



To: Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice Convener; Councillors Al-Samarai, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Grant, Lawrence, MacGregor, McLeod, Radley and van Sweeden; and Mrs Frances Cardno (Parent Representative - Primary Schools/ASN), Mr Michael Crawford (Parent Representative - Secondary / ASN), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative), Mr Mike Paul (Teacher Representative (Secondary Schools)), Mr Madhav Regmi (Third Religious Representative), Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative).

Town House,  
ABERDEEN, 28 March 2023

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE – SPECIAL MEETING</b></p>
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The undernoted item is circulated in connection with the meeting of the **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE** to be held in the **Council Chamber - Town House** on **THURSDAY, 30 MARCH 2023 at 10.00am**. This is a hybrid meeting and Members may also attend remotely.

The meeting will be webcast and a live stream can be viewed on the Council's website. <https://aberdeen.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

JENNI LAWSON  
INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER - GOVERNANCE

**B U S I N E S S**

**EDUCATION**

5.1 Northfield Academy Inspection - CFS/23/115 (Pages 3 - 36)

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Steph Dunsmuir, [sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

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## SUBMISSION OF LATE REPORT

**NAME OF COMMITTEE** : Education & Children's Services – Special Meeting

**DATE OF COMMITTEE** : 30 March 2023

**TITLE OF REPORT** : Northfield Academy Inspection

**Please explain why this report is late.**

The report could not be issued until the HMLe report was publicly available – it has been issued as soon as the inspection report was made public.

**Please explain:**

- **why this report must be submitted to the next meeting of the Council/Committee; and**
- **why it cannot be submitted to a meeting of the Council/Committee at a later date.**

A special meeting of the Committee has been arranged to allow timely discussion of this report by the Committee.

**Director** *Eleanor Sheppard*

**Date** 28 March 2023

**The following section must be completed by the Convener where a report must be submitted less than three clear days<sup>1</sup> before a meeting of the Council/Committee.**

**By law, an item of business must be open to inspection by members of the public for at least three clear days before a meeting.**

**An item of business not open to inspection for three clear days may be considered at a meeting only by reason of special circumstances, which shall be specified in the minutes, and where the Convener is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency.**

**Please explain why you are of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency.**

It is important for the Committee to have early sight of this inspection report and the chance to discuss its findings.

**Convener** *Councillor Martin Greig*

**Date** 28 March 2023

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## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	30 March 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Northfield Academy Inspection
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CFS/23/115
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Shona Milne
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.1, 1.1.6

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report shares the outcome of a recent inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) of Northfield Academy and details the work undertaken to secure improvement to date, and proposed improvement activity to support the school to move forward positively.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 approve the workplan contained in Appendix A as the Council's official response to the HMIE inspection report on Northfield Academy;
- 2.2 approve the governance framework available in Appendix B;
- 2.3 instructs the Interim Director Children and Family Services to implement the governance framework, including the establishment of an Advisory Group, to help drive improvements in the longer term;
- 2.4 instructs the Chief Education Officer to oversee the Tactical Team in their support of school improvement at Northfield Academy against the Core Quality Indicators;
- 2.5 instructs the Chief Education Officer to provide progress updates every two committee cycles through established Inspection reporting and include the outcome of any on-going engagement with Education Scotland including the conclusions from their return visit in 6 months and 18 months;
- 2.6 instructs the Head Teacher to routinely report progress to parents/carers and young people; and
- 2.6 instructs the Chief Education Officer to amend quality improvement arrangements for secondary schools to mitigate risk.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### Pre-inspection

- 3.1 In 2019, a review of data for Northfield Academy guided a period of intensive support to the then Head Teacher and then a subsequent change in school leader. A team of experienced school leaders were temporarily recruited to lead and help stabilise the school whilst recruitment for a new HT took place. The current HT took up post in March 2020 and led the school immediately into lockdown. The summarised inspection findings note that, ***'During the COVID-19 pandemic, parents felt well supported by the school in relation to the health and wellbeing of young people'***.
- 3.2 As Public Health restrictions lifted and staff and young people returned to school buildings, there were still considerable limitations on movement across and within schools in place. These restrictions limited opportunities for collaborative improvement and quality assurance work across the school. The restrictions resulted in adult to adult interactions generally being virtual. This was a very challenging environment for the new leadership of the school to cope with particularly as they faced the dual task of continuing to manage the communication associated with the pandemic whilst trying to manage the school's transition to its more recognisable "Business As Usual". These challenges inevitably impaired the ability of the new school leadership to undertake an assessment of all the systems, processes and practices in place across the school whilst of course having to respond to what was emerging post the national lockdowns.
- 3.3 The Head Teacher became acutely aware of the level of vacancy in the school and noted that staffing shortages were impacting on the ability to release staff for much needed development work. It was also noted that young people being taught by supply staff who didn't know them well was adding to the complexity of the situation. To give a sense of the scale of the challenge, as of March 2022 there were 10 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) vacant posts and 3 staff unable to attend due to having COVID-19 symptoms. This equated to around 20% of the teaching staff complement. The Head Teacher prioritised addressing the level of vacancy and worked with colleagues in People and Organisation to secure the appointment of permanent staff. By October 2022 the school had only one vacancy.
- 3.4 In keeping with national best practice, the Head Teacher led work on understanding trauma and making use of restorative practice to support staff to establish positive relationships with and proactively respond to the needs of young people as they emerged from the pandemic. Recognising that a wider range of support for wellbeing was required led to the establishment of new posts (Family Wellbeing Workers) in order to offer a wider range of interventions to support wellbeing at school level. Some partners such as Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust were commissioned to offer further supports.
- 3.5 In recognition that young people with some additional support needs (such as ADHD) had found the return to in-school learning challenging, work was undertaken with the Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Foundation to improve approaches to supporting young people with ADHD at

Northfield Academy. There is early evidence of improvement across some key measures resulting from this work.

- 3.6 Plans were also made to roll out a national programme being used in most other secondary schools across Scotland called Mentors in Violence Prevention.
- 3.7 Northfield Academy was identified as appropriate for inclusion in the Local Authority Edge of Care Pilot as a result of the high number of young people who experience care who attend the school. Inclusion in this pilot provided an opportunity to increase the resource available to young people who may require a more flexible route through the curriculum and improvements in key measures are emerging from the pilots. Both pilots, which are overseen by the Chief Social Work and Education Officers, will be fully evaluated over this academic year with findings reported to Committee.
- 3.8 The Trade Unions raised concerns about staff wellbeing and the use of Stress Risk Assessments was agreed as a means of monitoring staff wellbeing. It has subsequently been agreed to utilise Stress Risk Assessments on a termly basis and time has been set aside in the Working Time Agreement (WTA) to support this process. Staff expressed that they didn't feel they had sufficient voice in the school and a staff voice group was established to provide a forum to address this alongside a range of working groups to help support delivery of the School Improvement Plan. Officers from the Education Service attended the school at prearranged times to be available to any staff who thought it helpful to engage directly with central officers.
- 3.9 The Trade Unions also raised concerns about the consistency of responses from school senior leaders when alerted to issues by teaching staff and requested that school senior leaders maintain contact with parents and carers exclusively rather than school middle leaders doing so. The senior leadership team worked to take account of this feedback in order to support staff wellbeing but this did take time from the development of more strategic approaches to improvement.
- 3.10 Local Authority quality assurance visits evidenced that there was a need to clarify expectations against How Good Is Our School and Central Officers delivered 5 bespoke professional learning sessions to the Senior Leadership team in order to enable them to lead work with the staff team. Officers shared successful approaches to the development of distributive leadership aligned to the Core Quality Indicators.
- 3.11 Local Authority Attainment Reviews held in 2022 highlighted the need for a clear Presentation Policy and a review of curriculum as a mechanism for raising attainment. Time was invested in helping the team better understand and generate the data required to inform their review of curriculum and development of a Presentation Policy.
- 3.12 Concerns were expressed by Trade Unions about the consistency and ease of health and safety reporting. Staff accessed Health and Safety training in how to report incidents and near misses and the school put in place more robust data monitoring arrangements. The Trade Unions sought further focus on the Relationships Policy and asked that the Relationships Policy be the

single area of focus in the school and then held a ballot on potential industrial action. Given the nature of the situation, the Head Teacher agreed with Trade Unions to focus exclusively on the on-going refinement of a Relationships policy for a period of time and delay other planned improvement work. This saw the school work in partnership with the Parent Council to clarify expectations in advance of school session 2023/24 and a programme of engagement with young people through assemblies to enable the agreed approach to be rolled out from August 2023. Central Officers continued to prioritise covering vacancies and supporting the Head Teacher and senior leaders to consider the remits required to secure improvement in the short, medium and longer term.

