

Communities Youth Learning

Annual Report 2023/24

Community Learning and Development Plan

2021-2024

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## Introduction

The team have three key project areas; ***Empowerment, Education and Community.***

## Empowerment Team

The empowerment team lead on:

- Scottish Youth Parliament – Facilitating local elections and supporting elected Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament
- West Dunbartonshire Youth Council

## Education Team

The Education team lead on:

- Out of School Hours Learning – Community Based tutoring (support by a small team of CLD Tutors, CLD Assistants and a range of Volunteers)
- Pupil Equity Fund – Currently have a 2 FT worker based in VOLA S&FE Hub
- ASN School Youth Work – delivering wider achievement awards with ASN pupils in Kilpatrick High School.

## Community Team

The Community team lead on:

- Get Up and Go – Community based ASN Youth Group (Supported by small team of P/T Youth Work Staff)
- Midnight League
- Seasonal Programmes (not delivered in 2023/24)
- Outreach and Diversionary Based Activities (not delivered in 2023/24)

## Empowerment

### West Dunbartonshire Youth Council (WDYC)

The WDYC currently have digital meetings every second week with an average attendance of 15 young people.

The WDYC have supported the Scottish Youth Parliament Election process throughout this year. In total 33 young people expressed an interest in standing as a Candidate for the 2 constituencies within West Dunbartonshire's boundaries. All young people were supported to attend a variety of training opportunities to develop their skills in areas such as leadership, public speaking, facilitating group work sessions and how to consult others. All of which will go towards the young people achieving their Participative Democracy Certificate (PDC) endorsed by Fife College. Candidates were supported by Youth Learning staff to engage with their peers across a variety of settings including all secondary schools, the college and wider youth partners such as Haldane Youth Services and Tulloch. The Candidates utilised this information to prepare their Manifestos for their respective campaigns.

Youth Learning supported 13 young people to stand for SYP Election phase. Although we initially supported 33 young people, those young people who choose not to stand have continued with the service in other project areas. For example, many determined that due to school exams etc. they could not commit to the required time required to be a MSYP but still wished to be involved in local democratic structures. As such many have taken on roles within the WDYC and will support the campaigns determine by the wider group and young people locally.

Scottish Youth Parliament Elections initially took place in November 2023 using the Young Scot system. However, due to the technical issues that affected large parts of Scotland this election had to be ceased due to votes not being registered on the system. To ensure a fair election, Youth Learning staff supported young people to re-run the election using CHOICE voting in January 2024. Over 600 votes were cast by local young people; Rebecca Ross and Faith Bhadwarji were duly elected to service the Clydebank; and Dumbarton and Vale of Leven wards for the next 2 years.

The WDYC undertake a bi-annual consultation for all young people aged 12-26 to determine the priorities and issues most affecting young people in West Dunbartonshire. Throughout 2023-24 WDYC successfully engaged with over 600 young people to complete the bi-annual consultation. The top thematic areas identified by young people were as follows;

- Health and Wellbeing
- School Life
- Equalities
- Diversionary Based Activities

The WDYC are currently on their Campaign Planner for 2024-2026 which will identify key projects and services they can deliver to tackle the key thematic areas identified by young people.

WDYC are also working closely with partners, Youth Learning project areas, WDC schools, Elected Members and HSCP. They regularly involve wider partners/ organisations in their WDYC meetings e.g. upcoming meetings on the Local Development Plan, and work with NHSGCC and the Sandyford Service to re-design their website/apps used by young people as 2 such examples. WDYC also have reps that attend the West Partnership meetings and are currently engaged in the West Region PDC project. This project will see 6 members of WDYC work with their peers across the 7 other Local Authority areas to review the current Youth Consultation and Representation structures and identify changes and improvements that can be made locally.

### **Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP)**

Both MSYP's, Rebecca Ross and Faith Bhadwarji, attend monthly meetings in addition to being representatives on the West Dunbartonshire Youth Council.

Both attend regular meetings with Martin Rooney, Leader of WDC and are representatives on the WD Licensing Forum and the WDC Education Committee. They have continue to develop close working relationships across a variety of Council Services in preparation for taking up their roles as MSYPs in June 2024.

