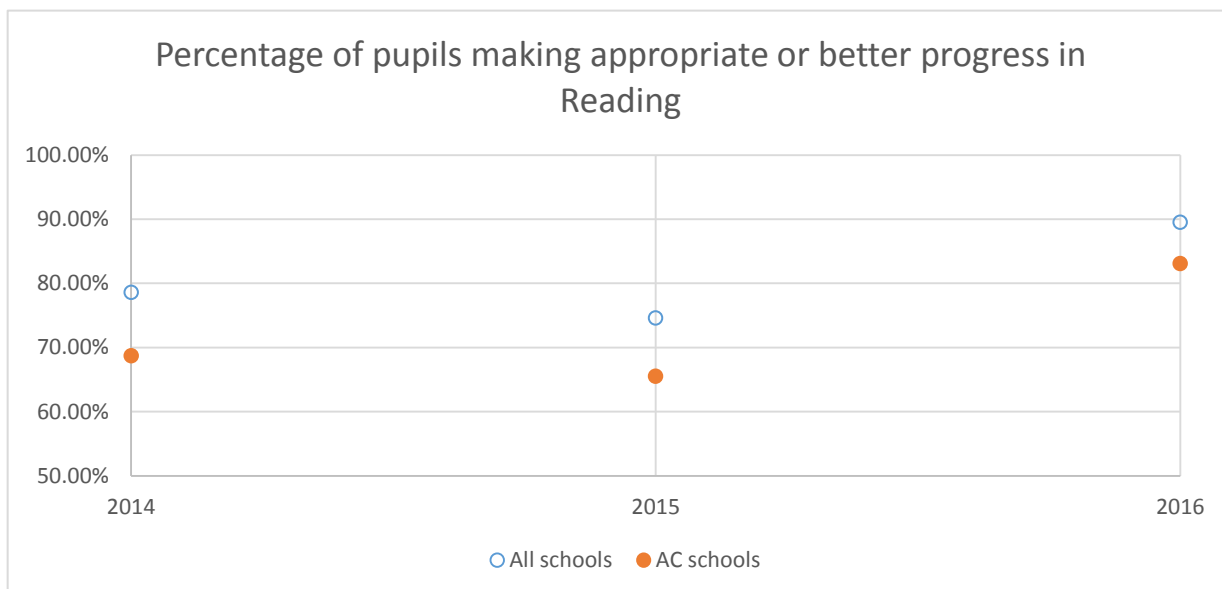
5.4 **Meeting Learning Needs**

The original plan identified a key target for closing the attainment gap for literacy and numeracy for the first year of the challenge. The target used the PIPs baseline test for P1 and was as follows:
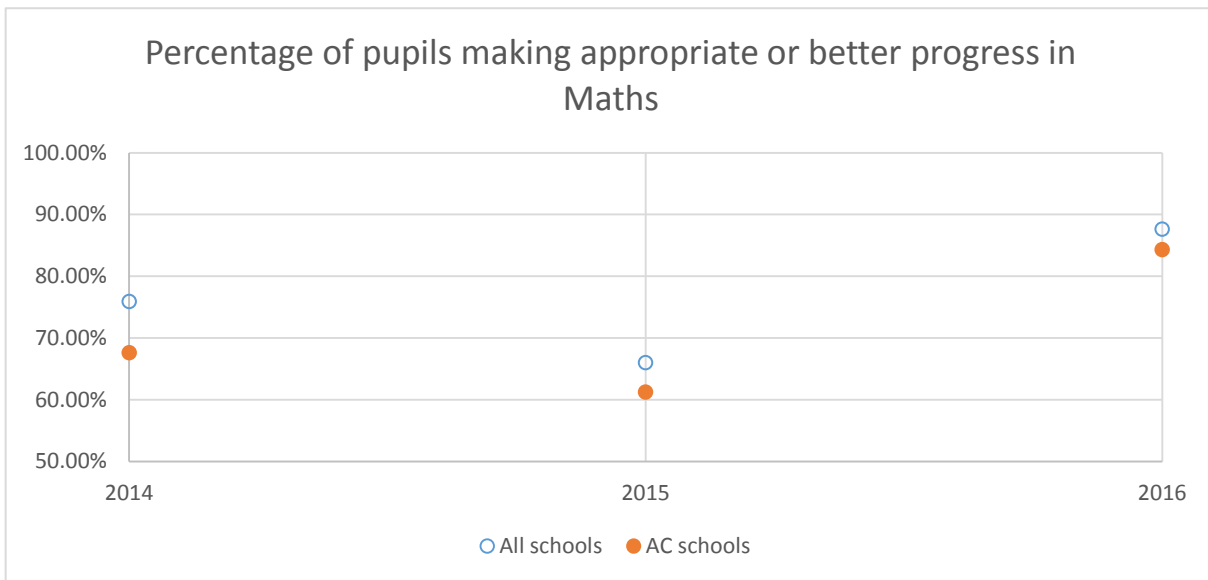
"To ensure that 75% of P1 pupils within the attainment challenge schools make appropriate or better progress during P1 in Maths and Reading as measured by the PIPS baseline test".