- 3.13 Officers regularly attended the school and engaged with young people to get a sense of their experience in school which was multi-faceted and was being impacted by a range of other factors. The young people identified a need to shift the narrative around their school and community and spoke of how they felt others across the city perceived them and how this impacted on their aspirations and options for the future. This triggered work to establish an 18 month arts programme entitled 'This is Northfield'. The programme is designed to help the young people have more control over what was said about their school and community in order to address how young people are impacted by the perceptions of others. It was determined that an intensive quality improvement visit would be helpful to support the comprehensive identification of next steps across all core Quality Indicators as the school broadened improvement work beyond the relationships policy.
- 3.14 In November 2022 the Local Authority activated the support network across the education service and secured the support of senior leaders from across city secondary schools to work in partnership with central officers to undertake a detailed quality improvement visit of Northfield Academy. This visit confirmed that performance against the Core Quality Indicators from How Good is our School? needed to improve, and highlighted that collegiality was not well developed. As a result, the team found that different groups of staff held different views on how the school should move forward positively and that this was likely to hamper progress. Additional management capacity was put in place to help support the school at this point and the team who had undertaken the quality improvement visit committed to supporting the school in the longer term.
- 3.15 Given the importance of getting all staff to work together to a common purpose and importance of moving the situation forward, the Head Teacher at Northfield Academy invited a long serving peer Head Teacher from an Aberdeen City school to act as impartial intermediary. This approach has been welcomed by members of staff/Trade Unions and remains in place. Inspectors noted the early positive impact of this approach.

#### The inspection

- 3.16 His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) visited Northfield Academy week beginning 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023. The inspection team spent the full week on site and reviewed a range of evidence to help them evaluate the work of the school against the core Quality Indicators from How Good Is Our School?



The inspection team spoke with groups of staff, young people, parents and carers as well as considering written and survey evidence available to them. The team also conducted a series of classroom visits to look at the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. As is common practice amongst external inspection bodies, informal feedback was shared verbally at the end of the inspection week.

- 3.17 The verbal feedback confirmed the significant work required against all of the core Quality Indicators. There was a clear sense that the school was 'overly traditional' and had not taken advantage of opportunities to amend operations to reflect the needs of the community as new courses and approaches were available for use over a large number of years. Inspectors noted the work being undertaken to bring the staff team together but recognised that this was yet to improve outcomes for learners.
- 3.18 Central Officers and school senior leaders guided staff through the verbal feedback from HMle. The findings understandably triggered a range of emotions in staff. Sharing the informal findings has helped to immediately focus the team on addressing the findings of the Inspection. The staff team are united in their desire to move the school forward at pace.

#### Responding to the verbal findings of the Inspection

- 3.19 Given the scale of improvement required, a large pool of expertise has been convened to support the school, this approach enhances further the approach the education service has taken to develop collaborative improvement over the last few years. This team is being referred to as the 'Tactical Team' and will have an on-going relationship with the school as the inspection findings are addressed. Almost all members of the Tactical Team were involved in the quality assurance visit of November '22 so have a clear sense of the improvements required. Given the scale of transformation required, the Tactical Team has used their considerable expertise to work with school senior leaders to structure a high level plan across 6 workstreams to address the inspection findings in the short, medium and longer term. The Tactical Team will support the Operational Team (essentially the school staff team) to plan, lead and embed the changes required based on current best practice. The tactical lead of each workstream is working closely with an identified member of the Northfield Academy school leadership team and some Tactical Leads are already engaging with the Operational Team. This will be extended further following the publication of the inspection report.

**Tactical Team 1: Safeguarding:** Mark Jones (Quality improvement Manager)

**Tactical Team 2: Leadership of Change:** Mike Paul (HT Bucksburn Academy)

**Tactical Team 3: Learning, teaching and assessment:** Alison Murison (HT Aberdeen Grammar School)

**Tactical Team 4: Wellbeing: partnerships and personalised support;** Craig McDermott (HT ASN and Outreach)

**Tactical Team 5: Curriculum:** Ross Allan (DHT AGS) and BGE Shona Milne (Chief Education Officer)

**Tactical Team 6: Raising attainment and achievement:** BGE Shona Milne (Chief Education Officer) and senior phase Stuart Craig (Quality Improvement Officer)

- 3.20 Tactical Leads are coordinating sources of support including that available from Education Scotland and other partners. This is to ensure that messaging is consistent and that changes put in place are co-ordinated across each interconnected workstream. This is critical as each workstream (and quality indicator) are interdependent and a change in one area will impact on other workstreams. This will also enable the Operational team to lead the change in a cohesive and coordinated way to improve the outcomes of young people.
- 3.21 As well as helping coordinate and deliver against the recommendations, the Tactical Team is asked to:
- build the capacity of all through a coaching and mentoring approach with a strong focus on collegiate leadership
  - drive changes based on robust self-evaluation to identify key priorities which are measurable. This will allow teams to check the progress of work and critically, the impact on young people
  - help establish a culture of collaboration with young people, staff, parent/carer and community so that all stakeholders have a genuine voice
  - support the development of practices in keeping with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), clear understanding of pupil and family wellbeing and of the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) Standards
- 3.22 The Tactical Leads are currently meeting on a weekly basis in order to ensure that the activity of the various workstreams is complementary and to evaluate the impact of this supporting approach. This group will focus on improvement against the core Quality Indicators and will continue to oversee the operational work taking place at school level to ensure that changes are made, monitored and embedded. The progress of this group will be shared with local Trade Union representatives regularly.
- 3.23 From late January, The HT (ASN and Outreach) has been supporting Northfield Academy for 50% of each week to help coordinate supports around pupil wellbeing. In recognition that an inspection report can be challenging for young people and staff, a Central Officer has been on-site since the inspection in January.
- 3.24 Officers continue to cover vacancies in the school wherever possible with weekly allocations of time identified for all secondary qualified staff. In addition to usual school cover by class teachers, middle and senior leaders, during the week beginning 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 104 classes were covered by supply teachers and 14 by Central Officers who are registered with GTCS as secondary teachers.
- 3.25 The impact of the support from the Tactical Leads on their own school is being carefully monitored to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on other schools across the city.

### The inspection findings

3.26 The Inspection [report](#) and more detailed [summarised inspection findings](#) were published on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The report confirms that the school has a considerable improvement journey ahead. The inspection team has shared the following strengths in the school's work.

- The individual members of staff who are making a positive difference to the experiences of young people.
- The work with partners, which is supporting young people and offering valuable social, workplace and educational opportunities. This is enabling a few young people to have very positive experiences in preparing for life and work.

3.27 The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and representative from Aberdeen City Council.

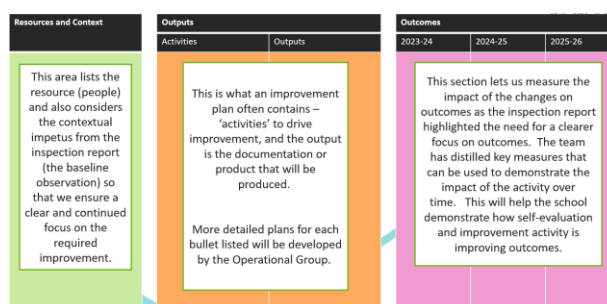
- Senior and middle leaders should work to improve the strategic leadership of all areas of the school. Review and update the school's vision and values. There should be a clear and shared understanding of the expectations, direction and identity of Northfield Academy. Ensure plans for improvement are agreed with young people, teachers and parents.
- Develop a calm, safe and purposeful learning environment. Build positive relationships and work towards a caring ethos across the school. Young people should be central to discussions about behaviour expectations and feeling safe in school.
- Agree with staff a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. Develop effective processes to plan, track and monitor young people's progress.
- Ensure the wellbeing needs of all young people are a key part of all school activities. Clarify procedures relating to pupil attendance and time keeping.
- Urgently improve attainment from S1 to S6. Review the number of young people who leave school in S4 and S5, and those who do not go to a positive destination. Make plans to support broader achievements for all young people. The school should demonstrate how young people on reduced timetables are included, educated and safe.

<b>Quality indicator from How Good is our School</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>unsatisfactory</b>

<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>unsatisfactory</b>

Responding to the written report

- 3.28 The publication of the report has triggered a rapid review of the High Level Tactical Plan being driven by the Tactical team to ensure that it fully reflects the written inspection findings. The High Level Tactical Plan is available in Appendix A and is presented as a LOGIC Model. It is proposed that Committee members be updated on progress towards delivery of the Plan every two Committee cycles through the regular inspection reporting process.
- 3.29 Considerable thought was given to the format of the Plan as the scale of change required could result in lots of activity but little evidence of impact. Using a LOGIC model allows the opportunity to record a hypothesis on the outcome that will result from a chain of events. The rationale for taking this approach is linked to Inspectors identifying that all staff now require to use data to inform decision making and maintain a relentless focus on outcomes. This simple model will help ensure the most effective use of time in the short, medium and longer term and may be rolled out to all schools to support school improvement planning after a period of testing. The full Tactical Team Plan (or LOGIC model) is available in Appendix A.
- 3.30 The key messages from the Inspection findings have been distilled and are included in the resources and context column of the LOGIC model. It is really important that the Operational and Tactical Team remain focussed on the 'baseline' captured by Inspectors and use this to drive improvement. This column also lists the resource (or person) responsible, this inclusion will help develop more robust accountability structures.



- 3.31 The key high level activities and outputs are detailed in the output column. This column will help guide the Operational Team to address the inspection recommendations as shown in one of the workstream plans below.