Both MSYP's are working towards their Saltire Awards and will be involved in the design and delivery of the Youth Learning Summer Sessions programme.

## Education

### Out of School Hours Learning (OSHL)

Youth Learning organises two supported study clubs in West Dunbartonshire. We currently have 34 young people being supported by 18 volunteer tutors. The supported study clubs each meet one evening a week during term time.

Concord Community Centre      Wednesday, 5.30pm -7.45pm

Dalmuir Community Centre      Thursday, 5.30pm – 7.45pm

The service is provided for pupils identified by schools, parents, social workers, educational psychologists and other agencies, who would benefit from having one-to-one support or take part in a small group tutoring session with a trained volunteer tutor or learning assistant.

Pupils who have fallen behind with their schoolwork are supported to improve their communication, reading, writing, and numeracy skills.

The principle aim is to promote a “can do” attitude to learning through positive reinforcement, praise and creating a relaxed, social atmosphere, which enables pupils to experience success in their learning. Pupils are treated with equality and fairness. In the supported study club environment, pupils feel safe, respected and encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour.

Pupils are supported to understand the basics of reading, writing and numeracy through adopting a multi-sensory approach to learning.

Areas of work for the pupils are identified and agreed by the OSHL teaching staff in partnership with the schools, parents and pupils. Pupils are actively encouraged to be involved in deciding which areas of the curriculum they will work on.

This information is used to devise an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for each pupil. The pupils’ learning and progress are recorded in their own Learning Diaries.

Through the tutoring service, we hope to establish and reinforce in the pupils a confidence in their own abilities as confident individuals, successful learners, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

### VOLA S&FE Hub – Youth Worker (PEF/SAC)

The Student and Family Engagement Hub provides targeted, individualised support with a holistic approach. The S&FE Hub creates a support plan which will differ for each individual. These plans would involve weekly 121's, daily check-in, supporting pupils into classes and continuously acting as an advocate for the young people's voice to be heard and listened to in school. The staff will often be the communicator between the young person and Pastoral Care which allows for a more intense support to take place. The S&FE Hub takes pride in developing strong and supported

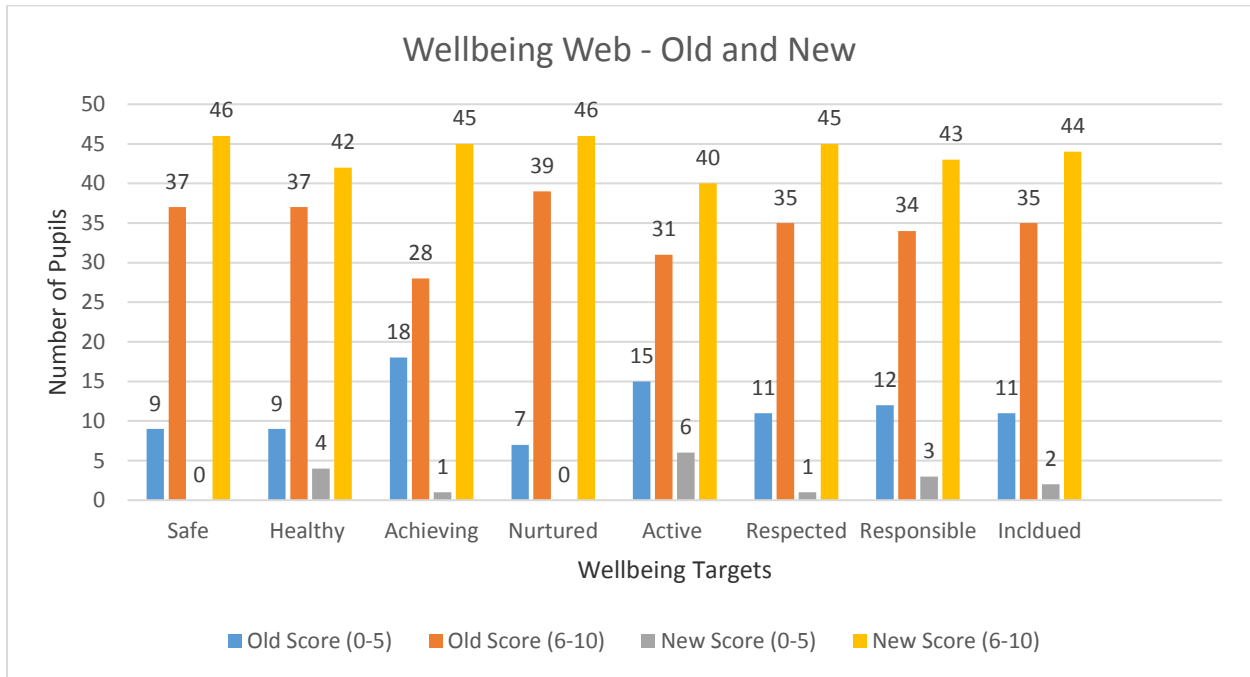
relationships with the young people which in turn encourages them to feel respected, listened to, empowered, and supported. The interventions the S&FE Hub put in place as well as being based on the referral form, is set out around the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators - the tool helps build a picture of the individual's life both within school and at home and supports us to implement appropriate engagement in school and with communication to the home/guardian. The assessment tool is also carried out after they have been engaging with the WFU Youth Worker for 6 months to 12 months with the pupil receiving support - this highlights the impact of the support sessions and the outcome is discussed with pastoral care and if appropriate parents / guardians. The S&FE Hub Youth Workers deliver targeted group work sessions for pupils who are identified by Pastoral Care and Senior Leadership Team.

