
Report To: Health & Social Care Committee **Date:** 9 January 2020

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Partnership (HSCP) **Report No:** SW/12/2020/SMcA

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Subject: Looked after Children Attainment Fund

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the need to increase the capacity of the Corporate Parenting Team /Looked after Children Reviewing Officers on a temporary basis from January 2020 until June 2020 and to seek Committee approval that this is funded via the Looked after Children Attainment Fund.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 There are currently 213 looked after children in Inverclyde all of whom require to have their child's plan reviewed on a recurring 12 week cycle. Of these, there are currently 41 looked after pupils (LAC) in the S4 cohort of 2019/20. Of these, more than half are looked after at home. This is double the number of pupils we have had in S4 in recent times. Nationally research is highlighting that it is these children who are more likely to experience the poorest outcomes of all looked after children who as a group experience poorer outcomes of all children. The previously agreed direction of travel for this funding stream has been to allocate funding on a self-directed support model. There is currently an underspend in this budget in 2019/20 that can support the proposals contained in this report.
- 2.2 In order to fully meet the needs of this cohort and ensure that they make maximum progress and achieve as they should, it is proposed to increase the capacity of the Corporate Parenting Team on a temporary basis. Additionally, there is a backlog of reviews requiring to be scheduled as well as a need to have a developmental focus on the health and wellbeing dimensions of the child's plan.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note and agree the proposal to allocate a portion of the underspend in this budget to facilitate the temporary appointment of an additional LAC teacher and child's planning reviewing officer for a six month period.
- 3.2 The Committee is asked to note that a report on the use of future years' funding will be presented to the Committee in 2020/21.

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4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Corporate Parenting Team has a total teaching complement of 3.6FTE. This includes a full time Principal Teacher.
- 4.2 The current Corporate Parenting Team are already stretched with a total cohort of 163 across P1 – S6. Having triaged the 41 S4 LAC pupils, it is clear that the majority have a level of need which means that they need the input of a LAC teacher and so the team are stretched to meet these needs based on their current staffing. Within the cohort the attendance of a number of pupils is lower than we would hope and whilst this is being addressed, the Corporate Parenting Team play a significant role in supporting these pupils to keep abreast of their learning.
- 4.3 Similarly across the population of children looked after , children looked after at home are least likely to have a robust care plan developed and reviewed at regular intervals In particular they are less likely to have a focus on the health and wellbeing elements of the broader wellbeing dimensions.
- 4.4 The Head of Education and Head of Service for Social Work, have discussed the matter and it is proposed following CMT agreement that a temporary teacher will be funded on a full-time basis for 6 months to boost capacity. Similarly the temporary appointment of a reviewing officer for a period of 6 months will facilitate the development of full robust care plans for all children looked after at home bringing them into line with their counterparts who are looked after away from home. Both posts will be funded from the underspend in the 2019/20 Looked after Children's Attainment Fund
- 4.5 The Corporate Parenting Team provide both direct teaching support / 1:1 tuition for these pupils, as well as a level of pastoral support. This includes liaising with the child's family or care team as well as the staff linked to their school.
- 4.6 It is already known that in 2018/19, the percentage of LAC pupils achieving in line with their non-LAC peers was below average, thus a significant gap exists.
- 4.7 Within the 2018/19 S4 LAC cohort (23 pupils), the % of LAC pupils cared for at home achieving a level 4 SCQF was well below that of their peers cared for either in foster care or residential placements i.e. 53% vs 100%. At SCQF level 5 the picture was starker with 0% of pupils cared for at home achieving this standard vs 55% of those cared for in residential placements or foster care.
- 4.8 The need to reduce this gap is urgent and given the number of pupils in the cohort, the Corporate Parenting Team will struggle to meet need and hence have an impact on closing the gap.
- 4.9 Children looked after at home are less likely to have a robust care plan and the plan is less likely to have been reviewed at the agreed frequency. Notably, this group of children are more likely to have missed annual health assessments and to have less parental involvement in the care plan overall. A dedicated focus on this group will support a reduction in this gap for these children.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Health & Social Care Committee agrees to the temporary increase in the capacity of the LAAC teaching and review teams

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 6.1 The cost of a full time teacher on a temporary basis from January to June would cost from £21.6k (SP1) to £27.3k (SP5). The cost of a review co-ordinator for the same period would be £28.8k. The Committee is asked to note that this funding stream is being awarded on an annual basis and must therefore be considered as non-recurring. There is however an acceptance by the Scottish Government that funding will require to be planned spend across the academic year and therefore it is possible to phase this spend to June 2020

It is proposed that this funding comes from the Looked After Children attainment fund.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Education LAAC	Employee costs	2019/20	27		1 LAAC Teaching post SCP5 for 6 months
Social Care	Employee Costs	2019/20	29		1 Grade 10 (SCP80) for 6 months. Funded from attainment fund.

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

- 6.2 N/A

Human Resources

- 6.3 This proposal recommends creating two temporary posts.

Equalities

- 6.4 Equalities

- (a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

x	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required
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(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – looked after children have much lower outcomes in term of attainment and this has a long term impact. Narrowing the gap between looked after and non looked after children seeks to address current and future inequalities
	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES –
x	NO

Repopulation

6.5 N/A

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 The proposals in this report are supported by the CMT.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None