Resources and Context	Outputs		Outcomes - Impact		
	Activities	Outputs	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
<b>Curriculum Group (CI 2.2)</b> <b>Human Resources</b> School Level: Liane Gray LA Leads: Miles Jones, Shona Miles, Robi Khan (Contd from S1) The school does not have a curriculum review. The curriculum offered from S1 to S6 is not suitably challenging nor appropriate for young people. Learners are not well supported in making choices at transition stages. Too many young people do not see the value or purpose of their learning and they opt out of learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the triangulated data and further pupil voice to create a curriculum rationale for Northfield Academy.</li> <li>Create an SS6 timetable that includes a greater number of pathways by taking each faculty to consider offering at least one 10% per faculty.</li> <li>Increase efficiency, quality and choice through a conscious engagement with neighbouring school with regular transport provision.</li> <li>Young people will have increased opportunities for growth-sector aligned pathways through ABE Campus courses.</li> <li>Introduce choice for S3 that allows young people to make progress in their learning and oversee relations.</li> <li>Introduce a greater range of partner-delivered channels to extend pathways for S4 young people.</li> <li>Final delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships in Northfield Academy by Aberdeen City Council PA programme.</li> <li>A redesign of the S1 experience will be introduced to support transition through a more 'model' focusing on health and wellbeing.</li> <li>The S1 curriculum will include a class teacher and 'home' room to allow delivery to focus on laying the foundations for learning, teaching and life opportunities.</li> <li>Recruit a team of class teachers with primary experience to deliver the experience to S1 young people to enhance transition and complement the HSE.</li> <li>Create an S1 residential experience to commence learning at Northfield Academy.</li> <li>SS2 primary data will be used proactively to support the transition of young people into S1.</li> <li>Explore how the S1 experience could be developed into S2 at 2024/25, and how learning could become based on expectations, interdisciplinary learning.</li> </ul>	Northfield Academy can demonstrate that curriculum development is informed by pupil voice and career aspirations data. An SS6 curriculum is in place that meets the needs of all young people. Young people are offered a broader range of courses across BGE and Senior Phase. A new S1 curriculum and strategy will be in place for 2023/24 including the offer of a residential experience for every S1 young person.	Stay on rates for S4 and S5 will begin to close the gap on the virtual comparator to 74%. The percentage of leavers achieving one or more LE and one or more LD courses will close the gap on the virtual comparator to 68% (S0) & 28% (S1). The percentage of young people achieving SS2 GCSE level or better by end of S3 is reading will rise to 72% beginning to close the gap on the local authority average (64% in 2021/22).	Stay on rates for S4 and S5 will close the gap on the virtual comparator to 79%. The percentage of leavers achieving one or more LE and one or more LD courses will close the gap on the virtual comparator to 72% (S0) & 34% (S1). The percentage of young people achieving SS2 GCSE level or better by end of S3 is reading will rise to 76% closing the gap further on the local authority average (64% in 2021/22).	Stay on rates for S4 and S5 will exceed the virtual comparator – approximately 80%. More young people stay on at Northfield Academy in SS6. The percentage of leavers achieving one or more LE and one or more LD courses will exceed the virtual comparator at 78.5% (S0) and 32.2% (S1). Young people will choose a greater range of courses.

- 3.32 High level outcomes (and measures) linked to the inspection findings have been established for the short, medium and longer term. This will help provide a clear indication of progress and enable plans to be responsive and agile as the hypothesis is implemented and tested. The outcomes section includes impact measures. Taking this approach will support a consistent focus on outcomes.
- 3.33 Given the scale of change required, a target outcome has been detailed for each of the following 3 years. Taking this approach acknowledges the scale of the improvement required and allows the Tactical team to amend approaches in the medium and longer term. This will also allow the plan to narrow in scope as improvements are realised and become areas to maintain.
- 3.34 Some Operational teams are already established, the publication of the Inspection findings will allow more Operational Groups to establish their operational plans linked to the High Level Tactical Plan.
- 3.35 Work has progressed at pace with the following areas already progressed against the recommendations.

Recommendation	Actions taken to date
1. Senior and Middle leaders Improve the strategic leadership of all areas of the school. Review and update the school's vision and values. There should be a clear and shared understanding of the expectations, direction and identity of Northfield Academy. Ensure plans for improvement are agreed with young	<p>Tactical Team is well established and have a clear Tactical Plan (LOGIC Model) in place that is linked to the recommendations and will ensure a consistent focus on outcomes and a proposed approach to address the inspection recommendations. Weekly meetings will continue to be held over the lifetime of the Plan.</p> <p>A Leadership of Change Operational Team is in place. Work is on-going to support more collegiate practices with a regular Trade Union/Management Group established.</p> <p>A Curriculum Operational Team is in place and significant work has been undertaken given the need to make changes before the change of timetable (further detail in recommendation 3).</p> <p>A Plan is in place to establish a school vision and values following the publication of the Inspection Report. An initial event on the 29<sup>th</sup> March will provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to start shaping the direction of Northfield Academy and will start to inform the direction of Operational Plans.</p>

<p>people, teachers and parents.</p>	<p>In response to feedback from young people, an event was held in February to celebrate the achievements of students in the Expressive Arts Faculty in collaboration with Aberdeen Art Gallery and the Aberdeen City Creative Learning Team. The school valued the attendance of Elected Members at this event. This signals the start of an 18 month programme called 'This is Northfield'. The school is currently recruiting 4 Artists in Residence to help young people use the arts to share and celebrate their uniqueness in order to help shift the narrative about their school and community. Each residency will have a slightly different focus:</p> <p><b>Residency 1 - What's Your Treasure?</b> invites Northfield pupils to offer new perspectives on artworks and objects in the city's art gallery and museum collection and work towards an exhibition at Aberdeen Treasure Hub to coincide with an open day in June. This residency will see young people benefit from a range of creative activities to explore what a collection is, why museums exist, what we consider a 'treasure' and why local stories and histories are important.</p> <p><b>Residency 2 - Princes Trust Collaboration.</b> Working alongside the Northfield Academy Princes Trust Achieve Programme lead, the artist will develop and deliver a project to support the use of the arts to help young people achieve by building on the positive work already undertaken in the school.</p> <p><b>Residency 3 - Supporting Health and Wellbeing.</b> Working across the whole school, this residency will explore creative interventions to improve health and wellbeing for staff, support staff and learners within the school community. Engaging with the theme "This is Northfield" to create a positive image of the school and celebrate its community.</p> <p><b>Residency 4 - Resilient Northfield.</b> The aim of this residency is to engage and consult with pupils, staff, and the wider school community to identify challenges and develop a strategy to create a positive narrative around the wider Northfield community by continuing the theme of 'This is Northfield' to celebrate the community.</p> <p>This project will be critical in helping us respond positively to the young people's feelings of being judged by postcode and the school are exceptionally grateful to our partners in the Creative Learning Team and Aberdeen Art Gallery for their support in moving this area forward at pace. Initial discussions have also been had with the city centre business improvement district, Aberdeen Inspired, to explore opportunities to build engagement between the school to develop Nuart inspired activities into the planned programme over the coming weeks. It is hoped that the local media will support the school in celebrating the achievements of the young people given that young people also shared their concerns around how they are perceived with the Inspection team.</p> <p>Appointment of 2 new senior leaders to add capacity and capability.</p>
<p>2. Develop a calm, safe and purposeful learning environment. Build positive relationships across the school. Young people</p>	<p>Agreement with Trade Unions and staff on the roles and responsibilities of all to create a safe and purposeful environment.</p> <p>Data on attendance in class is now analysed on a weekly basis and action taken to address findings. This is helping ensure a data informed approach.</p> <p>The timetable has been reviewed. A more efficient timetable structure has been put in place to decrease cover pressures and reduce the need for</p>

<p>should be central to discussions about behaviour expectations and feeling safe in school.</p>	<p>supply and management cover. This will help free up capacity to support young people and staff.</p> <p>Provisional arrangements have been made to develop a very different model for S1 pupils from August 2023. This will see young people benefiting from contact with less staff initially and be overseen by a highly skilled primary school leader who we anticipate being in post from April 2023. It is thought that this approach will help support students to settle more quickly in Northfield Academy and help address some of the issues that can present at transition points.</p> <p>Professional learning on understanding behaviour has been delivered and a member of staff is in the early stages of reviewing the PSE programme.</p> <p>Follow up discussions have been held with all young people (and their parents and carers) who identified as feeling unsafe. Emerging themes are being built into plans.</p>
<p>3. Agree with staff a shared understanding of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. Develop effective processes to plan, track and monitor young people's progress.</p>	<p>A crucial step before continuing to build a shared understanding of the features of high-quality learning and teaching is to ensure young people have a range of relevant curricular pathways matched to their prior attainment and interests. An immediate review of the existing curriculum has taken place and the course choice process has been amended. To increase the school's capacity to deliver a wide range of SCQF courses in the Senior Phase and deliver the new S1 curriculum, support from other secondary schools through ABZ Campus will be provided.</p> <p>An amended approach to the delivery of the S1 curriculum is in development and will be further developed by working in collaboration with P7 pupils transitioning to the school in August 2023. This change will see pupils working with fewer teachers in a day, reduce their movement through school and support greater curriculum cohesion through the use of Interdisciplinary project based learning. This approach will not limit access to subject specialists as they will have a key role in the delivery of project based learning.</p> <p>The Tactical Team for Learning, Teaching and Assessment has a plan in place to consult with teaching staff during the May 2023 in service day on the first pillar of a new Learning and Teaching Framework. The plan involves teachers and young people reviewing the physical learning environment in line with practice detailed within the CIRCLE Framework.</p>
<p>4. Ensure the wellbeing needs of all young people are a key part of all school activities. Clarify procedures relating to pupil attendance and time keeping.</p>	<p>The HT (ASN and Outreach) supports Northfield Academy 50% of the time with backfill arrangements in place to support the ASN and Outreach Service. This has allowed the HT (ASN and Outreach) to work alongside Senior Leaders to develop an action plan, which seeks to address the multiple, interconnected areas for improvement relating to wellbeing, as identified across the Inspection Findings. These span six themes, which will aid the coordination of improvement activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bullying and Equalities</li> <li>▪ Included, Engaged, Involved</li> <li>▪ Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Personalised Support</li> <li>▪ Transitions</li> <li>▪ Wellbeing Strategy</li> </ul>

