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To: Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice Convener; Councillors Al-Samarai, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Grant, Macdonald, 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, 31 October 2022

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Members of the **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in the **Council Chamber - Town House** on **TUESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2022 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>

VIKKI CUTHBERT
INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER - GOVERNANCE

BUSINESS

NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1.1 There are no items of urgent business at this time

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2.1 There are no items of exempt business

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3.1 Members are requested to intimate any declarations of interest

DEPUTATIONS

4.1 There are no requests for deputation at this time

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 Minute of Education Operational Delivery Committee of 8 September 2022 - for approval (Pages 5 - 20)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

6.1 Committee Business Planner (Pages 21 - 28)

NOTICES OF MOTION

7.1 There are no Notices of Motion at this time

REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES

8.1 There are no referrals at this time

PERFORMANCE AND RISK

9.1 2021-22 Attainment and Achievement Data Performance Report - CUS/22/240 (Pages 29 - 62)

9.2 Cluster Risk Registers - Education and Integrated Children's & Family Services - CUS/22/233 (Pages 63 - 80)

EDUCATION

10.1 Health and Wellbeing Summit - OPE/22/249 (Pages 81 - 88)

10.2 School Estate Plan - Implementation Plan - RES/22/242 (Pages 89 - 100)

10.3 Update of Gaelic Medium Education - OPE/22/241 (Pages 101 - 116)

10.4 Inspection Reporting - OPE/22/234 (Pages 117 - 168)

**AT THIS JUNCTURE, THE EXTERNAL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
WILL DEPART**

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- 11.1 Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2021/22 - OPE/22/246 (Pages 169 - 200)
- 11.2 Keeping the Promise - Year One of Plan 21-24 - OPE/22/244 (Pages 201 - 266)
- 11.3 Implementation of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 - OPE/22/243 (Pages 267 - 290)
- 11.4 Secure Care - Children's Rights - OPE/22/245 (Pages 291 - 296)

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Steph Dunsmuir, sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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EDUCATION OPERATIONAL DELIVERY COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 8 September 2022. Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION OPERATIONAL DELIVERY COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Allard (as substitute for Councillor Hazel Cameron), Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Cooke (as substitute for Councillor Davidson), Grant, Malik, McLeod, McLellan (as substitute for Councillor MacGregor), Radley, Nicoll (as substitute for Councillor van Sweeden from article 10) and van Sweeden (for articles 1 to 9). External Members:- 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) (for articles 1 to 13), Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools) (for articles 1 to 13) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

ANNOUNCEMENT

1. The Vice Convener asked Members to note their congratulations to the care experienced young people who had won awards at the recent Success Awards. She added that it had been particularly inspiring to see their resilience and success, and further noted thanks to Larissa Gordon and other officers who organised the event each year.

The Committee resolved:-

to congratulate those who had won awards, and thank officers for their work to organise the event.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

2. In relation to item 9.7 (Music Service Update), Councillor Blake noted for reasons of transparency that her children were involved in the school music service, however having applied the objective test, she did not feel that this was an interest which required to be declared, nor would prevent her from participating in that item of business.

In relation to item 9.10 (School Estate Plan), the following statements of transparency were noted, with all Members considering that these did not amount to interests which needed to be declared, nor which would prevent them from participating in that item of business:-

- Mrs Frances Cardno advised that she had children who attended Forehill School and Oldmachar Academy which were referred to within the report.

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- Mr Michael Crawford advised that he had children at Airyhall School and Cults Academy, and his wife was an Active Schools Assistant supporting Cults and Lochside ASG schools.
- Councillor Blake advised that she had children who attended Cults School and Cults Academy.
- Councillor Brooks advised that he had a child who attended Cults Academy.
- Councillor Grant advised that he had children at Riverbank School.
- The Vice Convener advised that she had a child who attended the Early Learning and Childcare provision at Gilcomstoun School.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 14 JUNE 2022

3. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 14 June 2022 for approval.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

4. The Committee had before it the committee business planner as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the business planner.

PRESENTATION FROM CHIEF OFFICER - EDUCATION AND CHIEF OFFICER - INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S AND FAMILY SERVICES

5. Ahead of the first meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee on 8 November 2022, the Committee received a presentation from the Chief Officer – Education and the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services which provided Members with context in relation to Education and Social Work Policy, focusing on (i) the National Improvement Framework; (ii) the Scottish Attainment Challenge 2.0; (iii) The Promise, which set out 80 calls to action presented as an ambitious set of promises for children and young people who had experience of the care system; and (iv) the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill, and the consistent messages across all the policies.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that the slides be circulated to Members outwith the meeting; and
- (ii) to thank officers for the presentation.

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ABERDEEN CITY NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN - OPE/22/166

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Operating Officer which sought approval to implement the refreshed Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan for 2022/23 following submission of the Self-Evaluation and Plan to the Scottish Government.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the service Self-Evaluation and Plan contained in Appendices A and B;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to implement the proposed Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan 22/23; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Education to maintain a review of the 22/23 Plan in light of any impacting national legislative or policy provisions such as the Scottish Government response to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Report and advise Committee of any required changes in due course.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to the number of pupils participating in Active Travel, to note that officers would ascertain how many primary schools had a walking bus and would provide that information to Members outwith the meeting;
- (ii) to note Councillor Blake's query about the limited number of degree options in relation to PGDE Home Economics and that the Chief Officer – Education would discuss further with Councillor Blake outwith the meeting; and
- (iii) to approve the recommendations contained in the report, with an additional recommendation as follows:-
 - (d) to commend the Evaluation of the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan 2021/2022.

FAMILY SUPPORT MODEL - OPE/22/178

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Operating Officer which provided an update on the progress of the redesign of Family Support, underpinned by the ten principles set out in the Promise [Plan 21-24], while also providing assurance that the development of a Family Support model would not compromise existing Child Protection systems.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the approach to develop and redesign family support in line with the aspirations of the Promise [Plan 21-24];
- (b) note the Child Protection system would be unaffected by the redesign of the Family Support Model; and

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- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Integrated Children's and Family Services to report back on progress and learning from the tests of change.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the query from Councillor Malik in relation to the £42 million reduction in the Scottish Government Education and Skills budget, and that officers would report back to Committee if a negative impact on children and young people was identified; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

EDGE OF CARE PILOT - OPE/22/156

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Operating Officer which provided an update on work being undertaken to strengthen the Council's approach to improving the attainment and achievement of Looked After Children and those known or thought to be on the edge of care.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the proposed approach to develop a more robust approach to supporting children and young people who were Looked After or on the edge of care; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Chief Social Work Officer to report back on the learning from the pilot and any plans to scale up approaches before the end of the 2022/23 school session.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING - OPE/22/159

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Operating Officer which set out the findings of the recent Health and Wellbeing surveys which had been undertaken within Aberdeen City Schools, as well as the current support in place for wellbeing, both physical and mental.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of this report and the data shared within Appendix A;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to consider the findings of the report and plan next steps, including the development of a partnership approach through a multi-agency Health & Wellbeing Summit; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to report the outcome of the multi-agency health and Wellbeing Summit to Committee as soon as reasonably practicable.

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The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Malik, moved as an amendment:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) note the content of this report and the data shared within Appendix A;
- (b) instruct the Chief Education Officer to establish a Children's Mental Health taskforce to support Children and young people's mental health following the pandemic and to support children and young people's mental health through the "cost of living" crisis thereafter consider the findings of the report alongside the Children's Mental Health taskforce to plan next steps, including the development of a partnership approach through a multi-agency Health & Wellbeing Summit; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Education Officer to report the outcome of the multi-agency health and Wellbeing Summit to Committee as soon as reasonably practicable.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (11) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillors Allard, Bouse, Cooke, McLellan, Radley and van Sweeden; Mrs Cardno, Mr Crawford and Mr Murray; for the amendment (5) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Grant, Malik and McLeod; declined to vote (3) – Mr Paul, Miss Scott and Mrs Smith.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to the query about Active Travel and whether it had improved in schools which offered an active travel plan, to note that officers would provide detail on this (and the earlier query in relation to walking buses) outwith the meeting; and
- (ii) to adopt the motion.

SUMMER IN THE CITY PROGRAMME - OPE/22/168

10. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Operating Officer which presented a high level evaluation of the Summer in the City programme and sought delegated authority to allow officers to design and deliver a similar programme for the October school holiday period using underspend from the summer programme.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the high level evaluation of the Summer in the City programme;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to design and deliver a programme for the October school holiday using underspend from the summer programme; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to report to Committee on the impact of the October 2022 programme following delivery.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to thank officers and partner organisations for the huge amount of work which had gone into the Summer in the City programme; and

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- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

UPDATE ON THE MUSIC SERVICE - OPE/22/165

11. With reference to article 8 of the minute of its meeting of 23 September 2021, the Committee had before it a report by the Chief Operating Officer which set out progress with the establishment of a digital anytime offer for learners and provided information on the effectiveness of the Music Service in light of national policy changes. The report also highlighted how the service was building collaboration with the wider music community to support children and young people across city schools.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the evaluation of the first year of free Instrumental Instruction;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to continue to develop plans to establish opportunities for ensembles; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to evaluate the quality and provision of music across the city and report the findings to Committee within one calendar year.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would provide information outwith the meeting in relation to the amount of top-up funding the Council had received from the Scottish Government;
- (ii) to request that future updates include some data on the digital offering; how it could help to develop engagement and musicality in children; how much movement there had been from traditional learning to digital learning; and to request that officers engage with children and young people on how much the use of Google Classroom between physical lessons had helped with retention and levels of engagement; and
- (iii) to approve the recommendations contained in the report with an additional recommendation as follows:-
 - (d) to instruct the Chief Officer – Education to explore models and costings in order to create a Music Centre and report back to Education and Children’s Services Committee prior to referral to the budget process.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK REPORT – EDUCATION OPERATIONS - CUS/22/186

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Customer Services which presented an update on the status of key performance measures relating to the Education Operational cluster. The report detailed performance to the end of June 2022 or Quarter 1 2022/23, as appropriate.

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The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the performance information contained in the report Appendix.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

INSPECTION REPORTING - OPE/22/155

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Operating Officer which detailed how a number of Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings had engaged with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and The Care Inspectorate since May 2022.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the report; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Education to continue to support Early Learning and Childcare settings and schools to implement continuous improvement in keeping with the Quality Frameworks.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

SCHOOL ESTATE PLAN 2022 - RES/22/184

14. With reference to article 10 of the minute of its previous meeting of 14 June 2022, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which presented the finalised School Estate Plan for approval. The report advised that the Plan set out the recommended actions to be undertaken to develop the school estate over the next ten years and beyond, supporting the delivery of the Council's Property and Estates Strategy and the National Learning Estate Strategy.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

City-Wide / Strategic

- 2.1 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to adopt an approach which favoured the improvement and repurposing of existing assets, over the construction of new school buildings, where this was appropriate, and to ensure that where new school buildings were required, these were designed from the outset, to comply with the low carbon criteria set out within the Learning Estate Investment Programme, and where appropriate, with the Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard;

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- 2.2 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to ensure that all new primary schools were designed with a minimum pupil capacity of 434, and all new secondary schools were designed with a minimum pupil capacity of 1000, in order to support high quality learning and teaching;
- 2.3 note that potential changes in pupil population across the city were likely to require a reduction in the number of operational schools over the next 10 years, and that within this and future editions of the School Estate Plan, officers would bring forward specific options and recommendations for making changes to the school estate to ensure optimum efficiency and sustainability of the estate as a whole;
- 2.4 note that where appropriate, officers would seek opportunities to make use of available capacity within schools for other purposes, including the delivery of additional services, in order to make efficient use of available space within the estate which would also benefit local communities;
- 2.5 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a review of signage in all schools and upgrade / replace signage where required to improve accessibility for all users and agree to refer this to the budget process;
- 2.6 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to present a delivery plan for implementing the agreed actions in this report to the next meeting of the Education and Children’s Services Committee, and thereafter, to present an annual update to the School Estate Plan to the Education and Children’s Services Committee, commencing from September 2023, to report on progress with the agreed actions and to update these as appropriate, in light of the most recently available data;

Denominational Primary Schools

- 2.7 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for ensuring appropriate and sustainable long term denominational primary school provision for the city to meet forecast demand, and report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations;

Secondary Schools in the North of Aberdeen

- 2.8 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the predicted long term excess secondary school capacity in Grandhome, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don, and report back with an outline business case for consideration by the Education and Children’s Services Committee;
- 2.9 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for ensuring appropriate long term secondary school provision for Bucksburn and Dyce, and report back with an outline business case for consideration by the Education and Children’s Services Committee;

Schools in Central Aberdeen

- 2.10 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and options appraisal to improve the suitability, accessibility and capacity levels of Victorian schools within Aberdeen City, and to report back to the

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Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations and estimated costs;

Bucksburn Associated Schools Group

- 2.11 note that officers had completed a feasibility study on the proposed permanent extension to Bucksburn Academy, and instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report back to the Finance and Resources Committee with an outline business case for consideration;
- 2.12 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to engage with developers to track progress with the Bucksburn / Newhills developments, in order to determine options and appropriate timing for new primary school provision to serve the new housing developments, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with an outline business case;

Oldmachar Associated Schools Group

- 2.13 note that officers were currently engaging with developers to track progress with the Grandhome development, to determine any requirements for new primary school provision and to relieve forecast pressure on pupil numbers at Forehill School;
- 2.14 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory consultation on proposals to re-align primary school zone boundaries within the Oldmachar ASG, to relieve future pressure on pupil numbers at Greenbrae School, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with the outcomes of the consultation and recommendations as appropriate;
- 2.15 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Oldmachar ASG, in order to minimise potential excess pupil capacity, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee as appropriate;

Bridge of Don Associated Schools Group

- 2.16 note that officers would continue to monitor forecast rolls at Braehead School and Scotstown School, and that any required actions would be reported in future updates to the School Estate Plan;

St Machar Associated Schools Group

- 2.17 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out an options appraisal on potential uses of the additional capacity to be provided by the new school at Tillydrone, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate;
- 2.18 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to consider the options for relocating other services accommodated within the Sunnybank School building, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations;
- 2.19 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study to consider the options for the removal of unused modular

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classroom buildings at St Machar Academy, and for carrying out general improvements to the outdoor space at the school, and to present a costed outline business case to the Finance and Resources Committee for consideration;

Northfield Associated Schools Group

- 2.20 note that officers would continue to monitor pupil numbers at Westpark School and Heathryburn School, considering the likely long term impact of the planned new Greenferns development, and that recommendations as required would be included in future updates to the School Estate Plan;
- 2.21 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Northfield ASG, in order to minimise excess pupil capacity, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate;

Hazlehead Associated Schools Group

- 2.22 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to assess the feasibility of creating new secondary school provision to serve the communities of Hazlehead and Countesswells, to put this forward to the Scottish Government as a priority project for funding in Phase 3 of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with an update on the outcomes of the funding bid and recommendations on next steps;
- 2.23 note that officers would continue to monitor the situation with the housing development at Countesswells and would bring forward recommendations as appropriate regarding requirements for additional primary school capacity to serve the development, in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan;
- 2.24 note that officers would continue to monitor pupil numbers at Hazlehead School and would include any required recommendations for action in future updates to the School Estate Plan;
- 2.25 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a further statutory consultation on the creation of a school catchment zone for Gaelic Medium Education provision at Hazlehead Academy;

Aberdeen Grammar Associated Schools Group

- 2.26 note that officers would continue to monitor pupil numbers at Aberdeen Grammar School and would include any required recommendations for action in future updates to the School Estate Plan;
- 2.27 note that officers would continue to monitor pupil numbers at Mile End School, and include any required recommendations in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan;
- 2.28 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a further statutory consultation on the creation of a school catchment zone for Gaelic Medium Education provision at Gilcomstoun School;

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Harlaw Associated Schools Group

- 2.29 note that officers were progressing plans to commission a review of sports facilities at Harlaw Road and Rubislaw, to allow Harlaw Academy to use the facilities for its off-site PE provision, and that the outcomes of this review with any relevant recommendations would be reported in future updates to the School Estate Plan;
- 2.30 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study to identify potential future options for improving the condition and suitability of the Harlaw Academy building, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations and costs;
- 2.31 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study to identify potential options for improving the dining capacity, layout and ELC facilities at Ferryhill School, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations and costs;

Cults Associated Schools Group

- 2.32 note that officers would continue to monitor pupil numbers at Cults Academy, and include any required recommendations in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan;
- 2.33 note that officers would monitor pupil numbers and use of space at Culter School, and consider options for alternative use of any available space, with any recommendations to be included in future updates to the School Estate Plan as appropriate;

Lochside Associated Schools Group

- 2.34 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for creating the required additional school capacity to serve the planned Loirston Loch development, and report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate;
- 2.35 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory consultation on proposals to relocate Walker Road School to the new primary school building in Torry, following its completion, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with the outcomes of the consultation and recommendations as appropriate; and
- 2.36 note that the Tullos Playing Fields Pavilion building would be declared surplus to requirement within the school estate, to allow options for its future use or disposal to be considered, under standard vacant property procedures.

The Convener, seconded by Councillor Cooke, moved the recommendations as set out in the report, with an additional recommendation as follows:-

That the Committee:-

- 2.37 instructs the Chief Officer – Capital to put forward to the Scottish Government details of the planned refurbishment of the existing Riverbank School building ahead of the relocation of St Peter’s School, for this to be considered as a priority project for funding in Phase 3 of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, and

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to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with an update on the outcomes of the funding bid and recommendations on next steps.

Councillor Brooks, seconded by Councillor McLeod, moved as an amendment:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) agrees 2.1 to 2.12;
- (b) agrees additional recommendation Bucksburn ASG 2.12a as set out below:-
2.12 a Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Kingswells Primary and include any required recommendations in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan;
- (c) agrees 2.13 to 2.32;
- (d) agrees amended 2.33 as set out below:-
2.33 notes that officers will monitor pupil numbers and use of space at Culter School, and consider options for alternative use of any available space, with any recommendations to be included in future updates to the School Estate Plan. Including adding Culter School to any relevant and appropriate interventions required across the Victorian school buildings;
- (e) agrees additional recommendation Cults ASG 2.33a as set out below:-
2.33a notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Cults Primary and include any required recommendations in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan;
- (f) agrees 2.34 to 2.36;
- (g) agrees additional recommendation:-
2.37 to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to include in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan any changes required as a result of the outcome of the examination by the Scottish Government Reporter of Aberdeen City Council's Proposed Local Development Plan following it being approved by Full Council.

Councillor Malik, seconded by Councillor Grant, moved as a further amendment:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) notes at its meeting on 3 March 2021 the Council asked for a finalised School Estates Plan, what it has received today falls short of a finalised School Estates Plan meaning further dither and delay from an Administration that specialises in dither and delay politics;
- (b) notes the Administration's agreement approved at Council only in May this year states "It is important that we build a school's estate which is fit for the future and provides the best learning environment for our young people" Noting that the very first recommendation at 2.1 undermines the Administration's agreement by the very instruction that the favoured approach to the School Estate Plan is to refurbishment and repurposing of existing assets as opposed to building new Schools to modernise our school estate;

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- (c) agrees in contrast to this Administration's woeful commitment to our children and young people the previous Administration built invested and financed over the last 10 years the following new schools build programme.
 - a. Lochside Academy
 - b. Brimmond School
 - c. Orchard Brae School
 - d. Stoneywood Primary
 - e. Milltimber Primary School
 - f. New Primary school in Torry
 - g. New Primary school in Tillydrone
 - h. New Primary School Countesswells
- (d) agrees recommendation 2.2 with the proviso that the problems we currently have with our School Estate relate directly to the last SNP/Lib Dem administration which built Bucksburn Academy too small;
- (e) agrees that Bramble Brae and Middleton Park schools should not be considered for closure. Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord as part of the next report on the School Estates Plan to identify in which areas of the city they see School closures over the next 10 years to avoid further dither and delay;
- (f) instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to present a delivery plan for implementing the agreed actions of the Committee to the next meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee which should identify areas of the city where officers are recommending School closures, and thereafter, to present an annual update to the School Estate Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee, commencing from September 2023, to report on progress with the agreed actions and to update these as appropriate, in light of the most recently available data;
- (g) notes with disappointment the decision by the Council to remove funding from St Joseph's School in respect of nursery provision. Not agree recommendation 2.7 in the report and agree the status quo on Denominational Primary Schools;
- (h) instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to use the Community School Campus model to determine the needs for educational provision in the Bridge of Don;
- (i) agrees recommendation 2.11 and notes that a detailed financial report for both Capital and Revenue expenditure will be included in the Business case for Bucksburn Academy extension will be presented to the Finance and Resources committee;
- (j) agrees that Victorian Schools have had their day and whilst many Victorian Schools are still fit for purpose it is important to note Victorian Schools that are past their sell by date will not help school learning in the future therefore instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to plan feasibility studies and options appraisals to improve the suitability, accessibility and capacity levels of Victorian schools within Aberdeen City including replacing Victorian Schools with new modern Schools and to report the costs to undertake this work to the 2023/24 budget process and thereafter report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations and estimated costs;

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- (k) instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to assess the feasibility of creating new secondary school provision to serve the communities of Northfield noting that Northfield Academy was built in 1954 and is the oldest Secondary School in our Estate outside the city centre, the community being a regeneration area is in much need of a new secondary School, and Committee should put this forward to the Scottish Government as a priority project for funding in Phase 3 of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with an update on the outcomes of the funding bid and recommendations on next steps;
- (l) notes that developer contributions will contribute to future secondary school provision for Countesswells;
- (m) notes that the Tullos Playing Fields Pavilion building will be declared surplus to requirement within the school estate, to allow options for its future use or disposal to be considered, under standard vacant property procedures to include Community Asset Transfer;
- (n) agrees 2.4, 2.5, 2.29, 2.30 ,2.31 and 2.32 of the report; and
- (o) in all other regards, notes Appendix 1 of this report.

Mr Murray, seconded by Mr Crawford, moved as a further amendment:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to include in the feasibility study and stakeholder engagement on Denominational Schools a question on establishing a Roman Catholic Secondary School in the city; and
- (b) to otherwise approve the recommendations.

At this juncture, Councillor Brooks withdrew his amendment.

The Committee then voted between the amendment by Councillor Malik and the amendment by Mr Murray.

On a division, there voted:- for the amendment by Councillor Malik (5) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Grant, Malik and McLeod; for the amendment by Mr Murray (3) – Mrs Cardno, Mr Crawford and Mr Murray; declined to vote (9) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillors Allard, Bouse, Cooke, McLellan, Nicoll and Radley; and Mrs Smith; absent from the division (2) – Mr Paul and Ms Scott.

The Committee then voted between the motion and the successful amendment by Councillor Malik.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (11) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillors Allard, Bouse, Cooke, McLellan, Nicoll and Radley; and Mrs Cardno, Mr Crawford and Mr Murray; for the amendment (6) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Grant, Malik, McLeod; and Mrs Smith; absent from the division (2) – Mr Paul and Ms Scott.

EDUCATION OPERATIONAL DELIVERY COMMITTEE
8 September 2022

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would confirm the timescales in relation to when the work at Riverbank School would be complete and would circulate this to Members outwith the meeting; and
- (ii) to approve the motion.

- **COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, Convener**

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed by the Committee as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
2	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
3	08 November 2022								
4	Performance Management Framework Report – Education & Children's Services	To present the latest performance for the cycle and update on the progress made delivering the National Improvement Framework Plan		Alex Paterson	Data and Insights	Customer	1.1.3		
5	School Estate Plan - Implementation Plan	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to present a delivery plan for implementing the agreed actions in this report to the next meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
6	Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report	To present the Chief Social Work Officer annual report.		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.5		
7	Keeping The Promise – Year One of Plan 21-24	ODC 18/11/21 - to instruct that the Chief Officer of Integrated Children & Family Services provides an annual report to the Committee on the Council's progress in delivering Plan 21-24; the first of these being in June 2022. At the 31 August ODC, it was noted that a report would be submitted to the November cycle, as officers were awaiting input from key partnership agencies before the report could be finalised.		Amy Evans	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1		
8	Gaelic Medium Education	EODC 26/01/22 - to acknowledge that Aberdeen is not in line with the national trend of increasing uptake for GME provision across Scotland and to instruct the Chief Officer - Education to undertake an evaluation of how we can improve uptake in the city and report back to committee (other decisions relating to this report superseded by Sept 22 EODC decisions on school estate)		Eleanor Sheppard	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
9	Health & Wellbeing Summit	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Education to report the outcome of the multi-agency health and Wellbeing Summit to Committee as soon as reasonably practicable		Gael Simpson	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
10	Inspection Reporting	A standing item to report on the outcome of Early Learning and Childcare and school inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies if required		Eleanor Sheppard	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.6		
11	Cluster Risk Register - Education / Integrated Children's & Family Services	To report on the cluster risk register		Eleanor Sheppard	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.4		

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	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
2	National Hub for Reviewing and Learning from the Deaths of Children and Young People	At its meeting on 7 December 2021, the Committee instructed the Chief Social Work Officer to provide the Committee with the National Hub's Annual Report when it was published in approximately 12 months from December 2021		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1.2	R	The National Hub for Reviewing & Learning from the Deaths of C&YP went live in Oct 2021. The National Hub is led by the NHS with Council and other partners engaging in this as required. The first annual report from the Hub is anticipated in Spring 2023. Given the majority of deaths of children and young people have no relevance to the business of the Council it is proposed that a service update is provided to Members on the functioning of the Hub and how it aligns to other reviewing processes for children and young people
12	Implementation of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021	PPC 07/12/21 - to instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to provide an update within next year's CPC Annual Report on progress made implementing the updated National Guidance for Child Protection		Amy Anderson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1.2		
13	Secure Care - Children's Rights	PPC 07/12/21 - to request an update report at the end of 2022 on the use of Secure Care and compliance with the Secure Care regulations. .		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1		
14									
15	24 January 2023								
16	Early Learning and Childcare Concession Agreements	Strategic Commissioning Committee 15/04/21 - in relation to the Early Learning & Childcare Concession (Tillydrone and Northfield Cummings Park Nurseries) business case, instruct the Chief Officer - Education to review the operation of the concession agreements, 12 months from their commencement, and report the findings of that review to the Education Operational Delivery Committee		Aisling MacQuarrie	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
17	Music Centre	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Education to explore models and costings in order to create a Music Centre and report back to Education and Children's Services Committee prior to referral to the budget process.		Shona Milne / Eleanor Sheppard	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
18	October Programme	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Education to report to Committee on the impact of the October 2022 programme following delivery.		Sharon Skene	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
19	Performance Management Framework Report – Education and Children's Services	To present the latest performance for the cycle and update on the progress made delivering the National Improvement Framework Plan		Alex Paterson	Data and Insights	Customer	1.1.3		

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2	Inspection Reporting	A standing item to report on the outcome of Early Learning and Childcare and school inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies if required		Eleanor Sheppard	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.6		
38									
39	4 July 2023								
40	Education Improvement Journey and National Improvement Framework	EOD Committee 19/04/18 - to instruct the Chief Operating Officer to track progress against the proposed KPIs in order to report progress to the Education Operational Delivery Committee. Reporting will comprise (a) a yearly progress report based on validated data and (b) a six monthly update to provide an indication of progress to that point.		Reyna Stewart	Data and Insights	Customer	1.1.3		
41	Edge of Care Pilot	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education and Chief Social Work Officer to report back on the learning from the pilot and any plans to scale up approaches before the end of the 2022/23 school session.		Eleanor Sheppard / Graeme Simpson	Education / ICFS	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
42	Family Support Model	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Integrated Children's and Family Services to report back on progress and learning from the tests of change.		Aisling MacQuarrie / Graeme Simpson	Education / ICFS	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1.		
43	Performance Management Framework Report – Education and Children's Services	To present the latest performance for the cycle and update on the progress made delivering the National Improvement Framework Plan		Alex Paterson	Data and Insights	Customer	1.1.3		
44	Anti-Bullying Policy	To present the updated Anti-bullying policy for approval		Mark Hearn	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.5		
45	Inspection Reporting	A standing item to report on the outcome of Early Learning and Childcare and school inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies if required		Eleanor Sheppard	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.6		
46	Free School Meals Annual Update	EOD Committee 19/04/18 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to bring a report to Committee prior to the close of each school year (a) detailing the numbers registered for and taking free school meals by school and (b) assessing the progress made by implementing the new workstreams and detailing any required adjustments for the following school year		Paul Tytler	Early Intervention and Community Empowerment	Customer	1.1.1		
47	12 September 2023								
48	Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan	This report will cover the instruction from EODC 25/11/21 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education to present an annual report on the progress of care experienced children and young people to the Committee, commencing in September 2022, and will also cover the yearly self evaluation.		Eleanor Sheppard	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
49	Annual Committee Effectiveness Report	To present the annual effectiveness report		Eleanor Sheppard / Graeme Simpson	Operations / Customer	Operations / Customer	GD 8.5		
50	School Estate Plan Annual Update	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to present an annual update to the School Estate Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee, commencing from September 2023, to report on progress with the agreed actions and to update these as appropriate, in light of the most recently available data.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		

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2									
65	School Estate Plan - Grandhome, Oldmachar, Bridge of Don - feasibility study and stakeholder engagement	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the predicted long term excess secondary school capacity in Grandhome, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don, and report back with an outline business case for consideration by the Education and Children’s Services Committee		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
66	School Estate Plan - Bucksburn & Dyce - feasibility study and stakeholder engagement	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for ensuring appropriate long term secondary school provision for Bucksburn and Dyce, and report back with an outline business case for consideration by the Education and Children’s Services Committee.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
67	School Estate Plan - Victorian Schools - feasibility study & options appraisal	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and options appraisal to improve the suitability, accessibility and capacity levels of Victorian schools within Aberdeen City, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations and estimated costs.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
68	School Estate Plan - Bucksburn / Newhills Developments	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to engage with developers to track progress with the Bucksburn / Newhills developments, in order to determine options and appropriate timing for new primary school provision to serve the new housing developments, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with an outline business case.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
69	School Estate Plan - Oldmachar ASG Statutory Consultation - realignment of school boundaries	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory consultation on proposals to re-align primary school zone boundaries within the Oldmachar ASG, to relieve future pressure on pupil numbers at Greenbrae School, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with the outcomes of the consultation and recommendations as appropriate.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
70	School Estate Plan - Oldmachar ASG Statutory consultation - reduction in primary schools	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Oldmachar ASG, in order to minimise potential excess pupil capacity, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee as appropriate.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
71	School Estate Plan - St Machar ASG - options appraisal on additional capacity at Tillydrone	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out an options appraisal on potential uses of the additional capacity to be provided by the new school at Tillydrone, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
72	School Estate Plan - St Machar ASG - options to relocate services within Sunnybank School	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to consider the options for relocating other services accommodated within the Sunnybank School building, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
73	School Estate Plan - Northfield ASG - feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to reduce the number of primary schools in ASG	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Northfield ASG, in order to minimise excess pupil capacity, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		

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2									
74	School Estate Plan - Learning Estate Investment Programme - Hazlehead & Countesswells	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to assess the feasibility of creating new secondary school provision to serve the communities of Hazlehead and Countesswells, to put this forward to the Scottish Government as a priority project for funding in Phase 3 of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with an update on the outcomes of the funding bid and recommendations on next steps.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
75	Statutory Consultation - School Catchment Zone - Gaelic Medium Education - Hazlehead Academy	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a further statutory consultation on the creation of a school catchment zone for Gaelic Medium Education provision at Hazlehead Academy.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
76	Statutory Consultation - School Catchment Zone - Gaelic Medium Education - Gilcomstoun School	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a further statutory consultation on the creation of a school catchment zone for Gaelic Medium Education provision at Gilcomstoun School.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
77	School Estate Plan - Harlaw ASG - feasibility study	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study to identify potential future options for improving the condition and suitability of the Harlaw Academy building, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations and costs.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
78	School Estate Plan - Ferryhill School - feasibility study	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study to identify potential options for improving the dining capacity, layout and ELC facilities at Ferryhill School, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations and costs.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
79	School Estate Plan - Loirston Loch Development - feasibility study and stakeholder engagement	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for creating the required additional school capacity to serve the planned Loirston Loch development, and report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
80	School Estate Plan - Walker Road School - statutory consultation	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory consultation on proposals to relocate Walker Road School to the new primary school building in Torry, following its completion, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with the outcomes of the consultation and recommendations as appropriate.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
81	School Estate Plan - Riverbank School - Learning Estate Investment Programme funding update	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Capital to put forward to the Scottish Government details of the planned refurbishment of the existing Riverbank School building ahead of the relocation of St Peter's School, for this to be considered as a priority project for funding in Phase 3 of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with an update on the outcomes of the funding bid and recommendations on next steps		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services Committee
DATE	8 November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	2021-22 Attainment and Achievement Data Performance Report
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/22/240
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott (Chief Executive)
CHIEF OFFICER	Eleanor Sheppard and Martin Murchie
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne, Mark Jones and Alex Paterson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Elected Members with oversight of 2021-22 Senior Phase data, Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) outcomes, and current in year progress towards the targets outlined in the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of this report presenting the 2021-22 pre-review Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and Insight Tool outcomes, provisional Curriculum for Excellence data for the same period and live attendance and exclusion data;
- 2.2 notes the content of Appendix A, outlining the progress of actions supporting delivery of the National Improvement Framework Plan 2022/23; and
- 2.3 provides comment on the approach taken to presenting the live data within the report to inform future reporting styles.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 Data Availability

- 3.1.1 Education data sets are released and validated at various points over a school year. Despite this, careful on-going analysis of live data helps the service identify and address potential issues in real time over a school session. In order to give Members full oversight of in year progress, live Curriculum for Excellence, attendance and exclusion data is included in this report. Members should note that there will be considerable movement as children make progress through the curriculum over the school year and that changes are also likely in validated attendance and exclusions data which could be statistically significant.

- 3.1.2 Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA) data is released in August. The data shared in this report is pre-appeal data and slight changes are to be anticipated by the end of December when the final validated post appeal data is published. The first release of Insight data is available in late September. This first Insight release provides details on the achievement of young people in a wider range of vocational qualifications which are not awarded by SQA and helps give a sense of the total achievement of young people.
- 3.1.3 The range of different operating models and assessment methodologies over the last few years has impacted negatively on the validity of trend data. On this basis both Senior Phase and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) data is most helpfully compared with 2018/19 data as 2018/19 was the last year in which a comparable exam diet and full CfE P1-S3 evaluations were held.
- 3.1.4 Narrative observations contained within this report are based on statistically significant data movements highlighting where variations potentially represent a material change out with the influence of differing cohort sizes and profiles. This approach is utilised to aid Officers and Elected Members to determine areas which would benefit from greater professional scrutiny.

3.2. Data Influences and Limitations

- 3.2.1 Care must be taken when comparing the attainment of cohorts over the past three years and when comparing these years to the attainment of earlier cohorts due to the changes in operating models put in place as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Members should note the considerable increase in school roll across Aberdeen City which will also have influenced the data.

Table 1.

Census date	Total number of pupils	Primary	Secondary
Sept '22 ¹	25,158	14,577	10,441
Sept '21	24,260	14,084	10,041
Sept '20	23,695	13,963	9,596
Sept '19	23,156	13,915	9,106

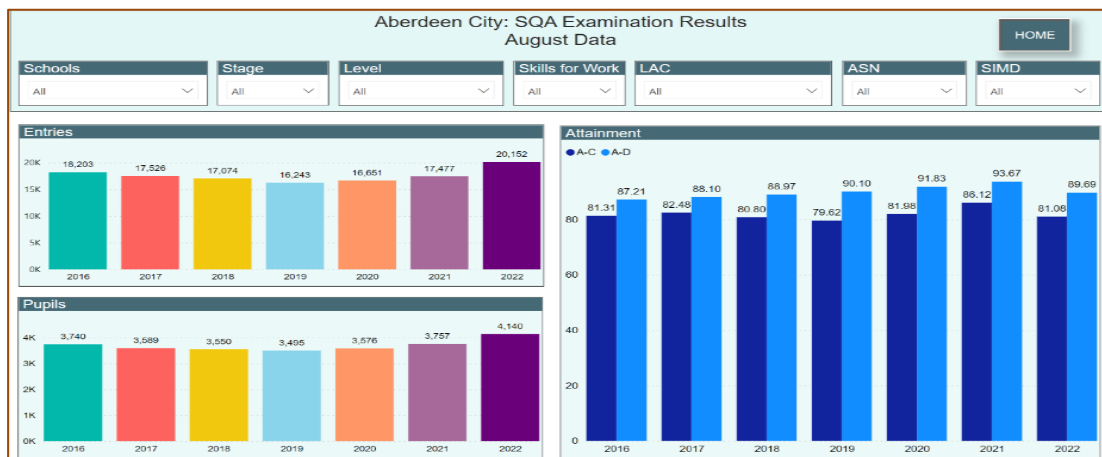
- 3.2.2 Destinations figures reflect both choices made by pupils, as well as the opportunities available to them upon leaving school. The availability of particular opportunities (employment opportunities, for example) may have been directly affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- 3.2.3 SQA, CfE and Insight data uses SIMD 2020 based data for academic years 2020/21 onwards which is not comparable with earlier years. On this basis, an additional element of caution requires to be exercised in direct comparisons with the 2018-19 baselines provided.

3.3 Progress towards Targets and Stretch Aims - Pre-Appeal SQA and Insight data

- 3.3.1 There has been a considerable rise in the number of young people in our schools. 4,140 young people were presented for SQA awards this year compared to 3,495 in 2019. As a result of this rise in pupil numbers there was a corresponding rise in presentations from 16,243 in 2019 to 20,152 in 2022.

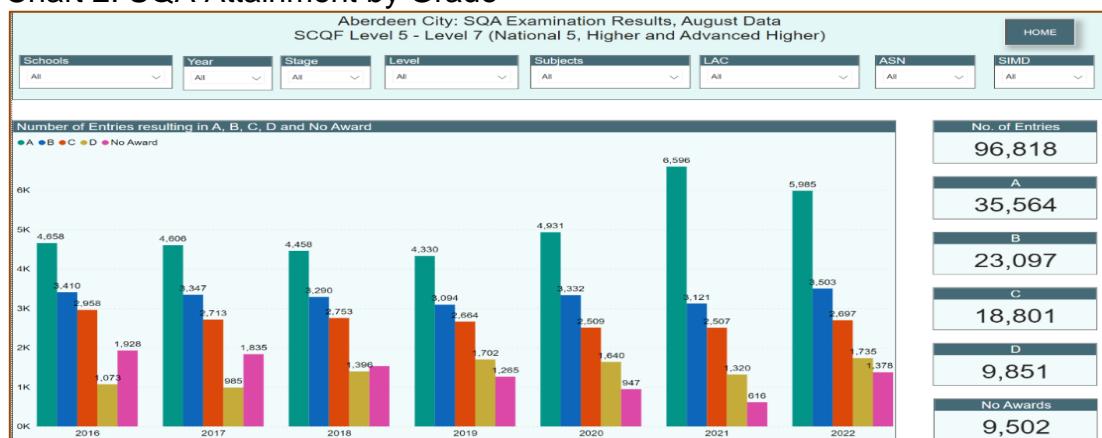
- 3.3.2 There is a rise in the number of presentations for SQA awards per pupil from 4.65 per pupil in 2019 to 4.87 per pupil in 2022. This rise is statistically significant and suggests that schools are encouraging young people to be more ambitious
- 3.3.3 The pass rate (A-C) for all (ungraded and graded) SQA courses is **81.08%** in **2022**. This is over 1.5% higher than in 2019 and suggests that some of the harms associated with the pandemic have been well mitigated.

Chart 1. SQA Attainment



- 3.2.4 There is clear evidence that improvement in the quality of SQA grades experienced over the last few years has been maintained. This will be as a result of changes to grade boundaries but will also be attributable to how hard staff and young people have worked over the last year. The ability of the service to keep schools open over the last 12 months will also have impacted positively. Young people are now far more likely to secure an A grade than they were previously, and initial review of national data suggests that Aberdeen City compares favourably with others.

Chart 2. SQA Attainment by Grade

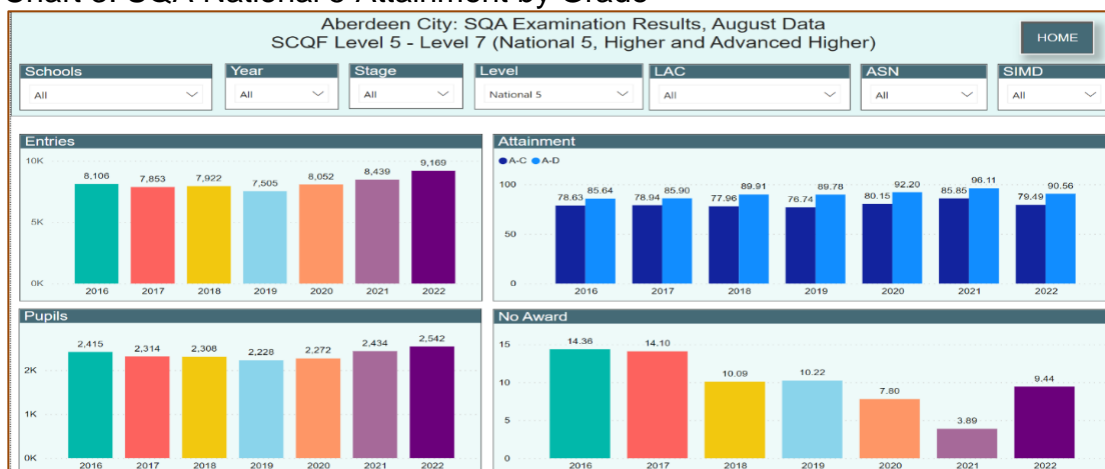


3.3 Level 5: National Courses - National 5, All Stages

- 3.3.1 National 5 courses (SCQF Level 5) were introduced in 2014. National 5 courses require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, will be externally assessed through an examination and/or coursework.

