Item 4
17th September 2024

Glasgow City Region Education Committee

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EVALUATION OF 'IMPROVING OUR' PROGRAMMES

Purpose of the Report

To advise members of the committee of the progress towards readying the 'Improving Our' programmes for the new Collaborative Framework in 2025.

Recommendations :

The committee is asked to:

- Note the changes and progress made.

1. Background

1.1 A number of changes have been made across the *Improving Our* programmes over the last year. Some of these were driven by the Cabinet Secretary's announcement in November 2023 that Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) funding would taper then stop. These changes have focussed on:

- further improving sustainability across the programmes;
- establishing connections and coherence between the *Improving Our* programmes and the Pedagogy Partnerships and Spotlights in the Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment workstream;
- eliminating and reducing programme costs; and
- building the networks of practitioners who drive the programmes.

2. Programme overviews and participant numbers for 2024-25

2.1 Improving Our Classrooms (IOC)

IOC is for teachers in the primary, secondary and ASN sectors. It is the only remaining free Masters' Level provision for teachers in Scotland. Those who successfully complete the year-long programme are awarded 30 Masters' Credits and / or GTCS Professional Recognition. IOC is driven and delivered by a group of experienced headteachers and local authority officers. There are **130 participants** from across all eight local authorities registered for IOC this session.

2.2 Delivering Mentorship (DM)

This programme is a year-long Masters accredited module (15 Credits). Participants who have successfully completed IOC can become mentors for the programme and undertake this professional learning module focused on group mentoring theory and practice. DM is supported and driven by a cross-authority group of experienced IOC mentors. Participant numbers are not yet confirmed for 2024-25.

2.3 Improving Our Schools (IOS)

IOS is an establishment-level programme for primary schools. This 15 month programme works across the whole school and has a much greater degree of flexibility than IOC and involves all teachers in a school. The focus is driven by each school's self-evaluation and becomes a priority in the school improvement plan. There are inter-authority networking and sharing opportunities for school leadership teams throughout. IOS has previously been led by two experienced primary headteachers, however, a reference group of headteachers is being set-up to drive and shape the programme and to promote sustainability. There are **20 schools** participating in IOS in 2024-25. They range in size from **2 to 30 FTE**, numbering just under **300 teachers** in total.

2.4 Improving Our Departments and Faculties (IODF)

IOD/F is a 15 month programme for any department or faculty in the secondary sector. Teams use self-evaluation to identify an aspect of LTA and a course/level/ skill component from the BGE or Senior Phase to focus on. This is built into the improvement plan and involves all teachers. There are inter-authority networking and sharing opportunities for the principal teachers (PTs)

and faculty heads (FHs) throughout. IODF is developed and driven by a cross-authority, multi-subject group of depute heads, PTs and FHs. There are **34 PTs and FHs**, who lead **300 teachers**, participating in IOD/F in 2024-25. They come from a variety of subjects, with **most participants coming from language /literacy, maths and science** departments.

3. Programme changes

The main changes that have taken place across the *Improving Our* programmes and networks are outlined below. These changes are driven by the points outlined in Background and by the *Improving Our…* evaluation data (see appendix).

3.1 Aligning the timescales of IOC to IOD/F and IOS

IOC has always started in late August / September. IODF and IOS start in May. The model has been adapted to make this change this using core principles of flexible delivery and the assumption that no class cover is required to participate in IOC. This meant an overlap in cohorts and some risk of impacting the support for the 23-24 cohort and, because of shorter sign-up timescales, lower sign-up numbers for 2024-25. However, registration numbers are comparable to the last three years and the 2023-24 cohort achieved an overall pass rate of 85%.

3.2 Establish Leadership of Learning Groups

These teacher-led groups are cross-sector and cross-authority. Group members share relevant and recent expertise and experience in high-quality LTA. This includes taking a critical eye to relevant policy, practice and research in specific areas of LTA and ensuring the high quality of materials that support the *Improving Our…*programmes, Pedagogy Partnerships and Spotlights. To date, groups have been set up to focus on **questioning, feedback, creative classroom, metacognition and differentiation**. Currently the two IOC PTs take significant leadership roles in these groups. There is still work to be done to further develop these groups.

3.3 Delivering Mentorship led by experienced mentors

The West Partnership core team picked up the teaching element of the Delivering Mentorship module from Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) in 2023-24. The IOC PTs led this with professional learning sessions designed and delivered by experienced mentors using the GCU self-study modules as a framework.

3.4 Introduce choice in IOC assessment routes

Participants were offered a choice of case study format in IOC – both absolutely focussed on learners and classroom practice. Both options are built around the same set of learning outcomes. Previously, IOC was only assessed via a 5000 word case study. This year an option was introduced to work towards GTCS Professional Recognition only via a structured presentation. Deciding which assessment option(s) to offer was a local decision, with six local authorities offering both assessment routes to participants. The choice was introduced to broaden the appeal of IOC to teachers who may already have a Masters or find academic writing challenging.

4. 2024-25 and beyond

4.1 Maintaining the high quality of the West Partnership LTA offer, including the *Improving Our…* programmes, will continue to be a priority in 2024-25. However, preparing the way for the new collaborative framework will also form a significant part of the work that needs to be done in the coming session.

4.2 There will be a focus on strengthening the groups and networks that drive the programmes, including the Pedagogy Partnerships and Spotlight sessions. One benefit of this will be to increase the number of people who contribute to the programmes from different contexts. This might be a ten minute, classroom-focussed input to a Spotlight session, leading a session on questioning in IOC or sharing approaches to tracking and monitoring across a school or department.

4.3 There will be a particular focus on the Leadership of Learning Groups. These are already built to be inter-authority and sector and focussed on LTA. The next step is to work alongside existing groups to make sure that they add value to participants' professional learning, experience and perspective and offer West Partnership-wide leadership opportunities. There is also the opportunity to expand the number of groups to include different aspects of LTA.

4.4 Focussing on developing the groups and networks in this way has the potential to build a West partnership-wide network of teachers, focussed on LTA, that can shape and share practice. This might be through programmes like IOC, IOS and IOD/F. However, beyond the programmes, it could also impact on a wider scale through:

- offering teachers system leadership opportunities;
- learning from each other across sector and local authority boundaries; and
- developing an understanding of policy, practice and research from different perspectives and that is absolutely grounded in the classroom.

4.5 Evolving the existing networks and groups, in the ways described above, offers the possibility of further developing networked classroom leadership that drives improved outcomes for all children and young people. This could continue to build the West Partnership networked learning system.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the changes and progress made.