	<p>A draft <i>Wellbeing Strategy</i> is in place, which aligns the school's approaches to Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion to the SHANARRI (wellbeing) indicators and the articles of the UNCRC. This will ensure all aspects of the school's work is directed towards monitoring and improving wellbeing outcomes for young people. This is a live document which will continue to be shaped and developed as use of data develops.</p> <p>Work surrounding the refresh of attendance recording and monitoring procedures has begun. Complementary work around the clarification of associated Roles and Responsibilities is also being progressed. Both seek to ensure attendance management procedures are rooted in the proactive use of live data by key members of staff.</p> <p>Work to capture the voice of young people, in relation to their wellbeing, was prioritised as a matter of urgency immediately following the inspection; this was led using information provided to Inspectors via learner questionnaires. This has resulted in increased, proactive visibility of staff across the school – at period change, break and lunch in particular – and has informed the Logic Model plans.</p> <p>The school is engaging in the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Scheme, which is complementary to the work planned around the refresh of the approaches to supporting and managing bullying and equalities. Four staff have newly undergone the initial implementation training. A leadership and development plan is in place, which will see learners subsuming leadership of this area of the school's work from August 2023. In addition, plans are in development to train all staff in trauma-informed, de-escalation methodology. This will inform a planned refresh of the school's Positive Relationships policy to engender coherence in this aspect of the wellbeing strategy.</p> <p>Support has been provided to make better use of the school Management Information System to collect and collate data to enable routine data analysis to inform planning.</p> <p>A study visit is planned to Doncaster in March to visit XP (a school with a very similar Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) profile who structure the day very differently in order to support positive wellbeing and community). This study visit will see a number of stakeholders from the Northfield community determine if establishing 'crews' will help support the young people to have a stronger sense of community and better support the wellbeing of young people in the longer term.</p>
<p>5. Urgently improve attainment from S1 to S6. Review the number of young people who leave school in S4 and S5, and those who do not go to a positive destination. Make plans to support broader achievements for</p>	<p>The profile and achievements of young people in the senior phase have been reviewed to determine supports available from other schools to help secure positive attainment outcomes.</p> <p>For the remainder of this current session 2022-23; the latest round of attainment reviews have been completed with all faculty areas, focusing on interventions for all including those at most risk, faculties will continue to offer a range of lunchtime and after school sessions to support young people in their preparations for assessment, and a set of options for study during the spring break are at the latter stages of preparation.</p> <p>For 2023-24 and beyond, the staff team have used a range of data sources to plan together in preparation for a revised Senior Phase model; working in</p>



<p>all young people. The school should demonstrate how young people on reduced timetables are included, educated and safe.</p>	<p>partnership with neighbouring schools to extend and enhance the quality of offer, and broadening pathway options from within the school and through partnerships. Support and advice has been sought from Education Scotland (Support Arm) on curriculum change. This should help realise an increase in staying on rates.</p> <p>Plans for individual learners are under review.</p> <p>All young people who expressed concerns around safety have been interviewed and the feedback has been used to review the focus of supervision at lunchtime and in communal areas at change of class.</p> <p>Plans are in place to review formal attendance, exclusions and bullying procedures with time currently being invested in monitoring the data to ensure that decisions taken are based on sound evidence. This work will enable more consistent reporting and help identify more reliable trends.</p>
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3.36 Officers anticipate that HMIE will return to Northfield Academy to check progress against the recommendations within 6 months of publication of the report. This visit is classed as an 'interim' visit and will provide the school with an opportunity to share early progress against the recommendations and share their plans for the months and years ahead. It is anticipated that Inspectors will return again after a further 18 months. Inspectors will continue to engage with the school until all recommendations have been fully addressed. In the meantime, support is available from the support arm of Education Scotland and being coordinated through the Tactical Leads.

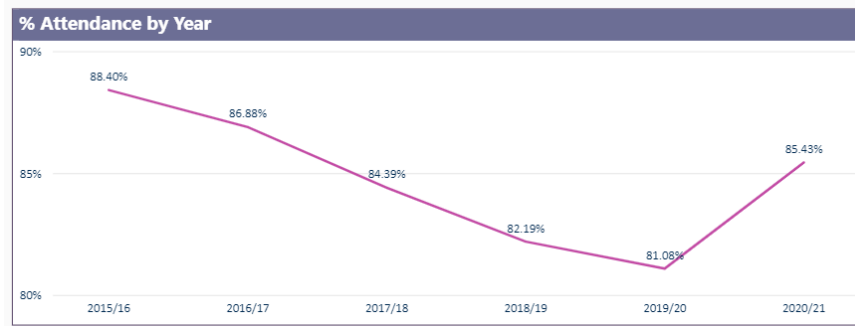
**3.37 Securing improvement in the longer term**

We require to secure immediate improvements for the cohort of children within the school through a focus on the core Quality Indicators to realise sustained change.

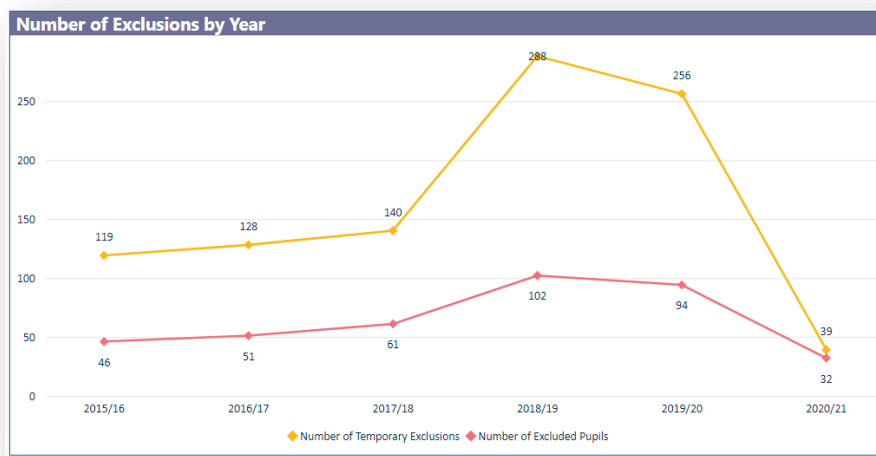
3.38 A review of historical data shows that Northfield Academy has been under-performing for a significant period of time and this knowledge triggered the interventions outlined from paragraph 3.1 in this report. Education Scotland reviewed the data available to them from 2016 and concluded that the school had been consistently underperforming from 2016 to the present day. Local data would suggest that the issues in the school extend beyond 2016 and this would suggest that the school has not incrementally implemented changes to the curriculum over a long period of time resulting in the need for considerable change (rather than incremental) now.

3.39 Attendance at Northfield Academy sits considerably below the city averages. Validated attendance in 2020/21 sat at 85% which was 8% lower than the city average of 93% at that time. By comparison, St Machar Academy (as the schools nearest comparator based on deprivation) sits far higher at over 91%. Attendance rates are currently higher than recorded previously but Inspectors rightly identify that attendance levels are not where they should be. This suggests that the broad general education has not been laying the foundations for success in the senior phase and that the pathways available

to young people are not well matched to local context or the aspirations of young people.

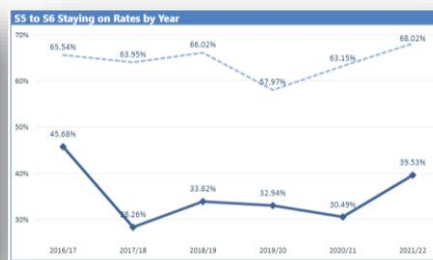
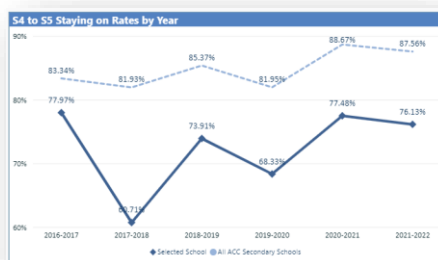


3.40 The number of half days lost to exclusion at Northfield has reduced of late, but has historically been significantly above both local and national averages.