3.3.2 National 5 courses are all graded A, B, C or D and 'No Award'; grades A to C indicate a pass and grade D indicates an achievement at SCQF Level 5.

Chart 3. SQA National 5 Attainment by Grade



3.3.3 There is an encouraging trend at National 5 with 2022 attainment exceeding that of 2019 and a positive trend in the number of entries. ACC Attainment at Nat 5 (79.5%) is statistically in line with the national pass rate of 80.8%

3.3.4 The ACC attainment rate at National 5 is the highest recorded under an exam diet. Of note also is that there are less 'no awards' than in 2019. This change is deemed to be statistically significant.

3.3.5 There is clear evidence that more young people are being presented for National 5 awards. This is extremely encouraging with the proportionate increase in presentations higher than the proportionate increase in pupil population. This indicates higher aspiration for young people in schools.

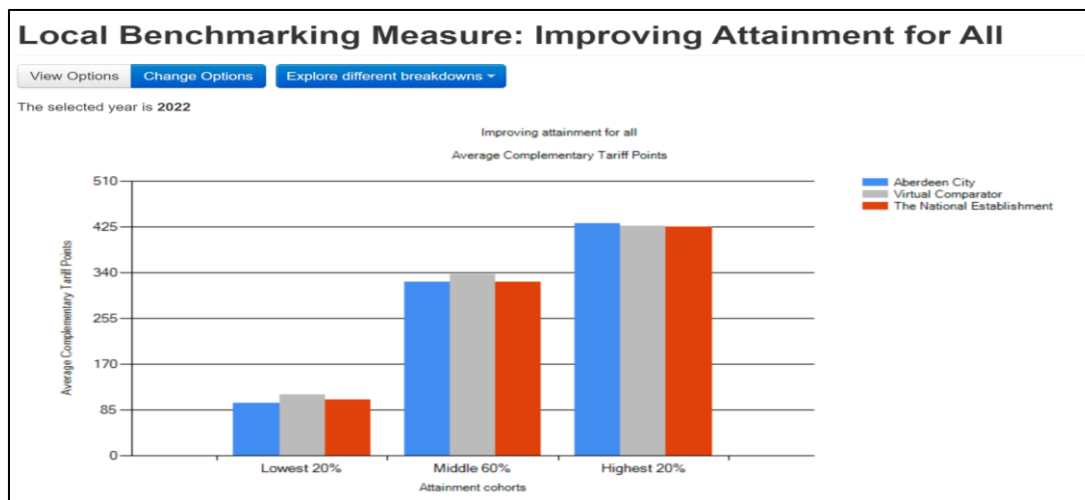
3.3.6 Pupils from across S1 to S6 were presented for a National 5 award with the highest number of entries from those in S4. There were more entries from S3 pupils than ever before with 31 passes achieved by young people in S3 (100% pass rate). This suggests an improvement in pace and challenge for those who are ready in advance of S4 but also indicates a need to explore when schools present these achievements as courses recognised by SQA before S4 do not 'count' towards school attainment.

3.3.7 The Insight Tool was released in late September. This tool allows Officers to look at the broader range of Level 5 qualifications which do not rely on one single high stakes examination. These courses are National Progression Awards and Skills for Work courses and provide breadth that doesn't exist in traditional national qualification subjects such as *Applied Sciences*, *Cyber Security*, *Web Design* and *Business & Marketing*.

3.3.8 The Insight Tool offers a chance to review results converted into Tariff Points, but with an allowance applied to take account of differing curriculum models where a young person may sit a different number of qualifications in S4. This table shows the picture for schools in Aberdeen City measured against both the Virtual Comparator (which allows us to see how the performance of our pupils compares to a similar group of pupils from across Scotland) and nationally.

There is evidence that our attainment is improving against previous years. There is clear evidence of the need to continue to broaden pathways for those in the lowest 20% and middle 60% although progress has been made from previous years. .

Chart 4.Improving Attainment For All, Tariff Points



3.3.9 As schools in Aberdeen City review and broaden their curriculum structures in S4-S6, they are continuing to increase the numbers of young people who have access to aforementioned National Progression Awards, Skills for Work courses and Foundation Apprenticeships. These courses offer a route to achieving a standard of Level 4, 5 or 6 without the requirement to sit an end of year examination, an assessment measure that evidence would suggest impacts on disadvantaged young people more than any other group. The table below provides an overview of the increase in National Progression Awards alone.

Table 2. Pupil Candidates Attaining Qualifications by SCQF Level

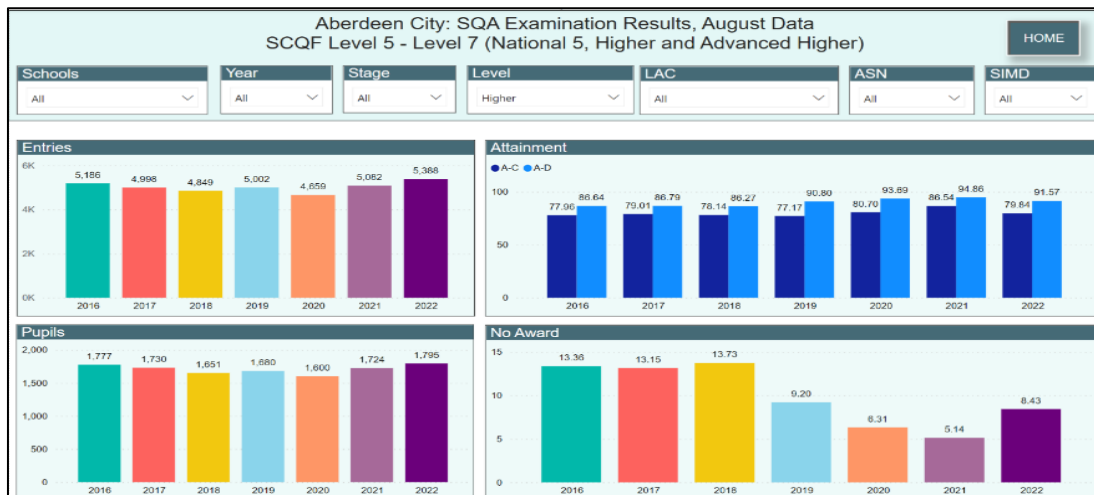
By level	2019	2020	2021	2022
Level 3	0	0	2	0
Level 4	6	38	66	46
Level 5	57	159	201	247
Level 6	48	92	116	106
Total	111	289	385	399

3.3.10 Insight evidences that a broader range of vocational qualifications have been made available to young people over academic session 2021/22 than in 2019. This change is statistically significant and will continue to be built upon as we develop the ABZ Campus.

3.4 Level 6 - Higher

3.4.1 The current Higher qualification was first introduced in 2015. The courses require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, will be externally assessed though an examination and/or coursework.

Chart 5. Pupil Candidate Attainment at SQA Level 6

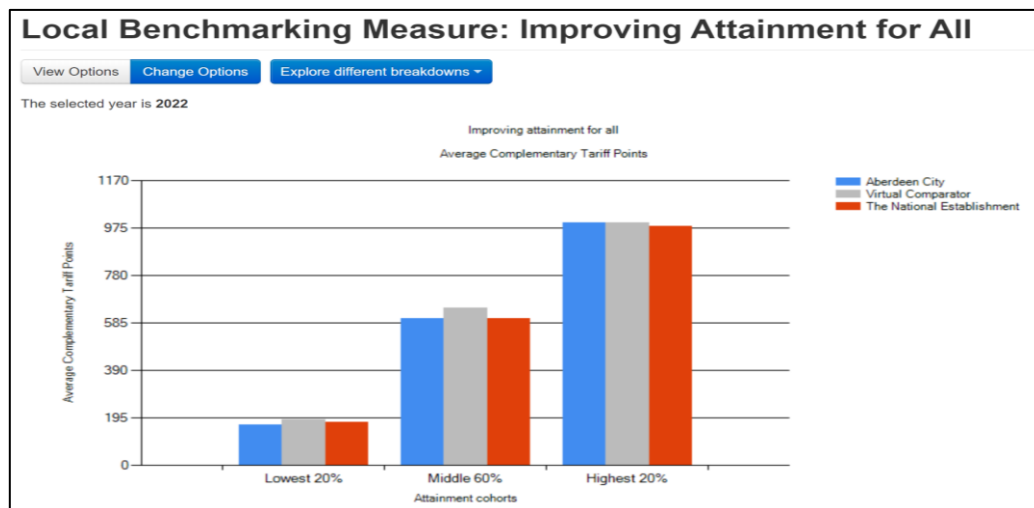


3.4.2 Attainment at Higher is 2.5% better than in 2019 and the highest rate recorded since 2015. This has been deemed to be statistically significant. There are less no awards than in 2019. ACC Attainment at Higher (80%) is statistically in line with the national pass rate of 79%.

3.4.3 Pupils from across S3 to S6 were presented for a higher with the highest proportion of young people being in S5.

3.4.4 Insight provides an opportunity to review this progress in grades when converted into Tariff Points in measuring *Attainment for All*. In the table below, performance for S5 young people in Aberdeen City is ahead of the national picture for two of the three cohorts and making progress against the virtual comparator.

Chart 6.

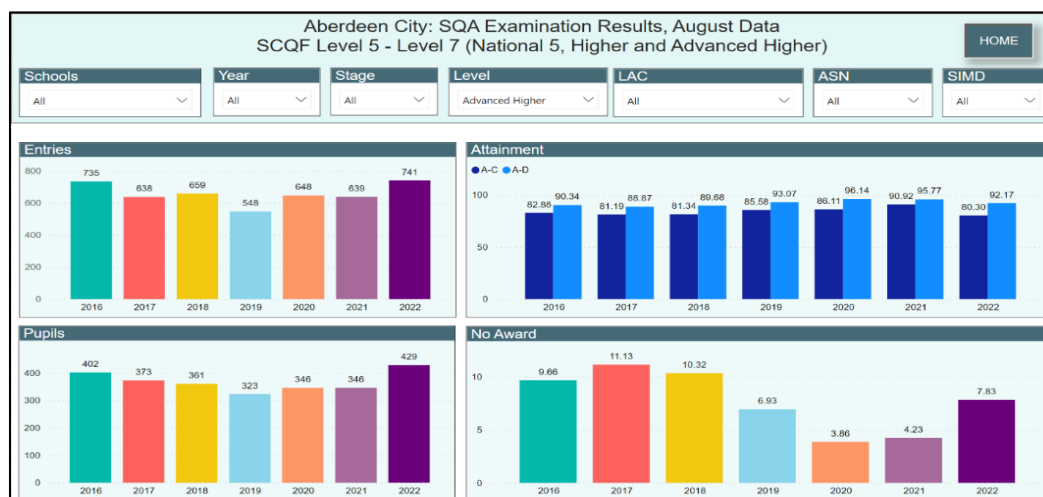


3.4.5 The improvement in performance at Level 6 is pleasing, reflecting both hard work from staff teams and incredible resilience from young people in rising to the challenge of exams after the pandemic. Specifically, schools have been focusing on ensuring the best choice advice is given to young people in selecting courses, tracking progress during the year, and preparing them effectively for the examinations. Further progress in measures such as the table above will be seen as schools provide a broader range of courses offering an alternative route to demonstrating ability at Level 6.

3.5 Level 7 - Advanced Higher

3.5.1 The current Advanced Higher (SCQF Level 7) qualification was first introduced in 2016. The courses require the attainment of a number of SQA quality assured internally assessed units and a course assessment which, in most cases, will be externally assessed through an examination and/or coursework.

Chart 7. Pupil Candidate Attainment at SQA Level 7

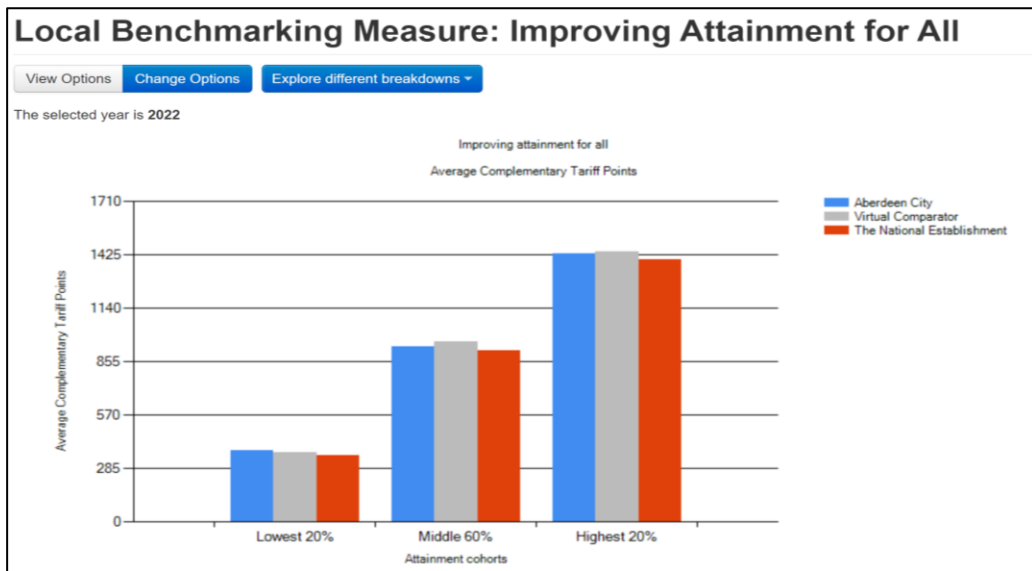


3.5.2 ACC Attainment at Advanced Higher (80.3%) is in line with national pass rate of 81.3%. There is a considerable rise in entries (the highest ever recorded) which suggests increased ambition for young people, this rise is proportionately greater than the increase in school roll. This will have impacted the reduction in attainment from 2019. In 2019 the Local Authority was an outlier and had incredibly high attainment at Advanced Higher well above the national average, the more equalised attainment rate across all three levels (Nat 5, Higher and Advanced Higher) in 2022 is really encouraging and suggests that each qualification is being given equal focus now.

3.5.3 Young people from across S4 to S6 were presented for an Advanced Higher. Those presented in S4 and S5 enjoyed a 100% pass rate.

3.5.4 Using similar tables from Insight, this time showing tariff points for S6 young people as part of the *Attainment for All* picture, demonstrates a positive picture. Although there has been a fall off from the high-mark of performance at Advanced Higher in 2019, performance for S6 students (where Advanced Highers are most common) remains good, ahead or close to virtual comparator and out-performing the national picture in all three key groups.

Chart 8.



3.5.5 As schools look towards what course choice will be like in 2023-24, there has been a determination to look towards piloting of HNC qualifications as part of the S6 experience. HNC qualifications are at Level 7 (at the same level as Advanced Higher but carrying the weight of multiple Advance Higher Awards) and are traditionally taught in further education establishments. This is an exciting offer that has been the result of collaboration between schools, North East Scotland College and our local Universities as we develop ABZ Campus.

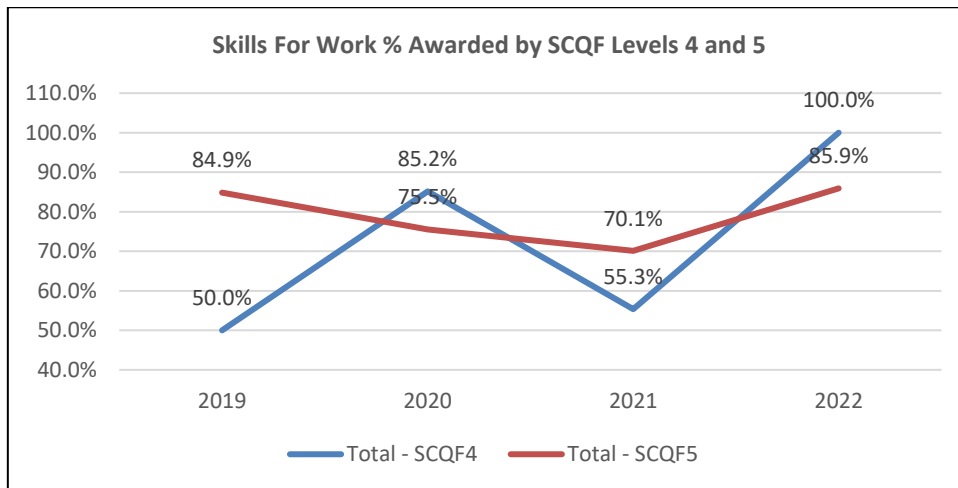
3.5.6 Linking with the theme of expanded curriculum provision, the take up of National Progression Awards at SCQF Levels 4, 5 and 6 has grown substantially with 370 awards being made in 2021/22, as opposed to 100 in 2019 and 600 awards made against the Personal Achievement curriculum with 30% of these being achieved at SCQF Levels 5 and 6. In 2019, this figure was 14.8%

3.6 Skills For Work

3.6.1 The award rate for Skills For Work, across the phases, at both SCQF 4 and 5 have materially regained the reductions experienced in the midst of the pandemic although with a reduced number of entries. It is likely that some of this reduction is as a result of a greater proportion of pupils electing to focus on academic based subjects or national progression awards and some residual impacts on the accessibility of some Skills for Work courses caused by COVID-19 restrictions.

3.6.2 At subject level, taking account of necessary data suppression, the largest number of courses to date resulted in 100% award rates with four courses; Travel and Tourism SCQF 4, Engineering Skills, Early Learning and Childcare, and Sport & Recreation (all at SCQF Level 5) falling into this category.

Chart 9. Skills For Work, % awards at SCQF Levels 4 and 5



3.7 Senior Phase - Breadth and Depth Outcomes and SCQF Level 3 in Literacy and Numeracy

3.7.1 There is evidence of improvement in both the number of pupils achieving 1+ qualification at SCQF Level 5 and Level 6 and of the grades awarded. Tracking data over the year will enable the Service to determine the likelihood of achieving the target set for 22/23.

Chart 10. Pupil Candidates Attaining 1 or more passes at SCQF Level 5 by grade

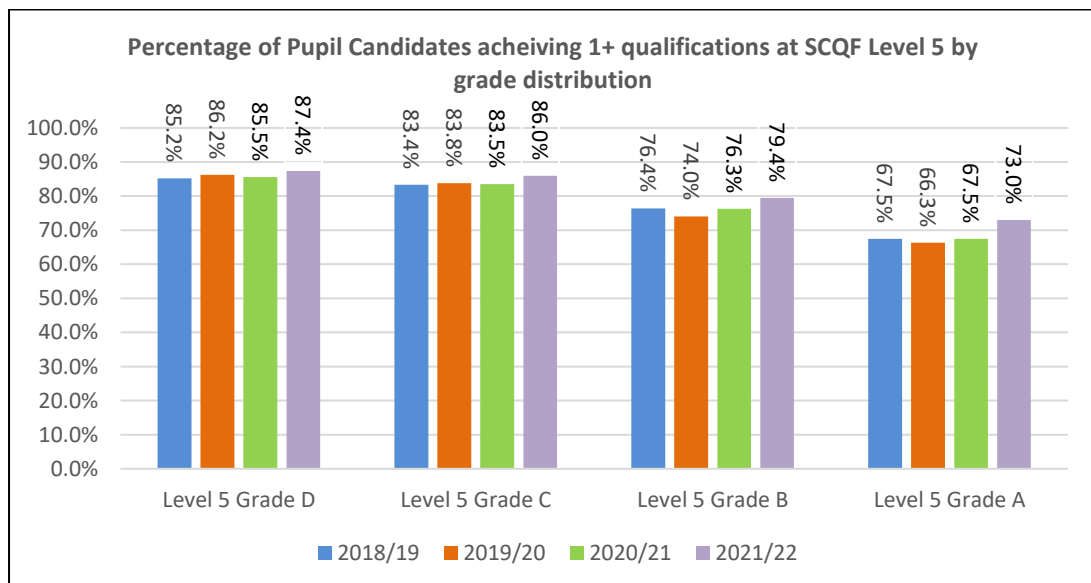
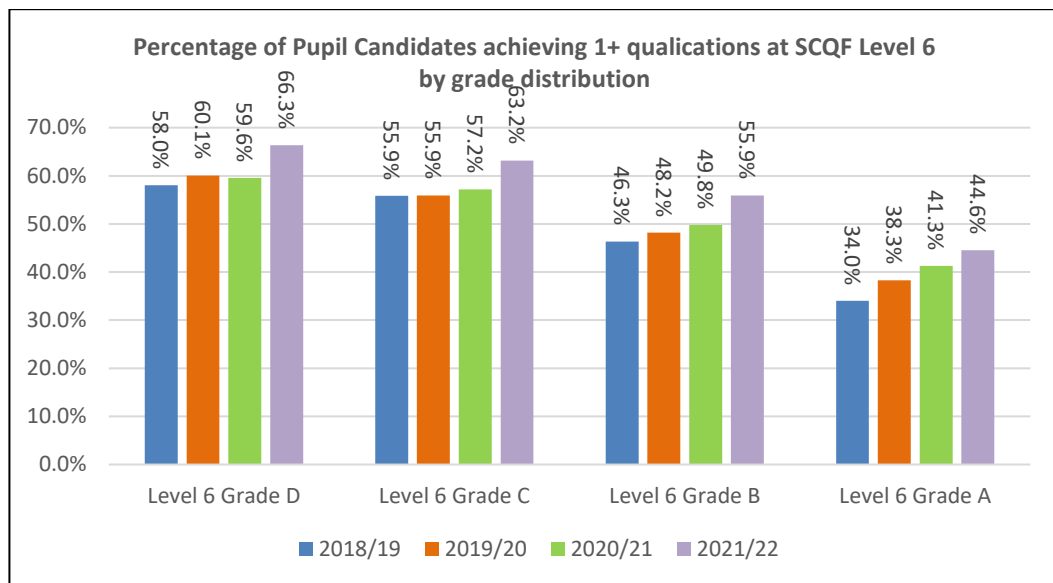


Chart 11. Pupil Candidates Attaining 1 or more passes at SCQF Level 6



3.7.2 The 2021/22 outcomes show sustained improvement towards the 2022/23 target when aggregated to Authority level,

3.7.3 There has been a statistically significant uplift in the 2021/22 pre-appeal outcomes around the proportion of candidates achieving SCQF Level 3 in Literacy and Numeracy and material closing of the gap to both National and Virtual Comparator.

Chart 12. % of Pupil Candidates achieving SCQF Level 3 in Literacy and Numeracy

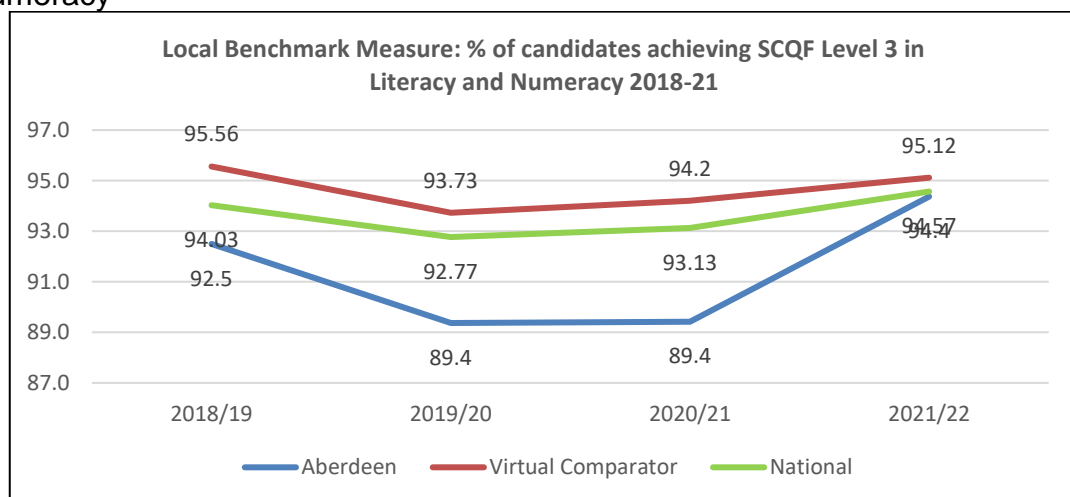


Table 5. National Benchmark Measure: Proportion of school leavers Attaining a minimum of SCQF Level 3 in Literacy and Numeracy by SIMD Quintile

	All Leavers	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5
Current level (2021/22)	92.8%	90.1%	88.1%	95.6%	5.6%
National (2021/22)	94.6%	91.1%	93.5%	97.6%	6.5%
Pre-appeal data 21/22	94.4%	93.0%	89.5%	96.5%	3.5%
Target 2022/23	94.6%	91.6%	93.1%	97.1%	5.6%

3.7.4 Assuming that the pre-appeal trends are replicated equally in subsequent Leaver outcomes, and that this improvement rate is sustained during the current year, this suggests that the Service is on track to meet, or closely match, the 2022/23 targets and a reduction in the deprivation associated gap between SIMD 1 and 5.

3.7.5 The data suggests that the gap is more evident at SIMD 2. There is a need to explore this more fully with schools.

3.8 General reflections on Senior Phase data

3.8.1 The quality of grades has improved significantly from 2019. This is really encouraging.

3.8.2 There is evidence of improved presentations which is very encouraging. This will continue to improve with the development of ABZ Campus.

3.8.3 The data around LAC (Looked After Children) confirms that those who are looked after away from home do better than those at home. The Edge of Care pilots at Lochside and Northfield will be key to bucking this trend as we move forward.

3.8.4 There is considerable evidence of improvement against 2019 levels in National 5 and Higher. In general terms, attainment is now in line with national averages and progressing towards the virtual comparator.

Table 3. National 5 and Higher Attainment by SIMD Banding

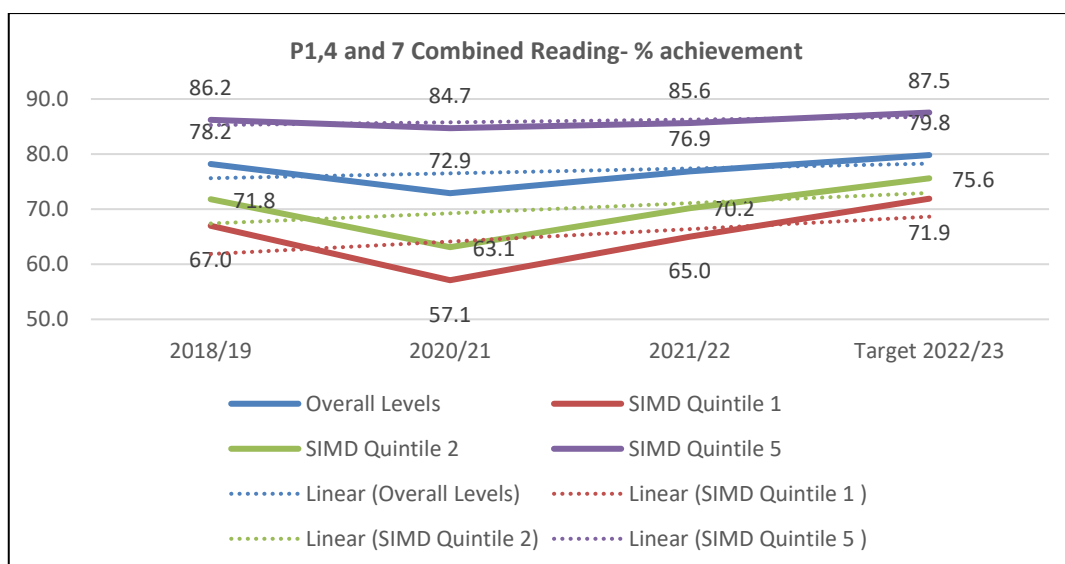
SIMD banding	Improvement in National 5 attainment compared with 2019	Improvement in Higher attainment compared with 2019
1 (133 pupils in total)	11%	8%
2 (312 pupils in total)	5%	6%
3 (186 pupils in total)	1%	9%
4 (269 pupils in total)	2.5%	13%
5 (609 pupils in total)	3%	5%

Note: Pupil Census data from 2016 to 2019 (academic years 2016/17 to 2019/2020) is matched with SIMD2016 data. Pupil Census data from 2020 and 2021 (academic years 2020/21 and 2021/2022) is matched with SIMD2020 data.

3.9 Progress towards Targets and Stretch Aims - Curriculum for Excellence data

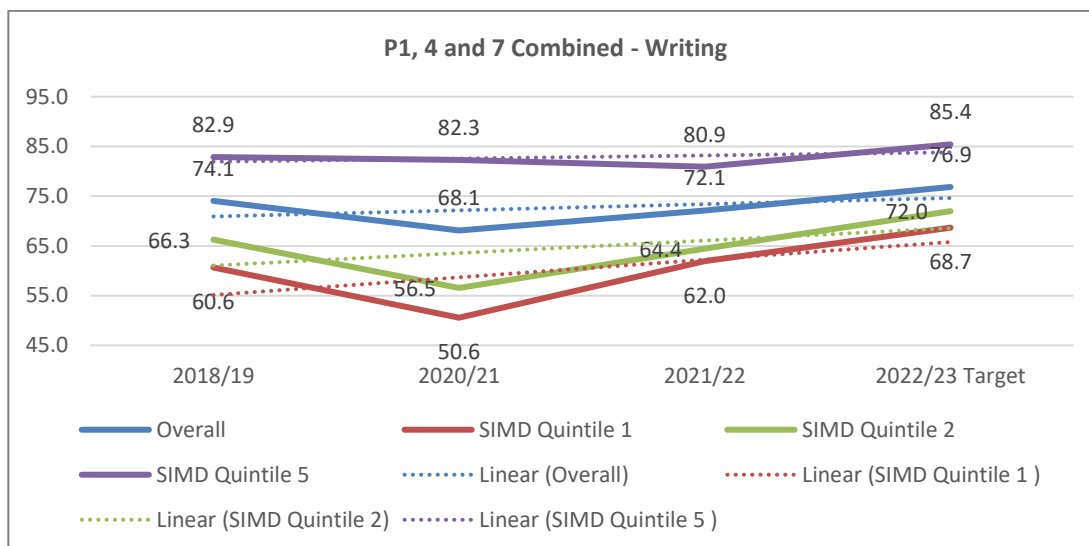
- 3.9.1 Members will be aware that aspirational short-term targets and longer term stretch aims were agreed as part of the National Improvement Framework Plan for 2022/23. Mechanisms are in place to track progress against these targets over a school year and report our live progress to Committee over the school year.
- 3.9.2 Schools are currently in the middle of the first tracking period and have the school year ahead to support children and young people to make the progress anticipated. Members should note that targets set are for the end of school year position.
- 3.9.3 Early analysis of the provisional CfE data for 2021/22 shows some closing of the Attainment Gap, although this is less evident at P4 than at P1 and 7. Additional scrutiny of the data will be undertaken to identify trends at more granular levels, and in comparison with the National outcomes, as and when this is released in December.
- 3.9.4 The charts below offer timeline trends against each Curriculum for Excellence component with progression towards the 2022/23 targets based on linear data projection which effectively 'smooths' the impact of variations in pupil cohort sizes and profiles.
- 3.9.5 Within the commentaries, differences of less than one percentage point being generally disregarded as representing a material change in outcomes or variation from target. It is anticipated that each tracking period will drive projections upwards.
- 3.9.6 Progress in **reading** appears to be on track, it is anticipated that the variance between the target for June 2023 and the current trendline will be addressed over the school year. The progress of those in SIMD 1 and 2 will be monitored following the first tracking period to determine if any further action is required.

Chart 13. Primary 1-7 Combined, Reading



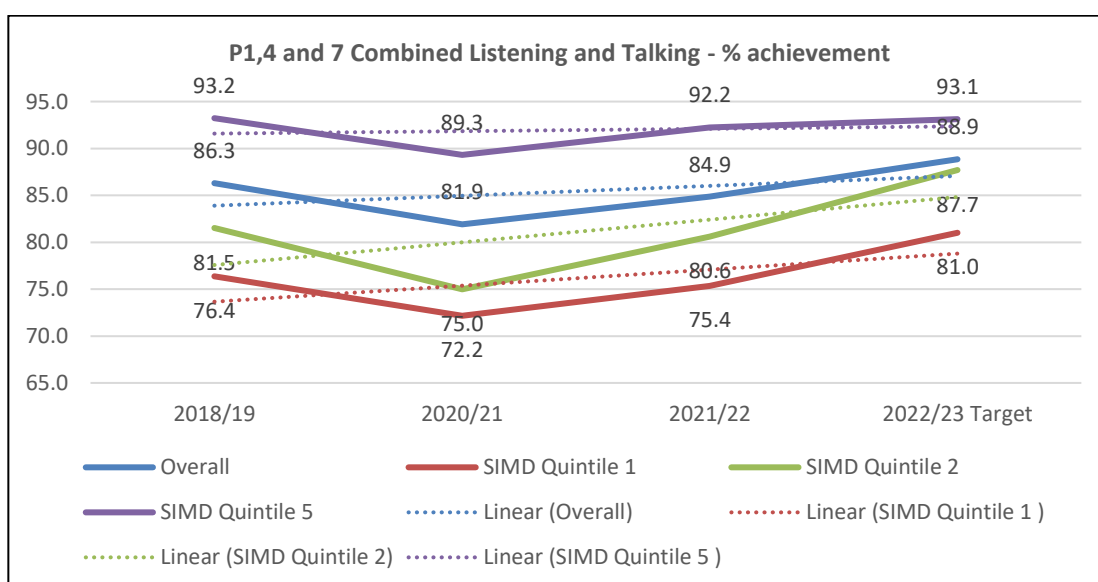
3.9.7 Officers have identified a need to offer a higher level of support to some schools to support the development of **writing** and 6 schools have been identified to work on the Children and Young People’s Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) Writing Project. P4 and P5 teachers in these schools will be offered training in proven tools and techniques for raising attainment in writing.

Chart 14. Primary 1-7 Combined, Writing



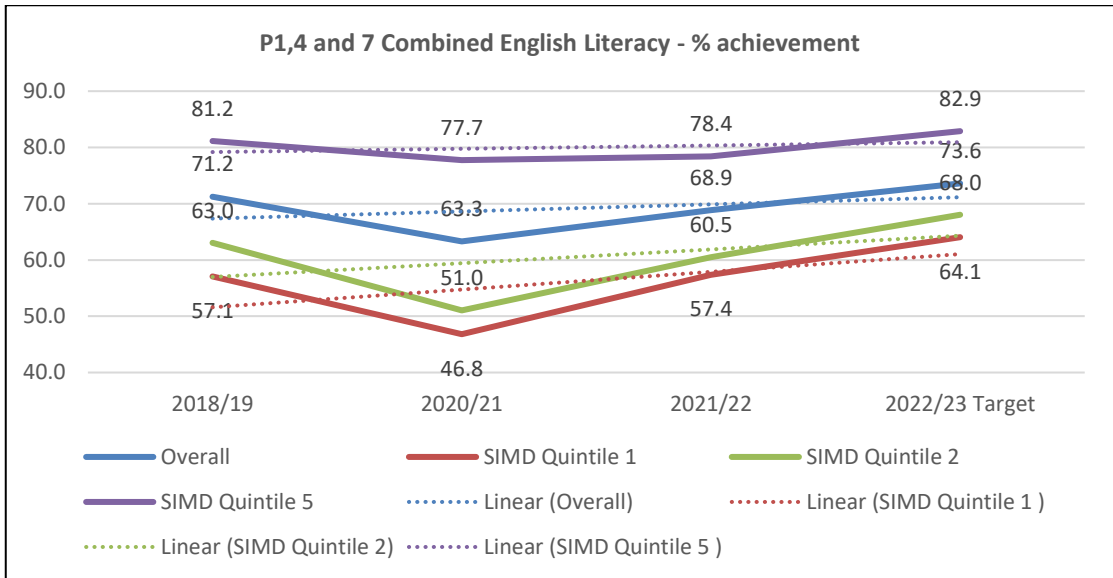
3.9.8 Progress in **listening and talking** appears to be on track to be achieved by June 2023, it is anticipated that the slight variance between the target for June and the current trendline will be addressed over the school year.

Chart 15. Primary 1-7 Combined, Listening and Talking



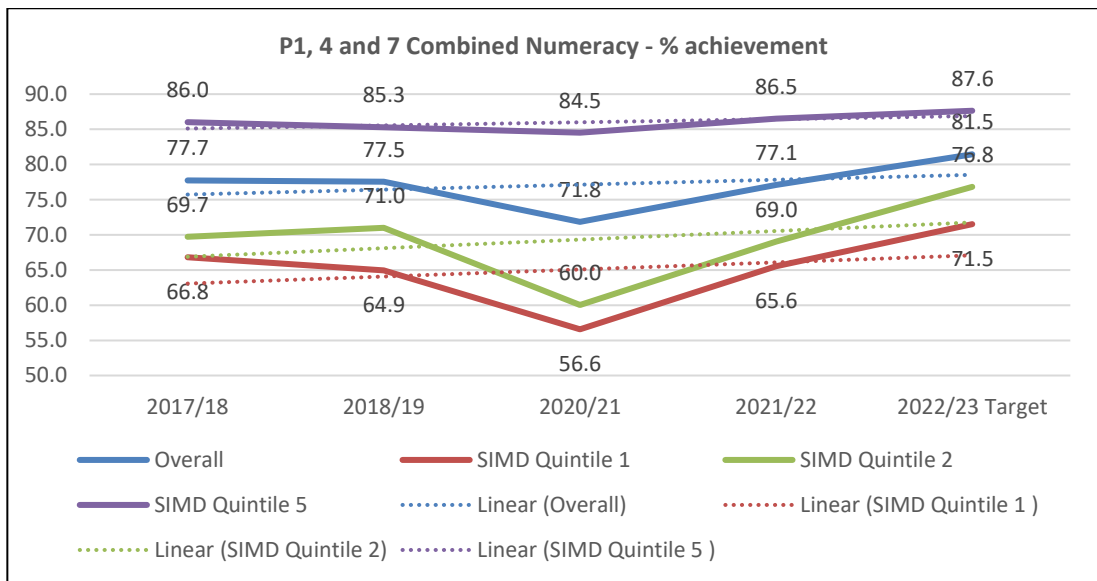
3.9.9 Progress in **literacy** appears to be on track, it is anticipated that the slight variance between the target for June 2023 and the current trendline will be addressed over the school year.

Chart 16. Primary 1-7 Combined, English Literacy



3.9.10 Progress in **numeracy** appears to be on track although will require careful monitoring of SIMD 1 and 2 cohorts over the year on a school by school basis.

Chart 17. Primary 1-7 Combined, Numeracy



3.9.11 As with any form of projection, this information is offered as a statistically based guide to future potential performance, rather than a forecast of 2022/23 outcomes, given the variables involved. This modelling will be re-visited, strengthened and reported, at various points throughout the academic year as and when additional data becomes available to the Service following the three set tracking periods across a school year.

3.10 Progress towards Targets and Stretch Aims – Attendance and Exclusions

Attendance

3.10.1 Reference to live data in the system has been included against the metrics below as we work towards achieving the targets outlined by the end of the school session.

