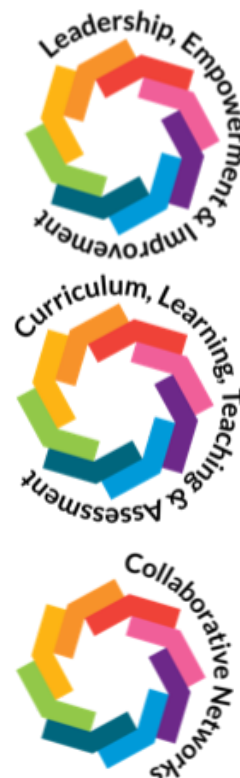
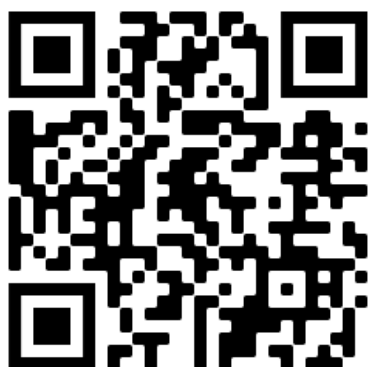


# THE WEST PARTNERSHIP

*The West Partnership Newsletter*



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main website**



## OUR ETHOS

The West Partnership aims to embed the values of equity, excellence and empowerment in everything we do. Focusing on building a culture of working collaboratively across the eight partners, we strive to continually improve learning experiences and increase attainment for every learner across the region. We believe it is by empowering staff and shifting the ownership of change that we can drive our vision forward. Working together we can overcome barriers to lack of engagement in learning and raise achievement and attainment for all. Underpinning all of our work is a commitment to supporting recovery across the system



# Working together to support staff and learners

A MESSAGE FROM TONY MCDAID

During the past few months a range of activities have been undertaken across The West Partnership which have been designed to support our collaborative working.

As a result of the move to a further period of lockdown and remote learning for the majority of pupils, a West Partnership Interim Action Plan was drawn up to add value to the approaches taken by each local authority in addressing the challenges we have all faced.

The plan identified a small number of priority projects. They include: support for teachers and leaders, tracking learners wellbeing and extending our digital learning offer - West OS.

We have seen many examples of how staff have been able to work together to support learning across The West Partnership during this period of time, such as;

- *Improving Our Classrooms professional development sessions for class teachers;*
- *Virtual Leadership Networks (VLN) for school leaders;*
- *Sharing approaches in play pedagogy for staff within early learning;*
- *Curriculum networks to support the SQA Alternative Certification Model; and*
- *The development of West Online School (West OS).*

West OS was introduced as part of our work and has developed into part of the national digital offer of pre-recorded lessons for teachers and pupils. We have now seen over one thousand eight hundred quality assured lessons uploaded to Glow, all developed by teachers. Teachers across all of the West Partnership, and nationally, have been involved in creating content that is designed to support high quality learning, as well as help staff manage their workload.

We have seen thousands of teachers, children and young people make use of West OS during this term. As a result, we have received very positive feedback from teachers, school leaders, parents and young people on the quality of the West OS offer. This is an example of how, by utilising the wide range of talents across the partnership and building on genuine collaboration, the West Partnership can achieve significant results in a short period of time which make a difference.

We would like to thank staff for their contribution to these important developments and we will continue to build on this very successful model of working.

**'By utilising the wide range of talents across the partnership and building on genuine collaboration, the West Partnership can achieve significant results in a short period of time which make a difference.'**

# LEADERSHIP, EMPOWERMENT AND IMPROVEMENT



LEAD OFFICER- JEN CROCKET.  
EMAIL-JCROCKET@BOCLAIR.E-DUNBARTON.SCH.UK

*Over recent months, the workstream has aimed to provide a range of mechanisms to support senior leaders in navigating the challenges of Covid-19. Ensuring that platforms for sharing, learning and collaborating across our partner local authorities are available and having impact is our goal. Some of our ongoing projects include:*

## VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP NETWORK-MASTERCLASSES

Due to the ongoing success of our Virtual Leadership Network events for both DHT and HT colleagues, a programme of 'spin-off' Masterclass sessions has been developed and is being delivered via Microsoft Teams. Each session is themed, based on feedback from VLN members and is facilitated by expert partners such as Microsoft Education. Our first Masterclass focused on the capacity of Office 365 to enhance the digital capacity of educational establishments and was attended by 80 senior leaders from across the West region. The session was hosted by Ian Stuart of Microsoft and included input from Martin Reid, DHT at Perth Grammar who shared the transformative journey which his team have been on. On March 3rd we hosted a Masterclass focusing on WestOS and how it can be utilised to enhance a digital curriculum for children and young people. We were delighted to welcome colleagues from the Northern Alliance to this session and look forward to further collaboration with colleagues from across the country who wish to access the high-quality professional learning offered by the West Partnership.

"I ALWAYS GAIN SOMETHING USEFUL THAT I CAN USE WITHIN MY SCHOOL. THE EVENTS ARE ALWAYS POSITIVE."

"THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE WITH COLLEAGUES ACROSS THE WEST AREA IS INVALUABLE, PARTICULARLY DURING THESE TIMES"

## EXECUTIVE COACHING PROGRAMME

Continuing our positive collaboration with The Mudd Partnership, the West Partnership has launched an Executive Coaching Programme for Head teachers from across the West region. Participants each undertake a pre-programme evaluation to allow them to reflect on their practice as leaders and to identify areas for exploration. They are matched with a highly trained coach and have 5 x 1 hour virtual coaching sessions which are delivered flexibly to suit the needs of the participant. This project aims to offer school leaders a direct access to bespoke coaching support which will not only develop their leadership capacity but provide them with space for supported reflection and consideration of their actions and impact in the widest sense.



@CrocketJen



## THINKING ABOUT HEADSHIP A PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMME

Thinking About Headship is a virtual professional learning programme aimed at Depute Heads from across the West region, who are actively thinking about pursuing a Head teacher post in the near future. Prospective participants will be keen to begin the process of professional study and reflection on their own practice and to gain a better understanding of the policy framework which underpins Scottish education today, with support from an allocated HT mentor. The West Partnership is delighted to offer this programme to a cross-authority group of 17 in its pilot cohort which began in January 2021. Recruitment for cohort 2 will commence in May 2021 and will launch in Sept 2021.

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The hope is that moving forward, this level of study and that which follows will ensure that there is a bigger pool of qualified professionals who will have the necessary skills, attributes and knowledge to take on the role of head teacher and to become part of a system wide improvement in the Scottish Education system. Although Thinking About Headship is delivered virtually via twilight seminars, assessment is demanding and reflects the high expectations of the programme. Candidates can therefore be assured that the programme will serve as a very good grounding to the formal Into Headship programme and associated Standard for Headship qualification which is now a mandatory requirement for attaining the post of head teacher in any Scottish school.



"THE CONTENT COVERED HAS BEEN WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR IN TERMS OF DEVELOPING MY PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE"

"THE WHOLE PROGRAMME SO FAR HAS BEEN EXCELLENT. I AM THOROUGHLY ENJOYING THE EXPERIENCE"

"VERY INFORMATIVE AND CONCISE PROGRAMME. EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES TO COLLABORATE ACROSS AUTHORITIES"

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ANY OF THE ABOVE OPPORTUNITIES OR WISH TO FIND OUT MORE, PLEASE CONTACT WORKSTREAM LEAD OFFICER, JEN CROCKET:  
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@CrocketJen

# COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS



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## Tracking Learner Wellbeing Network

The Learner Wellbeing Network has produced a Learner Wellbeing Matrix summarising and providing links to some of the evaluation tools used across the West Partnership. This has been prepared to support schools and early learning centres in identifying the evaluation tools best suited to their context when evaluating learner wellbeing. The Learner Wellbeing Network have been sharing their practice around tracking learner wellbeing and we have collated this experience to provide some advice on how to use evaluation tools as part of the process for tracking learner wellbeing. The matrix can be found here:

<https://www.westpartnership.co.uk/download/2812/>

## Child Centred Play Pedagogy Network

Over 160 practitioners came together for an Open Discussion on the 18th February to talk about child centred play pedagogy. After listening to a well-received presentation by Lynn Taylor, from Education Scotland, the practitioners broke into discussion rooms to share their experiences of developing child-centred play pedagogy in the class and play rooms as well as during remote learning. The opportunity for ring-fenced time for professional dialogue around this topic was very welcomed. Practitioners made the following comments:

"I loved the emails and organisation of the event. The presenters were all lovely and friendly"

"This gave me the opportunity to listen and talk with people in a similar setting and hear their views and ideas"

"Enjoyed participating in this opportunity, really liked the breakout rooms and discussing play pedagogy with colleagues."

## Storyboards

The West Partnership are keen to capture and celebrate how schools and early centres have continued to serve their children and families whilst adapting to COVID19 public health restrictions. We aim to gather stories about current themes such as family learning, parental engagement, learner wellbeing, transitions and supporting children with additional support needs. To support schools and early learning centres in sharing their stories, a one hour informal interview is arranged to hear about how the school or ELC have adapted their practice. These are then written up and shared via Twitter. We have been privileged to hear more than 20 stories and were inspired by the creative solutions schools and ELCs had developed to overcome the challenges of public health restrictions. The participants reported that they enjoyed the process and it gave them an opportunity to reflect on their practice. The storyboards are all available on our website and can be found on our Collaborative Learning Networks page.

### The West Partnership presents: Renfrewshire Council's Transition Team Digital Flip Books for Effective Transitions



*This storyboard details how the transitions team in Renfrewshire used digital flipbooks as a way of ensuring effective transitions. We hear how the team responded to the COVID19 pandemic by changing their practice to meet the needs of their pupils, parents, and carers.*

#### What was the problem?

Over a number of years the transitions team in Renfrewshire had adapted their transitions practices to engage families and embed positive relations between establishments. The COVID19 pandemic meant that in-person transitions activities were no longer appropriate. A digital solution was required.

#### Why is this important?

Positive transitions has been positively linked to wellbeing, attainment and also appears to be correlated with reduced pupil and parental anxiety. Just under 4000 pupils per year engage in vertical transitions between organisations in Renfrewshire. In respect of the pandemic, getting transitions right is of great

#### What happened?

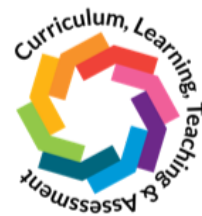
The flipbooks were initially given to several target schools. After initial praise, the flipbooks were given to other schools within the local authority and subsequently used. Promotion of the tool occurred via social media channels which generated awareness. The team received praise from a number of users, with the simplicity and 1-click accessibility of the flipbooks commended. The flipbooks gained the attention of the local regional improvement collaborative and the case was presented in a disseminated research paper that explored how educational establishments had used digital technology to engage parents during social distancing.

Scan QR code for more info



@jamesbowness800

# CURRICULUM, LEARNING, TEACHING & ASSESSMENT



LEAD OFFICER JOHN STUART  
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## West Partnership and Education Scotland Webinars

The West Partnership, in collaboration with Education Scotland, have developed a series of webinars to support practitioners' daily practice within the classroom or playroom on the following themes: Rights, Equity, Inclusion & Pedagogy. These themes were generated from consultation and feedback from practitioners based on current needs. Each theme has three webinars, taking place on a Tuesday at 4pm. The majority of webinars include practitioners from the West Partnership sharing their experience linked to current circumstances. Demand for the webinars has been very high. At the time of writing there are still a few spaces left for the remaining webinars.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=oyzTzM4Wj0KVQTctawUZKR0AdpShNINJIL-bkudDpyUQTRNWjFXQjAySzFGOFJDN0xBWEw2RUIESC4u>