3.41 There is clear evidence that the number of children being entered for and passing National 5 assessments is low. Attainment levels are significantly below comparator schools.

3.42 Staying on rates are very low and significantly below the city and national average. This illustrates that the curriculum does not ideally meet the needs of young people and that there aren't options available to attract them to remain in school.



- 3.43 There may be a need to consider changing how the school and other partners work to support children and families in order to turn around these long rooted and systemic issues. We know that young people are heavily influenced by a range of societal issues and that the wellbeing of young people relies on support from a wide range of partners. Making one single change (such as simply working to address the core Quality Indicators) is less likely to secure positive outcomes for young people and their families than taking a more holistic whole family approach.
- 3.44 As work is now well underway under the leadership of the Tactical Team we propose to establish an expert **Strategic Advisory Group** to oversee the consideration of structural changes to the delivery of services. It is proposed that this group include a range of individuals with a nationally recognised expertise in their sectoral, professional and topic fields across education (primary, secondary and tertiary), children's social work, and the contextual factors affecting the population health of this community. The Advisory Group will include the Chair of the Parent Council and pupil representation.
- 3.45 The Advisory Group would have a key role in advising the Council on the development and implementation of more radical changes that may be required to address the societal factors and the circumstances of individual families. We need to consider fully the needs of young people and families and may need to change the paradigm to better reflect the needs of the young people and families served by the school. The draft governance framework is available in Appendix B.
- 3.46 Taking this approach will enable us to consider the wider education and policy reforms and consider the need for more extensive reform in how services are delivered to serve the Northfield Community. It is proposed that a report be presented to Committee as the first full HMle follow up visit is published to help Committee determine if we continue to focus exclusively on the core quality indicators or implement further change.

#### **Reflections on our central approaches to quality improvement**

- 3.47 The central team continue to review quality assurance and improvement arrangements. There is clear evidence that external inspections of the authority's schools, undertaken since implementation of the Council Target Operating Model and forming of the new education structure, are more positive than those held before where a return inspection had become highly likely. However, there are still issues to address as evidenced by this inspection.
- 3.48 Pre-pandemic difficulties recruiting class teachers and senior and middle leaders has resulted in many leaders being appointed with limited experience of inspection and inspection expectations, there is a need to ensure the use of the Aberdeen City Standards, available to all school leaders, are more clearly evidenced.
- 3.49 The restrictions on the central team's ability to move between schools during the periods of lockdown to undertake assurance checks impacted progress as

does the on-going commitment to cover vacancies where required to keep schools operational.

- 3.50 Inspection outcomes show that primary schools are currently realising greater improvement from pre-pandemic evaluations than secondary schools, this is partially due to the increased complexity at secondary schools. The Northfield Academy inspection finding has triggered a review of Quality Improvement arrangements in secondary schools and will result in an enhancement to current quality improvement and assurance approaches to make increased use of peer review and challenge.
- 3.51 In addition, Head Teachers have identified a need to build capacity in Middle and Senior Leaders to help exemplify the standards expected and a programme of professional learning is currently being developed. This leadership development programme will help ensure secondary school leaders are aware of expectations and have suitable accountability structures in place to ensure delivery against them.
- 3.52 As central staffing reduces, there is a need to think carefully about how to ensure a rigorous approach to quality improvement with fewer staff. Aberdeen City benefits from a number of very talented Head Teachers and has sought their support in undertaking more detailed evaluations of some schools such as the quality improvement visit described at para 3.4. It is proposed that this approach be embedded proportionately into our quality improvement framework by building capacity in DHTs and involving HTs and DHTs in the peer review process across the core Quality Indicators.
- 3.53 Significant work has been undertaken to improve the accuracy of self-evaluation gradings against the core quality indicators and many schools are now driving improvement successfully at school level. Improvements in the accuracy of self-evaluation gradings now affords the central team the opportunity to prioritise schools requiring more significant improvement.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Implementation of the recommendations will assist the Council discharge its statutory duties under the Education legislation more effectively.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

## 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners at Northfield.	Detailed plan in place to address the findings of the inspection.	L	Yes
<b>Compliance</b>	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Detailed plan in place to address the findings of the inspection with on-going support from across our secondary schools and beyond.	L	Yes
<b>Operational</b>	Risk that improvement work does not lead to improved outcomes for learners	Weekly Tactical meetings to look at the impact of changes on young people.	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	No risks identified			
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	Weekly meetings of the Tactical Team will help address any issues timeously.	M	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No risks identified			

## 8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p>Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and</p>	<p>External scrutiny can support wider reform when issues are entrenched. It is thought that the external</p>

<p>implement progressive choices.</p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>report will serve as a catalyst for change at Northfield Academy.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></a></p>	
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026</p>	<p>Engagement with inspectors provides an opportunity to learn from national best practice and has helped establish the Tactical Team to support the school's improvement journey. The establishment of the Expert Advisory group will help ensure that the provision of services from Northfield better serves the community.</p>
<p><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p> <p>Prevention Strategy</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework Plan</p>	<p>Engagement with the Inspectorate is fully aligned to the city prevention strategy. Work to address poverty and improvement in the Children's services plan, the Child Poverty Action Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan is also supported through external scrutiny.</p>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	None

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

## 11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Tactical Team Plan  
Appendix B – Governance Framework

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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# Appendix A

Resources and Context	Outputs		Outcomes - Impact		
<p><b>Leadership of Change (QI 1.3)</b>  <u>Human Resources</u>                      School Lead – <b>Doug Watt</b>                      LA Lead - Mike Paul</p> <p><u>Context (from SIF)</u>                      There is no agreed approach to how change and improvements are organised, planned and led.</p> <p>Senior leaders are aware of the urgent need to secure improvement in everyday expectations across the school. Most significantly, senior leaders need to establish respectful relationships across the school community.</p> <p>At present, self-evaluation is not carried out to inform the school improvement agenda.</p> <p>The headteacher and senior leaders are aware of the urgent need to develop a more collegiate culture in which all members of the school community are involved in planning and leading improvements.</p> <p>The headteacher is aware of the need to re-affirm, refresh and agree the values and vision. It is essential that this is done through consultation, with approaches that fully engage young people, parents, staff, and school partners. This will support a shared understanding of the expectations, direction and identity of Northfield Academy.</p> <p>There is currently no strategic plan for leadership development at all levels.</p>	Activities	Outputs	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a 'method' for introducing change at Northfield Academy.</li> <li>• Engage TU &amp; ELT on change 'method'</li> <li>• Create a clear communication strategy for the school.</li> <li>• A Review of SLT Remits will take place.</li> <li>• A system of regular SLT and ELT meeting will support a clear system of accountability, quality assurance and reporting.</li> <li>• A process is built based on priority areas so that every member of the team will have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.</li> <li>• A process of stakeholder consultation on the Vision &amp; Values of Northfield Academy will take place.</li> <li>• The refreshed Vision and Values will be introduced and embedded as part of the culture of the school.</li> <li>• A Self-Evaluation Calendar will be created to include biannual checkpoints on progress for young people, parents and carers (surveys using HME questions), and staff (via Stress Risk Questionnaire).</li> <li>• A revised action planning process will support school improvement in a three year plan.</li> <li>• The calendar timings will reflect the dynamic priorities for that school year and clear consultation will take place.</li> <li>• A culture of celebrating young people is created.</li> <li>• A relevant expression of leadership will be developed for young people.</li> <li>• Leadership opportunities are discussed with staff as part of the PR&amp;D process.</li> <li>• The school will encourage staff members to take up leadership roles including SQA.</li> <li>• The school will explore and implement a programme of leadership development through professional learning available to all.</li> </ul>	<p>Northfield Academy has a recognized and accepted method for introducing change and communicating with stakeholders.</p> <p>Staff report increased understanding of remits, accountability and reporting system is in place.</p> <p>Rigorous one-to-one meetings are in place with a clear agenda.</p> <p>Northfield Academy has refreshed vision and values that express the school community.</p> <p>A cycle of self-evaluation is in place to contribute towards rigorous impact-driven improvement planning.</p> <p>Young people and staff report increased opportunities to lead aspects of school improvement.</p> <p>Northfield Academy is a place where people are celebrated, with a recognised programme supporting leadership development at all levels.</p>	<p>A Majority of (&gt;70%) young people report that staff treat them fairly and with respect</p> <p>A majority of (&gt;50%) staff report that they are consulted on change at work</p> <p>A majority of (&gt;50%) parents/carers report that the school is well led</p>	<p>Most (&gt;80%) young people report that staff treat them fairly and with respect</p> <p>Most (&gt;75%) staff report that they are consulted on change at work</p> <p>A majority of (&gt;60%) parents/carers report that the school is well led</p>	<p>Almost all (&gt;90%) young people report that staff treat them fairly and with respect  <i>(Young people are treated fairly and with respect)</i></p> <p>Almost all (&gt;90%) staff report that they are consulted on change at work  <i>(Staff are consulted on change at work)</i></p> <p>Most (&gt;75%) parents/carers report that the school is well led  <i>(Parents and carers report that the school is well led)</i></p>