Chart 18. Local Benchmark Measure: Percentage Pupil Attendance by Year

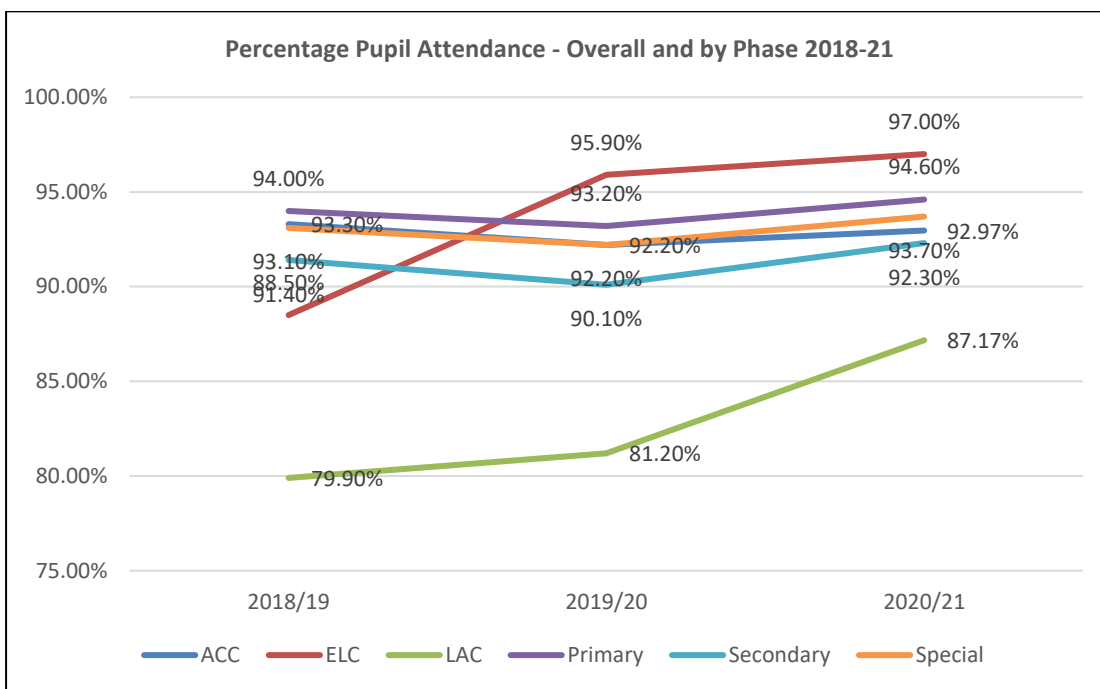
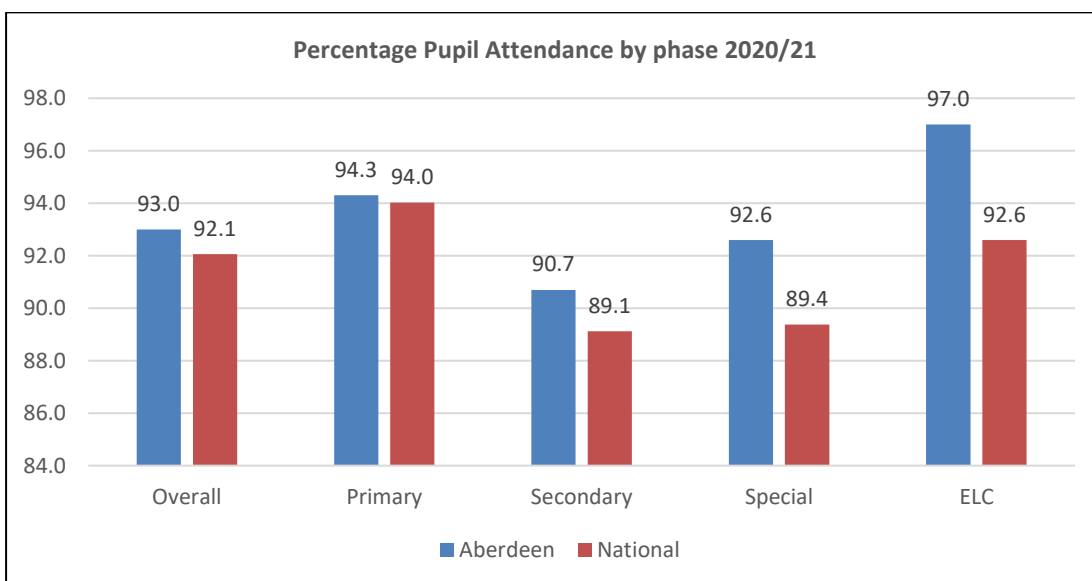


Chart 19. National Benchmark Measure: Percentage Pupil Attendance 2020/21



3.10.2 The data collated by the Scottish Government’s Education Analytics Service against 2021/22, (although not directly comparable with the Local or National Benchmark data, as it includes the suppressive effect of COVID-19 within it’s calculations), indicated that the Overall Attendance in schools for the year was 90.3%, compared with the National figure of 89.0%.and a Large Urban Authority figure of 89.2%.

3.10.3 The live data for 2022/23 to date is recording an average Overall Attendance Level (by Present Openings) of 93.1%, marginally above the whole year data for 2021/22 and which, taking variations throughout the year into account, would provide for a linear forecast closely matching the 2022/23 target of 94.8%.

Table 4. Live Average Attendance by Openings – August-September 2022

Overall	Primary (inc. Nursery)	Secondary	Special
93.1%	94.5%	91.0%	90.3%

3.10.4 Across the suite of Overall and SIMD based cohorts, the City has traditionally performed well in comparison with national and geographic benchmarking over the past four years, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. As at the current data snapshot, there is a reasonable sense of confidence that the 2022/23 targets can be achieved, although the smaller cohort sizes (e.g. SIMD 1 and LAC in particular) are more vulnerable to variations in end of year forecasting.

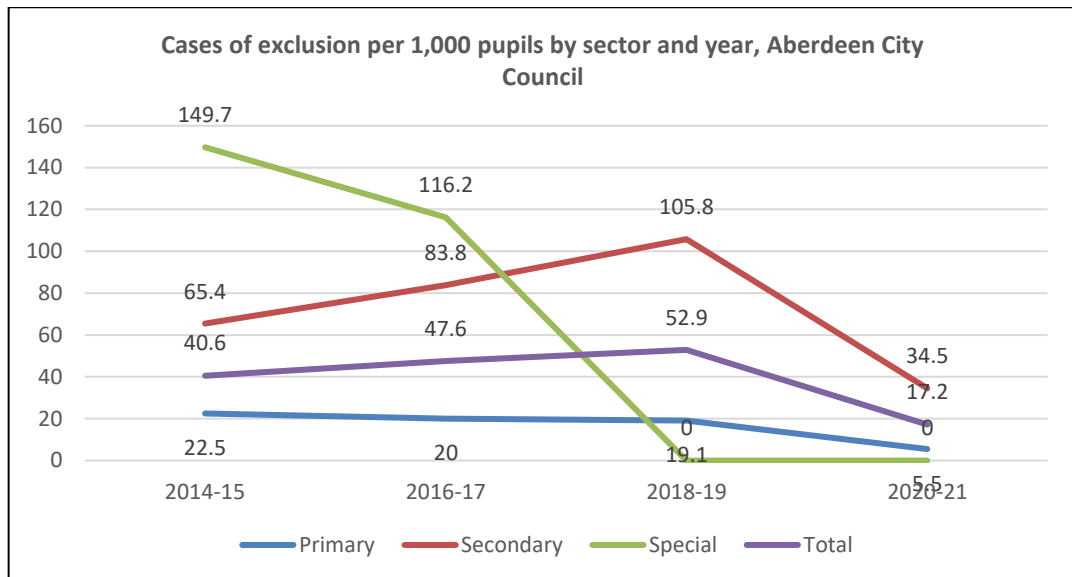
Exclusions

3.10.5 Although the influence of COVID-19 across the 2020-2021 academic year was clearly evident across the national Exclusions dataset, the City has experienced a greater two-year improvement in the level of exclusions than its benchmarks with an improvement in the rate of exclusions per 1,000 pupils of 67.5%, from 2018/19 in comparison with the national change of 41% and an Urban Mean of 48.4%, and is the largest rate of improvement amongst Scottish Local authorities.

3.10.6 The overall number of pupils experiencing exclusion had fallen from 626 to 294, a reduction of over 50% with the rate of exclusion incidence per excluded pupil falling from just under 2 exclusions per academic year to less than 1.4 occasions as an average.

3.10.7 Across the phases, exclusion incidence of Primary school pupils reduced by around 72% with a lower 60% fall in the number of pupils excluded while, at Secondary level, the change from 2018-19 was marginally less, showing a reduction of 65% in the number of incidence and 50% fewer pupils experiencing an exclusion. Within Special schools, there were no incidence of exclusion for the second recorded academic year. Provisional 2021/22 and live data from the current year suggests that we are on track to meet our end of year target.

Chart 20. Exclusions Timeline



3.10.8 The current in-year data around Exclusions (based on Openings) is captured in the table below. It is presently too early to extrapolate this information directly to end of year outcomes aligning with the national data captured above although the indications around the reduction in the average monthly number of Distinct Pupils Involved in Exclusion (this would have equated to 24.5 pupils in 2020/21) is a positive underlying trend.

Table 6. Live Average Monthly Exclusions by Openings August-September

Number of Exclusion Incidents	Number of Distinct Pupils Involved	Average Length of Exclusion (Openings)
15.25	14	3

3.11 School Leaver Destinations

3.11.1 In 2020/21, Aberdeen City recorded its highest level of Initial Destination positivity over the lifetime of the current national measure, with an outcome of 95.4%, an advance of 5.1 percentage points on the prior year and, more significantly, an increase of 1.6-percentage points ahead of 2018/19, which was the previously greatest percentage of school leavers recorded in a sustained positive destination.

Table 7. Initial School Leaver Destinations: % of school leavers participating in education, training, employment and other positive destinations at initial sample point.

	All Leavers	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5
Current (2020/2021)	95.4%	91.9%	93.9%	97.6%	5.7%
National (2020/2021)	95.5%	92.8%	94.5%	97.6%	4.8%
Target 2022/23	95.9%	93.4%	95.3%	97.9%	4.5%
% Increase	0.5%	1.5%	1.4%	0.3%	-1.2%
Stretch Aim 2025/26	97.9%	95.0%	95.8%	98.7%	3.7%

3.11.2 This improvement trend was validated by both the subsequent Sustained Destinations publication and through the more comprehensive Annual Participation Measure released in September 2022.(Table 9 below)

Table 8. Annual Participation Measure: % of school leavers participating in education, training, employment and other positive destinations

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5
Previous (2020/21)	90.9%	81.3%	84.9%	94.9%	13.6%
National (2020/21)	92.2%	87.1%	90.4%	96.4%	9.3%
Target 2022/23	92.2%	85.0%	87.0%	96.0%	11.0%
Improvement (percentage points)	1.2%	3.7%	2.1%	1.04%	-2.6%
Stretch Aim to be achieved by 25/26	94.5%	90.9%	94.0%	97.3%	6.4%

3.11.3 In each of these releases, there is some evidence that the gap in outcomes between those recorded as being resident within areas with the higher levels of deprivation (SIMD 1 and 2) and those in the SIMD 5 cohort, narrowed during the current reporting year after a previous increase in the gap in the midst of the pandemic

3.11.4 The most recent release of the national Monthly Participation Snapshot for 16-19-year olds (May 2022) indicates that Aberdeen is above the National figures for both 16-17 year olds combined (95.7% as opposed to 94.9%) and the wider 16-19 year old cohort at 90.7% with the Scotland figure being 89.5%

3.11.5 Although, in part, reliant on the continued accessibility of employment opportunities as the City's economy recovers, with the impact of the ABZ Campus becoming more embedded, there is a reasonable level of confidence that the 2022/23 targets will be achieved. These assumptions are supported by linear data projections based on the currently available data and will be updated on the release of national datasets.

3.12 Summary Position Statement

3.12.1 As at the point of report writing, there is substantial data based evidence that the outcomes of pupils have, where affected by the pandemic in both of the prior years, recovered and are generally tracking both in line with expectations aligned to targets and the Stretch Aims outlined, and positively in comparison with 2018/19.

3.12.2 Where areas of potential shortfall have been identified, the Service is addressing these through the current National Improvement Framework although further detailed analysis of the Insight data, that provided through the in-year three tracking periods, and future national publications, will be undertaken to ensure that the NIF remains appropriate at each data release point.

3.12.3 The appendix attached to this report outlines progress being delivered in support of the NIF across the current academic year.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. The costs of all improvement actions will be undertaken within existing budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000 requires that, as the Education Authority, Aberdeen City Council has a duty to:

- Enhance equity and promote a reduction in inequalities of educational outcome experienced by pupils because of socio-economic disadvantage.
- Endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the NIF.
- Undertake annual planning and reporting and annual school improvement planning to address the four priorities of the NIF.
- Ensure strategic decisions are taken with due regard as to how they will address, or help to address, the disparity of educational outcomes which exist between the most and least disadvantaged and at the same time raise attainment for all.

5.2 The Equality Act 2010 also imposes a public sector duty on the Education Authority, when making decisions of a strategic nature, to have due regard to the desirability of exercising its functions in a way which is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No environmental implications 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?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners	Changes to our provision and service delivery will enable primary prevention and early intervention thereby reducing potential risk.	L	Yes

Compliance	Non-compliance with legislation, financial claims, and legal challenge (tribunals).	Mitigated by services being realigned to better meet the needs of our young people in Aberdeen City and prevent escalation of need and through carefully analysis of data sets to take actions when emerging issues are identified.	L	Yes
Operational	Staff are overwhelmed, which leads to low morale as staff feel unable to meet the educational and well-being needs of young people.	Mitigated by Offering a range of professional learning and support to staff and senior leadership teams	L	Yes
Financial	Risk of not having sufficient resource.	Mitigated by maximising the impact of staff on children and young people and building capacity where possible to do so.	L	yes
Reputational	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	Mitigated through the establishment of a set of measures to routinely track impact over a school year.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement UNICEF Child Friendly accreditation.	The proposals within this report support the delivery of Child Friendly City accreditation as children and young people will be directly involved in shaping the service.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	

<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>Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty</p> <p>Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and group</p> <p>Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities</p> <p>90% of Children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to by 2026. This is reflected in interactions, activities, supports and services</p> <p>Improving health and reducing inequalities.</p> <p>Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach.</p>	<p>The detail within this report supports the delivery of Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9 in the refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan. This includes the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase to 80%, the number of staff who feel confident about how to directly support, or refer a child for support, and signpost to appropriate services by 2022. • Increase the number of care experienced young people accessing a positive and sustained destination by 25% by 2022. • Increase the number of vulnerable learners entering a positive and sustained destination by 7% by 2023. • Increase the number of young people who leave school with a minimum of Scottish Vocational Qualification 3 in literacy and numeracy and 4 other qualifications to 93% by 2023. • Increase number of young people who need support in relation to trauma and bereavement having access to such support by 50% by 2023
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<p>Regional and City Strategies</p> <p>Regional Cultural Strategy</p> <p>Prevention Strategy</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework Plan</p>	<p>The pilots will be aligned fully with the Prevention Strategy and will form a critical part of the Children's Services Plan.</p> <p>This pilot features in the Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan for 2022/23</p>
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Required

Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Progress towards delivering the National Improvement Framework

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix A – Progress towards delivery of the National Improvement Framework Plan October 2022

Key	Fully delivered	
	On track	
	Behind track	
	At risk	

Excellence		
Priority identified in the NIF	Progress	Narrative on progress
<p>Improve the leadership of change in schools</p> <p>Roll out a programme of training associated with the Quality Improvement Framework. Further develop collaboration across the service through the use of Trios and sharing best practice across schools.</p> <p>Enlist the help of Associate Assessors to help drive improvement at school and Local Authority level</p>		<p>A refreshed Quality Improvement Framework was shared with school leaders in August 2022. The revised framework clarifies expectations around arrangements for quality assurance and accountability at school and Local Authority level. The framework includes exemplification of the standards expected for each core Quality Indicator from How Good is Our School 4 and is being used to inform quality improvement visits to schools over school session 22/23. The central quality improvement team has sought feedback from school leaders on the professional development required to fully implement the framework and are making arrangements for delivery of professional learning. Bespoke support to individual schools has been made available where a need has been identified.</p> <p>A calendar of quality improvement visits have been negotiated with schools with peer Head Teacher involvement part of our standard Trios process. This approach is enabling the spread of best practice including in play pedagogy and approaches to improving learning, teaching and assessment.</p> <p>2 primary leaders have been successfully appointed as Associate Assessors.</p> <p>In light of the small number of poor ELC inspections, staff are being sought from high performing settings to support staff teams to understand the standard where appropriate. The impact of this change in approach will be evaluated over the next 6 months.</p>
<p>Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools</p> <p>Use of Attainment Advisor and Lead Teacher to establish greater consistency based on our agreed Learning, Teaching and Assessment Standard.</p>		<p>The Attainment Advisor has been supporting primary schools to develop approaches to Learning, Teaching and Assessment. The Lead Teacher has been developing materials to support a rights based approach to equalities to support our readiness for the implementation of the UNCRC. The Lead Teacher is now working with secondary colleagues across the city to provide targeted support to a small number of schools in order to improve the quality of</p>

<p>Launch the Quality Assurance and Moderation QAMSO website to support city wide moderation activities</p>		<p>learning, teaching and assessment and coordinating delivery of A Learning, Teaching and Assessment Conference for secondary in collaboration with one of our Secondary Head Teachers.</p> <p>A group of QAMSOs have designed a Google site to provide support in moderation of CFE levels. We currently have 32 QAMSOs trained with another 10 attending training this session. The plan is to use their expertise to help staff seeking support in Moderation. The Google site will also allow us to share best practice.</p> <p>A new approach to delivery of professional learning has been undertaken this year with a focus on expert teachers delivering focused professional learning in response to quality improvement activity and staff feedback.</p>
<p>Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports in response to changes in need Work with school health and wellbeing leads to audit the in school provision.</p> <p>Reflect on the outcome of the SHINE and health and wellbeing surveys to determine next steps.</p> <p>Work with the established Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) Group to increase provision of physical activity for children and young people.</p> <p>Continue to deliver holiday programmes in keeping with national guidance and local instructions</p>		<p>A Mental Health Summit was held on 14th October. The Summit provided an invaluable opportunity to explore the data available to us and agree a number of areas to progress as multi-agency partners. The Plan will be delivered over the coming months with progress reported to Committee.</p> <p>The PEPAS Group has launched resources to support the effective planning of physical activity to primary head teachers. The resources have been well received with plans now to consider a similar approach to other areas of the curriculum. This is being shared with classroom practitioners through our Grassroots Professional Learning Programme.</p> <p>A holiday programme was designed and delivered over the October holiday period. The programme comprised a mix of week-long childcare and activities with food and was well received by families. A sports leadership programme was particularly well received by young people in our secondary schools.</p>
<p>Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services that directly and indirectly affect them</p> <p>Continue to support our Pupil Climate Change Group Establish a webpage on the ACC site to encourage engagement and participation by children and young people.</p> <p>Continue to work with community planning partners to become a Child Friendly City.</p>		<p>A webpage was developed to help inform work around the school estate. This is supporting our work to prepare for the incorporation of the UNCRC and also providing children and young people to comment on the School Estate Plan approved by Committee.</p> <p>Officers are gathering some of the best practice in upholding children's rights across our schools and organisation in order to compile a statutory report on the extent to which we uphold and promote children's rights. This report will be presented to Committee in early 2023 prior to submission to the Scottish Government.</p>

<p>Collaborate with children and young people to report on the extent to which ACC supports and promotes Children's Rights and set next steps.</p> <p>Lead the Council to ensure full compliance with the UNCRC</p>		<p>Officers continue to support planning for the proposed full implementation of the UNCRC from summer 2023 and work continues to improve the quality of reportable data on the extent to which the Council upholds and promotes children's rights. Further guidance from Scottish Government is expected and plans will be refreshed to take account of this when published.</p>
<p>Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas.</p> <p>Support the introduction of ABZ Campus comprising an aligned set of curricular opportunities for Senior Phase young people.</p> <p>Phase 1 ABZ Campus to support specific pathways programme of work which includes workstreams on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HNC • National Qualifications • Foundation Apprenticeships • Employability Courses • Pathways for young people with ASN • Targeted support for care experienced young people <p>Simplify pathways into apprenticeships with the Council post school.</p> <p>Prepare for Phase 2 and the establishment of Hubs across schools to further improve access.</p>		<p>Work continues on the development of ABZ Campus, our exciting initiative to develop growth-sector aligned pathways for young people in Aberdeen. With secondary schools having completed the task of aligning timings for four columns in the week to provide access for common courses, work is now advanced to confirm the 40+ courses that will be offered as part of Phase 1 in June 2023.</p> <p>Engagement with our parents/carers and young people has started and a staff event is planned for 18th November. An important part of the engagement process is to ensure that quality information is available for each course to allow families and schools to make informed decisions about their choice process. To this end each course will be accompanied by a ninety second video and a one-page course guide which are currently being developed.</p> <p>Strategic thinking about how Phase 2 of ABZ Campus might allow locality-based provision has started with work to continue through 2022 and into 2023.</p> <p>Colleagues in People and Organisation are helping the Education Service to offer pathways into harder to fill posts in the Council. This represents a significant opportunity for many of our young people.</p>
<p>Improve the delivery of Computer Science from 3-18 and beyond</p> <p>Establish Aberdeen Computing Collaborative to bring all key partners together Work with Prof Mark Logan to address the issues raised in his report. For year 2022/23 this is likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upskilling current staff in digital and computer science skills • Increasing pathways into Computer Science teaching 		<p>The Aberdeen Computing Collaborative launched in September 2022. The launch was attended by many of our children, young people and staff and will see work to develop computer science skills in children and staff progress at pace.</p> <p>The event was well received by all attendees and there is a clear appetite from staff to work to develop computer science skills in children and young people and this will be actively promoted.</p>

- Increasing the number of pathways (aligned with ABZ Campus)



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Equity		
Priority identified in the NIF	Progress	Narrative on progress
<p>Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs</p> <p>Work with partners to roll out training in the Circle Framework to ensure consistent understanding, approaches and language across all agencies.</p> <p>Develop guidance on how to meet a range of needs, particularly sensory needs Continue to be responsive in the support being offered by the ASN and outreach service.</p> <p>Work with partners to develop transition planning, including those with disability Delivery of the Accessibility Plan.</p>		<p>The CIRCLE framework has been launched with a member of staff from each school being supported to implement the approach following reflections from a Head Teacher colleague who was an early adopter of the framework. The approach is being supported by multi-agency partners and will progress incrementally over the course of the school year. Training has also been delivered to central staff to help develop more consistent use of language.</p> <p>The leadership structure of the ASN & Outreach Service is now fully implemented with collective responsibility for high-level decision making distributed across the senior leadership team. Accountability is managed and monitored by the Head Teacher through a single Service Improvement Plan and governance structure. Each senior leader has a vertical (team) and horizontal (service improvement) remit: these are further distributing leadership and ownership of core areas and driving cross-team collaboration. Mechanisms are in place to afford staff at all levels the opportunity to support decision making about service-wide issues. These are continuously being evaluated and adapted to monitor their effectiveness, and the blending of virtual and in-person participation utilised to maximise engagement.</p> <p>Activity undertaken in 2021-2022 enabled the Service to identify and agree common, Service-wide features of highly effective practice; this forms the basis of our <i>Learning, Teaching and Assessment Charter</i>. The <i>Charter</i> is being used to support the implementation of a system of collective self-evaluation of Quality Indicator 2.3, learning, teaching and assessment. Evidence gathered from this is key to better understanding collective strengths and next steps, and the development of an internal professional learning calendar. Common tracking and monitoring periods/approaches are being piloted to strengthen data-led improvement methodology and further engender Service-wide consistency. These seek to ensure we can consistently link demographic / request for assistance (input)</p>

		<p>data to improved outcomes for learners, thus robustly evidencing the impact of our interventions.</p> <p>A new professional learning framework to help staff develop the skills they require to support children with additional support needs has been launched. The framework offers training at a range of levels to support our delivery of the Accessibility Plan.</p>
<p>Reshape the Virtual School to ensure that those on the edge of care and the care experienced achieve at the highest levels in keeping with The Promise</p> <p>Review cases of those who are on the edge of care to inform next steps</p> <p>Use Service Design principles to reshape the approach taken by the Virtual School and wider Council with a focus on prevention and early intervention.</p> <p>Establish a pilot in two Associated Schools Group to test and improve the model.</p> <p>Continue to work with Further and Higher education to support those who are care experienced into positive destinations</p> <p>Support those least likely to secure a positive destination through a School Leavers fortnight</p>		<p>2 workshops were held to set the direction of travel for the two pilots and agreed guiding principles are in place to guide work.</p> <p>Groups of children and young people have been agreed and education staff are now in place although we await a start date for the wider team and this is limiting the impact of the pilots at present.</p> <p>As we await all members of the team, time is being invested in building relationships with children and families to ensure that they shape the provision of support over the year.</p> <p>An evaluation framework has been agreed and governance arrangements to ensure effective oversight and reporting over the school year.</p> <p>An amber rating has been allocated due to the delay in establishing the full teams across both pilots and officers are working to address this as soon as possible.</p> <p>Officers are at the early stages of considering what a school leavers fortnight could look like. Considerable time and energy has been invested in following up school leaver destinations to inform our work in the longer term.</p>
<p>Close the poverty related attainment gap</p> <p>QIOS to work with HTs to monitor the impact of PEF interventions regularly to enable agility (attendance, exclusion and attainment data for identified children and young people reviewed 3 times a year).</p>		<p>Officers and the Attainment Advisor have linked with other Local Authorities to learn from best practice in the oversight of PEF interventions to inform creation of an ACC PEF tracking tool. PEF planning and impact is discussed as part of Q.I. visits to schools and best practice shared locally. An ACC Equity Network Teams channel is being established as a place for practitioners to access information, guidance and support to promote equity.</p>

<p>Engagement with Education Scotland</p> <p>Monitor impact of the provision of Youth Work, Family Learning to determine an agile response to supporting disadvantaged groups.</p> <p>Work with Education Scotland Attainment Adviser to target support to identified schools.</p> <p>Maximise update of free Musical Instruction Audit the cost of the school day to determine next steps</p> <p>Work with the Scottish Government to increase provision of ELC to those who are 1 and 2 from low income households.</p> <p>Universal roll out of PEEP in all ELC settings</p>		<p>Officers have met with colleagues from Education Scotland to discuss progress towards the stretch aims identified in the National Improvement Framework Plan. Feedback around our systems and processes has been positive. Partnership Forums must maintain a record of all interventions using this funding and their impact. All children and young people being targeted this require data on 4 measures to be tracked on a monthly basis. This data may be supported by supplementary data as appropriate, according to interventions planned. Youth Workers and Family Learning Workers gather and provide agreed supporting data on a monthly basis.</p> <p>The Attainment Advisor continues to offer invaluable support to identified schools and is available to support Head Teachers on request.</p> <p>The Music Service continues to work to maximise uptake and are investing time in exploring potential models for the provision of a Music Centre. The output will be presented to Committee early in 2023.</p> <p>The Best Start: Strategic early learning and school age childcare plan for Scotland 2022-26 was published in October and Officers are currently reviewing the publication and considering implications for our Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan. The publication will be fully considered with a report planned to Committee in 2023 to outline any changes required to ensure our work is aligned to the national publication. Work has been undertaken to identify potential sites for Out of School Care provision with a particular focus on those with additional support needs and those living in areas of deprivation to ensure the Council are well placed to respond.</p> <p>All Early Learning and Childcare settings are now delivering a Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP) programme based on the needs of their school community.</p>
<p>Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible</p> <p>Work in collaboration with others to address the root cause of poverty. This will see targeted promotions of support available through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money advisors • Partnership with Cfine 		<p>Money Advisors attached to schools continue to support families to maximise their entitlements. Schools continue to promote the 'Making ends meet' resource on the Council website.</p> <p>We continue to support those fleeing from conflict, with children from Ukraine now benefiting from school placements in a high number of our schools. The service is working to establish an Education Support Officer post to help provide some additional capacity to Dyce Primary and Dyce Academy in the short to medium term. All families living in bridging hotel</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to be responsive to the needs of refugees arriving in the city. 		<p>accommodation received summer bridging payments and automatic access to free school meals and clothing grants. Families continue to be supported to access all benefits to which they are entitled.</p> <p>Schools continue to identify further opportunities to reduce the cost of the school day and removing barriers to provide equitable access to experiences which enhance the curriculum offer. Updated national guidance on school uniforms is anticipated imminently.</p>
<p>Partnership Delivery of the Family Support Model Continue to work to shape a model of Family Support with Community Planning Partners</p>		<p>Work to develop a Family Support Model continues to progress at pace. Two recent workshops with multi-agency partners have helped clarify the vulnerabilities in the current system in order to build a stronger model.</p>
<p>Review the Anti-bullying policy</p> <p>Details analysis of data Comprehensive study of practice nationally and internationally to inform next steps.</p>		<p>Two school have engaged with the national thematic review. The output of the review will be used to help inform our work to refresh our Anti-bullying policy.</p>

Strategic enabler identified in the NIF	Progress	Narrative on progress
<p>High quality professional learning for all</p> <p>Maintain an agile programme for all school staff to include opportunities for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probationers Early stage teachers Middle leaders Senior leaders Supply staff <p>Re-establish subject networks.</p> <p>Continue to build capacity in learning, teaching and assessment outside including making use of outdoor Nurseries.</p> <p>Support staff to gain qualifications in order to realise career progression and promotion.</p>		<p>This session we launched our grassroots pilot programme of professional learning (GPLP), designed and delivered by a small network of 'Expert Teachers' across a range of key themes; pedagogy, health and wellbeing, inclusive practices, probation and NQT support and curricular support. Our GPLP offer is being shared across the local authority to support system wide improvement through enquiry-based practices, collaboration opportunities and evidence-informed learning.</p> <p>The project is running in tandem with the wider CLPL offer and allows for the continuation of targeted CLPL sessions from both internal and external providers. We will continue our city wide work with Osiris on the February in-service day to allow for completion of the four quadrant cycle of learning for our schools.</p> <p>A joint in-service day offer for ELC and Primary 1 teachers will take place in November through the Early Years Outdoor Expo event at Hazlehead Outdoor Nursery. The event will allow for an opportunity for educators from across the city to network, join a range of practical workshops and move towards a shared vision for early childhood.</p>

		<p>Our EduSharePoint Professional Learning page continues to signpost to local, regional and national professional learning opportunities for all and offers a variety of asynchronous self-directed activities across all levels.</p> <p>In partnership with the Northern Alliance and Education Scotland we are continuing to offer, where possible funded opportunities for staff to engage with award bearing courses such as the Into Headship and Middle Level Leadership.</p>
<p>Senior and Middle Leadership development</p> <p>A programme for Middle Leaders to enhance their leadership skills.</p> <p>A focus on those aspiring to Into Headship</p> <p>Create a network for Middle Leaders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share practice • Learn from and with each other • Engage with professional learning opportunities to improve leadership capacity 		<p>Middle Leaders are being offered the chance to engage with quality professional learning to support leadership development and ensure positive impact on a chosen area of school improvement.</p> <p>More experienced Middle Leaders are offered a programme to prepare them for Into Headship. This will include undertaking leadership self-reflection to support their leadership development. The programme will focus on leading to make impact, managing change and delivering results.</p> <p>Through the use of Microsoft Teams a support network for Middle Leaders has been established and continues to be developed. This also offers an opportunity to share practice and learn from one another.</p>
<p>Support staff health and wellbeing</p> <p>Respond positively to the findings of the staff health and wellbeing survey</p>		<p>We have developed in partnership with The findings of the staff health and wellbeing audit are currently being analysed. The summary of findings will be shared with school leaders to inform short, medium and longer term planning.</p>
<p>Monitor workforce to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families</p> <p>Monitor recruitment to ensure swift identification of any issues to be addressed.</p>		<p>Effective mechanisms are in place to monitor levels of vacancy across schools, and despite the increase in school rolls, the service is attracting applicants for posts in schools.</p>
<p>Continue to develop School Profiles</p> <p>Include tracking information collected in November, February and May.</p>		<p>Tracking information from SEEMiS will be uploaded to PowerBi following each tracking period. This will provide schools with the journey towards achieving their individual targets and enable decision making based on live data.</p>

<p>Provide overview of individual school targets in relation to agreed stretch aims.</p> <p>Continue to evaluate the use of profiles and ensure access for all.</p>		<p>Profiles will be evaluated annually to ensure schools have access to all tracking information required to allow them to plan for interventions to raise attainment.</p>
<p>Implement improved tracking and reporting</p> <p>Establish common tracking system across BGE and use alongside Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) data to inform pathways for young people.</p> <p>Develop a range of templates for reporting in BGE at secondary.</p> <p>Ensure smooth transfer of tracking in all curricular areas at key transitions and in particular at P7/S1 where data will be mapped to courses in Secondary.</p>		<p>A common tracking system is available for staff to use and evaluate over this current school session prior to mandatory implementation in all schools in August 2023. This approach is providing really helpful insight into the system and enabling us to build a system we can have confidence in.</p> <p>Reporting templates will be reviewed and agreed to allow secondary schools to have a format which matches their context.</p> <p>Work is underway to map primary curricular tracking to secondary subject areas to ensure smooth transition of information and improve learning transitions.</p>
<p>Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so</p> <p>Monitor uptake of ELC to inform next steps and help offer top up hours to families</p> <p>Work in partnership with others to increase update of ELC for eligible 2s</p>		<p>The service continues to work closely with colleagues in health to identify families eligible for ELC provision in order to increase update of ELC for eligible 2s.</p> <p>The service is currently looking at spare capacity that could be made available to families although the considerable increase in applications for ELC and school placements has limited scope in this area.</p>
<p>Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures</p> <p>Monitor tracking data in November, February and May to allow predictions in attainment at city wide level.</p> <p>Track PEF interventions and match to attainment to identify impact and inform future PEF spend</p>		<p>Mechanisms are in place to centrally monitor Curriculum for Excellence data following the three tracking periods. Data is matched to SNSA data to allow for challenge around correlation of attainment. At each tracking period QIOs discuss data with headteachers or data leads providing challenge and scrutiny .</p> <p>The Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) tracker in development will allow schools and central officers to better audit the impact of interventions and spread best practice more readily.</p>

<p>Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of the Quality Improvement Framework and plan next steps.</p>		<p>There is a notable improvement in the quality of school improvement plans and almost all schools now have a child friendly improvement plan in place.</p>
<p>Regularly reviewed approaches to central Quality Improvement approaches</p> <p>Evaluate the impact of each programme of Quality improvement to determine next steps</p>		<p>Quality Improvement Visits are currently underway. The learning from the first set of visits is being collated and shared to inform next steps.</p>
<p>Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city</p> <p>Review impact of Trios and plan next steps</p>		<p>The Trios approach is now leading to increased opportunities to share best practice across primary schools. The approach is less impactful across secondary schools and is currently being reviewed, with a view to introducing in session 2023-24.</p> <p>In light of the number of poor ELC inspections, staff are being sought from high performing settings to support staff teams to understand the standard where appropriate. The impact of this change in approach will be evaluated over the next 6 months.</p>
<p>Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan</p> <p>Delivery of the Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan</p>		<p>Strong partnership is in place with Aberdeen Parent Council Forum with representatives from the Education Service attending bi-monthly meetings to provide updates in relation to service improvement.</p> <p>Ongoing support for parent councils has been provided with almost all schools currently sustaining a positive parent council team. Supports continue to be offered where there are challenges with engagement.</p> <p>Through the Stronger Family Series a variety of learning opportunities continue to be offered to parents and carers which a focus on supporting children and young people and building confidence. These have been well received and further supports continue to be made available through the Digital Parent Hub for those that cannot attend.</p> <p>Within ELC, PEEP is continuing to be rolled out. Partnership with Save the Children was also positively received last session, and provided key supports to parents in some of our pilot settings. This is</p>

		<p>being offered again this session and an engagement event is planned for the beginning of November.</p> <p>We are also just about to re-launch our volunteering guidance which has been updated and ensures appropriate training and processes are in place to encourage and support volunteering within our settings.</p>
<p>Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway</p> <p>Establishment of pathway in keeping with the partnership plan</p>		<p>The service continues to contribute to the development of a multi-agency neurodevelopmental pathway and a Programme Manager has been appointed to help drive forward plan.</p>
<p>More closely align the universal services of health and education</p> <p>Capitalise on opportunities for co-location and co-delivery of services for children and families</p>		<p>The education service and Lead Nurse continue to meet on a weekly basis to share intelligence and further promote co-location and co-delivery. This has led to a refresh of approaches to school nursing and the attendance of the Lead Nurse at Head Teacher meetings and attendance by the Chief Education Officer at Universal health meetings.</p> <p>School nursing teams are now aligned to the localities supported by schools to ensure stronger partnership working is being developed.</p>

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services Committee
DATE	8 November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Cluster Risk Register and Assurance Map
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/22/233
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott, Chief Executive
CHIEF OFFICER	Eleanor Sheppard, Chief Education Officer Graeme Simpson, Chief Officer – Integrated Children’s and Family Service
REPORT AUTHOR	Chief Officers
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.4

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the Cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Maps in accordance with Education and Children’s Services Committee Terms of Reference to provide assurance that risks are being managed effectively within each Cluster.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee note the Cluster Risk Register and Assurance Maps set out in Appendices A, B and C.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for overseeing the system of risk management and for receiving assurance that the Extended Corporate Management Team (ECMT) are effectively identifying and managing risks. Reviewing the strength and effectiveness of the Council’s system of risk management as a whole is a key role for the Committee.

- 3.2 The Risk Management Policy Framework states that all other committees should receive assurance on the risk management arrangements which fall within their terms of reference. This is provided through the risk registers for the relevant Clusters which fall within the remit for this Committee. These are:-

- Education Services
- Children’s and Family Services

Risk Registers

- 3.3 The Council’s Risks Registers are tools used by Functions and Clusters to capture and manage the risks which could prevent achievement of organisational outcomes and service delivery.

- 3.4 The Council's Corporate Risk Register (CRR) captures the risks which pose the most significant threat to the achievement of the Council's organisational outcomes and have the potential to cause failure of service delivery. The CRR is scrutinised annually by the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.5 The Cluster Risk Register is set out in appendix A and reflects the risks which may prevent each Cluster area from delivering on organisational outcomes and services, these risks may be escalated to the CRR where deemed necessary.
- 3.6 The risk contained within the Risk Register for each Cluster is grouped below by risk category and shows the Council's corresponding risk appetite for the category as set within the Council's Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) which was approved by the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee in February 2022.

The Cluster is working towards a target risk score which aligns with the risk appetite.

Risk Category	Risk Title	Target Risk Appetite	Aligned with RAS
Compliance	CareFirst System Failure	Averse	Yes
Operational	Child Migration	Cautious	Yes
Operational	Education – Demographic Demands	Cautious	Yes
Operational	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)	Cautious	Yes

- 3.7 The Cluster Risk Register provides the organisation with the detailed information and assessment for each risk identified including;
- **Current risk score** – this is current assessment of the risk by the risk owner and reflects the progress percentage of control actions required in order to achieve the target risk score.
 - **Target risk score** – this is the assessment of the risk by the risk owner after the application of the control actions. This is aligned with the risk appetite for this particular category of risk.
 - **Control Actions** – these are the activities and items that will mitigate the effect of the risk event on the organisation.
 - **Risk score** – each risk is assessed using a 4x6 risk matrix as detailed below.

The 4 scale represents the impact of the risk and the 6 scale represents the likelihood of the risk event.

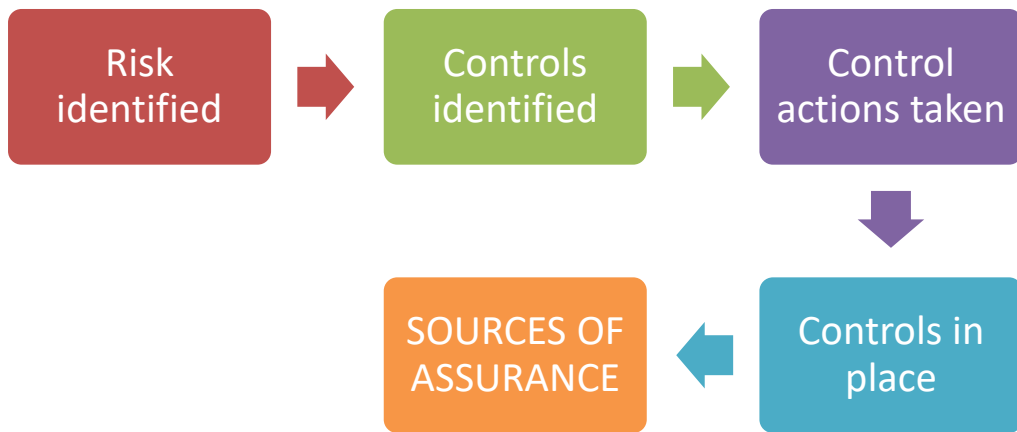
Impact	Score						
Very Serious	4	4	8	12	16	20	24
Serious	3	3	6	9	12	15	18
Material	2	2	4	6	8	10	12
Negligible	1	1	2	3	4	5	6
Score		1	2	3	4	5	6
Likelihood		Impossible	Almost Very Low	Low	Significant	High	Very High

3.8 Development and improvement of the Cluster Risk Register and associated risk management processes has continued since the Cluster Risk Register was last reported to the Educational Operational Delivery and Operational Delivery Committees:

- The Council's Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) was reviewed and updated.
- Risk Management Guidance – the complementary documentation which supports the Risk Management Policy was updated and approved by the Risk Board.
- Committee Report Template and Guidance – risk sections were reviewed and updated to reflect RAS and enhanced to provide additional guidance on management of risk.
- Assurance Maps – were updated to include the Corporate and/or Cluster Risks that are being managed by each Cluster to provide an overview of both the risk/s being managed and the sources of assurance which includes completed risk control actions for each of the three-lines of defence.
- The Corporate Risk Lead has continued to provide support to Risk Owners and Managers to review and update Risk Registers to improve monitoring and reporting across the organisation.

Assurance Maps

3.9 The Risk Registers that are reviewed by the Council's Committees list the risks identified within each of the relevant Functions and Clusters and provides detail of the risk, the potential impact and consequence of the risk materialising and the control actions and activities required to manage and mitigate the risk. Assurance Maps provide a visual representation of the sources of assurance associated with each Cluster so that Committee can consider where these are effective, following the completion of control actions. Presentation of the Cluster's Assurance Map provides full sight of the defences that the organisation has in place to manage the risks facing local government.



3.10 The Assurance Map provides a breakdown of the “three lines of defence”, the different levels at which risk is managed. Within a large and complex organisation like the Council, risk management takes place in many ways. The Assurance Map is a way of capturing these and categorising them, thus ensuring that any gaps in sources of assurance are identified and addressed:

First Line of Defence “Do-ers”	Second Line of Defence “Helpers”	Third Line of Defence “Checkers”
The control environment; business operations performing day to day risk management activity; owning and managing risk as part of business as usual; these are the business owners, referred to as the “do-ers” of risk management.	Oversight of risk management and ensuring compliance with standards, in our case including Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee as well as the Corporate Management Team and management teams; setting the policies and procedures against which risk is managed by the do-ers, referred to as the “helpers” of risk management.	Internal and external audit, inspection and regulation, thereby offering independent assurance of the first and second lines of defence, the “do-ers” and “helpers”, referred to as the checkers” of risk management.

Chief Education Officer Overview

3.11 The fortnightly assessment and mitigation of risk by the education leadership team has aided the education service to address identified risks over the year. The risk of staffing shortages has been removed and our schools are now, for the most part, fully staffed. Monitoring of staff vacancy has been transferred to the Assurance Map forming an improved source of assurance.