Feedback on the Rights and Equity webinars has been very positive. On average, attendees who completed the evaluation rated the sessions 4.41 out of 5. Almost all respondents (98.7%) said that they would be very likely or likely to implement aspects of the professional learning in their practice with one practitioner commenting: 'Today's session has given some really useful and practical ideas to implement and share with colleagues'. The Inclusion and Pedagogy themed webinars will take place in April and May and we are looking to build on the success of these webinars with further offers of support for practitioners later this year



Scan QR code for more info



**"I FOUND THIS A  
REFRESHING AND  
INSPIRING SESSION"**

## Professional Learning- Curriculum Development in Partnership with University of Stirling

Over 40 senior leaders from secondary schools across the West Partnership are participating in a four-day programme, led by Dr Valerie Drew and Professor Mark Priestley from the University of Stirling, which models School Based-Curriculum Development through Critical Collaborative Professional Enquiry. The current OECD review provides an opportunity to think anew what matters in schools, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has also thrown these questions into sharp relief. For these reasons, exploration of the relevant issues raised in this programme are especially important at present.

The aims of the programme are to:

- develop enhanced understandings of curriculum concepts and practices amongst a group of senior/middle leaders;
- raise the capacity of the group to act as leaders of curriculum-making in their schools/clusters;
- produce accessible resources to support their work;
- and support the process of school-based curriculum development through professional enquiry.



@John\_education

Since July 2020, The West Partnership Online School (West OS) has grown from a collaborative idea to become central to Scotland's National e-Learning Offer. All local authority schools in Scotland have access to West OS; one hundred and fifty thousand video views have been accessed through West OS and we are receiving positive feedback from across Scotland.

In 2020, we set out our vision: to promote equity by ensuring access to excellent learning experiences regardless of circumstances, including challenges which prevent full time attendance for whatever reason. Now, with approximately 1800 learning videos live on the platform, West OS has made huge progress in achieving its goal to ensure that children and young people are able to access high-quality learning experiences regardless of circumstances and offering flexibility for remote learning and study.

West OS continues to evolve with content being uploaded on a daily basis. Practitioners and learners should access West OS via their Glow launch pad (or via Google tenancy in West Dunbartonshire). West OS continues to be a very valuable resource to support learning and teaching when learners are back in school full time. West OS can support learners with homework, revision and preparing for assessments. It is also a valuable tool for practitioners to use to encourage independent learning, support composite and bi-level classes and facilitate group work.

As well as providing recorded lessons for children and young people across Scotland, West OS has promoted collaboration between practitioners throughout the country. Staff from every regional improvement collaborative area have been producing content for West OS. This is leading to exciting collaboration as we push the boundaries of digital learning and teaching approaches alongside our partners from the National e-Learning Offer such as e-Sgoil, Education Scotland and Keep Scotland Beautiful. During the phased return to school buildings before the Spring Break, the Sustainable Scotland resource, jointly produced by this partnership was used extensively by schools as part of their broad general education (BGE) lessons for learners. This content continues to be available and will be developed further in the build up to COP 26 which takes place in Glasgow in November 2021.

**"WE SET OUR VISION: TO PROMOTE  
EQUITY BY ENSURING ACCESS TO  
EXCELLENT LEARNING REGARDLESS  
OF CIRCUMSTANCE"**

We also introduced a wellbeing themed section of West OS – 'Feel Better. Learn Better' which features videos produced by Young Scot and a special message from Jason Leitch, National Clinical Director.

In the months to come, the West OS team will be working hard to complete our offering for senior phase subjects, to deepen the wide range of lessons available for the BGE and to develop material to support young people at points of transition. You can expect to see video lessons relating to Developing the Young Workforce priorities, wellbeing and personal and social education.

If you have skills in delivering a high standard of video lessons which would enhance the offering for West OS, please get in touch with the West OS core team by emailing;

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**William Brown** [inwbrown001@glowmail.org.uk](mailto:inwbrown001@glowmail.org.uk)



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