## Resources and Context

### Safeguarding Group (QI 2.1)

Human Resources  
 School Lead: **Doug Watt**  
 School Team: Dawn Lynch, Leanne Ritchie  
 LA Lead: Mark Jones

Context (from SIF)  
 Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

- 1. Ensure that arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection are secured and in place.*
- 2. A specific and consistent focus to be maintained on those aspects identified by HMIE during their visit of corridor and classroom safety, walkouts & attendance, and approaches to bullying.*

\*\* aspects of interpretation included in italics\*\*

Outputs	
Activities	Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A team is in place to support progress for QI 2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection.</li> <li>A Central Team Officer will support the school on a daily basis for an initial period (Jan-Apr 2023).</li> <li>Senior Leadership Team, Trade Union Reps and Extended Leadership Team will agree urgent arrangements for high expectations for all.</li> <li>A robust process for reviewing, reconciling and intervening with walkouts from class will be introduced with fortnightly review.</li> <li>A review of the HMIE returns identifying young people with concerns over safety and/or bullying will take place with key actions identified.</li> <li>Embed the monitoring, tracking and reviewing of care experienced young people reflecting the context of the school.</li> <li>As part of the self-evaluation calendar, include two HMIE questionnaire instances per session for young people, two Stress Risk Questionnaire instances per session for staff, and one HMIE questionnaire instance per session for parents/carers.</li> <li>Create development and learning opportunities for young people and staff in safeguarding related activity.</li> <li>For young people, introduced a Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme.</li> <li>For staff, enhance staff competence and confidence in recognising and responding to safeguarding matters through INSET activity, Faculty meetings, with content to include Compassionate &amp; Connected Classroom (CCC), Restorative Practice etc. Also, a roll-out of appropriate CALM training and strategies (trauma, de-escalation, and physical intervention) will be introduced across the wider school team at Northfield Academy.</li> </ul>	<p>With agreement from the staff team, this school-wide approach is implemented.</p> <p>Processes for ensuring safeguarding are implemented and effectively managed.</p> <p>Walkouts have decreased with the impact of strategies in place.</p> <p>Twice annually there is a stakeholder voice report shared with the school community.</p> <p>A programme of opportunities is in place for young people and staff to supplement learning and development in key safeguarding areas.</p>

Outcomes - Impact		
(2023-24)	(2024-25)	(2025-26)
<p>Over 65% of young people will report that they feel safe at Northfield Academy.</p> <p>Staff report that a majority of (&gt;50%) relationships with young people are respectful.</p> <p>Weekly referrals will show 0.32 referrals (young people per week based on roll) against the baseline measure.</p>	<p>Most (&gt;75%) young people will report that they feel safe at Northfield Academy.</p> <p>Staff report that a majority of (&gt;60%) relationships with young people are respectful.</p> <p>Weekly referrals will show 0.26 referrals (young people per week based on roll) against the baseline measure.</p>	<p>Almost all (&gt;90%) young people will report that they feel safe at Northfield Academy.  <i>(Young people feel safe at Northfield Academy)</i></p> <p>Staff report that most (&gt;75%) relationships with young people are respectful.  <i>(Staff report that relationships with young people are respectful)</i></p> <p>Weekly referrals will show 0.20 referrals (young people per week based on roll) against the baseline measure.  <i>(There are fewer incidents around the school)</i></p>

## Resources and Context

### Curriculum Group (Q1 2.2)

Human Resources  
 School Lead: **Laura Gray**  
 LA Leads: Mark Jones, Shona Milne, Ross Allan.

Context (from SIF)  
 The school does not have a curriculum rationale.

The curriculum offered from S1 to S6 is not suitably challenging nor appropriate for young people.

Learners are not well supported in making choices at transition stages.

Too many young people do not see the value or purpose of their learning and they opt out of learning.

Outputs	
Activities	Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the triangulated data and further pupil voice to create a curriculum rationale for Northfield Academy.</li> <li>Create an S5/6 timetable that includes a greater number of pathways by tasking each faculty to consider offering at least one NPA per faculty.</li> <li>Increase efficiency, quality and choice through a consortium arrangement with a neighbouring school, with regular transport provided.</li> <li>Young people will have increased opportunities for growth-sector aligned pathways through ABZ Campus courses.</li> <li>Introduce choice for S3 that allows young people to make progress in their learning and overtake national qualifications.</li> <li>Introduce a greater range of partner-delivered courses to extend pathways for S4 young people.</li> <li>Pilot delivery of Foundation Apprenticeships in Northfield Academy by Aberdeenshire Council FA programme.</li> <li>A redesign of the S1 experience will be introduced to support transition through a 'crew' model focusing on health and wellbeing.</li> <li>The S1 curriculum will include a class teacher and 'home' room to allow delivery to focus on laying the foundations for learning, teaching and high expectations.</li> <li>Recruit a team of class teachers with primary experience to deliver this experience to S1 young people to enhance transition and complement the BGE.</li> <li>Create an S1 residential experience to commence learning at Northfield Academy.</li> <li>ASG primary data will be used proactively to support the transition of young people into S1.</li> <li>Explore how the S1 experience could be developed into S2 in 2024-25, and how learning could become based on 'expeditions' (interdisciplinary learning).</li> </ul>	<p>Young people report high levels of satisfaction with their course choice.</p> <p>An S5/6 curriculum is in place that meets the needs of all young people.</p> <p>Young people are offered a broader range of courses across BGE and Senior Phase.</p> <p>A new S1 curriculum and strategy will be in place for 2023-24 including the offer of a residential experience for every S1 young person.</p> <p>In S1 second level activities are matched to benchmarks, in place and meet the needs of learners?</p> <p>An outcomes report from the new S1 design will inform changes to S2.</p>

Outcomes - Impact		
2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
<p>Stay on rates for S4 into S5 will begin to close the gap on the virtual comparator to 74%</p> <p>The percentage of leavers achieving one or more L5 and one or more L6 course will close the gap on the virtual comparator to 68% (L5) &amp; 28% (L6).</p> <p>The percentage of young people achieving 3rd CfE level or better by end of S3 in reading will rise to 72%, beginning to close the gap on the local authority average (84% in 2021-22)</p>	<p>Stay on rates for S4 into S5 will close the gap on the virtual comparator to 78%</p> <p>The percentage of leavers achieving one or more L5 and one or more L6 course will close the gap on the virtual comparator to 72% (L5) &amp; 34% (L6).</p> <p>The percentage of young people achieving 3rd CfE level or better by end of S3 in reading will rise to 76%, closing the gap further on the local authority average (84% in 2021-22)</p>	<p>Stay on rates for S4 into S5 will exceed the virtual comparator – approximately 86%.  <i>(More young people stay on at Northfield Academy in S5/S6).</i></p> <p>The percentage of leavers achieving one or more L5 and one or more L6 course will exceed the virtual comparator at 78.51% (L5) and 43.24% (L6) (2022).  <i>(Senior Phase attainment shows success against a greater range of courses)</i></p> <p>The percentage of young people achieving 3rd CfE level or better by end of S3 in reading will be in line with the local authority average (84% in 2021-22)  <i>(Reading levels have improved for young people at Northfield Academy)</i></p>

## Resources and Context

### Learning Teaching & Assessment Group (QL 2.3)

#### Human Resources

School Lead: **Mhairi Guthrie**  
 School Team: Alexis Dean  
 LA Lead: Alison Murison  
 LA Team: Shirley Torrie, Anne Bell

#### Context (from SIF)

There are major weaknesses in strategic and operational approaches to learning, teaching and assessment across the school.

Senior leaders need to apply greater strategic direction to the improvement of learning and teaching through professional learning. All staff would benefit from engaging more fully with current reading and research to improve their practice.

All staff now need to develop a greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities in providing high-quality learning experiences for all young people.

There is no coherent and agreed approach to assessment across the school.

Teachers' approaches to tracking and monitoring young people's progress requires improvement across almost all subject areas.