Demographic demands continue to present a risk although the nature of the risk has changed. This risk now reflects the increase in those fleeing conflict and an unprecedented increase in the number of children accompanying

international students. Increased monitoring of school applications and routine engagement with Higher Education Institutions is helping the service have a better understanding of demand to enable proactive planning. These controls have been added to the education Assurance Map.

The wellbeing needs of children and young people were recorded as a risk over the course of the year, but improved data collection and collaboration with partner agencies has enabled this risk to be removed from the register.

A refreshed Quality Improvement Framework has been put in place to mitigate risk around quality. This is effectively mitigating risks to the organisation although will be kept under review over the school session.

The cost of living crisis increases risk in a number of areas. There is a greater risk of families becoming homeless, of children inadvertently being at risk of neglect due to the cost of food and fuel and that children are impacted by the financial and mental health needs of parents and carers. This risk relies on proactive planning and mitigation by a number of clusters and as a result the risk sits at Corporate level. This risk will also likely lead to an increased demand on services through volume of referrals including social work intervention. Our schools provide valuable eyes on the ground and continue to promote the use of Money Advisors attached to schools and monitor wellbeing and attendance. The cluster continues to collaborate and share intelligence with others across the organisation to respond proactively and the Community Planning Anti-poverty group continues to provide an invaluable means of working with partners to address the risks.

Chief Social Work Officer overview

- 3.12 The Children's Social Work Senior Management Team actively consider the assessment and mitigation of risk during our fortnightly meetings. While the monitoring of staffing levels across children's social work remains a heightened focus on our assurance map, it is one which has implications for all activities and risks noted on the Risk Register.

The transition to a new client data system is nearing completion and the launch of D365 will support our workforce to work in a more agile and flexible manner. It will also support the service's continuing drive to be data informed and outcome focused.

Demographic changes continue to present a risk. The risk reflects the increase in those fleeing conflict. The arrival of increasing numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children into the city will continue to be a demand for the foreseeable future and we need to plan how we meet their support needs on a sustained basis. Additionally, the impact on those affected by war and trauma, arriving with family members, will inevitably generate a demand for services beyond the substantial universal offer. These controls have been added to the children's social work Assurance Map.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. This report deals with risk management at Cluster level and this process serves to identify controls and assurances that finances are being properly managed.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The Council's Risk Registers serve to manage many risks with implications for the legal position and statutory responsibilities of the Council.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

7.1 There are no risks arising from the recommendations in this report. The Committee is provided with assurance that the risks presented within the Cluster Risk Register are those that may affect achievement of organisational outcomes and delivery of services for each Cluster are identified, appropriately managed and that the Council's activities are compliant with its statutory duties.

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?
Strategic Risk	The Council is required to have a management system in place to identify and mitigate its risks.	The Council's risk management system requires that risks are identified, listed and managed via Risk Registers.	L	Yes
Compliance	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Operational	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Financial	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Reputational	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	As above.	As above.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

- 8.1 The recommendations within this report have no direct impact on the Council Delivery Plan however, the risks contained within the Council's risk registers could impact on the delivery of organisational outcomes.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not applicable

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A– Cluster Risk Register – Education and Children's Services
- 11.2 Appendix B – Cluster Assurance Map – Education Services
- 11.3 Appendix C – Cluster Assurance Map – Children's and Family Services

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

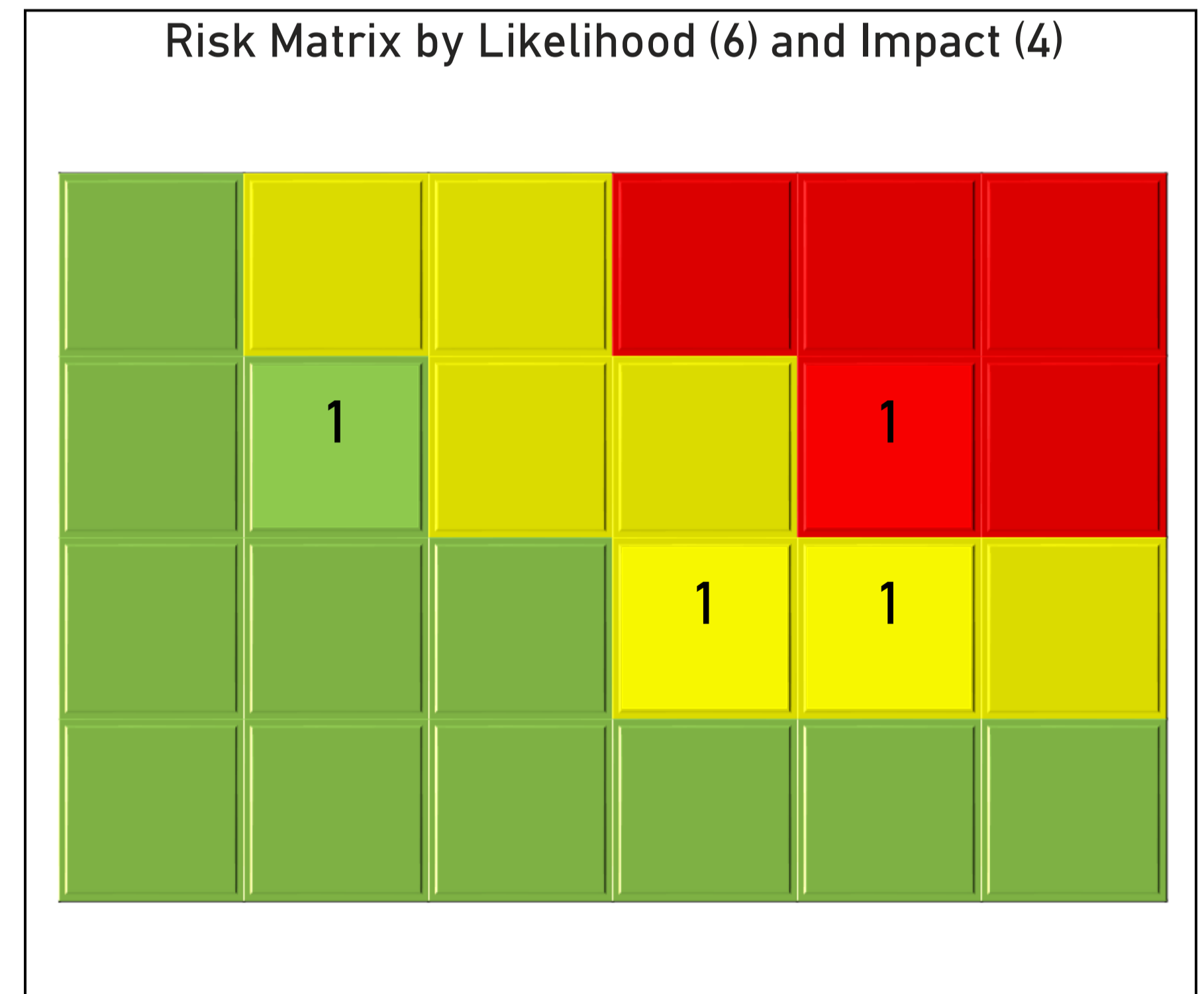
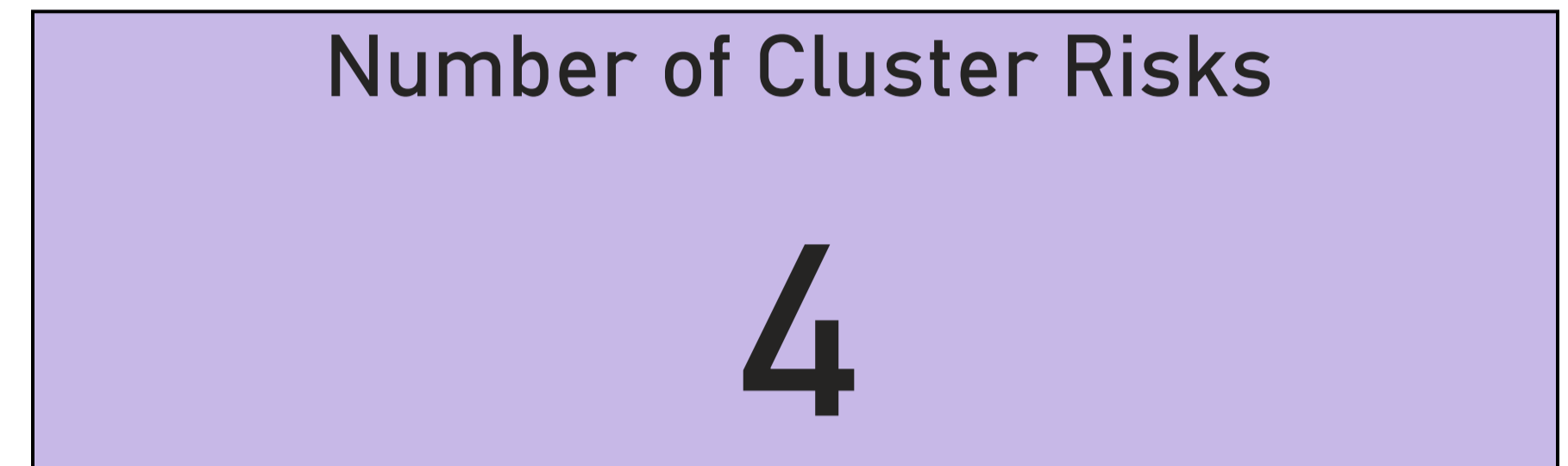
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Education and Children's Services Risk Register

CURRENT CLUSTER RISKS	CURRENT RISK SCORE
CareFirst System Failure	8
Child Migration	15
Education - Demographic demands	10
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)	6



FUNCTION	CLUSTER	RISK OWNER	RISK LEAD
Operations	Children's & Family Services	Graeme Simpson	Alison MALpine

RISK TITLE	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROL ACTIONS	TARGET RISK SCORE	CURRENT RISK SCORE	CURRENT LIKELIHOOD	CURRENT IMPACT	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
CareFirst System Failure	Risk of major CareFirst systems failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Implement replacement system due Autumn 2022 and continue support and engage with replacement system project team and partners. 2) Complete data migration activities prior to implementation of replacement system. 3) Continue with existing system maintenance checks and procedures until existing system is replaced. 4) Conduct annual Disaster Recover Tests on system. 5) Maintain Service Business Continuity plans in conjunction with the Business Continuity Group. 	6	8	4	2	31 October 2022

FUNCTION	CLUSTER	RISK OWNER	RISK LEAD
Operations	Children's & Family Services	Graeme Simpson & Eleanor Sheppard	Caroline Johnston & Ali McAlpine

RISK TITLE	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROL ACTIONS	TARGET RISK SCORE	CURRENT RISK SCORE	CURRENT LIKELIHOOD	CURRENT IMPACT	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
Child Migration	<p>Risk is that there is insufficient resource to meet demand and that this compromises the care protection and wellbeing of children and their families.</p> <p>The significant growth in the numbers of children young people and families arriving in Aberdeen from Ukraine, UASC arriving through the NTS, Afghanistan families arriving in Aberdeen having been supported to leave their country in order to protect them from the current regime; families from East Africa arriving in Aberdeen as a result of significant increases in sponsorship from Universities. As a result of these we are already seeing an increase in the school roll and in referrals to children's social work.</p> <p>Information from CoSLA, UK and Scottish Government has alerted us that further significant increase in current numbers is imminent.</p>	Close links between children's social work / education and the refugee project manager/welcome hubs is ensuring timely pick up of collaboration.	8	15	5	3	31 August 2023

FUNCTION	CLUSTER	RISK OWNER	RISK LEAD
Operations	Children's & Family Services	Eleanor Sheppard	Eleanor Sheppard

RISK TITLE	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROL ACTIONS	TARGET RISK SCORE	CURRENT RISK SCORE	CURRENT LIKELIHOOD	CURRENT IMPACT	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
Education - Demographic demands	Growing demographic demands result in service delivery pressures	<p>1) Produce annual pupil roll projections against existing school capacity and use to inform school estate plans.</p> <p>2) Work with ABZ works site to actively promote and clarify opportunities and post school pathways available to young people.</p> <p>3) Undertake work and engagement with stakeholders to develop and consider "Campus Model" to meet needs.</p> <p>4) Continue to monitor demand for school places to identify any changed trends in the data</p> <p>5) Routine engagement with Higher Education to get a clearer sense of the number of overseas students who are likely to be looking to secure school placements for their children and young people</p> <p>6) Regular attendance at IMT to help anticipate the number of refugees likely to be placed in the city to enable timely planning to ensure access to school placements. Officer identified to oversee demand in this area with particular consideration being given the different life stages to ensure that appropriate support is in place for all.</p>	8	10	5	2	28 February 2023

FUNCTION	CLUSTER	RISK OWNER	RISK LEAD
Operations	Children's & Family Services	Graeme Simpson	Isabel McDonnell

RISK TITLE	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROL ACTIONS	TARGET RISK SCORE	CURRENT RISK SCORE	CURRENT LIKELIHOOD	CURRENT IMPACT	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)	Risk that the dispersal of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) from England will result in a number being placed in Aberdeen. The unique needs of UASC will require significant resources and a multi-agency response and they have access to appropriate legal services.	<p>1) Work with Multi-Agency partners to plan for the continuing arrival of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) via the National Transfer Scheme.</p> <p>2) Development of localised guidance for UASC created in conjunction with partnership representatives to maximise effective resourcing and collaborative practice to facilitate UASC coming to Aberdeen City.</p> <p>3) Engagement with other Local Authorities and Scottish Government to ensure planning takes account of wider experience and national best practice.</p> <p>4) Engagement with national services who have a role to support UASC with advocacy and immigration applications.</p>	9	6	2	3	29 June 2023

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Assurance Map		
Cluster – Education Service		
Cluster Risk Register Risks:		
<p>1. Education - Demographic demands - Growing demographic demands result in service delivery pressures</p> <p>2. Child Migration – Risk that there is insufficient resource to meet demand and that this compromises the care protection and wellbeing of children and their families</p>		
First Line of Defence (Do-ers)	Second Line of Defence (Helpers)	Third Line of Defence (Checkers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained and qualified staff • School Leadership Team oversight and quality assurance of day to day operations and finances in school • School health and safety procedures agreed annually • All staff involved in school risk assessment process • Designated school Health and Safety Reps • Risk assessments shared with all staff including Trade Union reps • School risk registers in place in all schools with effective mechanisms in place for review and escalation • School Business Continuity Plans in place • Tracking and monitoring arrangements in place in all schools to track attainment • School positive behaviour management procedure agreed yearly • School child protection and safeguarding procedures agreed yearly • Yearly analysis of school community data to inform the school improvement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Management Team Boards • Council Committees • Health and Safety guidance for schools • Identified health and safety team link for all schools • Child protection and safeguarding guidance and professional learning available to schools • Range of policies/procedures for schools to support consistent practice • Quality Improvement Framework setting expectations around accountability • Quality Improvement Visits to schools and Early Learning and Childcare provision • Quality Improvement Team monitoring of live data • Service Business Continuity Plan • Monitoring of complaints • Improvement groups comprising central Officers and school staff identify and address emerging risks • Weekly Trade Union meetings • Engagement with Parents and Carers • Data dashboard and Risk Register discussed fortnightly by Senior Leadership Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Scotland inspections • Care Inspectorate Inspections • Health and Safety Executive inspections • Health and Safety Team compliance visits to schools • Extended Corporate Management Team data reviews • External Audit • Monthly budget print outs • Annual Internal Audit Plan • Audit Scotland and National Audit reports

- Regular review of applications for school placements in order to identify emerging trends
- Regular meetings with Higher Education to understand demand for school placements from international students
- Calendar of data gathering around the health and wellbeing needs of pupils
- Monitoring of levels of vacancy in schools and Early Learning and Childcare provisions
- In-service days and staff meetings to address any identified vulnerabilities

- Regular finance meetings with Senior Leadership Team
- Assurance Team
- Regular contact with ADES and COSLA

Assurance Map		
Cluster – Children & Families Services (Children’s Social Work)		
Cluster Risk Register Risks:		
<p>1. Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) - Risk that the dispersal of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) from England will result in a number being placed in Aberdeen. The unique needs of UASC will require significant resources and a multi-agency response and that they have access to appropriate legal services.</p> <p>2. CareFirst System Failure - Risk of major CareFirst systems failure</p> <p>3. Child Migration – Risk that there is insufficient resource to meet demand and that this compromises the care protection and wellbeing of children and their families</p>		
First Line of Defence (Do-ers)	Second Line of Defence (Helpers)	Third Line of Defence (Checkers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained and qualified staff • Professional Supervision in place for all Children’s Social Work (CSW) staff ensuring day to day service delivery. • Team Managers/Service Managers oversight of finances for teams • Agreed health and safety procedures – all staff supported to familiarise as part of induction. • All staff involved in risk assessment process • Team Business Continuity Plans in place • Tracking and monitoring arrangements in place in all schools to track performance and delivery of statutory duties. • Learning from case reviews considered on single and multi-agency basis and embedded at practitioner level. • Voice of children and young people at the heart of service planning and improvement. • Regular analysis of CSW data to improvement planning on both single and multi-agency basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Management Team Boards • Council Committees • Health and Safety guidance for services, including Lone Working • Identified health and safety team link for all teams • Child protection and safeguarding guidance and professional learning available • Range of policies/procedures for schools to support consistent practice • Service Manager? Quality Assurance activity within teams and through professional supervision. • Multi-agency Quality Improvement activity • Service Business Continuity Plan • Improvement groups comprising central Officers and school staff identify and address emerging risks • Data dashboard and Risk Register discussed fortnightly by Senior Management Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Inspectorate Inspections • Health and Safety Executive Covid-19 inspections • Health and Safety Team compliance visits to work settings • Extended Corporate Management Team data reviews • Performance reports to Committee • Annual reporting of Risk Registers to Committee • Regular contact with Scottish Government OCSA Team • External Audit • Monthly budget print outs • Annual External Audit and report • Annual Internal Audit Plan approved and overseen by Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee • Audit Scotland and National Audit reports

- Staff supported to fulfil registration requirements to ensure continuous professional development.

- Regular finance meetings with Senior Leadership Team
- Assurance Team
- Committee reports
- Regular contact with Social Work Scotland and COSLA

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services Committee
DATE	8th November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Mental Health and Wellbeing Summit
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/22/249
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott (Chief Executive)
CHIEF OFFICER	Eleanor Sheppard
REPORT AUTHOR	Gael Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 In September the Education Operational Delivery Committee instructed the Chief Education Officer to consider the data shared in Committee Report OPE/22/159 and plan next steps by holding a multi-agency Health & Wellbeing Summit. The Committee instructed that the outcome of the health and Wellbeing Summit be reported to Committee as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter and this report aims to satisfy that instruction.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

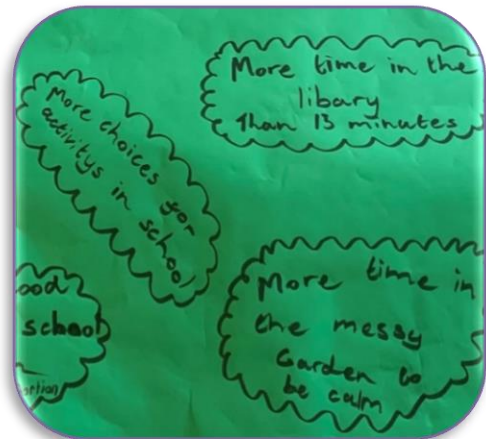
That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the approach taken to delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Summit held on the 14th October 2022;
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to establish a Mental Health Collaborative to focus on positive mental health from birth to end of life;
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to establish an aligned Youth Taskforce to inform the work of the Mental Health Collaborative; and
- 2.4 instructs the Chief Education Officer to report on progress within one calendar year.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 A Health and Wellbeing Summit was held on 14th October in the Town and County Hall. The Summit enabled around 60 decision makers to come together and explore the data outlined in Committee report OPE/22/159 both personally and collectively. The event also provided an opportunity for attendees to hear directly from the children and young people of Aberdeen and consider how best to respond to health and wellbeing needs together.

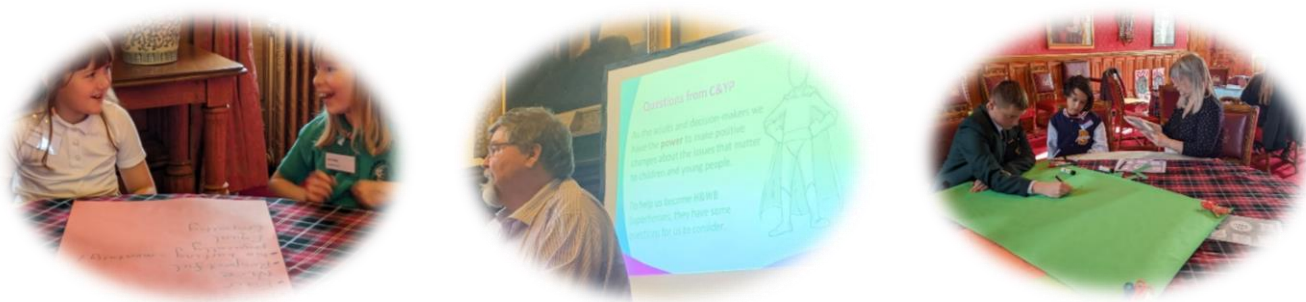
- 3.2 Attendees included local decision makers from the Community Planning partners including Elected Members, Public Health, the Third Sector as well as representatives from Scottish Government and their agencies. Children and young people worked in parallel to this event, directing key questions and comments to delegates through various creative approaches and through direct dialogue. All attendees benefited from the wide range of perspectives shared on the day and all showed a commitment to work in collaboration and with greater integration.
- 3.3 There was clear agreement from partners to establish robust governance arrangements across agencies, to focus on mental health and wellbeing from pre-birth to end of life through the proposed development of a Mental Health Collaborative. This thematic approach across all citizens takes account of the high number of young people who are impacted by compromised parental mental health and emerging trends suggesting that separated parents and young parents require additional consideration.
- 3.4 This Collaborative will take lead responsibility for considering a number of key improvement outcomes identified through the summit, ongoing review of work and support engagement of agreed actions required to enable sustainable and evidence-based impact. This on-going review is thought critical given the changing needs of children and families. Attendees at the Summit agreed that a follow up Summit should be held before the end of this school session.



3.5 Key themes that have already been identified for the Collaborative to consider are:

- On-going review of qualitative and quantitative data, considering improved data alignment, for sharing and using data and a focus on trying to reduce the number of times a family must retell their story
- Coordinated and integrated resource planning as part of a collaborative approach to responding to the emerging trends within a shared data structure
- A need for proactive, preventative services for children and families which should in turn lead to fewer referrals for specialist support
- Improved accessibility of information to support preventions, self-referral an earlier intervention
- Ensuring the lived experiences and voices of children and young people and their families is central to the design of services
- Improved understanding of adolescent brain development across services
- Reducing the impact of poverty on the 6 identified groups most at risk
- Reduce demand on tier 3 services by improving the accessibility of tier 2 services
- Better connect children's and adults services to address family wellbeing and build resilience of all

The agreed workplan of the collaborative will be shared with Members through a service update and relevant actions should be reflected and considered through the work of the LOIP and refreshed Children's Services Plan.



3.6 A Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Collaborative will be agreed before the end of 2022 and shared with Members through a Service update.

3.7 The work of the group will be supported through the introduction of a Mental Health Youth Group, to ensure the voices of children and young people are listened to, understood, and responded to. It is expected that the Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Collaborative will make explicit reference to how the Youth Group will directly inform decision making.

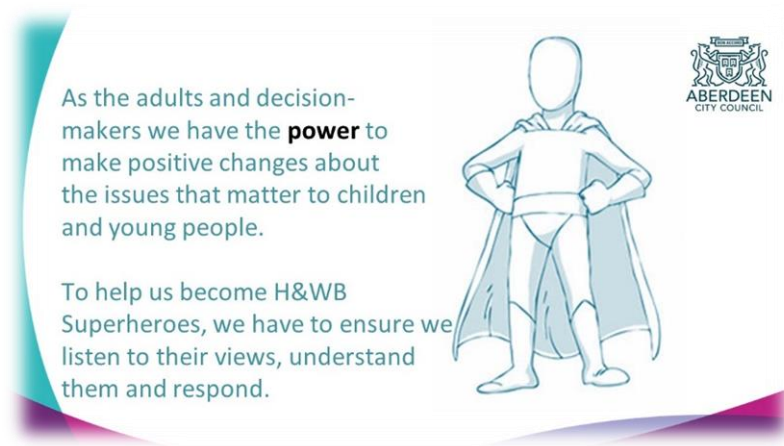
3.8 In addition to the establishment of these collaboratives, some actions were identified for completion within the next 6 months. These include:

- Engagement with 'The One Good Adult' Resource developed in partnership with Scottish Government, Children In Scotland and NHS Education for Scotland
- The development of materials to support an improved, collective understanding of adolescent brain development to ensure that our young

people, parents and carers and professionals understand how brain development can impact self-perception.

- Consideration of which further services could be accessed through Fit Like Aberdeen to enhance the strong offer of support that is already in place.

3.9 It is proposed that an update on progress be provided within one calendar year.



4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report and any funding requirements linked to recommendations raised by the Mental Health Collaborative will come from existing funding streams or seek further action if required.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 provides that children's services should be provided in a way which best safeguards, supports or promotes the wellbeing of children; ensures that any action to meet needs is taken at the earliest Page 199 appropriate time and that, where appropriate, action is taken to prevent needs arising; is most integrated from the point of view of the recipients; and constitutes the best use of available resources.

5.2 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 places a duty on Education Authorities to secure that education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential and in carrying out this duty to have due regard to the views of children and young people.

5.3 The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on the Authority to make adequate and efficient provision for supporting children and young people with additional support needs.

5.4 The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the Authority to Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and

those who do not and to take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.

- 5.5 The ingathering of data from the surveys undertaken and the proposed steps to address the findings of these surveys will assist the Authority to implement these duties more effectively.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Only positive environmental impacts have been identified. On-going promotion of pupil voice and their participation in decision making will help develop citizens who consider environmental implications in later life.

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?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners	Working with multi-agency partners to address health and wellbeing needs helps maximise the use of resource and helps collectively reduce the risk.	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with the ASL Act as amended	Establishing a multi-agency plan will help mitigate this risk and ensure a proactive response by all key partners given the interdependence in this area.	L	Yes
Operational	Staff are overwhelmed, which leads to low morale as staff feel unable to meet the educational and well-being needs of young people.	Staff wellbeing surveys are undertaken which help us to understand their needs and respond with an ongoing commitment to delivering support	L	Yes

		and high-quality professional learning for all.		
Financial	Risk of not having sufficient resource.	Ongoing consideration of a multi-agency approach to service delivery and resource, ensures the right support from the right place is timely and we have a more joined up process for children and families.	L	Yes
Reputational	Where single agency support is in place for children and young people to meet their physical and mental wellbeing needs we are unlikely to meet these, causing a reputational risk to the organisation.	Data scrutiny, reporting and strong partnerships enable us to enhance the Council's reputation for strong collaborative and solution focused working.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement UNICEF Child Friendly accreditation.</p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of Child Friendly City accreditation as independent inspectors will have made judgements on the extent to which children's rights inform the work of our schools.</p> <p>External scrutiny provides helpful assurance that there is sufficient focus on helping young people recover from the pandemic and that the school self-evaluation and improvement plan is well positioned to support a closing of the poverty related attainment gap.</p>

[Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#)

<p>Prosperous People -children and young people</p>	<p>The detail within this report supports the delivery of Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9 in the refreshed LOIP. This includes the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase to 80%, the number of staff who feel confident about how to directly support, or refer a child for support, and signpost to appropriate services by 2022. • 100% of schools offer sustainable and equitable access to counselling for those children aged 10 and above who require it by 2022. • The number of children and young people with an eating disorder who are identified within 3 months of onset is increased by 50% by 2023. • Increase by 80% the use of digital wellbeing resources for children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing by 2022. • 100% of children and young people have free access to physical activity which improves mental health and wellbeing by 2022 • Increase the number of care experienced young people by 10% receiving multiagency throughcare/aftercare support by 2023 • Increase number of young people who need support in relation to trauma and bereavement having access to such support by 50% by 2023. • Increase % of people who walk as one mode of travel by 10% by 2023. Increase % of people who cycle as one mode of travel by 2% by 2023. • Increase the number of community run green spaces by a minimum of 8 that are organised and self-managed for both people and nature by 2023.
<p>Prosperous Place</p>	
<p>Regional and City Strategies Regional Cultural Strategy Prevention Strategy Children’s Services Plan</p>	<p>The universal provision of education is fully aligned to the Prevention Strategy and a key partner to the Children’s Services Plan</p>

National Improvement Framework Plan	
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services Committee
DATE	8 November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	School Estate Plan 2022 – Implementation Plan
REPORT NUMBER	RES/22/242
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Jones
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report presents the draft timeline for implementing the recommended actions from the School Estate Plan, as agreed by the Education Operational Delivery Committee on 8 September 2022.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

2.1 Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to implement the School Estate Plan in accordance with the timeline presented at Appendix 1 of this report.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 At its meeting of 8 September 2022, the Education Operational Delivery Committee approved the Council’s School Estate Plan, and instructed the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to “present a delivery plan for implementing the agreed actions in this report to the next meeting of the Education and Children’s Services Committee.” This report seeks to fulfil that instruction.

3.2 The approved School Estate Plan includes 38 separate instructions, many of which will require detailed feasibility studies, stakeholder engagement activity, and further reports to be compiled for further consideration by committee. These individual instructions will therefore become projects in their own right, and it is anticipated that it will take approximately two years to complete all of the projects included within the Plan.

3.3 The implementation plan presented at Appendix 1 of this report sets out the order of priority in which the projects will be carried out, and provides an indicative timeline for the activities which require to be undertaken in order to progress those projects. The plan is presented in two formats for ease of reading: Appendix 1A shows the list of projects and their likely timescales only, whilst Appendix 1B presents the same list of projects as a full Gantt chart, to provide an overview of all of the activity which will be taking place at any one time.

- 3.4 The projects have been prioritised in the implementation plan according to the level of urgency in which the relevant changes to the school estate require to be made, whilst also considering the complexity of each project and the likely time required to fully meet the committee's instructions.
- 3.5 Where feasibility studies are to be carried out to identify options for making improvements to existing buildings, these studies will include an assessment of the accessibility of the building, and any opportunities for improving levels of accessibility will be incorporated into the identified options as appropriate.
- 3.6 The timescales presented in the plan represent officers' best estimates of the time which will be required to undertake each project, and the individual workstreams contained within them. These may be subject to change, as a range of factors may influence the amount of time required, as the work progresses.
- 3.7 An online consultation on the School Estate Plan, aimed at children and young people, was launched in September 2022, and this will remain open until 31 December 2022. The findings from this consultation will be reported to the Committee alongside future updates on progress with the implementation of the Plan. The online consultation can be found here: <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/aberdeen-city-council-school-estate-plan>

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The cost of carrying out the feasibility studies and other actions detailed within the implementation plan will be met through the Contingency budget within the reprofiled General Fund Capital Programme.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of every education authority to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education.
- 5.2 Section 17 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of an education authority in the performance of their functions under sections 1 to 6 of the Act, to provide for their area, sufficient accommodation in public schools and other educational establishments under their management to enable them to perform their said functions. In addition, an education authority shall maintain and keep efficient every public school, and other educational establishment under their management, and shall from time to time provide such additional accommodation as may be necessary to enable them to perform their functions under the Act and may, provide, alter, improve, enlarge, equip and maintain schools and other educational establishments within their area.
- 5.3 The identified priorities for developing the school estate outlined in the draft implementation plan are in fulfilment of the above duties incumbent upon the Education Authority.

5.4 A proposal to make changes to a school, including closing, relocating or opening a school, is subject to consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Formal consultations will require to be carried out for any proposals to make these types of changes to schools, and consideration of this has been given in the recommendations arising from the School Estate Plan, and in the activities and timescales set out within the implementation plan.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from the recommendation within this report.

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?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified			
Compliance	(1) Failure to plan effectively for the school estate, leading to the Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate and efficient provision (2) Failure to consult formally with stakeholders on changes to schools would be in breach of legislation	(1) The School Estate Plan and implementation plan set out priorities for the school estate and proposals for continually monitoring and updating plans to ensure adequate and efficient provision is maintained (2) Any proposed changes to schools arising from the School Estate Plan will incorporate full statutory consultation to ensure compliance with legislation	L	Yes
Operational	(1) Failure to engage and consult with communities on the future of the	(1) The School Estate Plan and implementation plan emphasise a renewed approach	M	Yes

	school estate which serves them, could lead to a breakdown in relationships with community members. Some proposals about the future of the school estate may not be popular with some stakeholders	which places community engagement and consultation at the centre		
Financial	No significant risks identified.			
Reputational	Failure to engage and consult with communities on the future of the school estate which serves them, could lead to reputational damage for the Council. Some proposals about the future of the school estate may not be popular with some stakeholders	The School Estate Plan and implementation plan emphasise a renewed approach which places community engagement and consultation at the centre	M	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified.			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>This report supports the delivery of the following policy statements:</p> <p><u>A City of Opportunity</u></p> <p>Policy Statement 2 - Review and invest in our school estate, ensuring all of Aberdeen's schools are fit for the educational needs and the challenges</p>

	<p>of the 21st century. The report seeks Committee's approval of the School Estate Plan.</p> <p><u>A Prosperous City</u> Policy Statement 8 - Seek to buy goods, services and food locally whenever possible, subject to complying with the law and public tendering requirements. Opportunities to do this will be considered for all Capital Projects.</p>
<p><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></p>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of Stretch Outcome 8 in the LOIP – Child friendly city where all decisions which impact children and young people will be informed by them by 2026. The School Estate Plan and implementation plan set out how all stakeholders including children and young people will be consulted on proposals to make changes to the school estate.
Regional and City Strategies	The School Estate Plan and implementation plan will support the delivery of the Council's Property and Estates Strategy (currently in draft).

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	No other assessments required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Education Operational Delivery Committee, 8 September 2022: [Agenda Item 14: School Estate Plan 2022](#).

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 : School Estate Plan Implementation Plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix 1A : Implementation Plan

(Projects List)

Tasks marked with a * are subject to further Committee approvals, and are dependent on the outcomes of the preceding tasks - they are presented here to give an indication of the likely programme and timescales if they are required, and should the necessary approvals be granted.

Recommendation / Key Tasks & Milestones	Indicative Timescale
Projects Commencing Autumn 2022	
HH1 - Hazlehead / Countesswells Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Autumn 22 - Summer 23
<i>Develop and submit LEIP funding application</i>	<i>Autumn 2022</i>
Deadline for LEIP application	31/10/2022
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Autumn/Winter 22/23</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Winter 22 - Spring 23</i>
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	17/05/2023
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	04/07/2023
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	<i>TBC</i>
A5 - Review signage in all schools	Autumn 22 - Summer 23
<i>Research / project scoping</i>	<i>Autumn 22</i>
<i>Survey schools</i>	<i>Winter 22/23</i>
Council Budget Meeting (secure budget)	01/03/2023
<i>Implement Changes</i>	<i>Spring/Summer 23</i>
B2 - Bucksburn / Newhills additional primary provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Autumn 22 - Summer 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Autumn 22</i>
<i>Feasibility Study & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Winter 22/23</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Winter/Spring 23</i>
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	17/05/2023
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	04/07/2023
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	<i>TBC</i>
O2 - Greenbrae School rezoning - Consultation	Autumn 22 - Spring 23
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	<i>Autumn/Winter 22</i>
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	21/03/2023
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	<i>TBC</i>
B1 - Bucksburn Academy Extension - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Autumn 22 - Spring 23
<i>Update and finalise OBC</i>	<i>Autumn/Winter 22</i>
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	01/02/2023
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	21/03/2023
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	<i>TBC</i>
Projects Commencing Winter 2022/23	
L2 - Walker Road School Relocation - Consultation	Winter 22/23 - Spring 23
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	<i>Winter 22/23</i>
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	21/03/2023
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	<i>TBC</i>
N2 - Northfield ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 22/23 - Autumn 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Winter 22/23</i>
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Spring/Summer 23</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Spring/Summer 23</i>
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	12/09/2023
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	13/09/2023
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	<i>TBC</i>
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	<i>TBC</i>

Recommendation / Key Tasks & Milestones	Indicative Timescale
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
O3 - Oldmachar ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 22/23 - Autumn 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	Winter 22/23
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	Spring/Summer 23
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Summer 23
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	12/09/2023
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	13/09/2023
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
HH4 / AG3 - Gaelic Medium Education catchment areas - consultation	Winter 22/23 - Summer 23
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	Winter/Spring 22/23
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	23/05/2023
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
CA1 - Victorian School Building Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 22/23 - Spring 24
<i>Planning & Preparation / Analysis & Research</i>	Winter/Spring 22/23
<i>Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessments</i>	Summer/Autumn/Winter 23/24
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Winter/Spring 24
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)	May 2024
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
Projects Commencing Spring 2023	
H2 - Harlaw Academy Condition & Suitability Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	Spring 23
<i>Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment</i>	Summer/Autumn 23
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Summer/Autumn 23
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	22/11/2023
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
S3 - St Machar Academy Outdoor Space Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	Spring 23
<i>Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment</i>	Summer 23
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Summer/Autumn 23
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	22/11/2023
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
H3 - Ferryhill School Suitability Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	Spring 23
<i>Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment</i>	Spring/Summer 23
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Summer/Autumn 23
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	22/11/2023
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
Projects Commencing Summer 2023	
RC1 - Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Summer 23 - Summer 24
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	Summer/Autumn 23
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	Autumn/Winter 23/24
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Winter/Spring 24
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)	July 2024
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal (date TBC)	July 2024

Recommendation / Key Tasks & Milestones	Indicative Timescale
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
L1 - Loirston Loch Additional Primary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Summer 23 - Summer 24
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Summer/Autumn 23</i>
<i>Feasibility Study & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Autumn/Winter 23/24</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Winter/Spring 24</i>
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)	July 2024
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	July 2024
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
Projects Commencing Winter 2023/24	
S2 - Sunnybank School Relocation of Additional Services - Options Appraisal	Winter 23/24 - Summer 24
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Winter 23/24</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Winter/Spring 23/24</i>
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)	May 24
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal (date TBC)	June 24
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
NA1 - Grandhome / Oldmachar / Bridge of Don Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 23/24 - Autumn 24
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Winter 23/24</i>
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Study & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Winter/Spring 23/24</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Spring 24</i>
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)	September 2024
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal (date TBC)	September 2024
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
NA2 - Bucksburn & Dyce Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 23/24 - Autumn 24
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Winter 23/24</i>
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Winter/Spring 23/24</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Spring/Summer 24</i>
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)	September 24
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal (date TBC)	September 24
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC
S1 - Riverbank School Excess Capacity - Options Appraisal	Winter 23/24 - Spring 24
<i>Options appraisal</i>	<i>Winter 23/24</i>
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of recommendations (date TBC)	March 2024
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	

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Appendix 1B : Implementation Plan
 [Full Gantt Chart]

Tasks marked with a * are subject to further Committee approval, and are dependent on the outcomes of the preceding tasks - they are presented here to give an indication of the likely programme and timescale: if they are required, and should the necessary approvals be granted.