The Student and Family Engagement Hub Workers adapt their approach in order to support those with additional support needs. A high number of pupils accessing the S&FE hub have been identified as having an additional support need. In order to support those individuals' strategy in terms of implementing structure, routine and predictability especially important for those with Autism spectrum disorder. Liaising with classroom teachers and curriculum leaders in order to adapt teaching styles and adding aids in order to support the individual- Using ear defenders to help support those who struggle with noise, giving the individuals fidget toys to help support them and allows them to self-regulate their emotions in class and be able to cope within class. Allowing individuals time out of class if they become overstimulated to come to the S&FE Hub to regulate their emotions and help maintain a positive classroom ethos as well as deescalating behavioural issues. The S&FE Hub workers spend time supporting pupils on a one to one basis or within a small group in order to support them with completion of their academic work. This will involve being aware of the pupils additional support needs and providing support and aids in order to help them comprehend and complete their learning. An example of this would be working one to one with a pupil and providing them with a chrome book in order to help support them with issues involving literacy, providing pupils with overlays to help eradicate barriers as a result of them having dyslexia.

The S&FE Hub is very much involved in partnership working with supporting agencies and professionals to ensure our fullest support and awareness regarding the young people on our caseload.

Each young person takes part in a self-reflection at the beginning and end of the support time frame and this allows themselves and staff to understand if the support has been of value to them and made a positive impact. It allows us to set targets for future development either within the S&FE Hub or in the school. Please see below for a table which details the total number of pupils who have engaged in the S&FE Hub in the term of 2022-2023.

121's	Group Work (delivery by S&FE Hub staff)	Group Work (with supporting agencies)
72	46	52



The above bar graph and statistics displayed highlight the effectiveness of all work and engagement conducted at the S&FE Hub within the Vale of Leven Academy. Following the 2022-2023 term specific young people (pupils) selected completed a wellbeing web assessment which targeted specific areas of wellbeing. This was completed at the start and end of their engagement at the S&FE Hub (old and new) which displayed a score between 1 and 10 (0-5 and 6-10), targeting the following areas: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included. Due to absences and other factors some engaged at the S&FE Hub were unable to complete the wellbeing web. The data gathered displays an increase in all areas across engagement at the S&FE Hub as the total number of pupils that scored between 6 and 10 for the 'new score' was much higher compared to the 'old score' (90% and above scoring between 6 and 10).



## ASN Youth Work – Kilpatrick High School

The Youth Learning team support three S1 groups in Kilpatrick High School consisting of 21 pupils to participate in issue based workshops while completing a Dynamic Youth Award.

The groups have been exploring relationships and have looked at conflict within the family and the common causes. They've explored the common reasons such as money, privacy, school amongst others and explored why they lead to conflict and disagreements. They've looked at individual scenarios and looked at the issue from the parent's and Child's perspective to understand both sides. We then looked at compromise, what is it, how can it be used, what it has to offer a family which the group has used with the classroom examples by offering solutions to various disagreements that can occur within the family and also with friends.