	Cohort	Maths Value Added		Reading Value Added	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
2016					
All schools	765	622	87.60%	642	89.50%
AC schools	260	210	84.30%	207	83.10%
			3.30%		6.40%
2015					
All schools	772	510	66.00%	577	74.60%
AC schools	281	171	61.20%	184	65.50%
			4.80%		9.10%
2014					
All schools	815	576	75.90%	597	78.60%
AC schools	307	186	67.60%	189	68.70%
			8.30%		9.90%

The above table and associated graphs below show that we have significantly overtaken the target that was set for reading and maths. Across the Authority the PIPs data shows that we have raised attainment for all of our learners in P1 and have reduced the attainment gap linked to deprivation from 4.8% to 3.3% in maths and from 9.1% to 6.4% in reading. It should be noted however that the attainment gap for the year 2015 is a result of a dip in attainment overall.

Percentage of pupils making appropriate or better progress in Reading

Percentage of pupils making appropriate or better progress in Maths

Legend: ○ All schools ● AC schools

(2014: All schools ~76%, AC schools ~67%; 2015: All schools ~66%, AC schools ~61%; 2016: All schools ~88%, AC schools ~84%)

The Coaching and Modelling Officers (CMOs) have provided support and guidance to class teachers about the structure of lessons, as well as planning and assessment. They have worked alongside class teachers in all focus schools, modelling high quality teaching and effective learning activities.

Greater emphasis on assessment and use of data has identified pupils earlier than progress meetings may have done previously, allowing earlier intervention to provide support. Senior Management Teams (SMTs) and class teachers are now focussing on the data linking attainment to deprivation using of SIMD bandings, Pips scores and value added information and allocating support appropriately.

Workshops for parents have focussed on supporting parents to support learning at home, as have Family Learning sessions. The dual focus on both classroom and family learning has, we believe, contributed to raising the bar overall and to reducing the attainment gap linked to deprivation.

Disadvantaged children have had extra teaching input from CMOs and our Attainment Challenge teachers. P7 children in 6 schools have been working on the Literacy Toolbox on a regular, planned basis. Support staff time is dedicated to facilitate this. In some schools, small tests of change are underway within numeracy. More assessment has been undertaken to provide baseline assessments in numeracy, allowing teachers to measure progress and impact.

Our Research Assistant and Acting Principal Psychologist have met with HTs from all focus schools and our Coaching and Modelling Officers. We are gathering information about current measures in place and identifying gaps, to ensure that we can confidently measure the impact of interventions implemented to raise attainment.

Next Steps

For the original bid, the number of focus schools will increase from 6 to 9. The first year has been about setting up systems and processes to support the Challenge and to recruit the Attainment Challenge Team. The backfill for teachers has been problematic and we expect similar issues in the second year. The original 6 focus schools will now extend the support to Primary 3 for the second year of the Challenge.

Because we have made significant progress in the first year of the Challenge, the Scottish Government asked us to consider extending the reach of the project to the second level of learning (Primary 4 – 7). As a result, a second proposal was submitted to the Scottish Government and additional funding of £1,562,375 was secured to support Primary 4 -7 and Early Years in the 9 Challenge Schools.

In June 2016, the Scottish Government announced extra funding for Attainment Challenge Authorities to support Secondary Schools. The submission date for the bid is the end of August. The bid for the secondary schools will follow a similar model to the current primary bid.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 **Financial Implications:**

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Attainment Challenge		16/17	£1,562,375		Fully funded by the Scottish Government

Financial Implications - Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From	Other Comments
n/a					

6.2 **Legal:**
There are no legal implications

6.3 **Human Resources**:
There are no human resources implications

6.4 **Equalities:**
Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

| | Yes | See attached appendix |

| X | No | This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required. |

6.5 **Repopulation**:
There are no repopulation implications.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 The Attainment Challenge Implementation Group was consulted in the preparation of this report.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 N/A

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 N/A