Recommendation / Key Tasks & Milestones	Indicative Timescale	Autumn 22	Winter 22/23	Spring 23	Summer 23	Autumn 23	Winter 23/24	Spring 24	Summer 24	Autumn 24
Projects Commencing Autumn 2022										
H11 - Haleshead / Countesswells Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Autumn 22 - Summer 23									
Develop and submit EIP Funding application	Autumn 2022									
Deadline for EIP application	31/03/2022									
Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement	Autumn/Winter 22/23									
Develop OBC	Winter 22 - Spring 23									
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	17/05/2023									
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	04/07/2023									
Statutory Consultation*	TBC									
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC									
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
A5 - Review signage in all schools	Autumn 22 - Summer 23									
Research / project scoping	Autumn 22									
Survey schools	Winter 22/23									
Council Budget Meeting (secure budget)	01/03/2023									
Implement Changes	Spring/Summer 23									
B2 - Buckburn / Newhills additional primary provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Autumn 22 - Summer 23									
Planning & Preparation	Autumn 22									
Feasibility Study & Stakeholder Engagement	Winter 22/23									
Develop OBC	Winter/Spring 23									
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	17/05/2023									
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	04/07/2023									
Statutory Consultation*	TBC									
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC									
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
O2 - Greenbrae School rezoning - Consultation	Autumn 22 - Spring 23									
Statutory Consultation	Autumn/Winter 22									
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	21/03/2023									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
B1 - Buckburn Academy Extension - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Autumn 22 - Spring 23									
Update and finalise OBC	Autumn/Winter 22									
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	01/02/2023									
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	21/03/2023									
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC									
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
Projects Commencing Winter 2022/23										
L2 - Walker Road School Relocation - Consultation	Winter 22/23 - Spring 23									
Statutory Consultation	Winter 22/23									
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	21/03/2023									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
N2 - Northfield ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 22/23 - Autumn 23									
Planning & Preparation	Winter 22/23									
Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement	Spring/Summer 23									
Develop OBC	Spring/Summer 23									
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	12/09/2023									
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	23/09/2023									
Statutory Consultation*	TBC									
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC									
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
O3 - Oldmarch ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 22/23 - Autumn 23									
Planning & Preparation	Winter 22/23									
Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement	Spring/Summer 23									
Develop OBC	Summer 23									
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	12/09/2023									
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	13/09/2023									
Statutory Consultation*	TBC									
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC									
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
H4 / AG3 - Gaelic Medium Education catchment areas - consultation	Winter 22/23 - Summer 23									
Statutory Consultation	Winter/Spring 22/23									
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	21/03/2023									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
CA1 - Victorian School Building Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 22/23 - Spring 24									
Planning & Preparation / Analysis & Research	Winter/Spring 22/23									
Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessments	Summer/Autumn/Winter 23/24									
Develop OBC	Winter/Spring 24									
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (late TBC)	May 2024									
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC									
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
Projects Commencing Spring 2023										
H2 - Harlaw Academy Condition & Suitability Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23									
Planning & Preparation	Spring 23									
Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment	Summer/Autumn 23									
Develop OBC	Summer/Autumn 23									
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	22/11/2023									
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC									
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
S3 - St Machar Academy Outdoor Space Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23									
Planning & Preparation	Spring 23									
Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment	Summer 23									
Develop OBC	Summer/Autumn 23									
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	22/11/2023									
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC									
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC									
Implement Decisions*	TBC									
H3 - Ferryhill School Suitability Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23									
Planning & Preparation	Spring 23									

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education Operational Delivery Committee
DATE	8 November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Update of Gaelic Medium Education
REPORT NUMBER	OCE/22/241
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott (Chief Executive)
CHIEF OFFICER	Eleanor Sheppard
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1 and 1.1.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 In January 2022 Committee instructed an evaluation of the current approach to the delivery of Gaelic Medium Education in order to understand the relatively low demand for provision in Aberdeen City with a view to taking action to increase uptake. This report aims to satisfy that instruction.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the outcome of an on-line survey conducted contained in Appendix A and high level evaluation undertaken by the Education Service contained in Appendix B;
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Education Officer to review and enhance how Gaelic Medium Provision is promoted across the city;
- 2.3 instruct the Chief Education Officer to continue to work with partners to fill the vacant posts in Gaelic Medium provision; and
- 2.4 instruct the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to undertake a statutory public consultation commencing 16 January 2023 on the proposal to change the catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education provision at Hazlehead Academy and Gilcomstoun School, to align with the boundaries of Aberdeen City (i.e. to propose a city wide catchment area for GME provision); and
- 2.5 instruct the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to report back to the Committee on the outcomes of the consultation at its next available meeting following conclusion of the consultation process.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Gaelic Medium Early Learning and Childcare and Gaelic Medium primary provision are made available at Gilcomstoun Primary School. Secondary Gaelic Medium provision is made available at Hazlehead Academy.
- 3.2 Nationally, only 11 Local Authorities offer Gaelic Medium Early Learning and Childcare, 15 offer Gaelic Medium Primary provision and 13 offer secondary provision. The provision in Aberdeen City can be accessed by families in Aberdeenshire.
- 3.3 Although the uptake of Gaelic Medium provision in Aberdeen City is at the lower end compared to other Local Authorities (43% of primary pupils in the Western Isles access GME compared to 0.3% of primary pupils in both Aberdeen and South Lanarkshire), registrations for provisions are relatively stable. Aberdeen City Council continues to have regard to the Statutory Guidance on the provision of Gaelic Medium Education and promote and support the availability of Gaelic Medium Education and learning. However, the current approaches are not realising an increase in applications or registrations for the provision.
- 3.4 An online survey was undertaken to try to understand the local demand for Gaelic Medium Education. The survey was promoted on Local Authority social media channels, through schools and through the Education Service Newsletter. The survey ran from mid-July to the end of September and gained a total of 141 responses. Although this may seem a fairly low response rate, of Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant advise us that national surveys generally attract around 200 responses so the number of responses are thought to be sufficient to draw conclusions.
- 3.5 Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant expressed some reservations about the survey and shared concerns that our reporting of survey outcomes may not align with the Local Authority duty to promote Gaelic Medium Education. Appendix A has been shared with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant in advance of publication in an attempt to alleviate these concerns. Both Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant are comfortable with the content of the report and welcome the opportunity to work with central officers to try and address the staffing issues the service is experiencing.
- 3.6 It is clear from the responses that there is a need to raise the profile of all three provisions. We will continue to work closely with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, University of Highlands and Islands and Comann nam Pàrant to promote the provisions through their social media channels as well as using our own information sharing platforms. There is also a need to reach out to the Gaelic community with the aim of helping others feel more connected to it.
- 3.7 The survey did not provide conclusive evidence of the reasons for the relatively low local demand for the provision of Gaelic Medium Education. As a result, a survey was issued to parents and carers to explore potential barriers more fully. This evaluation activity has helped inform the evaluation contained in Appendix B.

- 3.8 As a result of both the public survey and the evaluation activity, it can be concluded that there is a need to further promote the availability of provision, to continue to work to address the challenges faced around staffing to ensure high quality provision and progress work to establish a catchment area in keeping with the statutory guidance. Parents and carers advise that they would welcome a city wide catchment area.
- 3.9 Further to the instruction from Committee in September, as a result of the online survey and feedback from parents, it is now proposed to consult on the creation of a city wide catchment area for GME provision.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The provision of a city wide catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education would result in a rise in school transport costs. The potential impact is hard to quantify given that costs will depend on where interested families reside.
- 4.2 Any future recommendation to instate a city wide catchment area would require to be referred to the Council budget setting process to ensure that sufficient funds are available.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory Consultation Requirements in regard to Catchment Areas

- 5.1 The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended requires local authorities to carry out a public consultation on proposals to make permanent changes to school zones, and for the outcomes of that consultation to be considered, before making a final decision on whether to implement the proposals. The proposed consultation (recommendation 2.4) on establishing a new catchment area for GME provision will be carried out in full compliance with the legislation. The 2010 Act prescribes the procedural steps the Education Authority must take. This includes:
- preparation of a proposal paper;
 - giving notice of the proposal;
 - ingathering oral and written representations;
 - holding a public meeting;
 - providing Education Scotland with all relevant documentation;
 - reviewing the proposal having regard to the representations received and Education Scotland's report; and
 - thereafter publishing a consultation report containing an explanation of how it has reviewed the proposal and responding to the points raised during the consultation.
- 5.2 As the proposal does not refer to the proposed closure of any school, any decision to implement it by this Committee cannot be called in by Scottish Ministers. A complaint may be made to Scottish Ministers under section 70 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 where it is alleged that an Education Authority has failed to comply with obligations placed upon it by the 2010 Act. In such instances, if satisfied the Authority is in default the Scottish Ministers may make an order requiring that the statutory duty be carried out.

- 5.3 Statutory guidance on Gaelic Education states that “Education authorities should establish catchment areas for GME provision and may wish to consider demand for GME when setting guidelines for placing pupils in GME provision”. The Guidance further states that “*the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 places a duty on education authorities to set out catchment areas for their schools and guidelines to be followed when placing pupils in schools. As such, education authority areas will be divided up into a number of school catchment areas, with placing guidelines based on local factors such as distance to the school and the number of pupils living in the area. A catchment area for GME provision should be an area in which the education authority thinks it is reasonable for pupils wishing to receive GME provision to travel to school, and should have the potential to attract parents to choose GME provision for their children. Catchment areas for GME provision will normally overlay a number of school catchment areas*”.

Duty to Promote Gaelic Medium Education

- 5.4 The Authority has a duty under section 15 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 to promote Gaelic Medium Education in its area so far as is reasonably practicable. In carrying out its duty of promotion an Education Authority must take reasonable steps to ensure it publicises, in such manner as it thinks appropriate, the provision in its area of Gaelic Medium Education. In carrying out its duty of support an Education Authority must:
- take reasonable steps to ensure that teachers in any class where the education is provided have such resources, training and opportunities as are reasonably necessary to adequately and effectively provide the education;
 - take reasonable steps to ensure that pupils in any such class have such resources as are reasonably necessary to adequately and effectively receive and benefit from the education; and
 - have regard to any guidance under section 9 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.
- 5.5 Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of every education authority to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education and further education. Section 28 of the 1980 Act provides that in the exercise and performance of their powers and duties under the Act, education authorities shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of suitable instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents.

Duty to Provide Transport

- 5.6 Section 51 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 states that an Education Authority shall make such arrangements as they consider necessary for:-
- the provision of free school transport for the whole or part of the journey
 - making bicycles or other suitable means of transport available to the pupils
 - paying some or all of pupils reasonable travelling costs
 - or any combination of the above.
- 5.7 In considering whether to make any arrangements, section 51 (2C) states that

an education authority shall have regard to the safety of such pupils.

- 5.8 Statutory walking distances to school are set out in Section 42(4) of the Act, and are defined as three miles for children aged eight years and over, and two miles for children aged under eight.
- 5.9 Although the Act sets no "trigger" distance beyond which specific transport should be provided, the effect of combining the requirements of Sections 42(4) (walking distances) and 51 is commonly viewed as obliging an education authority to provide school transport (free for children who live beyond the statutory distances) whenever it would be unreasonable, dangerous or (in some cases) impossible for a child to walk to their zoned school (even if accompanied).
- 5.10 There is no duty to provide transport where the Education Authority has proposed a placement for a child in their zoned school, and if necessary, offered suitable arrangements for transport to avoid the pupil having to walk more than the statutory walking distance, but where the pupil attends another school as the result of a placing request. (Section 51(2A) of the 1980 Act). Presently, pupils who live out with the catchment areas of Hazlehead Academy and Gilcounstoun School must make a placing request to attend the GME provision there. Accordingly, there is no duty to provide transport. If the catchment area for GME provision changes to city wide, there would be an obligation to provide free transport for any pupils attending the GME provision who lived beyond the statutory distances (three miles for children aged eight years and over, and two miles for children aged under eight.)

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified from this report.

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?
Strategic Risk	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	Risk of non-compliance with legislation relating to school zoning / school placings procedures and required consultation	All aspects of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended will be complied with.	L	Yes

Operational	Risk of not being able to fill vacant posts	Contacts made with all partners to ensure all adverts are circulated throughout the Gaelic community and using all social media platforms	M	Yes
Financial	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reputational	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	Mitigated through the establishment of a set of measures to routinely track impact over a school year.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following policy statements:-</p> <p>We will actively work with partners to review and enhance how Gaelic provision is promoted across the city.</p> <p>Work with UHI and other partners to fill teacher vacancies in GME.</p> <p>Work with corporate landlord to support consultation on catchment areas.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p> <p>Regional Cultural Strategy</p> <p>Prevention Strategy</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework Plan</p>	<p>The proposals in this report support report our city Cultural Strategy - through promoting our culture and heritage.</p> <p>The proposals align with the NIF plan through supporting the delivery of quality learning experiences in GME and developing transition between provisions.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A GME Survey

Appendix B Evaluation of Gaelic Medium Education

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Tel	07581092279

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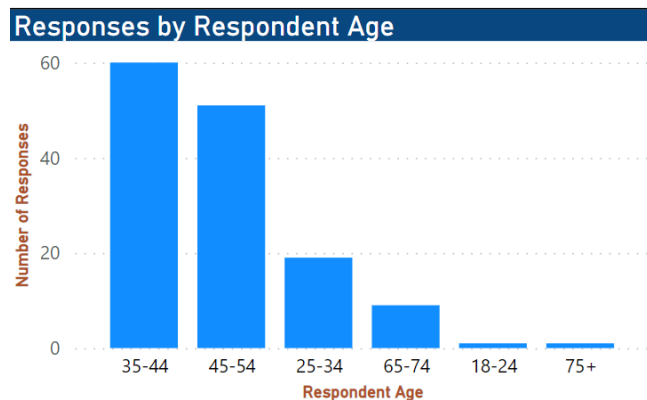
Appendix A Gaelic Medium Education Survey

An on-line survey was conducted between 13 July and 30 September 2022 to try to understand the relatively low demand for Gaelic Medium Education across Aberdeen City Council. The survey was promoted through the Council social media channels, through the Gaelic community with the help of Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant and through schools.

141 Responses were received. Although this return rate is low when considered as a percentage of the total city population of 227 430, it compares favourably when considering the general number of returns received when national surveys are conducted. Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant advise that around 200 returns are generally returned.

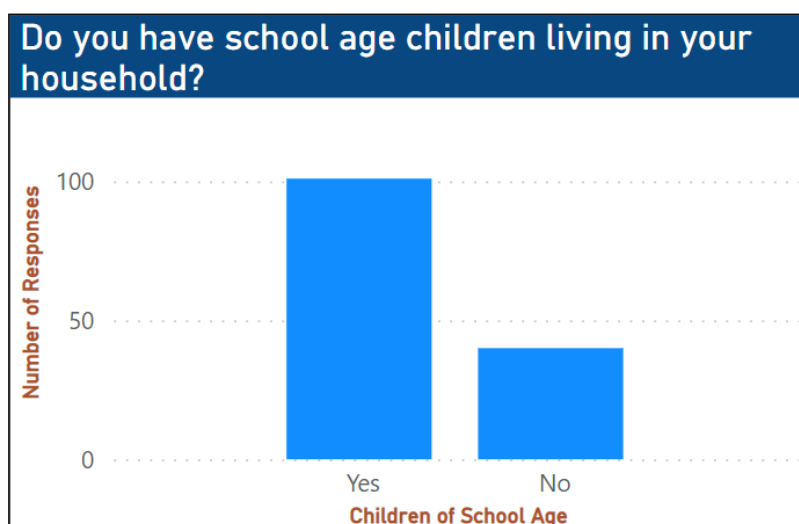
About those who responded to the survey

The majority of respondents were aged 35 to 44 although the age of respondents ranged from 18 to 75+.



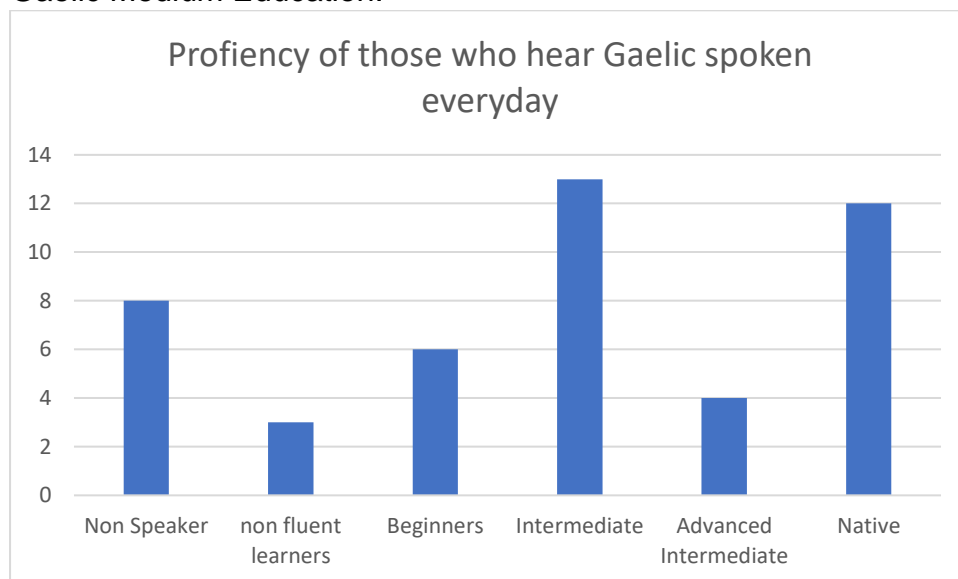
The majority of respondents (84%) were resident in Aberdeen City, 15% were resident in Aberdeenshire and 1% resided in the Western Isles.

72% of respondents had children of school age.



Respondents were asked how often they hear Gaelic being spoken

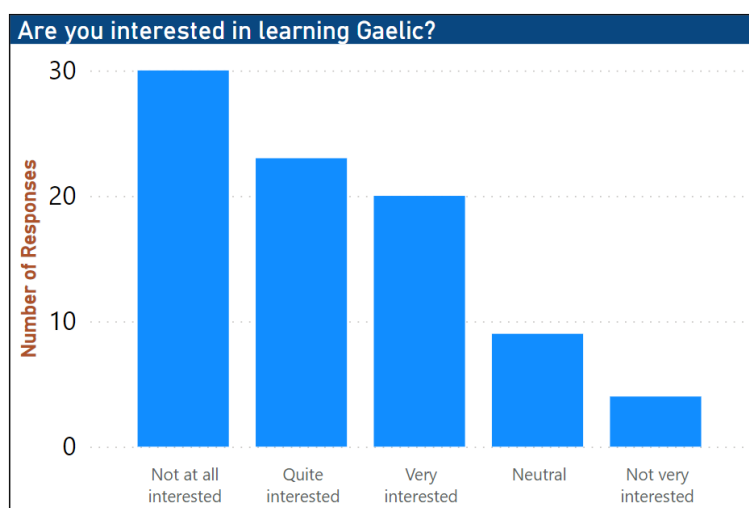
This question was asked as hearing Gaelic is known to directly influence demand for Gaelic Medium Education.



46 respondents hear Gaelic spoken everyday however their own proficiency varies from the 8 non-speakers through to 16 who were native or advanced.

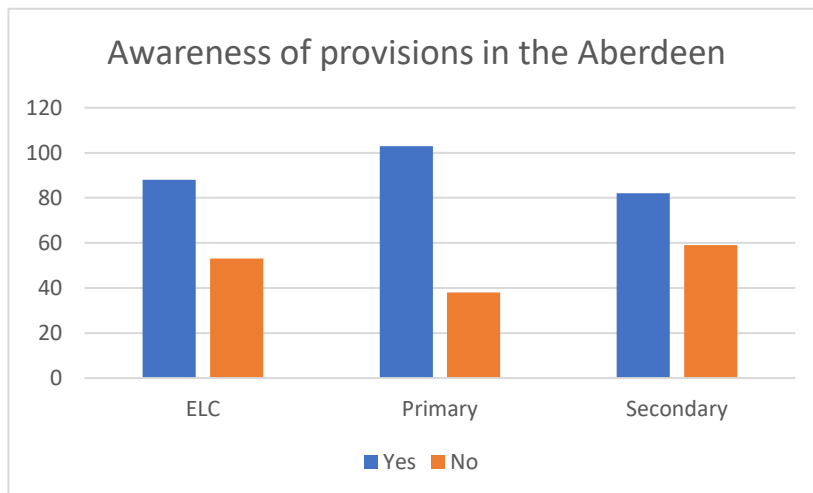
Respondents were asked about their interest in learning Gaelic

This question was asked as having an interest in speaking the language is known to influence the decision of parents and can therefore influence demand for Gaelic Medium Education.



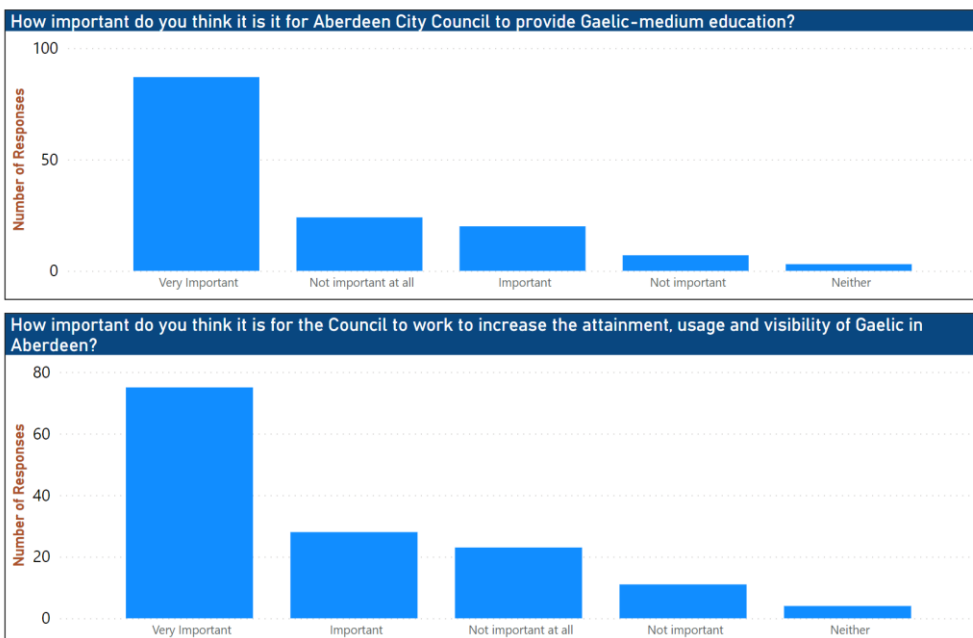
More people were quite interested or very interested than those who were not at all, or not very interested.

Respondents were then asked about their awareness of Gaelic Medium Education across Aberdeen City.



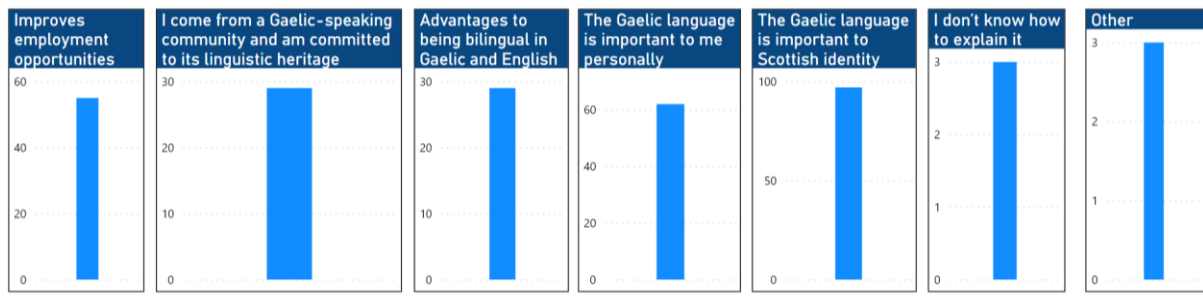
Although there are mechanisms in place to promote the provision in keeping with the statutory guidance, surveys continue to tell us that parents are not sufficiently aware of the provisions. There is a need for us to further promote the provision available across the city.

Respondents were then asked how important they felt it was to increase the attainment, usage and visibility of Aberdeen City Gaelic Medium Education. This question was designed to try to understand perceptions and the relatively low uptake across the city.



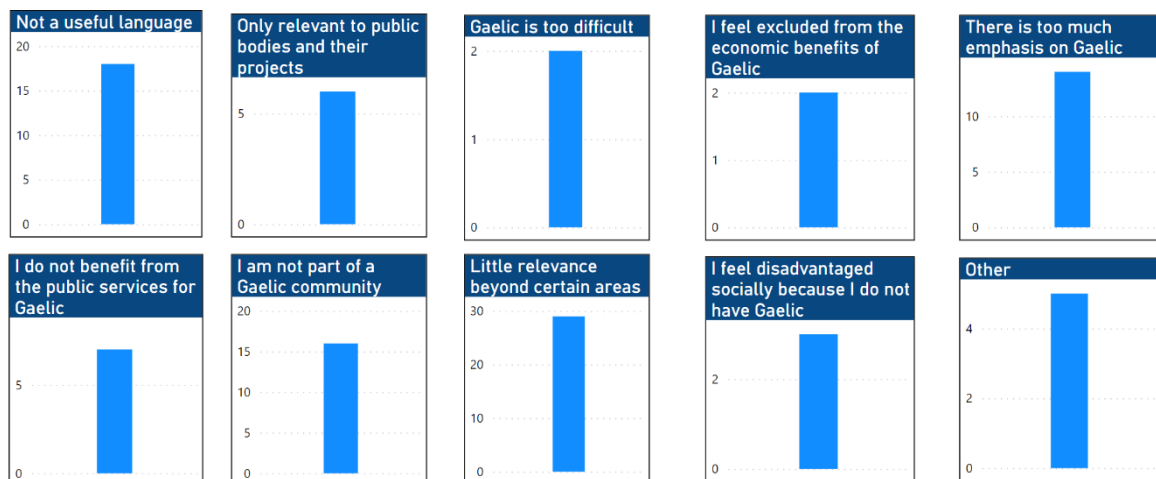
The majority of respondents value the GME provision on offer within Aberdeen and are keen to support further promotion and development.

Respondents who noted its importance were asked to consider why this was important.



The majority of respondents felt that Gaelic language is important to Scottish identity, culture and heritage and opens up employment opportunities in Gaelic speaking communities for those who have studied the language.

Respondents who didn't note its importance were asked to consider why this was not important to them.



Some respondents don't feel part of the Gaelic community and this seems to have influenced their responses. These findings will be shared with the Gaelic community.

Conclusion

It is clear from the responses that there is a need to raise the profile of all 3 provisions. We will continue to work closely with Bòrd na Gàidhlig, University of Highlands and Islands and Comann nam Pàrant to promote the provisions through their social media channels as well as using our own platforms.

There is also a need to reach out to the Gaelic community to share the findings of this survey with the aim of helping others feel more connected.

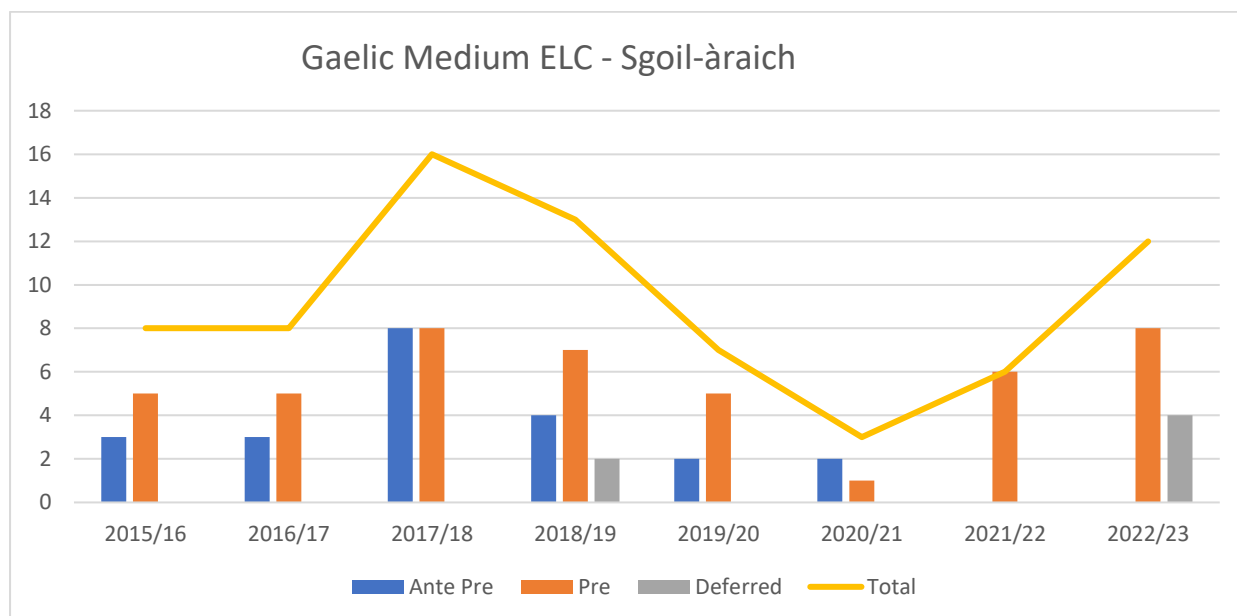
Appendix B

Service Evaluation of Gaelic Medium Education (GME)

Officers explored three questions to help understand what may be influencing the uptake of Gaelic Medium Education across Aberdeen City Council. The findings are summarised below.

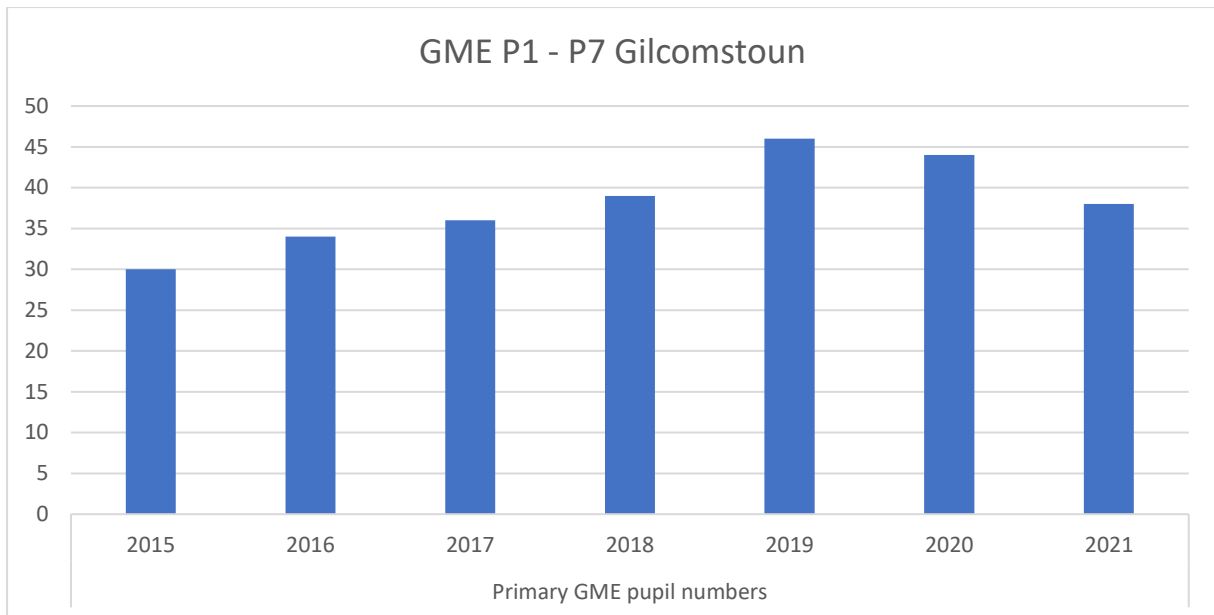
Is the current provision sufficient?

Aberdeen City is one of 11 Local Authorities who offer Gaelic Medium Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). Since August 2020, Gaelic Medium ELC has been provided within a new building at Gilcomstoun Primary School. The provision of Gaelic Medium ELC is outlined in ELC admission policies and has been promoted on social media to help increase knowledge of the provision.



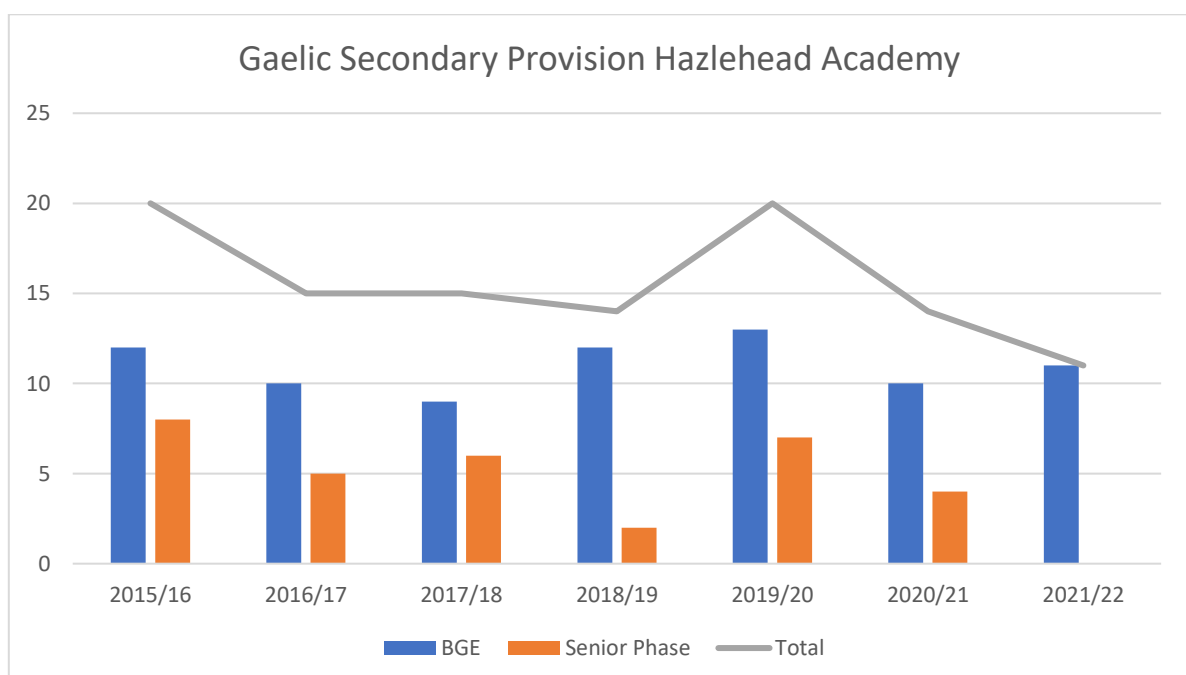
There is an upward trend in registrations for the Sgoil-àraich however the setting still has capacity for another 8 children. Although there are well planned and frequent transition activities between Sgoil-àraich and the Gaelic unit not all children choose to transition to P1 in the unit. The Lowest numbers were registered in 20/21 and are thought to be associated with the uncertainty created by the pandemic.

Aberdeen City is one of 15 Local Authorities who provide Gaelic Medium Primary School provision. Primary Gaelic Medium Education is provided at Gilcomstoun Primary School and around 0.3% of our total primary population take up this opportunity. Although uptake is low across Aberdeen, the percentage of primary school children accessing GME varies considerably across the country from 43% in the Western Isles to 0.3% in Aberdeen City and South Lanarkshire.



In the last 7 years numbers have peaked at 46 in the Primary School. During our recent consultation to create a zone for the school, parents suggested that establishing the whole city as a zone would increase numbers as it would allow parents to be secure in the knowledge children would be able to transition successfully to the provision at Hazlehead.

Aberdeen City is one of 13 Local Authorities who offer Gaelic Medium Secondary Education. Secondary Gaelic Medium Provision is located at Hazlehead Academy. In keeping with the national picture (less than half of those attending primary provision nationally attend GME provision in secondary), the number of children attending GME in secondary is considerably lower than the number attending primary provision. This is in keeping with national trends.



The Aberdeen City Council provision of Gaelic Medium Education is thought to be appropriate and sufficient.

Are there barriers to providing high quality provision?

The delivery of immersive Gaelic Medium Education relies on the provision of fluent Gaelic speakers. All three provisions, (Early Learning and Childcare, Primary and Secondary) have experienced considerable challenges in recruiting Gaelic speakers over the last few years. We have developed links with University of the Highlands and Islands and are working with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta to seek solutions in line with other authorities in the Northern Alliance. Both organisations support us through promoting our vacancies through their social media sites.

We have been fully staffed in secondary since August 2021, however this session we struggled to recruit to Primary and there are currently 2 teaching staff vacancies. The Primary provision continues to operate with our secondary staff member supporting the senior primary class with intensive input on grammar. This input has allowed the learners to develop relationships early with secondary staff and will support transition in the longer term.

Both provisions take all opportunities offered to engage in the wider Gaelic community with Gilcomstoun currently working with Midas Media to be part of a documentary called Green Scotland. During the filming the pupils in the p4 – 7 class will be discussing the issues in Gaelic. Secondary will be welcoming a Gaelic author for a question-and-answer session. There are also opportunities for groups to attend the National Mod.

Learners who chose to transition to their local secondary have been supported to keep their language skills alive through virtual sessions after school. This does not provide all the opportunities attending Hazlehead Academy would provide, however it means the use of the language is supported and learners can still access GME senior phase courses through our city campus.

Historically, a central Gaelic speaking Officer has helped oversee and drive the strategic direction of Gaelic Medium provisions. Unfortunately, repeated attempts to recruit to this Education Support Officer post have been unsuccessful and the post remains vacant. Following discussions with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta it was felt that the introduction of a promoted post in the city may help to attract staff. The proposal would be to reduce the central officer time and convert one of the existing teaching posts into a PT creating a career pathway to hopefully attract staff and help with retention.

Despite the challenges faced, our settings continue to develop their practice and look at innovative ways of engaging young people in Gaelic language experiences. This session we have the whole of the 2nd year at Hazlehead experiencing outdoor learning through Gaelic language with a view to youngsters choosing the Gaelic

Language options in senior phase. Each provision benefits from good links with other Gaelic Medium Provisions across the Northern Alliance and can access support from E sgoil where required.

The main barrier identified to the provision of a high-quality service is the provision of sufficient Gaelic speaking staff to support delivery in our settings. We continue to work with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant to advertise vacancies and with UHI to provide placements for undergraduates and probationer teachers. This session we have one UHI student teacher who has asked to be placed within the primary GME provision.

A parent survey issued in October highlighted the lack of sufficient Gaelic speaking staff as an area of concern. As a result of the survey findings a parent focus group will be established meeting termly to discuss issues relating to GME education.

Are there barriers to accessing the three provisions?

All three provisions can be accessed by families across the city however if zones alter to anything less than city -wide families would be required to submit a placing request. In the zoning consultation last year it was clear from parental feedback that it was felt the introduction of a city-wide zone removing the need for a placing request and providing equal access to all would increase the number of families wishing to access GME.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	8th November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Inspection Reporting
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/22/234
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott
CHIEF OFFICER	Eleanor Sheppard
REPORT AUTHOR	Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report details how Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings have engaged with His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and The Care Inspectorate since July 2022.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of this report;
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to continue to support Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings and schools to implement continuous improvement in keeping with the Quality Frameworks; and
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to monitor progress against the action plans put in place to realise improvements at Stompers and Flexible Childcare and report progress towards achieving the actions within 2 committee cycles.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Education Scotland

- 3.1 His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) has resumed their full inspection regime. Aberdeen City Council has been advised that the Harlaw Academy return inspection will take place in December 2022 as intimated previously and that Danestone Primary School will be inspected week beginning 31st October. Other school inspections are likely to be received over the course of the school session.

- 3.2 In planning the approach to school return inspections, HMIE proactively and positively engaged with Local Authorities to take account of learning from inspection visits to schools over the last 30 months. As a result, Local Authority Officers will continue to form part of school Inspection teams when a school is subject to a return visit. This approach is welcome and provides an opportunity to ensure that all parts of the education system have a shared understanding of standards to support improvement.
- 3.3 HMIE has also advised of their intention to undertake two thematic reviews over the 22/23 school session, both focussed on promoting positive behaviour and organised in two phases. The first phase focusses on the recording and monitoring of incidents of bullying. The second phase will focus on successful approaches taken by settings and schools to promote and develop positive relationships and behaviour. Both reviews will help shape our work to support learners and to review our Anti-bullying policy.
- 3.4 Two Aberdeen schools participated in phase 1. The School for the Deaf was visited in September 2022 and Aberdeen Grammar School visited in October. During the visits, the HM Inspector looked at the school's key documents and guidance re bullying and discussed with the headteacher and staff the approach to recording and monitoring incidents of bullying as per the Scottish Government guidance. Inspectors also spoke with groups of learners.
- 3.5 The HM Inspector who visited the School for the Deaf commended the approaches being taken and advised of their desire to record a best practice case study for publication. The considerable progress made since the appointment of the new management structure across ASN and Outreach Services was evident. The information available in the school guidance was triangulated across all focus groups of learners and staff. The inspector could see and feel all approaches discussed and felt the strong preventative approaches to bullying were appropriate for the context and took into account school values, deaf education and the health and wellbeing curriculum.
- 3.6 Inspectors commended the work being undertaken by Aberdeen Grammar School and identified it as sector leading. The range of helpful and impactful guidance available to staff was recognised. The Inspector is keen for the school to record a best practice case study to help guide work nationally. The Head Teacher of Aberdeen Grammar School is currently working with Officers to implement plans to share this sector leading practice across all secondary schools.
- 3.7 The information gleaned from all 35 visits will help shape a national report due to be published later in the year. The national reports will be shared with Members as a service update when published.
- 3.8 The Education Reform Bill will be introduced in this parliamentary year. The Bill will establish a new independent inspectorate which will remove the Inspectorate from Education Scotland and introduce a new operating model for the new Inspection agency. Members will be advised of the implications of the Bill on the inspection process when known. The Bill is wide ranging and extends beyond the Inspection agency, a report will be presented in January

2023 to ensure that Members have sufficient oversight of the progress being made to reform education.

Care Inspectorate

3.9 The Care Inspectorate continue to generally inspect on a risk basis, leading to a higher proportion of settings being inspected where complaints or issues have been raised with them. Members should be aware that this is likely to result in a higher proportion of inspections resulting in negative outcomes in the short term. Engagement includes a mix of in person and digital engagement although approach and expectations are consistent with those in place prior to the pandemic.

3.10 **Stompers Childcare Services** were inspected in June 2022. Stompers are a Funded Provider and help deliver 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare to children in the Bridge of Don area. Inspectors found that children experienced inconsistent interactions. Although some of these interactions were positive and supported them to feel relaxed, happy and settled, others were not respectful or responsive.

Children did not experience an environment which was homely, well cared for, clean and welcoming and quality assurance arrangements were not effective. Inspectors also noted that the mix of staff skills across the setting did not ensure staff in leadership roles were consistently positive role models.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Unsatisfactory (1)
How good is our staff team?	Weak (2)

A link to the full report is available below. The Early Years team are working with the setting to secure the required improvements and will monitor progress against the agreed Action Plan developed by the Service contained in Appendix A. Considerable progress has been made to date.

[Inspection report](#)

3.11 **Orchard Brae Holiday Club** was inspected in July 2022. The club is operated by Aberdeen City Council and is a collaboration between education and children's social work and caters for some of those with the most complex needs over the school holiday period. Inspectors noted that children and young people experienced extremely warm, caring and nurturing support from all staff. Children and young people were all very happy, engaged and having fun taking part in various activities both indoors and outdoors.