## Outputs

Activities	Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building on early work on developing a Northfield Way, design a Learning and Teaching Standard for Northfield Academy with high standards and rigorous quality assurance.</li> <li>Gain ownership and quality assure this design with the Extended Leadership Team and Learning &amp; Teaching Focus Group, and the rest of the school community.</li> <li>Activity on quality assurance contributes towards the whole school QA Calendar.</li> <li>The template for observations is shared with staff and gives opportunity for clear comparison against the standard.</li> <li>Develop a programme of targeted professional learning for the staff team based on the learning and teaching standard.</li> <li>Incorporate and embed the CIRCLE framework into this programme.</li> <li>Create a calendar of learning and teaching activity utilising staff &amp; faculty meetings, INSET, and offering voluntary lunch-n-learns etc.</li> <li>Close working is in place with the team involved in curricular redesign of S1 to ensure that the Learning and Teaching Standard is incorporated into planning for S1.</li> <li>Equip the staff team delivering in S4 to clearly understand how to apply and outwork the standard and undertake moderation in relation to this.</li> <li>Ensure accuracy of data based on understanding standard so that tracking can be accurate.</li> <li>Northfield Academy will develop a programme of support for those groups of staff who are at an early stage of development – the S1 class teacher group, support for probationer teachers, and for student teachers at the school.</li> </ul>	<p>Northfield Academy has a Learning and Teaching Standard based on high expectations and improvement.</p> <p>Staff report high levels of satisfaction with the professional learning on the Learning &amp; Teaching Standard.</p> <p>Staff understand and are supported to outwork this Standard in learning and teaching.</p> <p>Staff will be able to demonstrate a clear understanding of standards and evidence moderation activities.</p> <p>Staff in these groups say they are well supported in their career progression.</p>

## Outcomes - Impact

2023 - 24	2024 - 25	2025 - 2026
<p>Over 55% of young people report that they enjoy learning at school.</p> <p>Most (&gt;75%) young people report that staff help them to understand how they are progressing in their school work.</p> <p>A majority (&gt;50%) of lessons will be rated as satisfactory or better</p>	<p>Over 65% of young people report that they enjoy learning at school.</p> <p>Most (&gt;80%) young people report that staff help them to understand how they are progressing in their school work.</p> <p>Most (75-90%) lessons will be rated as satisfactory or better</p>	<p>Most (75-90%) young people report that they enjoy learning at school. <i>(Young people enjoy learning at Northfield Academy)</i></p> <p>Almost all (&gt;90%) young people report that staff help them to understand how they are progressing in their school work. <i>(Young people know how they are progressing at school)</i></p> <p>Almost all (&gt;90%) lessons will be rated as satisfactory or better <i>(The quality of lessons has improved over time)</i></p>

## Resources and context

### Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion Group (QI 3.1)

#### Human Resources

School Lead: **Francesca Adair**  
 School Team:  
 LA Lead: Craig McDermott

#### Context (from SIF)

Staff should prioritise the development of a strategic approach to supporting, improving and measuring wellbeing outcomes for young people.

A minority of young people report that they do not feel safe in school, which is having a negative impact on their wellbeing. A majority of parents do not feel their child is safe at school. Senior leaders should take immediate action to address this issue.

The majority of young people, staff and parents disagree that the school deals well with bullying. Staff and young people should develop an anti-bully policy and record incidents of bullying appropriately.

A high level of non-attendance in class is an ongoing concern, which should be addressed urgently. The current system for recording and reviewing absence from school is not rigorous enough to maintain an accurate record of attendance.

Young people have limited opportunities to consider and discuss cultural differences and diversity.

## Outputs

### Activities

- Following feedback from HMLe, we will create a plan for 3.1 (Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion) underpinned by the UNCRC Articles.
- This strategy will contribute towards the planned refresh of a Vision & Values for Northfield Academy.
- We will engage the Wellbeing Staff Group to ensure aspects of UNCRC and wellbeing indicators are part of the same language at Northfield Academy.
- We will use recent pupil voice activity to identify the areas of the school that are wellbeing 'hotspots' and plan a deployment of staff to support improvement in wellbeing.
- A programme of training will be put in place to support senior young people taking up roles as bullying ambassadors.
- Work will commence with all parts of the ASG community to create a definition of bullying in order to achieve consistency across the schools community.
- We will refresh and confirm recording and reporting of bullying instances.
- We will use qualitative and quantitative data to support the direction of further interventions in creating an Equalities/Diversity/Relationships Strategy.
- Systems for recording, monitoring attendance at Northfield Academy will undergo review. We will affirm responsibilities and agree processes for proactively dealing with attendance.
- There will be an introduction of a cycle of PTG/YH meetings using data as a focus for attendance, exclusion, and attainment.
- We will explore the systems and processes around exclusions including reviewing AGS practices.
- There will be a review of return to school protocols for repeat exclusions (staged intervention processes will be re-imagined to break the cycle of repeat exclusions.).
- A programme of continued staff development and professional learning around exclusions, and solution focused practice will be put in place.
- We will use visits to other schools to explore positive activity on flexible pathways / part time timetables.
- Northfield Academy will work with XP Doncaster to invest in Staff Crew as part of staff wellbeing within the Wellbeing Strategy.

### Outputs

Northfield Academy will have a Wellbeing Strategy founded upon the UNCRC and wellbeing indicators.

Northfield Academy ASG will have an "Inclusion and Equality" Charter that recognises and celebrates the diversity of the community.

Key staff will have a clear understanding of emerging trends around attendance and exclusions, including how these are changing over time. This understanding has led to changed practice.

Staff are an important part of the Wellbeing Strategy.

## Outcomes - Impact

### 2023-24

Attendance at Northfield Academy will exceed 87%.

Exclusions at Northfield Academy will fall below 75 per 1000 young people.

A majority of (>50%) young people will report that they think the school deals well with bullying.

### 2024-25

Attendance at Northfield Academy will exceed 89%.

Exclusions at Northfield Academy will fall below 50 per 1000 young people.

A majority of (>65%) young people will report that they think the school deals well with bullying.

### 2025-26

Attendance at Northfield Academy will exceed 90% (*Young people choose to attend Northfield Academy regularly*)

Exclusions at Northfield Academy will fall below 35 per 1000 young people. (*Young people will have pathways to allow them to access learning*)

Most (>75%) young people will report that they think the school deals well with bullying. (*Young People's relationships are positive and they know where to seek support*)

## Resources and Context

### Raising Attainment & Achievement Group (QI 3.2)

Human Resources  
 School Lead: **David Craig**  
 School Team: Alexis Dean  
 LA Lead: Shona Milne  
 LA Team: Stuart Craig, Mark Jones.

Context (from SIF)  
 Staff are aware that attainment across all measures is very poor.

Staff are not supported in the use of P7 transition attainment data.

In the senior phase, there is a large number of school leavers at S4 and S5.

Teachers' approaches to tracking and monitoring young people's progress requires improvement across almost all subject areas. Senior and middle leaders should develop robust systems to monitor and track young people's assessment and progress. Current processes do not support staff adequately to understand young people's progress, particularly in the BGE.

Overall, young people's achievements are not well recognised or celebrated.

## Outputs

Activities	Outputs
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer current S4 leavers an opportunity to further develop skills and certification through offers from Foyer Futures and Outward Bound.</li> <li>Ensure all efforts are made to ensure that leavers have at least L3 literacy and numeracy qualifications.</li> <li>A robust presentation policy sets out the expectations upon young people, and the ambitious approach that the staff team has for young people</li> <li>Staff will be aware and engaged with the content and spirit of the Presentation Policy.</li> <li>Work with ASG schools to create a robust tracking system to monitor and intervene in the progress of young people in the BGE to ensure that there is a firm foundation being laid.</li> <li>Use this tracking data to inform subject choice to ensure that young people are supported into the right pathways.</li> <li>Create a robust and smart Senior Phase tracker to allow analysis of progress and intervention against key measures (L20,M60,U20, Tariff Points, Leaver data).</li> <li>Quality feedback to young people forms an integral part of the outworking of the tracking of the school.</li> <li>The school will participate fully in pathway planning meetings with Skills Development Scotland.</li> <li>Termly attainment discussions are in place for all faculties with their link DHT.</li> <li>Pathways Advocates will support care experienced young people to plan carefully for success in their progress/futures.</li> <li>Universal intervention meetings will connect a wider view of attainment at Northfield Academy.</li> <li>Building in the voice of the young person, an achievement tracker supports development of skills and experiences of young people at Northfield Academy.</li> <li>Pilot an effective way to celebrate young people and record success and achievement during S1 Crew sessions and use this method as a basis for BGE.</li> <li>An awards ceremony will support celebrating success in both attainment and achievement.</li> </ul>	<p>Number of school leavers with Level 3 Literacy and Numeracy qualifications is increased.</p> <p>The staff team demonstrate their ambition for young people through presentation data.</p> <p>Northfield Academy has a clear process for knowing how young people are progressing and intervening when they are not.</p> <p>Northfield Academy staff regularly consider attainment as part of faculty, team and individual student discussions.</p> <p>Northfield Academy recognises the importance of attainment and achievement, with both playing an important part of school life.</p>
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## Outcomes - Impact