They also explored anti-social behaviour and focused on the legal side of anti-social behaviour and how that applies to them. They looked at the laws in Scotland and why do we have them and at what age does the Anti-Social Behaviour Act and other laws apply to a young person. We then began to look at possible consequences for a young person who breaks the ASB law. This led to introducing the role of the Children's Panel to the class and explore what it is and what it does in relation to youth offences.

They have also been exploring the issues surrounding legal/illegal drugs began to explore various scenarios surrounding drugs when older such as friends accessing alcohol, if a friend has begun to smoke cannabis or to vape. We looked at what age you can buy alcohol or vape and legally the age and different penalties that restrict the use of illegal drugs. We looked at what could happen to a young person under 18 if caught with cannabis and over 18 and also the difference in sole use (possession), supply (selling to friends) and manufacture (growing it) and the difference in sentencing if it reached court.

## Community

### Outreach/Detached Youth Work

In response to the pandemic the Youth Learning team developed an Outreach/detached youth work project area.

The staff participated in Outreach/detached Youth Work which was delivered by YouthLink Scotland to ensure the staff had the skills and were confident to safely facilitate an Outreach/Detached Youth programme.

The team developed a number of key strategic documents to enable them to carry out Outreach/Detached youth work, including risk assessments and Safe of the Street guidance documents for staff.

Outreach/Detached youth work was not delivered in 2023-24 due to the ongoing restructure of the Communities Team. However, it is anticipated that this priority area of work will resume alongside the wider community based offer available to young people.

### Holiday programmes

West Dunbartonshire Youth Learning Team were funded to provide a targeted six week programme during the summer holiday period through Cashback for Communities via Youthlink Scotland. The programme has two aims;

1. To provide young people with a wide range of creative and active opportunities to support personal and social development.
2. To provide young people with access to free meals throughout the summer holidays, to combat holiday hunger.

Cashback for Communities funding ceased in 2022. Youth Learning as a result were unable to deliver Summer Sessions in 2023. However, the team have secured a variety of small funds to enable delivery of the programme in summer 2024. This year's programme will support the same initial aims of the Cashback programme and will be designed and delivered by WDYC members.

In total 120 young people will access Summer Sessions 2024. The 6 week programme will enable young people to participate in a range of sports and creative workshops as well as access to free meals to combat holiday hunger. The team will carry out targeted outreach and will work with colleagues in Education to ensure the young people most in need are supported to engage in the programme.

## **Get Up and Go – ASN Youth Group**

Get Up and Go youth club which is a group for young people with additional support needs and is delivered by part time staff and volunteers. The youth club has been running for a significant period and offers the young people a place to socialise with their peers and take part in activities.

Due to the ongoing restructure of the Communities Team, the GUAG group were postponed between May and December of 2023/24. GUAG returned to provision in January 2024 and young people and families are re-engaged in provision. Over the last few months 12 young people have been regularly attending with a focus on arts & crafts, sports, music and Easter themed nights.

GUAG operate a rolling six week programme and is organised by a committee of young people within the group, in conjunction with the staff. The co-design element of the programme is an important way to ensure all young people have a voice and take part in activities of their choice. Alongside this, the group arranges small group visits to the cinema and other local activity providers.

## **Midnight League**

Midnight 'Football' League is a free Friday night diversionary activity open to young people between the ages of 11 (S1) to 18 years, supported by Youth Learning and in partnership with WDLT. The project offers young people an opportunity to participate in a positive activity as an alternative to hanging around the streets on a Friday evening. Midnight League is currently held at Vale of Leven Academy football pitches, which boosts an open space for young people to gather whilst learning new skills, meeting other young people and building confidence, alongside promoting health and wellbeing.

Sixteen sessions were delivered over 2023/24. Over 350 young people registered with the project, with an average attendance of 27 per session.

Staff carry out an ongoing (pre and post) attitudinal survey with participants, in relation to antisocial behaviour when measured against having positive activity as an alternative.

A number of participants reported changes of behaviours on a Friday evening due to having positive activities to access. Participants reported increased levels of fitness, confidence and wellbeing as a result of being involved in the programme.