Children and young people's choices were supported well through a balance of planned and spontaneous play experiences and resources. Positive relationships with families supported continuity of care and effective

partnerships. There were very clear personal plans in place which reflected children and young people's individual care and wellbeing needs. The indoor and outdoor environments were clean, bright and welcoming and of a high quality. Inspectors asked that quality assurance processes be further embedded to secure sustained improvements across the service but noted that staff were highly motivated to provide a service of a very high standard and were extremely flexible, supported each other and worked well as a team.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Very good (5)
How good is our setting?	Very good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Very good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Very good (5)

A link to the full report is available below. Staff should be commended for the high quality service delivered over the school holiday period.

[Inspection report](#)

- 3.12 **Loirston ELC Provision** was inspected in July 2022 and is operated by Aberdeen City Council. Inspectors found that children experienced nurturing care and support, had fun and were engaged in their play. Clear personal plans were in place which reflected children's individual care and wellbeing needs. Inspectors felt that daily communication with parents could be further improved.

Effective staff deployment within the service meant that children's individual needs were being met by the right number of staff. The management team had a clear focus on improving outcomes for children and their families.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Very good (5)
How good is our setting?	Very good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Very good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Very good (5)

A link to the full report is available below. Staff should be commended for the high quality service being delivered to children in the Cove area.

[Inspection report](#)

- 3.13 **Flexible Childcare Services Scotland** were inspected in July 2022. Inspectors who visited the Funded Provider found that staff were pleasant in their interactions with children and that children were cared for in a bright and spacious environment. Staff did not demonstrate the skills, experience, and knowledge to effectively support children's health, wellbeing, and safety. Children were not provided with resources and experiences to engage and sustain their thinking and learning. Quality assurance processes and self-

evaluation were not effective in promoting continuous improvement and good outcomes for children.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Unsatisfactory (1)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Unsatisfactory (1)
How good is our staff team?	Weak (2)

A link to the full report is available below. The Early Years team are working with the setting to secure the required improvements and will monitor progress carefully against the Action Plan developed by the Service and contained in Appendix B. The Care Inspectorate informally visited the setting in September and were assured that significant progress had been made against the recommendations.

[Inspection report](#)

- 3.14 **Walker Road ELC provision** is an Aberdeen City run provision and was inspected in early August. Inspectors found that staff had kind and caring intentions towards children and that some positive relationships had been built. There were limited opportunities for children to explore and extend their learning, solve problems and be curious about their world. Staff were not implementing effective infection prevention and control guidance or supporting children in safe hygiene practices. Inspectors also found that quality assurance processes were ineffective and did not have a positive impact on the quality of children's experiences. There were gaps in some staff skills and knowledge which meant they did not fully understand some children's needs or did not always act in a way that supported their learning.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Weak (2)
How good is our staff team?	Weak (2)

A link to the full report is available below. The Early Years team are working closely with the setting to secure the required improvements and have put in place considerable additional resource to help model and structure the learning environment and practices required to delivery 1140 hours of ELC. The Early Years team will carefully monitor progress against the Action Plan contained in Appendix C.

[Inspection report](#)

3.15 The roll out of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare during the pandemic has undoubtedly impacted on the quality of provision in some Early Learning and Childcare settings. This is thought to be due to a range of factors including:

- The establishment of new ELC teams when access to Senior Leadership support was limited due to Senior Leaders being required to cover classes to ensure business continuity
- Considerable recruitment of new staff
- Some new Senior Early Learning and Childcare practitioners taking some time to adjust to the responsibilities of their new leadership post
- General adjustments to new working patterns and new delivery models
- A period of adjustment as staff implement accountability structures
- Children being more unsettled due to their limited socialisation over the last 30 months

3.16 The education service continue to support ELC settings to improve quality and have action plans in place to drive improvement where appropriate.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report,

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?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not improving outcomes for learners	Engaging with the Recovery Visits process has provided a high level of assurance.	L	Yes

Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Engaging with the Recovery Visits process has provided a high level of assurance of compliance with national guidance.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that schools do not accurately identify the areas for improvement that will make the greatest difference to learners	Engagement in this process will allow the central team to prioritise those schools who did not engage in the process.	L	Yes
Financial	No risks identified			
Reputational	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	High levels of assurance are taken from the visits and from current quality improvement arrangements	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement UNICEF Child Friendly accreditation.</p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of Child Friendly City accreditation as independent inspectors will have made judgements on the extent to which children's rights inform the work of our schools.</p> <p>External scrutiny provides helpful assurance that there is sufficient focus on helping young people recover from the pandemic and that the school self-evaluation and improvement plan is well positioned to support a closing of the poverty related attainment gap.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	

<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>Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty</p> <p>Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and group</p> <p>Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities</p> <p>90% of Children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to by 2026. This is reflected in interactions, activities, supports and services</p> <p>Improving health and reducing inequalities.</p> <p>Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach.</p>	<p>Engagement with inspectors provides an opportunity to learn from national best practice and validate self-evaluation evidence available in schools. The support and challenge received by Inspectors helps to shape improvement plans for the coming sessions in keeping with the LOIP stretch aims.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p> <p>Regional Cultural Strategy</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
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Action Plan for Stompers
Appendix B – Action Plan for Flexible Childcare Solutions
Appendix C – Action Plan for Walker Road

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Stompers Childcare Services LTD: Improvement Plan 2022/23

National Standard criteria and sub-criteria outcomes	Actions	Relevant Indicators/Measurable Targets (SMART)	Impact	Additional Resources	Timescale	Completed or Further Action Required
Criteria 1 Nurture and Support Sub-criteria 1.1 (Staffing)	A). Support staff to develop their skills in quality interactions.	<p>ACC Early Years officer will provide practical in-house training for staff on quality interactions</p> <p>Senior staff and Manager will observe staff interactions at least once a week and provide verbal/written feedback.</p> <p>Performance reviews for all staff will take place every 2 weeks for an 8-week period (then monthly)</p>	<p>Staff will be skilled and knowledgeable, and interactions of staff will improve outcomes for children</p> <p>Feedback to staff will help develop confidence for staff resulting in children who feel safe and valued.</p> <p>Staff will have a clearer vision of expectations and target areas.</p>	<p>Quality Assurance Calendar in place to ensure timely audits are undertaken.</p>	<p>Meeting 26.08.2022</p> <p>26.08.2022-05.09.2022</p>	<p>EYO observed in each of the rooms, feedback generated and received 29.08.2022</p> <p>All senior staff's initial performance reviews completed, and target areas generated.</p>

Stompers Childcare Services LTD: Improvement Plan 2022/23

		Team Meetings will be undertaken on a fortnightly basis.	Staff will benefit from a clearer class vision and understanding of the routine, plans and strategies required to support children’s needs.	Quality Assurance Calendar in place to ensure timely audits are undertaken.	22.08.2022	Dragonflies are completing the meeting targets.
		All staff will complete the new National Induction Programme	Staff will benefit from a full induction to ensure core aspects of the job are understood and expectations from both staffing and management support.	Management to familiarise themselves with the new national induction resource and role it out to all staff members.	Introduce the National Induction Resource 12.09.2022	Continuous.
Criteria 1 Nurture and Support Sub-criteria 1.1 (Staffing)	b) Effectively facilitate and extend children’s play and learning (HSCS 3.14) (Quality framework 4.1)	Ensure all rooms have adequate resources to extend play opportunities. Improve layout of rooms with appropriate furniture and soft furnishings	Children will independently access learning opportunities. A deeper engagement and ownership of their classroom and learning journey.	Additional resources to be requested after evaluation.	Room evaluations to be completed by 16.09.2022	

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		<p>Encourage staff to be mindful and develop communication skills with children</p> <p>Encourage all staff to improve eye contact with children to improve and to engage a child's full attention</p> <p>Observe children at play to ensure the resources and space are age appropriate</p> <p>Provide additional resources to extend a child's play, creativity, and stimulation.</p> <p>Seniors will observe staff practice and provide written & verbal feedback to improve practice</p>	<p>Azilo training on observation, planning. To better understand the implications and benefits of a child centred approach.</p>	<p>All staff to be registered for the Azilo online training.</p>	<p>All staff to be registered by 30.09.2022</p>	
<p>Criteria 1 Nurture and Support Sub category 2</p>	<p>Ensure children's care, welfare and development needs are met by developing children's personal plans ensuring staff use these systems effectively</p>	<p>Purchase an online learning journey package (seesaw) and implement by September 2022</p> <p>Provide inhouse training for staff on how to effectively use the new system.</p>	<p>The online package will enable staff to record current daily routines and activities of children which can be shared immediately (online) with individual parents and as class activities.</p>	<p>Package to be researched, cost agreed.</p>	<p>Researched and information gathered by 31.08.2022</p>	<p>Package to be paid and implemented, alongside training by 30.09.2022</p>

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		Managers/Seniors to review monthly (add to QA Calendar			Quality Assurance calendar created and implemented by 11.07.2022	Management to evaluated and incorporate additional tasks as they arise.
		Provide in-house training for all staff on how to use care plans and chronologies. First meeting will be scheduled for 20.08.22 (Managers and senior staff to review and monitor)	Increased knowledge and skills of staff will ensure the needs of children are being met and reviewed regularly.		Q&A regarding care plans and chronologies done completed on 20.08.2022	Continuous monitoring and audit through quality assurance calendar.
		Re-establish room meetings for staff to discuss ongoing concerns, next steps, and routines of children.	All staff will have a deeper understanding of children’s care plans and needs and will be able to ensure activities and opportunities are readily available for children to meet their full potential.		Weekly class staff meetings and monthly management seniors.	Continuous.

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		Senior staff and practitioners should meet with families prior to nursery commencing to identify care plan needs and review dates	Families will be meaningfully involved in their child's care plan and reviews and will have daily feedback from key workers		All About Me's introduced 12.09.2022	Updated every 6 months.
		Key worker groups will be established for all staff			Each room lead to delegate children to specific staff members as keyworkers	Completed by 30.09.2022
Environment Sub criteria 1. (environment) My environment is safe and secure (HSCS 5.17)	Ensure that children experience an environment that is safe and clean.	Review the area for potential risks and take immediate action Clean areas that are visibly dirty Tidy the setting and remove items that cannot be effectively cleaned Implement an environment/maintenance audit to ensure all actions are timeously addressed. Make amendments to the cleaners job description to ensure all rooms are deep cleaned at least once a week.			Maintenance log to be used, priority logged. Domestic job description reallocated. Quality assurance calendar for maintenance manager. Domestic task list implemented to ensure all	30.06.2022 04.07.2022 22.08.2022 25.07.2022

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					critical areas are addressed.	
How good is our setting 1a HSCS (2.27)	Ensure all children experience an environment that is welcoming, well furnished, comfortable, and homely to support children to reach their full potential	<p>Reintroduce soft furnishings and natural resources in all rooms.</p> <p>Review room layout plans with staff and children and make changes accordingly.</p> <p>Purchase/implement cosy areas in all rooms</p> <p>Resource all areas with loose parts and homely items.</p>	Classroom areas established and furnished	Additional soft furnishings purchased for each classroom and the outdoors cosy areas and tepee areas.	.	<p>04.07.2022-15.07.2022</p> <p>04.07.2022-15.07.2022</p>

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		<p>Purchase resources including dens/cosy areas.</p> <p>Undertake regular room observations and provide verbal and written feedback to staff and seniors.</p> <p>Ensure staff do not move furniture, only resources</p>			<p>04.07.2022-15.07.2022</p> <p>12.09.2022-continuous</p>
<p>Environment Sub Criteria 1b (HSCS 2.27)</p>	<p>Ensure play spaces offer a range of resources and materials to effectively challenge and stimulate children and reflect their current interests and curiosities, both indoors and outdoors to enable</p>	<p>Ensure all rooms and areas have loose parts resources.</p> <p>Issue all rooms with the document "spaces and environments"</p> <p>Cover concrete baby area with artificial grass to improve safety</p> <p>Remove all baby garden plastic resources and upgrade with natural resources to improve</p>	<p>Managers & seniors Staff at team meetings</p> <p>July/Sept 2022 and ongoing with class budget of £100 per class All staff</p> <p>Seniors/Practitioners</p>		<p>July/Sept 2022 and ongoing with class budget of £100 per class</p>

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	children to direct their own play	<p>opportunities for children to direct their own play.</p> <p>Identify staff who will “champion areas inside and outside the nursery environment.</p> <p>Encourage staff to develop their skills and knowledge in loose parts play & outdoor play training.</p>				
<p>Criteria Sub-criteria (Self-evaluation and improvement) HSCS 4.19</p>	<p>1a) Implement robust audits to identify and action targets across the nursery</p> <p>1b. Effective plans are in place to develop and improve the nursery</p> <p>1c. There are effective staff monitoring systems in place for all staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a management quality assurance calendar with delegated tasks for senior staff, in partnership with ACC to ensure all service checks are reviewed and monitored. Ensure parents have access to and are involved in the review of the nursery’s visions and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans will drive the developments of the nursery and will lead to continuous improvements and influence change. Our strong, shared vision and values, 	<p>FF, GH</p> <p>FF, GH, Lisa, Kristen, Karen & Erin</p> <p>FF, GH, Lisa, Kristen, Karen, & Erin</p>		<p>BY 14.10.22</p> <p>From 26th Sept</p> <p>From 3RD Oct</p>

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	<p>and the setting as a whole with delegated support to all staff by their immediate seniors. To ensure children benefit from continuous improvement, with the nursery having robust and transparent quality assurance processes</p>	<p>values. The vision statements will be added to the nursery registration pack</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff will be issued with clear job descriptions, roles and responsibilities and their practice will be monitored by fortnightly performance reviews. • We will undertake regular team meetings to review, monitor and develop knowledge of skills and self-evaluation processes including (CI Action Plan, Quality Framework, Funding follows the Child) • Review and improve recruitment process consistent with current legislation (HGIOELC) • Monitor and respond to complaints promptly and inline with the Nursery Policy and procedures • Ensure all staff are registered with relevant 	<p>positively informs change</p>	<p>FF, GH, All staff FF, GH</p>		<p>When achievements are identified</p>
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		<p>agencies including SSSC, PVG</p> <p>All staff will be involved in the nursery self-evaluation and quality improvement process.</p>				
<p>Quality assurance and improvements are well led. HSCS 3.14</p>	<p>2. Ensure systems are in place for staff to be appropriately registered with a professional body to ensure staff are trained, competent, and skilled and are able to reflect on their practice and</p>	<p>All staff will be recruited in line with SSSC guidelines</p> <p>Managers will ensure all new staff follow SSSC registration guidance of within 6 months</p> <p>All new staff will be appointed using the national Induction Resource.</p>				

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	follow their professional and organisational codes	<p>Managers have registered as employers with SSSC and will receive notification of staff annual payments due/annual subscriptions with SSSC</p> <p>Staff SSSC registrations will be reviewed annually by managers</p>				
Quality assurance and improvements are well lead. HSCS 4.11	3. Ensure children are safe and the nursery is effectively managed by ensuring the required notifications are made to the Care Inspectorate to ensure children	<p>Managers will undertake a refresher course on SSSC Codes of practice.</p> <p>All new staff will be issued with SSSC Codes of practice</p> <p>Managers will report all notifications to Care Inspectorate</p>				

	experience high quality care and support					
Quality assurance and improvements are well lead. (area for improvement 1)	Support children and families to be meaningfully involved in developing the nursery HSCS (4.7) I am actively encouraged to be	We have introduced an online learning journey system which allows parents to be actively involved in their child's learning. Parents will have opportunities to be involved in parent				

	involved in improving the nursery I use.	<p>evenings, open days and other family events.</p> <p>All staff will promote family involvement by requesting input from families either through online social media platforms, questionnaires, seesaw etc.</p> <p>Staff from each room will undertake open day play sessions & feedback every two months to promote partnership working with families.</p>				
Quality assurance and improvements are well lead. (are for improvement 2)	Ensure managers have the skills and experience to carry out investigations to ensure children and families experience positive outcomes. (HSCS	<p>Managers will resume their own CPD Management training.</p> <p>Managers will identify all quality assurance tasks and develop a quality assurance calendar.</p>				

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	<p>4.23 I use a nursery that is well led and managed</p>	<p>Tasks and responsibilities detailed on the quality assurance calendar will be divided between the two managers.</p> <p>Both managers will be classified as managers and details will be updated on the CI Digital Portal</p> <p>Managers will work alongside the Area Manager to Review and monitor all tasks are being reached.</p> <p>Managers will provide a monthly report to the Area Manager.</p> <p>Managers will review and improve their CPD training on “how to carry out investigations. Thereafter writing a step-by-step Policy of how to conduct an investigation.</p>				
<p>Criteria Sun criteria 4.3 Staff deployment</p>	<p>1 (a) The management must review the skill mix</p>	<p>A recruitment drive has been implemented to attract new qualified, and experienced staff.</p>				

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(HSCS 3.14)	<p>of staff across the nursery. (b) clearly define roles and responsibilities for all staff, including management (c) review and make appropriate changes to staff deployment to improve experiences for children.</p>	<p>Staff incentives have been increased and include: 50% off childcare, 28 days annual leave, additional days annual leave for every year in employment (maximum 32) , day off for your birthday (If there are no absenteeism concerns), optional wellbeing officer support.</p> <p>Senior staff have reviewed staff qualifications and skills and have deployed staff accordingly to ensure qualified staffing in each room exceeds 75%.</p> <p>New job descriptions and performance reviews have been issued to all staff including Managers.</p> <p>Performance Reviews will take place every 2 weeks for an 8-week period then resume to monthly.</p>				
Staff Deployment 2.	Children are supported by staff	AS ABOVE.				

HSCS 4.24	who have the skills and qualities to ensure that care and support is consistent with HSCS 3.14					
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(HSCS 4.24)	2 The recruitment of staff will be improved to meet the best practise and ensure children are safe and protected					
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Requirements and Areas for Development arising from inspection	Actions	Responsible Person/persons	Timescale	What does success look like?	Impact on children	Progress updates
<p>Key Question) How good is our care play and learning?</p> <p>Requirement 1)</p> <p>a) Ensure children's up-to-date care and support needs are included within their personal plan and staff use this information to effectively support them.</p> <p>b) Ensure that staff have the relevant knowledge, skills, and understanding of child</p>	<p>Audit registration forms, personal plans, chronologies, and information held on allergies, medication etc. for each child.</p> <p>Update forms as required, liaising with parents to ensure accurate and current information is held.</p> <p>Provide training opportunities for all FCSS colleagues to ensure they have the</p>	<p>Susan McGhee and FCSS team members.</p> <p>FCSS team members to update forms for children in their key group.</p> <p>Susan McGhee Fiona Ednie (FCSS workforce lead)</p>	<p>By 15/08/22, then continue as ongoing practice.</p> <p>By 15/08/22,</p>	<p>Accurate, well completed plans are in place and are being used by FCSS colleagues in planning and caring for children at the nursery.</p> <p>Chronologies are up to date and accurate.</p> <p>Observation of practice, monitoring of documentation and feedback from team</p>	<p>Children are cared for by practitioners who understand their needs and have up to date information.</p> <p>Children are kept safe from harm and are protected by a team who have access to all relevant information.</p> <p>Children will be cared for by team members who understand their needs and who can effectively meet</p>	<p>Personal plans have been reviewed and updated, a full audit was conducted to ensure all children have appropriate documentation and information in place.</p> <p>Personal (support) plans are being shared with parents and additional information added.</p> <p>All team members have access to appropriate training and development and</p>

<p>development and ensure this is applied in their practice</p>	<p>relevant skills and knowledge required to meet children's individual needs.</p>		<p>then ongoing</p>	<p>members support and supervision evidence clear understanding of child development.</p>	<p>them in day to day practice.</p>	<p>are being supported in daily practice by the organisation's leadership team.</p>
<p>c) Ensure staff are well informed about the children attending and use this information to provide individualised and responsive care relevant to their needs.</p>	<p>Individual team member training plans to be created</p> <p>Ensure FCSS colleagues have access to children's personal information and that there is effective communication amongst team members.</p>	<p>Service Management team (from 3rd October)</p> <p>Susan McGhee Kirsty Ferguson New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p>	<p>By end of October 2022 By 15/08/22, then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22, then ongoing</p>	<p>Each member of the team will have a personalised training plan. These plans will support successful achievement of individual, service, and organisational goals.</p> <p>All team members will have access to personal plans, these will be reviewed regularly and updates shared across the team. There will be an audit trail of checks on documentation and its effectiveness.</p>	<p>Children are cared for by knowledgeable and well trained team members. This improves opportunities and outcomes for children.</p> <p>Children are cared for by practitioners who have information needed to provide individualised, responsive care.</p> <p>Children will be happy and confident in the nursery environment.</p>	<p>Some plans are underway, there is further training to be sourced.</p> <p>All FCSS colleagues working with children in the nursery have access to children's personal support plans, there are clear communication processes to share information regarding individual children's needs.</p>
<p>d) Ensure children are provided with</p>	<p>Provide training, support, and role modelling of nurturing</p>	<p>Susan McGhee Kirsty Ferguson</p>			<p>They will be supported by kind, caring</p>	<p>Support and supervision and a full</p>

warmth, comfort, and compassion.	care. Carry out observation of practice and address any issues identified swiftly and effectively.	New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)	By 15/08/22, then ongoing		practitioners who understand their needs and plan effectively to meet them.	team meeting have taken place. Discussion has taken place around nurturing care. Observations of practice are taking place daily and guidance is provided, as necessary. There is a strong emphasis on nurturing care. Children are supported to settle in to nursery with kindness and warmth.
<p>Key Question) How good is our care play and learning? Requirement 2)</p> <p>a) Ensure information to support children with medical needs or allergies are clearly recorded and up-to date.</p>	Audit and update all medication forms, check storage of medication and review with team on site.	Kirsty Ferguson, and team on site.	By 15/08/22, then ongoing	Medication forms are accurate, appropriately signed and are monitored by nursery management.	Children are kept safe and their health needs are effectively met.	<p>Storage and administration of medication has been reviewed to ensure it is in line with our organisation's policy and with national guidance.</p> <p>Information held for each child who requires medication to be administered at nursery has been reviewed and where</p>

<p>b) Ensure staff are knowledgeable and competent in relation to the safe recording and administration of medication and apply this in practice.</p> <p>c) Ensure parents are fully informed when medication has been given.</p>	<p>Provide training and support for FCSS colleagues on safe storage and administration of medication.</p> <p>Discuss with FCSS colleagues the importance of informing parents when medication has been given, also if not given for any reason, and/or if given late (e.g., if child was sleeping at planned time)</p>	<p>Susan McGhee Kirsty Ferguson New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p> <p>Susan McGhee Kirsty Ferguson New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p>	<p>By 15/08/22, then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22, then ongoing</p>	<p>Regular monitoring of medication forms evidence that FCSS colleagues are following best practice in relation to administration of medication. Forms are correctly completed and signed by parents.</p> <p>Parents are given clear feedback on whether medication has been administered, if not why, timing etc.</p>		<p>necessary additional details recorded.</p> <p>FCSS colleagues are being supported on site by the service's Senior Practitioner and by the organisation's leadership team to ensure safe administration of medication.</p>
<p>Areas for improvement</p> <p>1. To promote children's understanding and enjoyment</p>	<p>Review mealtime experience, observe current practice and agree actions to</p>	<p>Susan McGhee Kirsty Ferguson New Service Management</p>	<p>By 15/08/22, then ongoing</p>	<p>Mealtimes are calmer and offer opportunities for children to learn about</p>	<p>Children have a better experience and eat more of their</p>	<p>Mealtime routines have been reviewed. The cloakroom areas have been changed to</p>

<p>of healthy eating and drinking, the manager and staff should improve mealtime experiences.</p> <p>This should include promoting opportunities for children's independence, providing fresh water, and encouraging children to keep hydrated.</p>	<p>improve the experience.</p> <p>Relocate dining to cloakroom areas, creating a dining space and moving coat/shoe storage to under outdoor canopy.</p> <p>Purchase new crockery, serving bowls, cutlery and serving spoons, tongs etc.</p> <p>FCSS Team members to sit with children role modelling healthy eating, table manners etc.</p> <p>Create water stations for children to access water as and when needed throughout the day. Monitor this to ensure water is refilled and area is kept safe and clean. Provide clean cups and establish a system for children to place used cups in an agreed</p>	<p>Team (from 3rd October)</p> <p>FCSS team members</p> <p>FCSS team members</p>	<p>By 15/08/22, then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22, then ongoing</p> <p>From October 2022 then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p>	<p>healthy eating, share a social experience and be supported in eating their meal.</p> <p>New crockery and serving utensils are in place.</p> <p>Water station is set up and accessible every day.</p>	<p>meal; they are supported by staff who assist them to ensure they are able to eat enough to meet their needs.</p> <p>Children are able to self-serve at mealtimes.</p> <p>Children have support of practitioners who know them well at mealtimes.</p> <p>Children are well hydrated and their health needs are supported.</p>	<p>dining areas. New tables and benches (sourced by CM (ACC)) are in use.</p> <p>Resources to support self-service at meal times have been purchased and are in use daily.</p> <p>FCSS colleagues are sitting with children to share mealtimes, promoting healthy eating, and developing social skills.</p> <p>Hydration stations have been set up in each playroom so children can access drinking water as and when needed throughout the day. Children are supported in this and are prompted to drink</p>
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<p>2. To support children's health and wellbeing, the manager and staff should ensure that children are provided with a warm, comfortable space for sleep and are given the nurturing care to aid rest and relaxation.</p>	<p>location. Where preferred encourage parents to bring water bottles for their children.</p> <p>Review sleeping practice, purchase tote bags for storage of named bedding so this is kept to single child use.</p> <p>Review room layout to ensure there is suitable space for rest and sleep.</p> <p>Discuss with team best ways to support tired children.</p>	<p>Susan McGhee Kirsty Ferguson New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p>	<p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p>	<p>Sleepers have individual named bedding bags. The environment offers space for rest and sleep.</p>	<p>Children have warm, comfortable, and safe places to rest and sleep, and are comforted and supported by kind practitioners who know them well and understand their needs.</p> <p>Children experience a broad range of</p>	<p>regularly throughout the day.</p> <p>Parents are encouraged to bring drinking bottles for children to use if that is their preference.</p> <p>Sleeping facilities have been reviewed. Sleep mats and blankets have always been available. FCSS colleagues have reflected on the care needed to support a child who may need to sleep or rest and are consistently offering warm and caring support to children.</p> <p>Each child who sleeps at nursery has an individual bag to hold their allocated sheet and blanket.</p> <p>Play room layouts have been reviewed to ensure there are cosy, comfortable areas available for children</p>
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<p>3. To support children’s learning and development, the manager and staff should ensure children experience high quality play and learning relevant to their age and stage of development. In order to do this, the provider should ensure staff are knowledgeable and trained in supporting children’s learning and use this to plan meaningful play experiences.</p>	<p>Review learning opportunities, provide training for the team on site and role model good practice.</p> <p>Monitor, observe and feedback on practice as needed as part of ongoing QA process.</p> <p>Purchase and collect additional resources and review storage and care of these.</p>	<p>Susan McGhee Kirsty Ferguson New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p>	<p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p>	<p>Observation of practice shows improved support for children’s learning and development.</p>	<p>high quality learning opportunities.</p> <p>Opportunities are appropriate to children age and stage of development and are supported by practitioners who know the children well and understand their individual needs.</p>	<p>to choose to rest during the nursery day.</p> <p>Opportunities for play, learning and development have been reviewed. Support and challenge have taken place within the team and consideration has been given to appropriate opportunities.</p> <p>New resources have been purchased, nursery families and the local community have donated further resources.</p> <p>Observation of practice, role modelling and guidance have been ongoing to support the team in offering a meaningful play experience.</p>
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<p>Key question) How good is our setting</p> <p>a) Necessary repairs to the building are reported immediately and action taken to keep children safe.</p> <p>b) Staff are aware of the factors which raise the potential risk of children leaving the environment unsupervised and take action to prevent any occurrences. Effective risk assessments are conducted by competent staff.</p> <p>c) The outdoor area, including the fencing, plants, and shrubbery, are appropriate and keep children safe and protected.</p>	<p>Prepare list and re-report all defects/ damage to building.</p> <p>Ensure staff are aware of risks and that effective risk assessment is taking place.</p> <p>Where appropriate and possible carry out immediate repairs. If not possible close the area and make safe immediately.</p> <p>Tidy outdoor area and review garden checks/monitoring process.</p>	<p>Susan McGhee New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p> <p>Susan McGhee Kirsty Ferguson New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p> <p>Susan McGhee Kirsty Ferguson New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p> <p>Susan McGhee to carry out immediate remedial action, then ongoing</p>	<p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p>	<p>There is a clear log of maintenance issues.</p> <p>Repairs are carried out timeously effectively.</p> <p>Risk assessments are robust and are effective in keeping children safe.</p> <p>The garden area is well maintained and is checked 2 x daily for safety issues.</p>	<p>Children are cared for in a safe and attractive environment.</p>	<p>Repair needs are identified through risk assessment and reporting of damage/breakages etc.</p> <p>All repairs have been reported to the non-housing repair team. Follow up requests are made where repairs are delayed.</p> <p>Risk assessments are conducted to ensure children are safe while we wait for repairs to be carried out.</p> <p>FCSS colleagues are supported in risk assessment by the senior practitioner and leadership team.</p> <p>Where appropriate FCSS team members</p>

		check by FCSS team members				<p>carry out immediate repairs.</p> <p>All FCSS colleagues are aware of potential risks and take appropriate action to keep children safe.</p> <p>The outdoor area was cut back immediately. A professional gardener has since visited and carried out garden maintenance. Gaps at the bottom of fencing have been covered and or filled in with board or screening.</p> <p>The garden area is risk assessed daily to check for risks such as broken glass, bottles, cans, cigarettes and/or vape equipment, and other risks. Risk assessments are recorded and monitored.</p>
2.		Susan McGhee				

<p>a) Ensure staff implement safe and effective infection prevention and control practices.</p> <p>b) Ensure the appropriate storage and disposal of nappies.</p>	<p>Review infection control procedures.</p> <p>Ensure all team members understand the nappy changing policy and follow it when changing children's nappies and/or wet and soiled clothing.</p>	<p>Kirsty Ferguson New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p>	<p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p>	<p>The building is clean and there is effective prevention of infection measures in place.</p> <p>The nappy change area is clean and nappies are appropriately stored.</p>	<p>Children are cared for in a clean, healthy environment and are protected from the risk of infection.</p>	<p>Infection control procedures have been reviewed and enhanced processes implemented.</p> <p>There has been a nappy disposal contract in place with PHS since the service opened. Nappy bins are emptied 2 x weekly.</p> <p>Clean nappies are stored in individual children's bags.</p> <p>The nappy change area is clean and well maintained, suitable storage is in place.</p>
<p>Areas for improvement</p> <p>1. To support children's learning and development, the manager and staff should ensure the environment is equipped and resourced to facilitate children's imagination, enquiry,</p>	<p>Purchase additional resources as required.</p> <p>Register with Community Resource Service (CRIS).</p> <p>Collect authentic resources and develop the environment to</p>	<p>Susan McGhee New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p> <p>Susan McGhee and FCSS team members</p>	<p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p>	<p>There are new resources in place and the environment offers a depth of learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Children have access to and choice of a range of resources, both purpose designed and authentic/natural resources to support their</p>	<p>Further resources have been purchased by FCSS and donated by nursery families and the local community.</p> <p>The service has registered with Aberdeen City Council resource service.</p>

<p>and curiosity. This should include, but not be limited to, literacy and numeracy, sensory play, and creative play.</p>	<p>create a more homely and welcoming feel. Display photographs and artwork around the environment to create a sense of belonging and ownership for children attending.</p> <p>Ensure core provision is available at all times.</p>	<p>Susan McGhee and FCSS team members</p> <p>FCSS team members</p>	<p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p>	<p>There are artwork and photographs on display.</p> <p>Core provision is available at all times.</p>	<p>play and learning. Children feel they belong and have a sense of ownership within the nursery. They are comforted by seeing their pictures and photographs of them taking part in play with friends.</p>	<p>The nursery environment has been reviewed and changes to layouts made.</p> <p>Art work and photographs are displayed throughout the nursery.</p> <p>The team have reviewed continuous provision and now have sand, water, malleable play, paint, glue, mark making, role play, small world, construction, loose parts, literacy, numeracy, and sensory play available every day across both the indoor and outdoor areas. This still requires monitoring by onsite management but is improving steadily.</p>
<p>Key question) How good is our leadership?</p> <p>Requirement 1) a) Ensure effective management and</p>	<p>Carry out investigation into leadership failings</p>	<p>FCSS leadership team</p>	<p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p>	<p>The new management team are in post, successfully inducted</p>	<p>Children are cared for by a team who are</p>	<p>There has been a full change in management</p>

leadership arrangements are in place.	within the service and address outcome appropriately. Provide leadership team support to ensure effective support for the team.			and are supporting the team on site.	well managed. They are kept safe and benefit from high quality provision lead by experienced management.	and a new, experienced, management team have been recruited. In the interim period the service has been overseen by FCSS Chief Exec, Susan McGhee.
b) Ensure effective quality assurance, self-evaluation, and improvement plans are in place which have involved staff, children, and parents and lead to continuous improvement.	Review quality assurance, create improvement plan and use to develop the service. Carry out regular observation of practice and audit of documentation.	FCSS leadership team Susan McGhee New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)	By 15/08/22 then ongoing By 15/08/22 then ongoing	Improvement plans are in place and their impact is evident within the setting.	Children benefit from a continually developing and improving service. They are cared for by practitioners whose own practice is monitored, supported, and challenged to ensure a culture of continuous improvement.	Quality assurance is ongoing with improvement plans focussing on both the recent inspection outcome and broader development of the nursery. Support and supervision have taken place, and a full team meeting has taken place. Room observations are included in daily practice.
c) Ensure the improvement plan is effectively monitored and embedded into practice.	Carry out support and supervision with the team on site.	FCSS leadership team	By 15/08/22 then ongoing			
d) Ensure that staff have the capacity and skills to support a programme of continuous improvement.		Susan McGhee New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)	By 15/08/22 then ongoing			A floor book is in place to record, evaluate and further develop improvement actions. The team are supported in developing self-

						evaluation and reflective practice skills.
<p>Key question) How good is our staff team?</p> <p>1. a) Staff undertake a robust induction and when staff move to a promoted post, they must also receive an induction to their new role and responsibilities.</p> <p>b) Staff are effectively deployed and provide high quality outcomes for children</p>	<p>Review induction processes, revisit roles and responsibilities with the team.</p> <p>Review deployment of team members, recruit new team members, source training to achieve qualification for support workers. Provide appropriate staffing cover whilst recruitment is ongoing.</p> <p>Carry out observation of practice and</p>	<p>Susan McGhee New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p> <p>Susan McGhee New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)</p> <p>Susan McGhee, FCSS Leadership team and</p>	<p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p> <p>By 15/08/22 then ongoing</p>	<p>There is clear evidence of induction in team member records and it is evident in their understanding of their role and responsibilities.</p> <p>Team members are appropriately deployed to effectively meet children's needs.</p>	<p>Children are cared for by a team who know and understand their responsibilities and take accountability for their practice.</p>	<p>Induction processes have been reviewed. FCSS uses the national induction resource, supported by organisation and site specific induction.</p> <p>Staff deployment has been reviewed and further recruitment is ongoing.</p> <p>Where cover is provided by other FCSS colleagues care is taken to ensure continuity of colleagues working within the service.</p>

	support and supervision sessions.	New Service Management Team (from 3rd October)	By 15/08/22 then ongoing			
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Areas for improvement – How good is our care play and learning? 1.1 & 1.3	Action required	Stakeholders & date for completion	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion
To enable children to receive high quality care, play, learning and development opportunities, we should ensure staff are sensitive and respond to children's individual needs and interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written guidance created for the staff team on the new observations and planning format. • Observations to be up and running through Seesaw and children's individual floor books. • Planning board to be up and running to show responsive planning and extension throughout the year on children's specific interests. • Revisit to RTA and challenge questions/webinars with the staff team. • Interactions between staff and children are positive, nurturing and supportive. 	All staff members by December 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -play and learning takes account of individual children's needs and interests. -lines of development are planned for and resourced appropriately. -Interventions for children are timely. -Links created between home and Nursery, supporting extension of learning at home. 	
To promote children's understanding and enjoyment of healthy eating and drinking, we should improve children's experiences. This should include ensuring children are involved in the process, encouraged to drink regularly and mealtimes are a relaxed and social experience for all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff to refresh on setting the table guidance. • Children to be regularly asked and encouraged throughout the day if they would like a drink. (use of water station). • Children to be able to help with snack and lunch organisation and set up. • Self-serve set up for lunch and snack. 	<p>All staff members by end of October 2022.</p> <p>All staff members, Ongoing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Children are independent at snack and lunchtimes. -Children develop skills for life. -Children develop conversational skills and understand that meal times are a social occasion. -Communication and language development is nurtured and supported. -Children develop an understanding of healthy choices. 	