(2023-24)	(2024-25)	(2025-26)
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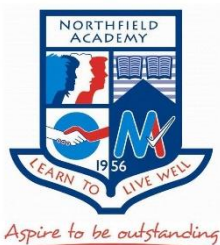
<p>The percentage of young people achieving 3rd CfE level or better in numeracy by end of S3 will be within 25% of the local authority average (89% in 2021-22)</p> <p>The total tariff points for the lower 20% of S4 young people will be within 20% of the virtual comparator.</p> <p>The total tariff points for the middle 60% of S5 young people (based on S4 roll) will be within 40% of the virtual comparator</p>	<p>The percentage of young people achieving 3rd CfE level or better in numeracy by end of S3 will be within 20% of the local authority average (89% in 2021-22)</p> <p>The total tariff points for the lower 20% of S4 young people will be within 10% of the virtual comparator.</p> <p>The total tariff points for the middle 60% of S5 young people (based on S4 roll) will be within 30% of the virtual comparator</p>	<p>The percentage of young people achieving 3rd CfE level or better in numeracy by end of S3 will be within 10% of the local authority average (89% in 2021-22) <i>(Numeracy levels have improved for young people at Northfield Academy)</i></p> <p>The total tariff points for the lower 20% of S4 young people will exceed the virtual comparator. <i>(There will be a path for success for all young people at Northfield Academy)</i></p> <p>The total tariff points for the middle 60% of S5 young people (based on S4 roll) will be within 25% of the virtual comparator <i>(Young people will be encouraged to stay on and do well in S5)</i></p>
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	Baseline	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Owner	Baseline	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Owner	Baseline	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Owner
Safeguarding Group (Q1 2.1)	Measure 1: <b>Almost all</b> (>90%) young people will report that they feel safe at Northfield Academy					Measure 2: Staff report that <b>most</b> (>75%) relationships with young people are respectful.					Measure 3: Weekly referrals will show 0.20 per young person per week.				
	55.09%					22%						0.38 (887 for a roll of 763)			
Leadership of Change Group (Q1 1.3)	Measure 4: <b>Almost all</b> (>90%) young people report that staff treat them fairly and with respect					Measure 5: <b>Almost all</b> (>90%) staff report that they are consulted on change at work					Measure 6: <b>Most</b> (>75%) parents/carers report that the school is well led				
	62.12%					26%						39.42%			
Learning Teaching & Assessment Group (Q1 2.3)	Measure 7: <b>Most</b> (>75%) young people report that they enjoy learning at school					Measure 8: <b>Almost all</b> (>90%) young people report that staff help them to understand how they are progressing in their school work.					Measure 9: Almost all lessons will be rated as satisfactory (3) or better.				
	55.03%* (almost all and sometimes combined)					69.64* (almost all and sometimes combined)						HMIE visit rated 2.3 as 'unsatisfactory' - suggesting major weaknesses			
Ensuring Wellbeing Equality & Inclusion Group (Q1 3.1)	Measure 10: Attendance at Northfield Academy will exceed 90%.					Measure 11: Exclusion at Northfield Academy will fall below 35 per 1000 pupils.					Measure 12: Most young people will report that they think that the school deals well with bullying.				
	85.43% (2020/21)					98.8 per 1000 (as at 18.02.23)						21.66%			
Curriculum Group (Q1 2.2)	Measure 13: Stay on rates for S4 into S5 will exceed the virtual comparator – approximately 86%.					Measure 14: The percentage of leavers achieving one or more L5 and one or more L6 course will exceed the virtual comparator at 78.51% (L5) and 43.24% (L6) (2022).					Measure 15: The percentage of young people achieving 3rd CFE level or better by end of S3 in reading will be in line with the local authority average (84% in 2021-22)				
	74% (2020-21)					64.86% (L5) & 20.27% (L6)						68% (2021-22)			
Raising Attainment and Achievement Group (Q1 3.2)	Measure 16: The percentage of young people achieving 3rd CFE level or better in numeracy by end of S3 will be within 10% of the local authority average (89% in 2021-22)					Measure 17: The total tariff points for the lower 20% of S4 young people will exceed the virtual comparator.					Measure 18: The total tariff points for the middle 60% of S5 young people (based on S4 roll) will be within 25% of the virtual comparator				
	59% in 2021-22					(2022) 22 against 70 (VC 2022)						(2022) 239 against 569 (VC 2022) - target 427			

almost all	over 90%
most	75% to 90%
majority	50% to 74%
less than half	15% to 49%
few	up to 15%







<b>Title</b>	Northfield Academy Governance Framework		
<b>Groups</b>	Education and Children’s Services Committee, Expert Advisory, Tactical and Operational Groups		
<b>Lead</b>	Eleanor Sheppard		
<b>Date</b>	28st March 2023	<b>Version</b>	V0.1

<b>Purpose</b>
<p>There is a need for considerable action and expertise to help turn around the long rooted and systemic issues at Northfield Academy. There is a need to secure some immediate improvements but also a need to think strategically about more substantive structural changes to help improve outcomes for young people and families in the longer term.</p> <p>This governance framework establishes a number of groups to oversee and guide delivery of the required improvements at operational and tactical level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Education and Children’s Services Committee:</b> discharge the Council’s functions as Education Authority in keeping with the established Terms of Reference</li> <li>• <b>The Tactical Team:</b> providing leadership against the core quality indicators and driving, monitoring and reporting progress against the Improvement Plan</li> <li>• <b>The Operational Group:</b> school staff planning, delivering and monitoring the impact of the changes at school level to ensure a robust evidence base to inform next steps. The Operational Group are expected to report progress to the Pupil and Parent Councils of the school, the Locality Groups within the community and to Trade Union school reps through their established regular meetings.</li> </ul> <p>Through the Chief Education Officer, the Tactical Team and Operational Group, will report to the council’s Education &amp; Children Services Committee via the progress reports which the Chief Education Officer will submit on Northfield Academy.</p> <p>In addition, the governance framework also seeks to establish an Advisory Group to help guide the Education and Children’s Services Committee on more structural and long term changes for consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>An Expert Advisory Group:</b> providing leadership, challenge and horizon scanning to support the shaping of longer-term structural reforms to better support the wellbeing of the school community until the school realises a positive inspection outcome.</li> </ul>

## **Remit and Responsibilities – Expert Advisory Group**

### **Remit:**

1. To consider research from a range of perspectives to help inform understanding of the societal factors on the attainment and achievement of young people and their families
2. To consider data from a wide range of partnership sources to identify where changes to current systems would help to secure more positive outcomes for young people and their families
3. To take account of the education and wider reform agenda and seek opportunities to capitalise upon such policy changes for the betterment of the Northfield Academy community.
4. To propose changes to be tested and if accepted by the Education and Children Services Committee monitor and evaluate progress against milestones and targeted outcomes
5. Make recommendations to the Tactical Team on improvements to the current paradigm and to the Education and Children's Services Committee on more radical changes which could benefit the community
6. Any other specific roles and responsibility to be agreed by Group members.

### **Membership:**

- The Chair/ Vice-Chair to lead the Expert Advisory Group, approve agenda, chair meetings, approve meetings.
- The Chair will be held by the Convenor of the council's Education and Children's Services Committee.
- Members should be independent from the Tactical Team and Operational Group
- Membership should not be static and there should be balanced membership across priority themes. Further membership appointments must be agreed by the Board, as per indicative membership.
- Where appropriate, the Board can invite and seek advice from relevant expert(s) and existing local partnership(s).
- Quorum – 5 members including the Chair should be present for meetings to take place.
- A minimum of 3 meetings should take place annually.

#### Indicative minimum Membership

- Chair
- 1x with a nationally recognised expertise in education
- 1x with nationally recognised expertise in broader contextual factors affecting children
- 1x with a nationally recognised expertise in children with additional support needs
- 1x Scottish Government Learning Directorate
- Young person representative
- Parent Council representative

The Interim Director Children and Family Services will act as Executive Lead supporting the Chair and will report the work of the group to the councils Education and Children's Services Committee

## **Remit and responsibilities – Tactical Team**

### **Remit:**

- The Chief Education Officer will lead the Tactical Team, approve agenda, chair meetings.
- Meet weekly to coordinate sources of support including that available from Education Scotland and other partners
- ensure that messaging is consistent and that changes put in place are followed through at school level to ensure impact.
- build the capacity of all through a coaching and mentoring approach with a strong focus on collegiate leadership
- drive changes based on robust self-evaluation and evidence
- help establish of a culture of collaboration with young people, staff, parent/carer and community so that all stakeholders have a genuine voice
- support the development of practices in keeping with the UNCRC, clear understanding of pupil and family wellbeing and of the GTCS Standards

**Membership:**

**Tactical Team 1: Safeguarding:** Mark Jones (Quality improvement Manager)

**Tactical Team 2: Leadership of Change:** Mike Paul (HT Bucksburn Academy)

**Tactical Team 3: Learning, teaching and assessment:** Alison Murison (HT AGS)

**Tactical Team 4: Wellbeing , partnerships and personalised support;** Craig McDermott (HT ASN and Outreach)

**Tactical Team 5: Curriculum –**Ross Allan (DHT AGS) and BGE by Shona Milne (Chief Education Officer)

**Tactical Team 6: Raising attainment and achievement:** - BGE Shona Milne (Chief Education Officer) and senior phase Stuart Craig (Quality Improvement Officer)

The Northfield Academy Head Teacher and school leadership team are all active members of the Tactical team. Education Scotland colleagues (support arm) are available to support the Tactical Team leads.

**Operational Group**

**Remit:**

- to engage positively with their Tactical leads
- to undertake all actions agreed with the Tactical Lead
- to follow and evidence the impact of changes being made on children and young people and report these back timeously to the Tactical Team
- to ensure that changes are collegiately driven at school level through whole staff and working groups

**Membership: School staff**

The Operational Group meetings (whole staff) will be chaired by the Head Teacher

Workstream Operational Groups (working groups) will usually chaired by the Deputy Head Teacher aligned to the Tactical Group unless other arrangements are agreed by the group.

Tactical leads and partners may join the Operational Groups by invitation.

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