<p>To develop high quality care and wellbeing of children, we should use effective and consistent strategies to support children and also develop knowledge and understanding of positive behaviour strategies in supporting children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff members to read, understand and put in place the actions from the Care Plans, PCRA's & IEPs. • SEYPs to review and update the plans with Key workers termly. • Personal plan and All About Me to be undertaken when a child starts Nursery, and updated termly. • Training to be held for all staff on behaviour strategies. (Creative Education). • Development of sensory circuit use to support individual children. 	<p>All staff members by end of October 2022.</p> <p>All staff members by 18th November 2022. (Inservice day training).</p>	<p>-Consistency of approaches and strategies between staff members supports the regulation of the children.</p> <p>-Holistic understanding of each child ensures appropriate supports are in place for the child and the family.</p>	
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Areas for improvement – How good is our setting? 2.2	Action required	Stakeholders & date for completion	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion
<p>By 07/10/22 the provider must ensure that children are able to play and rest in a safe environment that meets their needs and choices. To do this the provider must at a minimum:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete planned actions as set out following H&S review. - Ensure the kitchen area has child safety door and drawer locks. - Ensure all areas where children have access are safely maintained at all times. - Ensure that staff are knowledgeable and competent in relation to assessing and addressing risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with LLO & SLT on progress of the H&S work to be carried out. • All staff members to ensure the daily up keep of the nursery environments are maintained to a high standard. • All staff to ensure the daily cleaning and safety checks are completed to a high standard and on time, with any issues reported to SEYPs who will report to janitorial. • Training on risk assessment to be undertaken by all staff members. • Risk Assessments to be reviewed and updated monthly. • All staff members to re-read all risk assessments already in place, and complete review task to demonstrate understanding. • Any new risk assessments to be shared and read at weekly meetings, reviewed and updated monthly. • Health and Safety procedures followed by all staff at all times. 	<p>SEYPs, SLT & LLO, ongoing.</p> <p>All staff members, Ongoing.</p> <p>All staff members by November 2022.</p> <p>All staff members, ongoing.</p>	<p>-Children are safe in the Nursery environment both indoors and outdoors, with appropriate safeguarding procedures in place.</p> <p>-Timely interventions in place to ensure safety of children is not compromised</p>	
<p>To enable children to be cared for in an environment that is welcoming, homely and reflects their interests we should ensure the environment and furnishings are well presented throughout.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff members to ensure the daily up keep of the nursery environments are maintained, this includes replenishing resources as and when required, and adding in 	<p>All staff members, Ongoing.</p>	<p>-Children are independent in their environment.</p> <p>-Children can make choices.</p> <p>-Children feel nurtured and valued.</p>	

	<p>resources to areas of interest to extend learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SYEPs to complete an environment audit twice per term, and feedback to the team with actions. • Staff interactions with children will be nurturing, sensitive, positive and supportive. 	SEYPs, Ongoing.		
<p>To keep children healthy, safe and promote their wellbeing, we should improve infection prevention and control practices. This should include :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that nappy changing areas and disposal facilities are always kept in a hygienic manner and cleaned regularly - Support children to wash their hands effectively before and after eating and preparing food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nappy bin collection contract to be upped to twice per week. • If staff members see it needs emptied to alert SEYPs who will undertake this. • All staff members to undertake the daily clean of changing and toilet areas throughout each session as per the cleaning schedule. • All staff members to encourage, supervise and ensure children are regularly washing their hands effectively throughout the nursery sessions along with teaching the children the importance of this. 	<p>SEYPs to liaise with Locality Lead and SLT over this.</p> <p>All staff members, Ongoing.</p>	-Children understand and respond to the routine of the day, developing independence and ownership of these.	
<p>To enable all children to be cared for in an environment that meets their needs and supports them to reach their full potential we should ensure :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Play spaces offer a range of resources and materials to effectively challenge and stimulate children and reflect their current interests and curiosities both indoors and outdoors. - Quiet areas are available throughout that are well planned and equipped to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff demonstrate an understanding of schemas and accommodate opportunities for individual children. • Staff will use observation to notice when to stand back, give time, and allow children to investigate for themselves. • All staff will encourage the children's ideas, and allow them to make mistakes. 	<p>All staff members, Ongoing.</p> <p>All staff members, Ongoing.</p>	<p>-Children's skills are developed that link crucially to early literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>-Curiosity, creativity and confidence is nurtured and supported.</p> <p>-Children are stimulated and challenged in play spaces both outdoors and indoors.</p> <p>-Understanding of social rules is developed.</p>	

<p>provide peaceful places for rest and wellbeing time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff will pose questions which encourage inquiry, and model techniques and strategies to encourage new learning. • All staff will use provocations and invitations to play to support curiosity and engagement levels. • Planning will be intentional and responsive. • Working group to be set up to undertake improvements in the garden area and identify other partners within the community that we can work with to undertake this. • SEYPs to identify and ensure a quiet area is available in each nursery room, which take into account sensory needs. 	<p>Working group, ongoing.</p> <p>SEYPs by End on October 2022.</p>	<p>-Children are empowered through choice. -Children can access spaces where they can relax, feel safe, happy, content and cosy so they gain a sense of care and wellbeing.</p>	
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Areas for improvement – How good is our leadership? 3.1	Action required	Stakeholders & date for completion	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion
<p>To improve positive outcomes for children and ensure their safety, wellbeing and learning, we should:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure there is appropriate and effective leadership of the setting - implement effective plans for maintaining and improving the service, including the use of effective self-evaluation processed and quality assurance systems - implement effective action planning to address areas of improvement addressed in the report with identified timescales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan devised for areas of improvement. • Regular audits of children’s files, observations and planning etc to be undertaken by SEYPs. • Weekly staff meeting’s and daily huddles to be undertaken to ensure significant information is shared, everyone reflects on the day, and discuss and plan for next steps. • Monthly 1-2-1 meetings to be held with all staff members to support development and wellbeing. • Termly staff questionnaires to gain their voice. • Inservice day training to focus around teambuilding, new observation format, supporting ASN and key messages from Realising the Ambition. • Quality Assurance calendar to be in place for Nursery from October 	SEYPs and SLT, Ongoing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A robust quality assurance calendar and clear action plan will support critical reflection and continuous improvement for staff to provide quality experiences, interactions and spaces for children. -Appropriate and effective leadership ensures that all staff understand how children learn and develop and plans effectively for this. -Regular audits will support improvements with the management and delivery of the provision. -Training for staff promotes high quality provision, in turn promoting the children’s learning and development- staff understanding of pedagogy support age and stage appropriate experiences for children. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared vision and values developed and shared with all stakeholders 			
In the interest of genuine partnership working we should find ways to effectively involve children and families in the evaluation and improvement of the service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families to be invited in to the setting on a daily basis. • Set up of 'family' area where key information for each room will be displayed, and where settling in meetings will take place with key workers. • Daily communication at drop up and pick up time between families and keyworkers. • Termly questionnaires to families linked to core QIs from HIGIOELC. • 'You said we did' board to be set up in family area to allow families to see how their opinions and views are acted on. • Seesaw to be up and running for observations as so the families can comment. • 'Learning Journey' wall for each room – families encouraged to add their voice to the displayed evidence. 	<p>All staff, Ongoing.</p> <p>SEYPs, Ongoing.</p> <p>SEYPs by end of August 2022.</p> <p>SEYPs by October 2022, then all staff members, Ongoing.</p>	<p>-With families feeling valued and included, positive relationships are formed</p> <p>-Families as partners will allow staff to gain an understanding of the whole child</p> <p>-By ensuring families are informed of the learning will help them to support and extend learning at home.</p> <p>-Positive relationships with families allows them to approach staff to share wider achievements from home, allowing staff a holistic view of the child.</p> <p>-Shared observations allow families to understand their child's development and opportunities to ask questions about their child's next steps, and how they can support these at home.</p>	

Areas for improvement – How good is our staff team? 4.3	Action required	Stakeholders & date for completion	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion
<p>To improve positive outcomes for children and ensure their safety, wellbeing and learning we should ensure that :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children’s play is supported through quality interactions and extension of resources. - We empower and enable children through choice, autonomy and self-care - We use best practice to guide the care and support of children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff members to ensure the resources are replenished as and when required and add in resources to areas of interest to extend learning. • Continuous provision to provide choice for children. • SYEPs to complete an environment audit twice per term, and feedback to the team with actions. • Staff interactions with children will be nurturing, sensitive, positive and supportive. • Ensure staff are reading and acting on current national and local guidance. 	<p>All staff members, ongoing.</p> <p>SEYPs, Ongoing</p> <p>All staff members, Ongoing.</p>	<p>-Skillful questioning as part of improved interactions between staff and children will extend learning by promoting wonder and encourage problem solving.</p> <p>-Creating choice and following interests will support engagement, and children leading their own learning.</p> <p>-Improved knowledge of national and local guidance, including CFE Early level will support staff in providing developmentally appropriate experiences that build on what children already know and can do, and help them to plan experiences that engage children in challenging and risk appropriate play.</p>	
<p>To improve positive outcomes for children and ensure their safety and wellbeing, we should ensure that staff are monitored and deployed in a way that benefits the outcomes for children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who need significant support to remain safe within nursery have 1-2-1 worker at all times. • IEPs & PCRA’s will be read and followed by all staff members to ensure consistency in dealing with challenging behaviours. 	<p>All staff members, Ongoing.</p>	<p>-Knowledge of children’s strengths allow staff to build on small steps of progress. Appropriate planning and observations will allow staff to respond to children in unique way which best meets their needs.</p> <p>-In working with parents at the planning stage ensures their concerns and hopes are understood and valued.</p>	

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IEPs and PCRAs are updated termly or as necessary, and updates shared with the team• Accurate observations are used to record small steps of improvement over time .• Accurate observations will allow for early intervention. | | | |
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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education & Children's Services Committee
DATE	8 November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2021/22
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/22/246
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.5

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Elected Members with the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for year 2021/22. The report is to inform Members of the role and responsibilities exercised by the Chief Social Work Officer; to provide information on statutory decision making in the period; and to give a progress report on key areas of social work provision within Aberdeen City.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the content of the Annual Report, as attached at Appendix 1.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The role of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is a statutory post in accordance with the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, as amended by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994. This requires Local Authorities to appoint a CSWO for the purposes of listed social work functions.
- 3.2 The required qualifications of the CSWO are set out in regulations and the post holder must be able to demonstrate senior strategic and operational experience. National Guidance on the role was published by the Scottish Government in 2009, revised in May 2017. It provides an overview of position, outlining the responsibility for values and standards, complex decision making, particularly in relation to deprivation of liberty decisions and professional leadership. The guidance also covers accountability and reporting arrangements.
- 3.3 The CSWO provides advice to the Council on social work matters; undertakes decision making in respect of statutory functions and provides professional governance, leadership and accountability for the delivery of social work and social care services, whether they are provided by the Council or on behalf of the Council by another agency.

3.4 In its 2016 report on Social Work in Scotland, Audit Scotland outlined the increased complexity of the role: *“With integration and other changes over recent years, the key role of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) has become more complex and challenging. Councils need to ensure that CSWOs have the status and capacity to enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively”*.

3.5 This report is consistent with the content and formal guidance laid down by the Chief Social Work Adviser for Scottish Government. The annual report does not provide a complete account of social work activity over the year. Rather it provides an overview of the range of services and initiatives in social work and social care and to highlight key achievements and challenges.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. MANAGEMENT OF 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?
Strategic Risk	No strategic risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	No compliance risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Operational	This report reflects the impact of social work services delivered by the Council, the IJB and		L	Yes

	<p>commissioned services.</p> <p>It provides a clear narrative as to the critical role social work staff undertake to assess and manage risk posed to and by vulnerable children and adults.</p>			
Financial	No financial risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reputational	<p>This report provides assurance to the citizens of Aberdeen City on the quality of social work services delivered to those who meet the threshold for social work support and intervention.</p> <p>The delivery of effective social work and social care services is critical to the protection and care of vulnerable children and adults. Failure to discharge our statutory responsibilities effectively can bring significant</p>	<p>Customers have the opportunity to complain about the quality of services both directly and via the SPSO. A learning approach is actively taken to all complaints.</p> <p>Customers also contribute to inspections via various feedback opportunities enabling them to know that their views and listened to and considered.</p> <p>The public can be assured that the Council ensures compliance with legal requirements and identified areas for improvement are addressed.</p>	L	Yes

	media interest and scrutiny.			
Environment / Climate	No environmental risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people for whom secure care might be considered has a direct relevance to the delivery of the following statements contained within the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems • Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce “out of authority” placements. • Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices. • Seek to make Aberdeen a UNICEF Child Friendly City
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Social work services have a significant contribution to make delivering on the LOIP outcomes for Children and Adults – Outcomes 4 to 13.</p> <p>There is also strong alignment to LOIP Outcome 1 in relation to poverty.</p> <p>These outcomes require agencies to work in partnership and the attached report sets out the extent to which social work services delivers on these.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required

Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
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10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Chief Social Work Officer Report 2021/22

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Aberdeen City Council's Chief Social Work Officer's 2021/22 Annual Report

Foreword

Every local authority is required to have a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO), as set out in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994. The role of the CSWO is to ensure that the Council and Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) receive effective, professional advice and guidance in the provision of social work services, whether provided directly or purchased on behalf of the local authority.

The CSWO has responsibility for performance improvement, as well as the identification, management and reporting of corporate risks as they relate to social work services. To fulfil these responsibilities, the CSWO has access to elected members, reporting through various Committees, and to the Integrated Joint Board (IJB), the Chief Officer of the HSCP and the Chief Executive of the Council. The CSWO provides professional leadership and promotes values and standards of professional practice, ensuring only registered Social Workers undertake those functions reserved in legislation and meet the requirements of the SSSC Codes of Practice.

Audit Scotland have noted the establishment HSCP's, made the role of the CSWO increasingly complex. In Aberdeen, Children's Social Work (CSW) is located within the Council, whilst Adult and Justice Social Work (JSW) is located within the HSCP. This provides two challenges. Firstly, the CSWO has to retain oversight, professional leadership and provide assurance of safety and quality of all social work services across two large and complex organisations. Secondly, the CSWO has to step back from the role of Chief Officer to provide independent, professional oversight and challenge of CSW.

Delivery of the CSWO responsibilities requires close professional collaboration with the Lead for Social Work within ACHSCP who has operational responsibility for Adult and JSW services, and the management teams for whom we each have responsibility. Never has this been more critical than in the past year.

As Aberdeen City's CSWO, it is a privilege to present this report which recognises the excellent and dedicated commitment delivered day in day out by social work staff in a wide range of roles and with a diversity of responsibilities. This work is challenging and complex. I sincerely thank everyone of them for the professionalism and sacrifice they have shown during the year 2021/22.

1. Governance and Accountability

Whilst adult and children's social work have different governance arrangements, alignment is achieved through the governance and scrutiny of the Executive Leadership Group for Public Protection, Community Planning Partnership, Council Committees and the role of Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) itself.

Children's Social Work Services

Governance of Children's Social Work services is through Council Committee structures, in particular the Operational Delivery Committee and the Public Protection Committee. Strategic improvement and partnership delivery is governed by the Executive Leadership Group (referred to as the Chief Officer Group or COG) in relation to child protection and by Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA) in relation to GIRFEC, Corporate Parenting and Children in Need. Strategic plans are driven forward by the multi-agency partnerships of the Child Protection Committee, who report to the COG, and the Children's Services Board (CSB) who report to CPA. The CSWO is a member of the COG, CPC and CSB and ensures interface across these governance arrangements.

The CSWO leads and works closely with a Children's Services Management team who have operational responsibility for delivery across the range of services.

Adult and Justice Social Work Services

Aberdeen City Council delegates a range of statutory functions in respect of social work and social care services to the Integration Joint Board (IJB) which sets out its ambitions and priorities through the preparation and implementation of its **Strategic Plan 2022-25**. The CSWO is a statutory member of the IJB. The CSWO is also a member of the Adult Protection Committee (APC) and is uniquely placed to provide an overview of the leadership and governance around the discharge of the local authority statutory functions in adult support and protection. ACHSCP has appointed a Lead for Social Work as part of its Leadership team. The Lead for Social Work works closely with the CSWO in respect of statutory responsibilities, governance arrangements, quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Additional governance oversight is exercised through the Executive Programme Board, chaired by the HSCP's Chief Officer which met weekly throughout the past year. Daily/weekly leadership and portfolio huddles were established to ensure that our decision-making was swift and the implementation of subsequently agreed actions was thorough and effective. The effectiveness of this huddle model is such that it has continued to be utilised to lead and direct our post-pandemic recovery albeit on a reshaped and less frequent basis.

The experience of delivering a critical service during the pandemic has highlighted the value of social work to individuals and families in our local communities. We are very mindful that there is still much to do and achieve as shown by the publication by Community Planning Aberdeen of its refreshed **Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26** and the HSCP's Strategic Plan. The publication of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care (Feeley Report) last year, the recent introduction by the Scottish Government of the legislation to establish a National Care Service that incorporates a Social Work Agency and the ongoing debate and discussion about this significant development give an

added impetus to the social work function and highlights the difference that it makes to those in our local communities who are most disadvantaged, most vulnerable and most in need of our support.

2. Service Quality and Performance

Our delivery of service in the year 2021-22 and the effectiveness of this was again impacted by the COVID pandemic and the different public health measures that were in place at different times. Looking at the national health and wellbeing indicators from a city perspective ([IJB Annual Report 2021-22](#)), there was a decrease in the number of carers who felt supported in their caring role, the percentage of adults who felt safe at home and the proportion of care services that were graded as 'good' or 'better'. There was also an increase in the number of days that people spent in hospital when they were ready to be discharged. We recognise the importance of ensuring that individuals and their families have positive experiences and outcomes from our interventions and are committed to improving these where necessary.

A) Justice

As reported last year, the justice social work (JSW) service was inspected by the Care inspectorate in 2020. The two requirements in the [inspection report](#) that firstly, the service Delivery Plan and Performance Management Framework should be agreed and implemented and secondly, quality assurance of risk assessment and management should be strengthened were fulfilled. The pandemic however had a significant impact on the JSW ambition to build on that positive inspection outcome and put in place further developments and improvements for the benefit of the individuals that the service works with, the service workforce and other stakeholders.

Continuing to manage and support people to complete their statutory orders during the pandemic was challenging (see Table below) due to service limitations which meant that we had to be even more creative and flexible in developing suitable alternatives.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Justice Social Work Reports	1,126	715	935
Community Payback Orders	1,055	506	667
Diversion commenced	114	150	168
Bail Supervision commenced	45	4	26
Structured Deferred Sentence	25	11	30
Throughcare cases commenced in the community	32	38	40
Total no. of hours of Unpaid Work completed	52,854	32,153	36,683

The continued increase in Diversion from Prosecution however is very positive as it enables individuals who have committed offences and have significant underlying needs to be diverted into support and, ideally out of Court involvement and further offending at an early stage. Structured Deferred Sentences are similarly intended to be a lower level, albeit intensive diversion from custody with last year's figures higher than those pre-pandemic.

There has been an increasingly high percentage of remand prisoners with the Government and the Scottish Prison Service taking steps to reduce this pre-Covid by promoting Supervised Bail as an appropriate alternative. We successfully increased the number of Bail Supervision Orders imposed in Aberdeen to 45 in 2019/20 but pandemic-related Court closures reduced that to 4 in 2020/21 before increasing to 26 last year. This remains an area where we want to see sustained improvement in in the years ahead.

It is believed that domestic offences increased during the pandemic, but this has not increased the number of Caledonian Programme assessments undertaken nor requirements imposed. There is, however, a 35% increase in the number of Caledonian cases on workers caseloads which is reflective of the difficulty in delivering programmatic groupwork in the last two years and the timescale of orders having to be extended to complete. This has put considerable pressure on the service and is compounded by the loss of Caledonian trained workers and the challenges in recruiting already trained workers and accessing training for workers that are either new to Justice Social Work or recently qualified.

Delivery of JSW statutory supervision was a huge challenge during the Covid pandemic. Workloads were prioritised in respect of risk and need with those assessed as being either highest risk, most vulnerable, released from custody and those who did not have telephones being seen face to face. Wherever possible contact was maintained virtually with everyone else but many of the client group are “digitally poor”, so mobile phones were provided where necessary to maintain contact in addition to food parcels and practical support as and when required.

In 2020/21, 75.6% of Community Payback Orders (CPOs) were completed successfully – higher than the Scottish average of 73% - and we were able to increase this to 78.5% for 2021/22 (Scotland data not yet available). It is however difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from CPO data as the imposition of orders was significantly lower compared with pre-pandemic years.

Covid legislation allowed for a number of unpaid work hours to be written off in certain circumstances and for orders to be extended beyond initial completion dates. Even so, lockdown measures, and the impact of these meant it was more difficult than usual to get people through their orders. The Unpaid Work Team therefore developed some creative solutions such as Blended Learning Packs, to enable unpaid workers to undertake their orders at home. This evident creativity and flexibility have enabled some individuals to complete their UPW Requirements despite these challenging circumstances and, unlike many other authorities, Aberdeen City JSW does not have a backlog of Unpaid Work Requirements.

In 2021/22, 90% of JSW clients reported through their Exit Questionnaire, improvement with at least one of the ten possible intervention domains. It is also significant that, in a time of considerable stress for everybody, clients reported improvements in their Mental Health, Coping Skills and Self-Esteem, likely due to the support they had received, and in Education – possibly attributable in part to Unpaid Work’s Learning Packs mentioned earlier.

B) Older People and Physical Disability, including Hospital social work

A redesign of the Older People/Physical Disability service resulted in the enhancement of the Care Management Response Team to provide individuals and their families with a consistent entry point for screening, assessment, and care planning. There is a strong and sustained emphasis on addressing the waiting times for an assessment and the subsequent levels of unmet need. Staff are being encouraged to take an enablement-focused approach which involves a consideration of technological support and the appropriateness of risk assessed care.

In 2021-22, care management recorded on average forty-one referrals a week compared to thirty-six in 2020-21. Unmet need was also, on average, higher last year (147 clients) than in the previous three years (82;135;135) however this number would be higher still (226) if not for the Bon Accord Care Interim Project which provides emergency support for eligible individuals. There has been significant focus placed on building relationships with our Care Home and Care at Home providers and their support with hospital discharge in particular has been invaluable as we strive to deliver a flexible and responsive service.

The flow pressures across the hospital system have been significant and sustained over the past year and it has not been uncommon for the hospital social work team to be asked regularly, and sometimes at short notice, to intensify its efforts to meet spikes in demand. The team have been able to retain staff, with minimal vacancies arising compared to other areas of adult social work, which has enabled staff to be aligned to busier areas of the hospital particularly Frailty Pathway areas and provide swift, effective responses to emerging challenges. Facilitating a consistent social work approach has strengthened Multi-Disciplinary Team relationships and discharge planning collaborations to secure good outcomes on an individual and system-wide basis. Having an MHO whose sole focus is Hospital Guardianship applications has also helped avoid unnecessary and lengthy delays.

C) Learning Disability

In 2019, the **Learning Disability Strategy - "A'thegither in Aberdeen"** was published and supported by a robust action plan to ensure that the identified outcomes in the plan remained our priority and focus. We committed to reviewing our Action Plan in 2020-21 however this was impacted by the pandemic and the need for the service to focus on firstly business continuity and then recovery planning. That said, our strategic outcomes – “Learning, Living and Working” have continued to be at the forefront of how we create, develop, and implement support services and community opportunities which enable adults with Learning Disabilities to live a full and active life.

We have continued to provide safe, stimulating, person centred services to vulnerable individuals throughout the pandemic following all the relevant guidance and legislative requirements. Our annual Quality Questionnaire had a good return this year with positive feedback gathered from supported individuals, their families and other health and social care professionals. All services have completed an action plan to improve in areas where comments and suggestions were made.

Over the past year we have worked collaboratively with our third sector providers who provide Training, Skills, and Development services to co-produce our **Market Position Statement 2021-2026** which outlines our future commissioning intent in this area. We continue to encourage and support providers to work collaboratively to ensure that they provide a variety of different learning opportunities for individuals to effectively develop their skills and self-confidence in readiness to engage in supported employment placements, volunteering roles as well as “peer support” modules.

D) Mental Health

The implementation of the **Mental Health Delivery Plan 2020-23** has been impacted by the pandemic and the need for the service to focus on firstly business continuity and then recovery planning; some progress has been made as circumstances required us to implement some particular actions at pace. The plan has a clear focus on prevention, self-management and self-help and the enhancement of our digital provision and the use of apps to provide an accessible, personalised response to emerging and enduring mental health needs.

There continues to be an increase in referrals to our community mental health services. Moving into a new phase of living with Covid has affected different people in different ways however the main themes that impact on people’s mental health and wellbeing continue to be around social isolation, financial concerns, and lack of community engagement. We foresee these issues continuing to be prevalent in the coming years.

Figures for 2021/22 suggest there has been a continuing increase in the overall workload of our Mental Health Officer (MHO) Service which is very much in keeping with the national picture. It is reasonable to suggest that the pandemic has impacted on everyone’s mental health wellbeing over the past year and for some this impact has been greater than for others giving rise to a significant increase in numbers of Community Treatment Orders (CTO) applications. Due to an increase in hospital-based staffing, there has been a shift in service delivery in the community over the past year which has directly affected admission and discharge numbers.

Detention in hospital intervention	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Community Treatment Order (CTO)	56	52	62	82	53	70	57	106	113
Emergency Detention in Hospital	36	36	28	40	50	53	42	34	31
Short-Term	180	157	170	241	203	209	245	222	228

There are 15.3 FTE MHOs within our service not including other qualified MHO practitioners working in areas outwith mental health who are able to provide some limited but welcome input to the

service. The future MHO workforce is currently being shaped by the modernisation of the service as a whole and in particular our learning from interim workforce changes and the move to locality-aligned service delivery.

Due to the increase in workload, as in many other local authority areas, a waiting list for MHO allocation is in place. This is regularly reviewed and prioritised. Three relief MHOs are utilised to work on the waiting list with an intention to recruit more to focus on specific Adult with Incapacity Guardianship Orders and to assist specific cases open to the Learning Disability Team. An additional part-time MHO post has been created using funding provided by the MHO Capacity Building Grant Scheme to provide input into the delayed hospital guardianship work. A new Adult with Incapacity/Mental Health Adviser Co-ordinator's post will train, develop, review, and evaluate the ever-changing role of the MHO service within the context of current statutory demands and proposed legislative changes.

All guardianship orders are now being considered by the courts post-pandemic. There has been an overall increase in the number of Guardianship orders over the past 12 months. There has been 87 referrals and the granting of 113 guardianships (67 private and 46 on behalf of the CSWO).

E) Care Home and Care at Home Oversight

Over the past year, the Oversight Team has continued to provide ongoing assurances in respect of the care home sector by assessing available information and facilitating immediate action or support as required. The joint assurance visits undertaken with nursing colleagues have also enabled instances of harm or poor practice to be identified and responded to quickly due to the more substantive relationships that the multi-disciplinary team have with care home providers.

In January 2021, the Scottish Government required all eligible care home placements to be reviewed by July 2021 and so this team was extended – using available funding - to undertake these reviews for all individuals residing in care homes including those who were placed outwith Aberdeen. This initiative was very successful, leading to the Oversight team becoming formally known as the Oversight and Review team with its remit extending to include care at home providers. Reviews of all older people and physical disability service users are now planned to ensure that their care provision is meeting their assessed needs and delivering desired outcomes.

There is a consensus that the introduction of the multi-agency Care Home Oversight Group - which is now a permanent part of our governance arrangements - and joint assurance visits has had a positive impact in respect of Adult Support and Protection awareness across the sector and the response from our health partners. There has been very positive feedback from stakeholders including many providers that the team has engaged with.

F) Self-directed support

Self-directed Support (SDS) is not a separate activity but is instead something that underpins operational social work activity across our children's and adult services. We are very aware of the

fundamental aim of giving individuals greater choice and control over their social care support. We strongly believe that a pragmatic, person-centred approach is key to fulfilling this outcome and that we should always, be seeking solutions to the many challenges, sometimes complex, that are presented to us in respect of meeting client needs and fulfilling outcomes. Our SDS team has an enabling function to develop an evident consensus across our stakeholders from practitioners to individuals and their families to providers that 'SDS works'.

There has been an increase in adult protection concerns reported in relation to Option 2 providers which has led to formal proceedings under the Adult Protection legislation for some of them. We are currently exploring how best to provide support and assurance with regards to this wider group of providers who are not contracted by the partnership but still chosen by individuals to deliver desired services.

The pandemic resulted in practitioners working in emergency response and not having the same opportunities for development and training around SDS. It is recognised that some of our newer colleagues require training to fully understand the benefits of the SDS legislation. The SDS work closely with all colleagues, whatever their role, to answer any queries that they might have about the implementation of SDS to ensure that it remains a values-driven and outcome-focused activity. There is however, training planned for all care managers for SDS, utilising the learning we have gained so far in terms of the positive outcomes for individuals.

G) Carers

We recognise that Carers have been disproportionately affected by the reduction of access to services as a consequence of the Covid-related restrictions. Carers previously had access to a dedicated respite facility however this transitioned to an integrated, Intermediate Care Facility therefore different respite resources were needing to be developed.

A survey of Carers was undertaken to establish their priorities when seeking respite and the key theme that emerged from this was access and availability to local respite provision. Under the strategic umbrella of "Staying Well, Staying Connected", we subsequently reviewed and then commissioned residential respite and day opportunities in line with those identified carer priorities and also to address a long-standing gap in the city's provision of respite for those aged under 65 and dementia specialist services. We recognise that post-Covid, it will be necessary to revisit these respite arrangements due to the increase in demand for Carer support services.

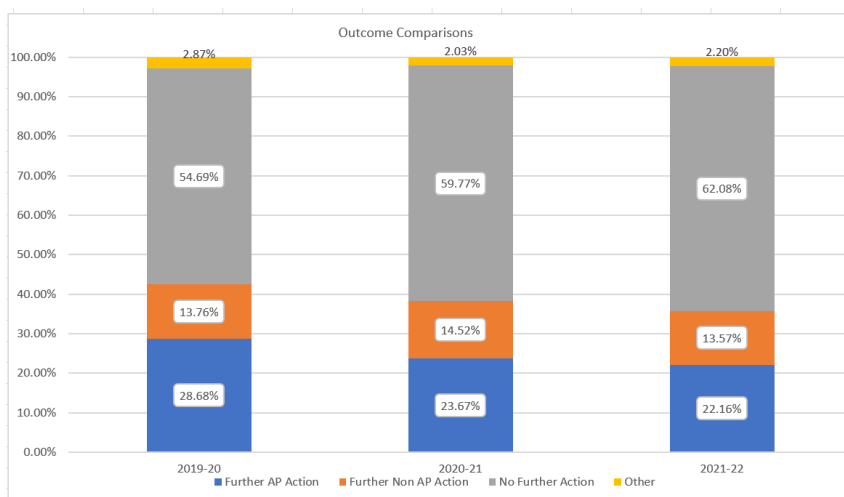
H) Adult Support and Protection

Governance of our adult support and protection activity is overseen by the Adult Protection Committee (APC) whose vision statement is "**Partners in Aberdeen are committed to an inclusive approach to preventing and responding to harm and protecting adults at risk**". In December 2021, the APC approved its **Strategy 2022-24** which sets out the vision and key strategic priorities for reducing the risk of harm and improving outcomes for adults at risk of harm.

A joint inspection of adult support and protection covering the period February 2020 – February 2022 was undertaken by the Care Inspectorate and other regulatory partners earlier this year – see [Position Statement](#) . The subsequent **inspection report** noted that in respect of supporting positive experiences and outcomes for adults at risk of harm, the partnership’s key ASP processes were effective and that its strategic leadership was very effective and demonstrated major strengths.

The Adult Protection Unit and the Duty team merged in September 2021 to become the Adult Protection Social Work (APSW) Team which is the central point for all ASP referrals, Police concern reports and emergency/crisis situations including the immediate safeguarding of adults at risk of harm. This significant shift in our ASP operational practice is in its infancy but we are already beginning to see positive outcomes from this development. The Care Inspectorate could already see how the new team had created consistency and an effective framework for the triaging of referrals and it was commended that we had transformed our ASP operations during the pandemic to ensure a strengthening of our ASP arrangements.

- ASP Referrals: Physical Harm remained the highest in terms of numbers of ASP referrals made, although this had not increased back to pre-covid levels. Increases in referrals relating to Psychological Harm, Self-Harm and Self-Neglect were likely to be linked to the impact of the pandemic.
- Outcome of Referrals: The highest proportion of referrals resulted in an outcome of ‘No further Action’ which was consistent with previous years – see chart below.



- ASP Referrals which progress to Investigation: Adult Protection Investigations increased from 227 in 2020-21 to 248 in 2021-22, although the proportion of referrals that go on to Investigation has clearly been reducing since the introduction of the new APSW team and a more consistent approach to the screening of all referrals.
- ASP Case Conferences: There was a total of 61 Case Conferences in 2021-22 compared to 34 in 2020-21. One explanation for this increase is that the first pandemic year significantly impacted on all off our social work delivery including adult support and protection but the

workforce subsequently made the necessary adjustments to their working practices, virtual meetings etc, to ensure that required meetings or activities took place.

- Case Reviews: During the period 2021-22 there were five Initial Case Reviews (ICRs) one of which is currently under Police investigation with the other four progressing to Multi-agency Review. The findings are expected during 2022 when consideration will be given about how best to implement the learning from these reviews as part of the local improvement plan.
- Large Scale Investigations (LSIs): Over the last year, concerns were raised regarding four care homes and one care at home provider, resulting in one Large Scale Investigation and the potential for a second LSI following discussion with other relevant agencies.

Lead agency quality assurance undertaken in April 2021 showed that 82% of scrutinised cases evidenced good quality investigations and in 100% of cases, partners were appropriately involved. This is an acknowledged area of strength with Council Officers reporting that they get appropriate and positive co-operation from partners as and when required. Significant resources have been put in place to ensure that relevant information and expert advice is accessible to support all adult support and protection investigatory activity.

Key risks to delivery – highlight key risks and action being taken to mitigate these.

The IJB has in place a Board Assurance and Escalation Framework to provide the necessary assurance that the partnership has put in place the structures and processes necessary for setting its risk appetite, for assessment and mitigation of risk, and for putting in place effective controls and assurances, properly owned and actioned.

The Strategic Risk Register is owned primarily by the Chief Officer, with individually identified risks assigned to different members of the Leadership Team as appropriate. It sets out those risks which may threaten achievement of the IJB's strategic priorities, in order for the board to demonstrate its attention to key accountability issues and to ensure that appropriate and effective mitigating actions are in place. The Register is presented to the Risk, Audit and Performance (RAP) Committee on a quarterly basis and then presented, with appropriate RAP comments included, to the following IJB meeting thus ensuring regular and robust scrutiny of the assessed risks and the mitigating activities and interventions. The IJB and its Leadership Team have always had an appropriate focus on its Strategic Risk Register, the identified risks and the controls and mitigations required to manage these. The pandemic arguably brought a greater intensity to this scrutiny and encouraged a whole-system approach to the management of risk in our social work services.

The resilience of the service was again tested last year by the pandemic as it directly or indirectly impacted on staff wellbeing and that of their families and friends. Similarly, the many third and independent sector providers that we work with experienced similar staffing challenges. In response, the service, across the different client groups, adjusted its working practices to ensure that appropriate access to required services was maintained. Risks to business continuity across all sectors and services – in whatever form they manifest themselves - are an on-going matter for discussion, mitigation and monitoring.

Children's Social Work Services:

Overview of Service performance and delivery of statutory functions

Child Protection

Child Protection processes and administration are well embedded, understood and utilised across all partners in Aberdeen City. The Joint Inspection 2019 noted ***“Recognition of, and responses to, children and young people at immediate risk of harm were very effective and staff were confident in their role, leading to a positive impact on children’s and young people’s safety”*** and that has continued throughout this challenging year.

Adherence is strictly to the National Guidance for Child Protection and to the Scottish Government’s Guidance issued in February 2019 “Protecting children and young people – child protection committee and chief officer responsibilities”. The new National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 was published in September 2021. Aberdeen City Council (ACC), in collaboration with our multi-agency partners, are working to implement the changes identified in the new guidance.

The Partnership appointed a new independent Chair of our Child Protection Committee in November 2021. This appointment also covers Chair of the Adult Protection Committee. This appointment supports our continuing drive to , as far as possible, across both areas of partnership working. The Independent Chair provides strong assurance and supports are continuing self-evaluation and improvement journey.

In January 2022, following the publication of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021, Aberdeen City implemented the changes in relation to Child Protection Planning Meetings (formally Child Protection Case Conferences). Aberdeen City adopted the change in language, and the timeframes for which Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPMs) should be convened. Aligned to the changes in language, the implementation of the Age of Criminal Responsibilities Act 2019, in December 2021 has further ignited our awareness that there is no place for younger children in an adult justice forum. The collaboration particularly between social work and Police colleagues in readiness for this legislative progression has allowed a healthy challenging and further cultural shift.

It is important that CPPMs are held in a timely manner to assess the risks and agree a multi-disciplinary Child Protection Plan to minimise risk of harm to the child. In 2021/22, 86% of initial and pre-birth initial CPPMs were held within timescale, exceeding Aberdeen City Council’s target of 80%. This illustrates a concerted effort across all agencies to meet with the family and to co-ordinate a plan for the child as expeditiously as possible.

Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPMs) are conducted utilising a strength-based approach; family attendance at initial and pre-birth initial CPPMs was 95% for the period April 2021 to March 2022. Family attendance at initial core group meetings for the same period approached 94%. This data indicates the respectful relationships among professionals and families involved in what can by nature unavoidably be a somewhat tense process. This was commended by the Care Inspectorate in the Joint Inspection 2019 - ***“Strengths-based approaches and relationship-based practice models were having a positive impact on helping to build trusting and respectful relationships between staff and families”***.

New referrals into service of a child care and protection nature are received through our Joint Child Protection Team, Reception Team or the Aberdeen Maternity Hospital Team. These are well

established and experienced teams. We regularly review and quality assure familiar processes such as Inter-agency referral Discussions (IRD), Joint Investigative Interviews (JII), and Child Protection Case Conferences (now known as Child Protection Planning Meetings). Throughout this period, IRD processes have routinely included Health and Education colleagues, with all agencies striving to ensure that discussions are conducted timeously, with the target being this is within one hour of referral. The quality assuring of JIIs and IRDs continues to be an essential part of our child protection processes with five IRD records and two JIIs per month being quality assured by all involved agencies, to offer partnership wise scrutiny. Very good use of forensic questioning is consistently demonstrated by social workers eliciting essential details and indicating a good level of planning for JIIs. The consistently high quality of IRD recording and of JIIs has formed an excellent basis from which to build on our implementation of the Scottish Child Interviewing Model which will commence in November 2022. To prepare for this we have been collaborating with colleagues in Aberdeenshire and Moray towards implementing a Grampian-wide IRD as the cornerstone for the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM), ensuring gold standard practice which will be consistent for children and their families regardless of where in the north east, they reside.

282 Child Protection Planning Meetings were held in the year, a reduction from 308 in 2020/21. Over the course of the year, the average number of children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) was 90. This is a reduction in comparison to an average of 123 children in 2020/21 when, as outlined in my report last year, this number was particularly high to ensure appropriate professional support was provided to families during the height of the covid pandemic. Numbers have reverted to a more usual pattern although they fluctuate throughout the year as we would expect, reflecting the appropriate identification of, and response to, risk and need. The registration rate per 1000 at 31 March 2022 was 3.1%, with 105 children registered. This is slightly higher than the Scottish average of 2.9%. The average rate of re-registration is consistent with the national picture. Very few children remained on the CPR for more than one year in the period reflecting improvement activity in this respect. This would indicate practice characterised by effective and appropriate interventions.

Local practice is for children on the Child Protection Register (CPR) to be seen weekly, a task that in the main rests with allocated social workers who are therefore familiar with the child and family. The infrequent return of children to the CPR in short timeframe is indicative of the effectiveness of operational professional's interventions with children and families in order to keep children safe.

Monthly referral rates remained stable throughout the year, with some fluctuations around school holidays. The volume of referrals received into the Service have fallen somewhat from around 9,000 to 7,328 referrals being received. Of these, 42% progressed to a level of social work assessment, ranging from initial enquiry to more comprehensive assessment and intervention taking place. Whilst the nature of incoming referrals has been consistent with previous years, it is apparent that the pandemic, economic pressures and of recent global unrest have disproportionately impacted on the most vulnerable in our society and in turn therefore on those who serve to support them. Work continues with partners to ensure an aligned understanding of thresholds for social work service intervention as well as maximising opportunities for support opportunities for families at an earlier juncture than when specialist social work support is necessary.

A campus school for children with a disability has been operational since 2017. The Children with Disability social work service along with health professionals are hosted within the school. The benefits of this co-location continued to be recognised, not only in relation to professional relationships but also in relationships with families allowing for more natural, responsive and supportive engagement

opportunities. Improving transition of children with a disability to adult services remains a focus for the coming year, particularly with the challenges that have increased since the onset of the Covid pandemic. Aberdeen City continues to work alongside Association for Real Change to embed the principles of good transitions for this group of young people and their families.

Maintaining a clear focus on risk is critical to all social work teams. The continuing utilisation of systemic practice which is trauma informed and relational in its delivery allows for the effective management of risk across all areas of operational fieldwork in the city. The challenge remains ensuring the staff team have the requisite skills and support to deliver this complex task.

There has been a helpful coordination of our public protection fora which has seen greater interface of child protection with other strategic partnerships such as the adult protection, alcohol & drugs, and violence against women partnerships. The [Aberdeen City Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2020/21](#) illustrates the multi-agency work across all child protection services. The CPC and APC share the same Chair.

Leaders of Public Protection have continued to ensure there is a strong focus on delivering preventative support to individuals and families in Aberdeen. Additionally ensuring the partnership has a strong learning approach has been a focus of action over the past year. Learning from Drug Related Death's and from the deaths of individuals who have taken their own lives continues to explore how agencies can collaborate more effectively.

Our areas for development remain predictable; neglect, parental substance and alcohol misuse, parental mental health and domestic abuse. These are all addressed in improvement plans, particularly the Child Protection Improvement Plan 2021-2024. There has been some escalation of referrals on the grounds of physical and emotional abuse which is indicative of family tensions indicative of the longer-term impacts of the Covid pandemic.

Ongoing self-evaluation includes implementation of the Independent Care Review articulated in "The Promise", with a particular drive to better enable children, young people and families to participate and influence our child protection culture and processes.

Corporate Parenting

The role of corporate parent continues to embed and develop. Improvement activity in relation to Corporate Parenting is prioritised and is embedded in the [Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Children's Services Plan 2020-2023](#) and [Corporate Parenting Improvement Plan](#). Our [Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2023](#) and [Champions Board](#) plans remain congruent with LOIP priorities. The vision for the Champions Board Plan for 2021-2023 remains unchanged; 'our care experienced children, young people and care leavers have a right to participate in decision-making about their own lives and have their voices heard'.

All strategic plans relating to corporate parenting are overseen by the Children's Services Board (CSB). The Quality Assurance Framework has been adopted by the CSB and a multi-agency data suite is in place although remains an ongoing focus for iterative improvement. Corporate parenting responsibilities span many agencies with varied approaches to what and how data is collected. This can make it challenging to establish baseline data and monitor improvement.

The number of children and young people who are looked after by Aberdeen City Council has decreased slightly from 566 in 2019/20 to 516 in 2020/21. There is a nominal positive trend in the numbers of children and young people being looked after at home versus away from home in comparison to 2019/20 data, however, multi-agency efforts on shifting the balance of care toward how we can safely care for children and young people at home or in kinship arrangements is still crucial if we are to **#keepthepromise** and meet our own local aspirations.

The Partnership's Corporate Parenting Performance and Improvement Group has responsibility for the delivery of the Corporate Parenting Improvement Plan, collation and monitoring of data and quality assurance in relation to care experienced children and young people, delivering on identified aims set out in the LOIP and driving the implementation of The Promise across the Partnership.

Aberdeen's Lead Officer for Corporate Parenting post was appointed to in September 2021. This post sits within the wider Improvement and Development Team in Children's Social Work, has responsibility for the strategic direction of Corporate Parenting improvement work across the partnership. The post is also closely aligned with the Champions Board in relation to the delivery of strategic aspects of their agenda.

A self-evaluation of our current improvement activity against the recommendations set out in Plan 21-24 has set the scene for establishing a baseline and focus on local delivery of The Promise across the partnership. This work will continue to be implemented and monitored and it is anticipated that we will recruit to the role of Promise Lead Officer in the coming months and create a Partnership Promise Group which reports to the Children's Services Board to support the implementation, delivery and monitoring of Partnership activities to #KeepthePromise.

The new [Aberdeen Protects](#) website went live in March 2022. The Corporate Parenting content on the site seeks to increase understanding and awareness of Corporate Parenting with our workforce and the wider public, as well as provide a platform for routine and accessible reporting on improvement activity.

Alternative Family Care

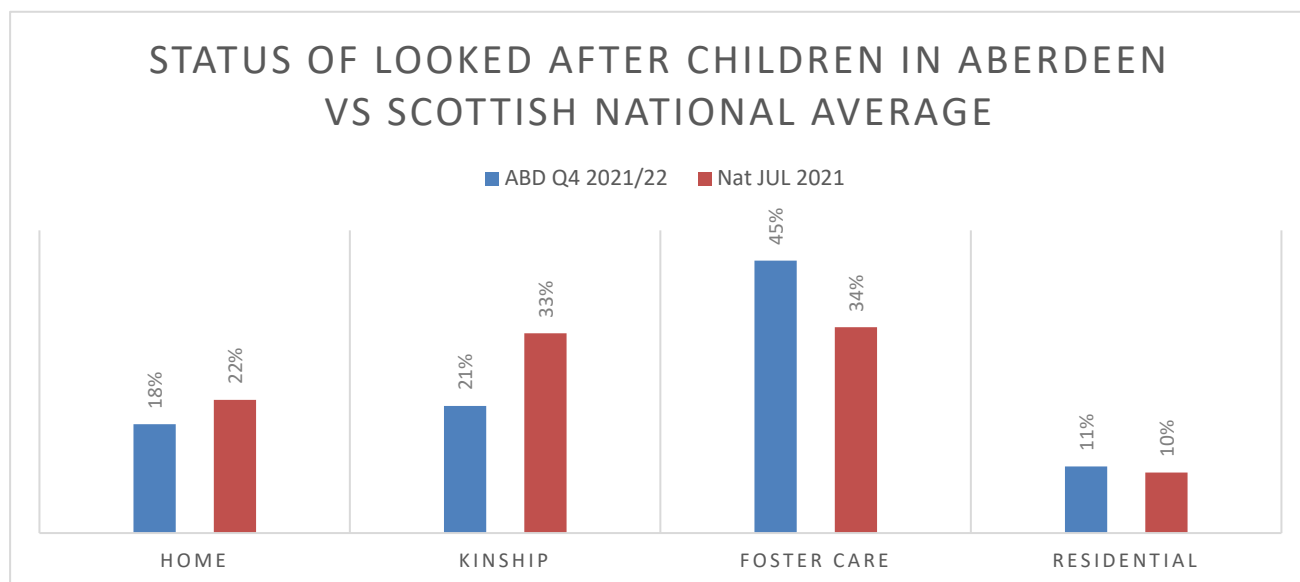
For those who cannot stay with their parents, the Alternative Family Care service provides children and young people with safe and nurturing home environments. There is a strong focus on improving outcomes for children and young people supporting them to continue to feel a sense of belonging and connectedness, enabling them to remain in their care setting and experience continuity of care. Our staff and carers are trained and supported to understand the impact of early childhood abuse, neglect, trauma and insecurity of attachment. The Alternative Family Care Service ensures our carers are well supported and have access to a range of training to help them meet the needs of the children they care for.

The number of children placed in residential settings out with Aberdeen City has for the second year running fallen slightly. The cost of such placements are prohibitive and the outcomes for young people can be variable. In addition to the statutory reviewing process, we have a forum where senior management staff in Education and Children's Social work scrutinise the quality and planning of individual placements on an annual basis at least. We have commissioned **Includem** to work with in-house resources to provide intensive support to prevent children being placed out with the city but also to support young people who return to the city.

The overall number of children in secure accommodation between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 has remained low, at an average of less than one child in total over the course of the year. This is consistent with 2020/21, with two months when no children were in secure care.

Despite recruitment efforts, the need for foster carers continues to outweigh the number coming forward. A new payment for skills scheme was approved and commenced in April 2020. It provides incentives to current carers to provide additional placements especially sibling groups where there is national acute shortage and to attract individuals that have wanted to foster but were not in a financial position to stop working. Although challenging growing our internal capacity remains an ongoing focus for the service.

Aberdeen City Council foster carers currently care for 91 children in 80 households. There are a further 150 children accommodated with agency foster carers. Kinship carers care for 277 children in 221 households of whom 115 young people in 95 households are in a formal kinship arrangement.



Permanence plans were made for 41 children; 14 for adoption (10 for individual children and 2 sibling groups of 2) and 27 for permanent foster care (2 individual children, 1 sibling group of 2, 5 sibling groups of 3 and 2 sibling group of 4). Adoption matches were approved for 18 children. With the exception of 3 sibling groups of two, these were all individual children. In common with other local authority areas, recruitment of foster carers remains a challenge as does fulfilling the aim to place sibling groups together.

Children’s Residential Care

The refurbishment and review of our children’s residential estate has clarified options which could enhance the numbers of children we care for and reduce need for externally purchased provision. Service redesign proposals have been consolidated and ensure residential roles are fit for future purpose, i.e., trauma enhanced, Staying Put and recognition that Aftercare is a core function of their role. In support of these functions a new Team Leader role and associated workforce resource across our homes has been developed to ensure these pathway transitions are relationally based and offers continuity.

A therapeutic approach to provision, based on [Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy \(DDP\)](#) is embedded across our service. Our residential service has a clear ethos of care that underpins our admissions procedure, including robust matching consideration. Service focus is on the development of safe and trusting relationships understanding that this is fundamental to change, development, and trauma recovery. This includes avoiding and challenging practices which seek to further stigmatise and marginalise our children.

The needs of our children are increasingly recognised to reflect neglect and the traumatic impact of this on their development. Care provision is generally not short term, offering long term or permanence to many of our children, most of whom have been in foster care which has disrupted. We have supported high levels of sustainment and associated low level of care disruption.

Care provision has had to be adaptable, to ensure the workforce is supported to respond therapeutically and lovingly. The workforce values and promotes ongoing learning and development, effective supervision and a reflective, supportive debrief procedure. We have invested in a workforce skills development strategy lead by a Clinical Practitioner within Residential and Youth Services.

Positive outcomes have been recorded following practice change in the partnership approach between Police Scotland and local Children's Homes. This has evidenced positive progress to avoid early criminalisation, recognising that early trauma has a direct impact on brain development, resulting in some impulsive and risk-taking behaviours. These outcomes are demonstrated in data shared by Police Scotland Youth Justice Management Unit, Comparative Report on Juvenile Offenders 2020/21 which indicated the reduction in crime files recorded against local children's homes reducing from a high of 122 in 2014/15; 10 in 2018/19 ;3 in 2019/20; 2 in 2020/21; 13 in 2021/22.

Collectively these approaches have contributed to a grading by the Care Inspectorate of good or very good for our Residential, Foster Care and Adoption Services.

Young people placed in alternative to family care are being encouraged to stay put in care placements on a Continuing Care basis. This has a beneficial impact on future success. There continues to be a significant number of young people aged 18 years and over remaining in our children's homes as well as in the two targeted services we have commissioned in the city.

Data highlights that at 31.03.2022, 32% of our young people within residential homes within the city are 18yrs or older. In addition, 22 young people are in Continuing Care with foster carers. This is an investment in future capacity and is considered preventative in reducing future dependencies and demand. It also contributes to decreased homelessness. This has previously been recognised in our joint inspection 2019 which commended the quality of this service noting that children and young people enjoy sustained positive relationships with staff and carers. The benefits of trauma informed approaches were apparent and almost all care experienced young people reported they felt settled and safe where they currently lived.

In line with the strategic review of Throughcare and Aftercare provision October 2021, across the city there has been a continued focus on our throughcare and aftercare support to young people this year. This has included ensuring that since October 2021 when the additional Covid enhanced payment was removed from universal credit, all young people entitled to a weekly aftercare allowance have

continued to receive an additional £20 a week. This pre-empted the govt cost of living payment issued in July and September this year.

Within our services, the addition of the care experienced Housing worker in 2021 has significantly streamlined processes for those young people moving into their own homes or becoming homeless, allowing a single point of contact and a liaison. They directly work with young people helping them understand sometimes complex processes and improving the experience for them which appears to be having an impact on tenancy sustainment. In October 2021, an Assertive Outreach project for care experienced young people began with a social worker seconded to focus on prevention and reduction in harm, in light of the increasing drug deaths in Scotland. They have begun identifying gaps in services and offering direct support to young people.

Following on from the increased use of digital communication over lockdown period, a wider arena of participation opportunities remains in place to date. The care leavers team Facebook page continues to be cited by our young people as a useful means of networking. In acknowledgement of the impact of digital inequality on those with care experience, a range of direct support has been made available. Following council's approval, all care experienced young people when moving into their own tenancy are now being provided with their own mifi and data sim as part of the continuing development of digital inclusion for care experienced young people.

Rights, Participation and Voice

The Aberdeen Young Person's Rights Service remains a key supporter of those with care experience in the promoting and upholding of their rights, participation and in their relationships with corporate parents and the Champions Board. The Rights Service, through its expanded remit, now provides advocacy, guidance and support to Aberdeen's children, young people and young adults aged 0-26, who are care experienced or are or have been involved in child protection processes.

The Service continues to be well utilised, with an increase of around 39% in new or returning referrals from the year previous. This growth includes its intended percentage increase, in line with Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 'Balance of Care' priorities, to offer support to children and young people who are looked after at home or in kinship care and to those young adults living in their own/supported tenancy.

Environments for linking in and meeting with children, young people and young adults continue to be variably affected by Covid19, but the Service has developed creative and inclusive ways to build relationships and to connect. The Service is becoming increasingly more adept at using social media and digital technology but has not lost sight of the importance of face-to-face contact, which remains the most preferred option of those it supports. The Service is involved in a range of single and multi-agency improvement charters and associated activity, with focus on rights, participation, and voice.

Safeguarding rights and wellbeing is not an exclusive obligation of the Rights Service; rather this requires a whole workforce approach. Many children, young people and young adults will not need or wish to access the Rights Service and those professionals with whom they have relationships are best placed to advocate for and support them. This is something that the Service actively promotes through its digital information, its monthly 'Voice Snapshots' and through activity such as its established monthly virtual rights and participation awareness raising drop-in sessions. These 'drop ins' meet, in part, the objective, noted in the Corporate Parenting Plan, about the Service providing workforce skill development sessions each year of the plan.

The [Aberdeen Young Person's Rights Service Annual Report 2021](#) gives fuller detail about its activity and the main themes related to what children, young people and young adults said matters to them. It further sets out priority areas for development, leadership, and improvement for 2022.

The Mind Of My Own app supports our children and young people to have a voice and for their views to be recorded accurately. It is the only digital tool that comprehensively supports Article 12 of the UNCRC. In 2022 we saw an increase to 232 Young Person Accounts and 423 Worker Accounts. The main themes young people used the app for in 2022 were when they wished to discuss a topic prior to worker's visits, when they wanted to prepare for meetings/conferences and when they had good news and wished to share it.

Quality Assurance

Significant progress has been made in the year to 31 March 2022 in relation to the monitoring of service quality and performance across the Service. The extended use of data, risk registers, service standards and the development of a quality assurance framework have all supported the identification of what is working well and what needs improved. We have a well-established practice of quality assurance across social work teams, which is supported by service wide quality assurance data reporting and analysis.

A multi-agency **Quality Assurance Framework**, led by Children's Social Work, continues to operate and provides a multi-agency approach to quality assurance across services to embed a culture of service improvement and learning which is consistent and strong across partner agencies. These audits are commissioned by the CPC and the CSB. They utilise The Care Inspectorate "[A quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection – August 2019](#)" to support self-evaluation.

Two audits were completed during the year in relation to Youth Homelessness and Children with Disabilities and recommendations were passed to the CPC and CSB to support longer term strategic and financial planning as well as identifying areas for short term operational support. The total audits carried out successfully is now four and the recommendations are being tracked to ensure progress is made.

Key Risks to Delivery:

Managing risk is an integral element of the social work function and is a responsibility that our Managers and Senior staff take seriously to ensure, as far as is practicable and reasonable, the continued wellbeing and welfare of the individuals with whom we work.

Both adult and children's social work services actively track and report risk via Risk Registers which in turn are reported to Council Committee or the IJB's Clinical and Care Governance Committee.

Children's Social Work records and reports risk on the Aberdeen City Council Cluster and Operational Risk Registers and the multi-agency CPC Risk Register.

Cluster risk registers are owned by Chief Officers and reviewed monthly by Directors. Cluster risk registers set out the risks that may prevent the delivery of critical services, commissioning intentions and/or strategic outcomes whereas Operational risk registers are risk registers owned by individual teams working within the Clusters. The risks contained within these registers will be localised to individual teams and are owned by team managers and leaders. Risks contained within Operational risk registers may be escalated to cluster risk register when the level and severity of risk increases.

The risk register held under the CPC represents one element of the multi-agency system of managing the risk of significant harm to children in the city and is reviewed at every CPC quarterly meeting. Recognising their interconnectedness, the Risk Registers of all public protection forums (CPC, APC, VAWP and ADP) are considered by the Executive Leadership Group for Public Protection (COG) at their bi-monthly meetings.

The IJB has in place a Board Assurance and Escalation Framework to provide the necessary assurance that the partnership has put in place the structures, behaviours and processes necessary for setting risk appetite, for delegating the identification of both significant events and trends, for assessment and mitigation of risk, and for putting in place effective controls and assurances, properly owned and actioned.

The Strategic Risk register is owned primarily by the Chief Officer, with individually identified risks assigned to different members of the Leadership Team as appropriate. The Strategic Risk Register is presented to the Audit and Performance Systems Committee (APS) on a quarterly basis and then presented, with any required revisions, to the following IJB meeting thus ensuring regular and robust scrutiny of the assessed risks and the mitigating activities and interventions. The pandemic has arguably brought a greater intensity to this scrutiny and encouraged a whole-system approach to the management of risk in our social work services.

From an operational social work perspective across both children's and adults services, the key risk to service delivery was the continuing challenge of the ongoing pandemic on the capacity and resilience of our social work-trained workforce and also the wider social care workforce. Illness, family illness, infection outbreaks at a service level, the need to self-isolate and other lockdown impacts all had an impact on the availability and wellbeing of our colleagues with daily monitoring and interventions needed to ensure the continuity of our services through very critical and challenging times. As noted in last year's report, it is commendable that services adapt and continue throughout the ongoing waves of the pandemic, with considerable positive feedback from those accessing our services.

3. Resources

Aberdeen is the third largest city in Scotland with an estimated population of circa 225K with a significant population increase anticipated in the next 10 and 20 years, particularly among the 65 to 74 and over 75 age groups. Rising expectations and demand for our services, in both children and adult services, coupled with rising costs and reduced funding presents a significant challenge to our ambitions to deliver effective interventions that lead to improved individual experiences and outcomes.

Additional resources have been provided by the Scottish Government to recognise the impact of the Covid Pandemic. While predominantly target on adult social work and social care children's social work and justice social work have also received some additional funding to support recovery

from the impact of the pandemic. Evidence suggests that the impact of the pandemic will continue to be felt by all aspects of social over the coming years with increasing demand for services.

Demand for our adult social work services is expected to continue to rise given these projected population increases. At the same time the complexity of the care required is increasing due to improvements in medicine and the increased average life expectancy evidenced over the last few decades. Also, there are greater expectations being placed on our services by clients and this, along with expectations from our other stakeholders, continues to drive performance on targets such as waiting times.

During the past year additional costs have been incurred, largely in relation to providing supplier sustainability payments to social care providers, purchasing additional surge capacity, additional staffing, and Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). These costs were all funded through the Local Mobilisation Plan. There were also indirect Covid costs, such as additional care at home costs to keep people in their own homes and lost income through client contributions. There is a slight risk that the whole health and social care system has become increasingly reliant on the additional funding provided to cover these additional costs.

Council budgets continue to face significant pressure and children's social work has had to collaborate on a cross council basis to ensure a balance budget. The Council's medium term financial plan indicates that the pressure on budgets will continue to be considerable over the coming years.

Ensuring there are sufficient staffing across all service areas to undertake statutory social work tasks remains key. In doing so a focus on delivering person centred interventions that aim to keep children and vulnerable adults in their own home for as long as it is safe to do so remains key is critical. Additionally working with partners to deliver early and preventative support that negates the need for crisis and high-cost intervention has to be a focus to drive up outcomes and deliver a sustainable budget position.

The additional funding targeted at adult social work to increase staffing and to support their wellbeing was hugely welcomed. However recruitment in the North East of Scotland across all aspects of social work and social care remains extremely challenging.

Whilst financial planning is as robust as possible, new risks have emerged and will require management. These include:

- Whether some of the changes in cost profile and services as a result of COVID are recurring and will require additional funding,
- The impact of the health debt caused by COVID on our delegated services. More certainty on these risks will start to materialise early in the new financial year.
- The impact of the war in Ukraine and the displacement of families
- The impact of the war in Ukraine on the cost of living.

As of April 2022, social work services await the clarification on the provision of financial support to implement the findings of the Independent Care Review – The Promise. Without additional funding

the Partnership will struggle to deliver the transformational changes to how services are delivered to support families. Utilising and enhancing our data the partnership is working to develop a Family Support Model that is targeting four family groups (Children with a disability; children exposed to the risk of trauma; children in conflict with the law and children on the edge of care).

Our new Family Support Model(s) by adopting a whole family approach will identify change activities that will aim to deliver targeted early intervention that enables more children to be supported within their family. However without clear financial support to core social work services, and partners, the aspirations of The Promise to delivering preventive and early intervention support to children and families enabling more children to be cared for within their families will remain an aspiration.

The Scottish Government have announced a commitment to a Wholer Family Wellbeing Fund of £500m over the course of this parliament. This will support implementation of The Promise and deliver whole family support. There are five priorities for this fund:

1. Improved family wellbeing,
2. Reduced inequalities in family wellbeing
3. Reduction in families requiring crisis intervention
4. Reduction in the number of children and young people living away from their families,
5. Increase in families taking up wider supports

At this point in time it is unclear how the government intends to distribute this fund and what Aberdeen City's proportion will be. Children's Social Work and partners are working to develop planning how to use this fund when the details are announced.

The [Adult social care: Independent review](#) has proposed significant change to the arrangements and delivery of social work and social care services. It also recognised the significant and long standing under investment in social work/social care. The Scottish Government's response to the Review was published in late summer 2021. The Council, with a strong social work voice responded constructively to the consultation. The Scottish Government's response proposes a fundamental rethink of where social work sits within our structures. Given our duties to support the most vulnerable children and adults in our society as well as the impact of the pandemic on our staff the transition to a new operating structure needs to be carefully considered.

We await the publication of the National Care Service Bill later in 2022.

4. Workforce

Workforce Planning - staffing and recruitment issues

Across both Children's and Adult social work services, staff have continued to rise to the challenges of the past year. The height of the pandemic in 2020 may be behind us but ongoing challenges remain. The duration and extent of these has seen an impact on the morale and the

resilience of our social work staff, yet I continue to observe their commitment, resilience and professionalism.

Children's Social Work Services

During the first quarter of 2021/22, most non-frontline employees continued to work from home, where this was feasible for service delivery. This mode of working was in place for all social work staff who were unable to work as previously. Where appropriate, this arrangement has continued as the year progressed. Frontline operational staff continued to, as they did throughout the pandemic, work out of offices and community settings to undertake face to face visits to our most vulnerable children and adults, ensuring that they could be supported as robustly as required. As lockdown restrictions were eased over this year, managers have worked closely with their staff to establish hybrid working arrangements aiming to ensure that the benefits from more flexible working arrangements could be maximised whilst increasing the number of staff who could come together for collaboration.

In most cases where working from home was not possible, this has been due to lack of ICT equipment, quickly resolved by Bring Your Own Device or by the Device Refresh programmes which ensured nearly all workers had a corporate device. Flexible working arrangements over this year have ensured that only a very small number of employees have been unable to undertake their role from home, such as our residential workers, who were subsequently required to take special leave. At the end of the financial year there was a small spike in the number of employees unable to work from home whilst isolating, due to a COVID case in a one of the Homes.

Recruitment

Recruitment remains a challenge across all areas of the Service with notable vacancies in our Residential Care and Children in Need teams. Secondment opportunities or internal recruitment enables staff experience to grow but will often leave gaps which can be hard to fill. The Council is moving to enhance a "grow our own" scheme supporting interested staff without a social work degree to undertake distance learning development.

We have struggled to fill our Learning and Development Co-ordinator post which has been felt by our staff through reduced opportunities. This has now been filled and we look forward to seeing a more robust and coordinated professional learning and development offer for our staff. Social work services offer extensive learning and development opportunities to social work students who predominantly undertake their training via Robert Gordon's University. In collaboration with SWEP (Social Work Education Participation) we want to explore further with RGU how we can ensure a more productive pipeline of social workers joining Aberdeen City.

This recognises the need for a strong supply of newly qualified social workers entering the profession. In order to take account of the fact that student experience had been significantly compromised through COVID, we have undertaken a review and enhancement of our programme of training and support for newly qualified social work staff.

Whilst locally retention of staff is good, we have been aware of the increasing pressures on our social work staff, as they strive to offer high quality service to our most vulnerable groups of children and adults. This recognition has prompted us to begin exploring with our People and

Organisation colleagues how to build increasing psychological resilience in a workforce who are at risk of vicarious trauma on a day to day basis whilst undertaking statutory duties.

We are aware the recruitment and retention issues are not unique to Aberdeen or the North-East. Staff from across Aberdeen City have contributed to a research piece of work commissioned by Social Work Scotland. This research is due to be published early into the coming year and will hopefully inform our collective thinking about the recognition and value placed of social work and social workers.

Adult & Justice Social Work

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the personal wellbeing and resilience of our workforce and their subsequent availability to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. It has caused us to reflect on the robustness of our workforce planning and the assumptions we may have previously made about the availability of a suitably qualified labour pool that is either available locally in sufficient depth or willing to relocate to the area.

Recruitment processes and timescales were perhaps not as efficient and as effective as they might have been with recruiting managers becoming frustrated at their inability to recruit staff as quickly as they would wish to. Strong collegiate relationships have been required from our service managers and their seniors to ensure that everyone has felt sufficiently supported with these issues as they have impacted on every service at some point in the past year. A member of the adult services Senior Management Team was subsequently asked to co-ordinate significant recruitment activity across all services using the Scottish Government funding to increase social work capacity. This resulted in a successful recruitment campaign which succeeded with support from colleagues from across adult and justice services in filling vacant and new posts at all levels.

We are developing our workforce through the introduction of Trainee Social Worker posts which will allow the service to have meaningful progression structures. Our LD service has also supported student placements from the Kickstart Programme, Career Ready, Foundation and Modern-Day apprenticeships as well as supporting staff to undertake their Social Work qualification through distance learning.

Staff wellbeing has fluctuated throughout the pandemic, particularly over the last 12 months with an increase in absenteeism due to stress related illnesses. We have attempted to support staff in this area with several approaches including, Organisational Development facilitated team building days and sign posting to psychological resilience supports. The weekly online staff Forum has evolved to include all adult Social Work staff and has provided an opportunity for directed learning as well as creating a culture of peer support and advice. The success of this has been evident through positive feedback from staff and the cross-service support via the Forum chat.

Workforce Development

Children's Social Work Services

We have a well-established multi-agency child protection learning and development programme co-delivered in-house and by a commissioned service. In the period January – December 2021, 74 courses have been delivered on the following 12 topics:

- Introduction to Safeguarding
- Assessing and Planning
- Effective Chronologies
- Risk, Analysis and Thresholds in Safeguarding
- Managing, Recording and Sharing Information
- Online Safety and Awareness
- Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Trafficking
- Emotional Abuse in Children and Young People
- Domestic Abuse and Child Protection
- Neglect
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Parental Substance Misuse

Additional training modules were identified at the beginning of 2021 in line with the Child Protection Programme. These were:

- Parental Resistance
- Child Protection and Disability
- Managers Course (developed to provide up to date information on Children and Young Peoples Mental Health, Early Indicators of Neglect and the impact of Emotional Abuse)

Training courses have reached 901 multi agency professionals. The [Learning & Development Annual Report 2021](#) illustrates the multi-agency training delivered, in partnership with Aberlour Childcare Trust, throughout the year and alignments to the Child Protection Programme. Training has continued to be delivered virtually throughout 2021/22 with the intention to consider hybrid events in the future.

The Children's Social Work Service learning and development programme is delivered through a combination of corporate modules, commissioned courses and through the utilisation of in-house expertise.

All of our local residential staff continue to be trained in trauma-recovery principles and ensuring our workforce is trauma-informed and where necessary, trauma-skilled, is a priority for 2023.

Recruitment to the post of Learning and Development Team Leader for Children's Social Work has revitalised the learning and development offer to staff across the service with particular focus on ensuring that the needs and registration requirements of newly qualified social workers and social workers in training are met.

Improvements to the learning and development offer to all staff is underway with the following key developments expected to be completed in 2023:

- Dedicated NQSW Intranet Page with guidance, details of the NQSW Programme and resources
- Induction Programme for Children's Social Work
- Child Protection for Social Workers Training

- Supervision for Social Work – Training and Guidance refresh

Adult & Justice Social Work

The pandemic has tested our personal, professional and organisational resilience and it is the case that some staff and some services have coped better with the demands of our reshaped social work response than others. Nevertheless, there is an opportunity to review our contribution to wider multi-disciplinary and multi-agency collaborations and reflect on what changes are worth keeping, what staff supports are needed – such as our new digital learning platform, CareKnowledge - and what structural enhancements are desirable.

The Lead for Adult Social Work has been undertaking a review of our services as part of a wider HSCP post-pandemic recovery to fully embed early intervention and prevention across services and also maintain the improved relationships and effective collaborations that have been forged in the face of the pandemic. A key element of this was the Adult Protection Social Work team, the review team and the care management response team. Further work is continuing to strengthen the alignment of our services to the HSCP and community planning 3-locality model.

A Learning and Development Framework and Plan For Practice Improvement for Adult Support and Protection is in place. This aligns to a Grampian Learning and Development Strategic Framework 2021, and outlines the competences required for the workforce at different levels (wider, specific and specialist workforce). Learning and Development is being progressed in line with this Framework.

Conclusion

2021/22 has been a challenging year for the social work profession. It has however highlighted that Aberdeen City can be proud of having a strong, confident and effective social work service. The continuing impact of the COVID pandemic on the citizens of Aberdeen City as well as the social work/social care workforce has continued to be significant. Responding to the constrained demand as well as dealing with the backlog of unmet need is something the health, social care and social workforce will be responding to for the coming years.

In spite of these challenges social work staff have continued to respond with compassion and sensitivity to the needs of individuals, children, young people, and families who required social work intervention. Responding to those in need of care, support and protection has been hugely challenging but social work staff in Aberdeen City can be proud of all they have achieved. As CSWO, it has been immensely rewarding for me to see this dedication first hand and hear the positive contribution made by staff across the profession.

There is no doubt that the coming years will be a period of change and uncertainty for social work and social care across Scotland. The programme for government outlines notes a range legislative and policy changes to be driven forward not least incorporation of UNCRC into Scots Law. However, the proposed establishment of a National Care Service plan is the most significant. This has the potential to provide new opportunities to for social work and its partners to work in a more integrated manner and deliver whole family support. However, given many questions still to be resolved the impact on the workforce of this proposed change cannot be understated.

The need for clear and effective governance arrangements to be in place to ensure the complex public protection agendas are clearly understood and recognised is critical. As social work leaders it will be important that the voice of the profession continues to influence the design and structures of the evolving National Care Service.

The impact of the COVID pandemic shone a brighter light on existing inequalities across our communities. It also resulted in many individuals and families, previously not considered as vulnerable, being so for the first time. The impact of the cost of living challenges that has been intensified by the war in Ukraine will require social work to remain active to mitigate the harmful impacts on vulnerable individuals and families.

Having a strong social work vision and effective leadership is critical to the delivery of a person-centred approach which meets the needs of those who require the intervention of social work in their lives. Working with partners social work is well placed to influence and shape the delivery of rights-based trauma informed services which more effectively meet the needs of our clients. We welcome the continuing opportunities to further develop our approach to bring the voices of children, adults and families to the heart of our service planning and development. They have much to tell us and we are open to hearing and learning from their experiences in the shared pursuit of improving their outcomes.

Graeme Simpson
CSWO – Aberdeen City
30 September 2022

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services Committee
DATE	8 November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Keeping The Promise – Year One of Plan 21-24
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/22/244
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Amy Evans
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report to the Committee on the progress of our implementation of the Scottish Government’s Plan 21-24 to #KeepThePromise.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Notes and endorse progress and activities against the national Plan 21-24 to #KeepThePromise;
- 2.2 Notes the local progress made in Year One of Plan 21-24 as outlined in the appendix report (Appendix 1);
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Officer – Children and Family Services to provide a progress report in Autumn 2023 in relation to the partnership’s implementation of Plan 21-24; and
- 2.4 instructs the Chief Officer – Children and Family Services to provide a report in July 2023 in relation to the partnership’s plans for the use of Aberdeen City’s share of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 On 5th February 2020, the Independent Care Review [published seven reports](#), with ‘[the promise](#)’ narrating a vision for Scotland. The Care Review recognised that the whole landscape of systems and services that interact with children and families needed to change.
- 3.2 The Promise is responsible for driving the work of change drawn from the findings of the Independent Care Review and makes clear the extent of change required, however, the outcomes that Scotland needs to achieve are simple and reflect Scotland’s existing commitment that all children “*grow up loved, safe and respected so they can fulfil their potential*”.

- 3.3 In Aberdeen we know that commitment and alignment to The Promise requires more than sentiment and change from within single agencies, that the care system is far reaching, and that care experience can have a lifelong impact. All services in and around care have responsibilities for delivering on The Promise, not just for those children currently in care, but for all who have, or will go on to have, care experience including infants, children, young people and adults.
- 3.4 The Scottish Government's Promise team translated the findings of the Care Review into The Plan for change which will be phased across ten years from 2020-2030. [Plan 21- 24](#) is the first of 3 plans and was published in April 2021. Plan 21-24 focuses on the period from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2024 and outlines a series of outcomes that must be fulfilled by 2024.

The five priority areas for Plan 21-24 are:

- The right to a good childhood
 - Whole family support
 - Supporting the workforce
 - Planning
 - Building capacity
- 3.5 An introductory overview report on keeping the promise was presented to the former Operational Delivery Committee on 18th November 2021, outlining the Scottish Government's Plan 21-24 to keep the Promise and to provide information and proposals on our implementation of it.
- 3.6 The Committee requested that the Chief Officer of Integrated Children & Family Services provide an annual report on the Council's progress in delivering Plan 21-24.
- 3.7 Led by Aberdeen City Council colleagues, under the auspices of the Children's Services Board, the partnership has undertaken a self-evaluation of progress in Year One of Plan 21-24 (Appendix 1) to examine how children's services in Aberdeen are and need to support the change agenda to keep the Promise. This exercise has helped identify gaps and areas for further development across the multi-agency children's services partnership.

Aberdeen Year 1 of Plan 21-24: Status of Work

31st March 2022

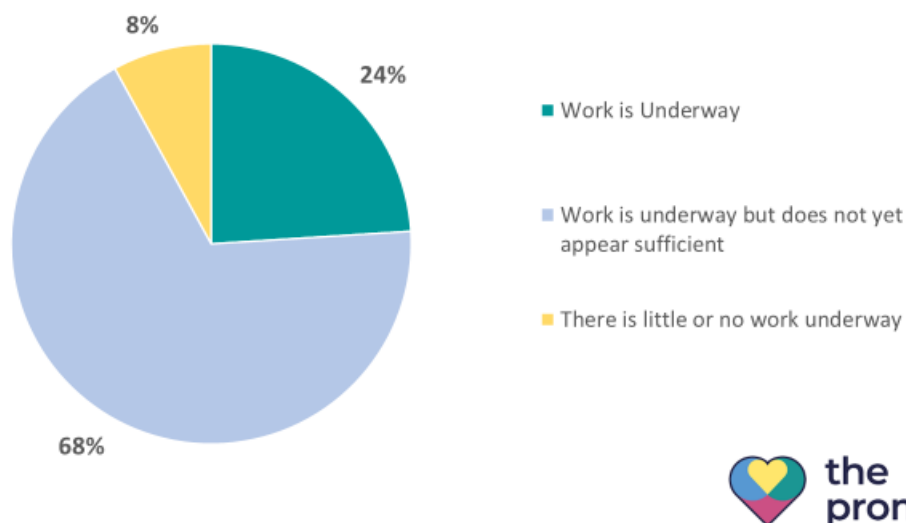


Figure 1: Aberdeen's Status of Work – Year One

- 3.8 As Figure 1 illustrates, progress has been made in Year One of Plan 21-24, however, there is still a significant amount of work to do if we are to affect the transformational change required of us all in and around the care system to deliver on The Promise. Notably, where there is 'little or no work underway', action to progress change is required to be made at a national, systems level e.g., by the Scottish Government or Children's Hearing system, before a local response to the call for change can be made.
- 3.9 The self-evaluation exercise highlighted the complexity and extent of the information gathering and reporting required and illustrated the need for a Lead Officer to be a single point of contact across the Partnership for this work. Having reviewed our current structure in Aberdeen City, the creation of a Partnership Promise Group, with a new post of a Partnership Promise Lead Officer, will, without interference to our existing structures, enable the oversight and reporting of our Promise implementation to take place.
- 3.10 Over the coming year, year two of Plan 21-24, our local priorities for change are:
- *Whole Family Support*: supporting families (of all shapes and sizes) with a focus on what support works to keep families together and support wider families to care, ensuring that support feels coherent, holistic and relational
 - *Trauma*: delivery of early and preventative trauma informed support across all services
 - *Children's Rights*: embedding a rights-respecting approach into all services and ensuring that rights of the child, their own needs and their voice is at the centre of decisions about what is best for them

- *Poverty*: ensuring that our local services know and understand the impact of poverty and work to reduce the number of children growing up in poverty and the negative outcomes associated with that
- *Participation*: involve the care community and lived experience in our plans to #KeepthePromise by working with families to redesign the services available to them to make them work better for those that use them

3.11 We will continue to work in collaboration with the Promise Scotland Team and our Promise Delivery Partner and welcome the opportunities this brings for mutual and ongoing knowledge exchange and support around implementing The Promise in Aberdeen.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report of itself, however, the scale of reform anticipated by the Independent Care Review will incur cost across the partnership in Aberdeen City.

4.2 The Promise has called for a move away from using resources to deal with the consequences of the current care system towards building a better system, focused on keeping children in their families wherever safe to do so by providing earlier, whole family support.

4.3 The Scottish Government has committed to investing £500m of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF) to support Children's Services Planning Partnerships (CSPPs) to reduce the number of children and young people in care by 2030 by supporting families, in the broadest sense, before they reach crisis point.

4.4 In 2022/23, £50m will be distributed. This includes £32m to support local CSPPs to build capacity for whole system change and to scale up and drive holistic whole family support services.

4.5 The Scottish Government have confirmed that Aberdeen City's share of the £32m is a multi-year commitment up to 2025/26. Aberdeen City's share of this funding is £1.025m per year. The funding is to be spent and delivered according to the collective agreement and direction of the local CSPP with accountability resting with the Children's Services Board.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Promise and Plan 21-24 impacts on a range of statutory duties on the Council in relation to vulnerable and care experienced children, including those contained in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and Children (Scotland) Act 2020.

5.2 Some aspects of the Independent Care Review, as articulated in #KeepThePromise and already outlined in Plan 21-24 have been, or are anticipated to be, enshrined in statute. The Children (Scotland) Act 2020 has implications for local authorities as it brings the law further into line with children’s rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), in particular:

- Supporting relationships between brothers and sisters
- Making sure children have greater opportunity and means to have their voice heard
- Providing better advocacy and support for children
- Developing rules for contact centres where children, parents and other people in the child’s life can meet.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

7.1 The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council’s Risk Appetite Statement.

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?
Strategic Risk	Many of the requirements of Plan 21-24 are already built into a variety of strategic plans. It is expected that gaps will emerge as the Council and partners scrutinise the requirements of Plan 21-24 in detail.	The Children’s Services Board and Community Planning Management Group have oversight of the delivery of the relevant strategic plans in this respect. They are ensuring that the terms of Plan 21-24 are incorporated into current and future strategic planning.	M	Yes
Compliance	No significant	Services across all multi-agency partners	L	Yes

	risks identified	are aware of legislative requirements and ensure compliance		
Operational	The aims of Plan 21-24 are ambitious and will require our people, equipment and buildings to change in order to drive on the plan. This may impact on morale as the change process is undertaken.	Leadership supports participation and planning across the multi-agency partnership in the delivery of Plan 21-24 to best ensure operational support for changes identified.	M	Yes
Financial	No significant risks identified			Yes
Reputational	No significant risks identified	The council and partners are committed to keeping The Promise and implementing Plan 21-24.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	Plan 21-24 has direct relevance to the delivery of the following policy statements contained within the Council Delivery Plan for People: 3. UNICEF Child Friendly City accreditation 6. Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city

	<p>7. Continue to promote diversion activities for youths and adults in our city with enhanced focus on our three locality areas</p> <p>8. Reduce fuel poverty across our most deprived communities through combined heat and power schemes, including the Energy from Waste Plant, and supporting community owned energy solutions</p>
<p><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></p>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Plan 21-24 has direct relevance to the following stretch outcomes in the LOIP and will help support delivery of these:</p> <p>4. 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026.</p> <p>5. 90% of Children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to by 2026. This is reflected in interactions, activities, supports and services.</p> <p>6. As corporate parents we will ensure 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.</p> <p>7. 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> <p>8. Child friendly city where all decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them by 2026.</p> <p>9. 30% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p>
Regional and City Strategies	Plan 21-24 is relevant to Aberdeen City Council Delivery Plan, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, and the Children's Services Plan

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	This report does not require a fully Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment to be completed.

Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

#KeepthePromise	#KeepThePromise - The Promise
Plan 21-24	Plan 21-24 - The Promise
Children's Services Plan	Childrens-Services-Plan-2020-1.2.pdf (aberdeengettingitright.org.uk)
Local Outcome Improvement Plan	Final-Draft-LOIP-Refresh-21.pdf (communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk)
Aberdeen City Council Delivery Plan	Council Delivery Plan.pdf (aberdeencity.gov.uk)
National Improvement Framework	Schools: National Improvement Framework (NIF) - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Reporting on Plan 21-24 – Year One (update to 31.03.2022)

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Reporting on Plan 21-24 (update to 31.03.2022)

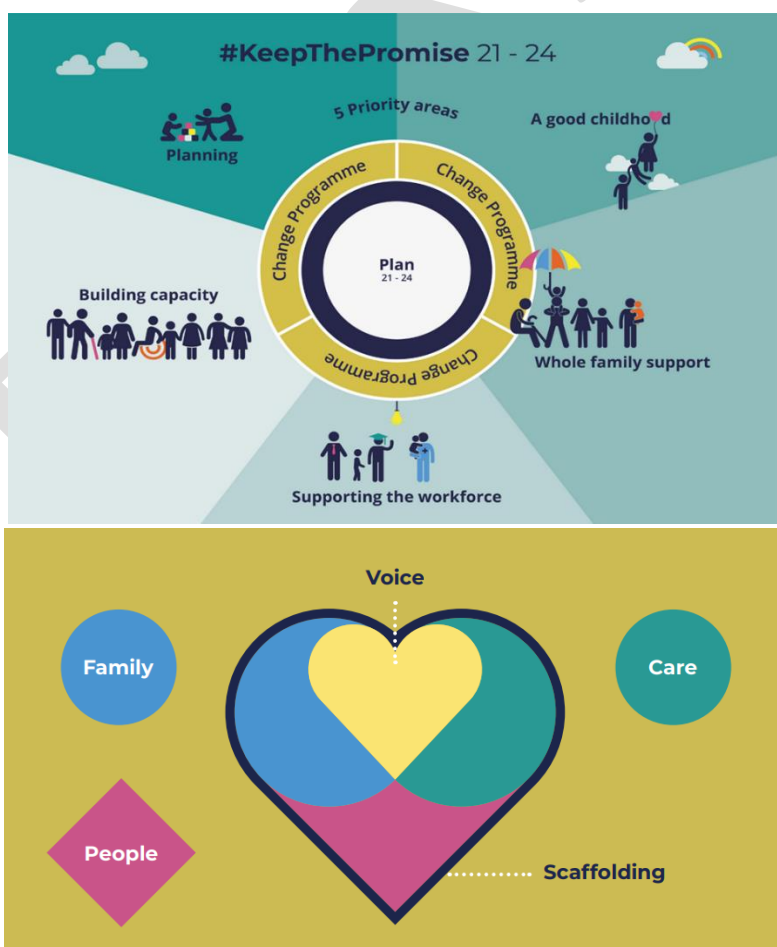
This report is a summary of progress made in Aberdeen to #KeepThePromise in Year 1 of [Plan 21-24](#), up to 31st March 2022. The format used to evidence progress mirrors that of the Promise Team and the [Change One Programme](#).

The report details progress against the 5 priority areas of Plan 21-24

1. [A Good Childhood](#)
2. [Whole Family Support](#)
3. [Supporting the Workforce](#)
4. [Building Capacity](#)
5. [Planning](#)

And the [5 Foundations](#) of [The Promise](#):

1. Voice
2. Scaffolding
3. Family
4. Care
5. People



A Good Childhood

Children who have been removed from their family of origin and live in and around the 'care system' will have a good, loving childhood.

Ensuring that children in Scotland's 'care system' feel loved, their needs are met, and their rights are upheld is a priority for 21-24. This change is urgent, it must be a focus for all organisations that have responsibility towards care experienced children and young people.

1.1 Support

See The Promise, pages 51 and 89

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every child that is 'in care' in Scotland will have access to intensive support that ensures their educational and health needs are fully met.• Local Authorities and Health Boards will take active responsibility towards care experienced children and young people, whatever their setting of care, so they have what they need to thrive.
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <p>A Systems Leadership Group has been established with membership across the Partnership to focus and deliver at pace on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children on the Edge of Care• Young People in Conflict with the Law• Trauma• Children with Disabilities• Workforce Development <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intensive support is planned through the provision of a Child's Plan. The provision of a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP) is being promoted and monitored robustly. Individual schools monitor trends at school level with the Virtual School and education service monitoring city wide trends to inform improvement. Mechanisms are being further bolstered through the provision of live data monitoring.• Expansion of 1140 including eligible 2s, Links Hub and 2 outdoor provisions• Health and wellbeing curriculum in schools• Summer and Easter of Play – and ongoing commitment• Priority access to after school activities in place• Links Hub collaboration with health• A review of the data has shown a gap in provision for those who require a bridge back into mainstream school or those at the edge of care. The Virtual School is being reshaped to address this vulnerability.

NHS:

- Universal and targeted monitoring of health and well being. Individualised care plans. Referral to appropriate services when needs identified to ensure they reach their optimal development and opportunity to thrive.
- Developing services that support care experienced young people aged 16-25 and where appropriate a graduated transition to adult mental health services
- Follow GIRFEC guidance across Health
- Specialist nurse for Care Experienced Children & YP monitors health, wellbeing etc and links with other multi-agency partners. There will be individualised child plan to ensure needs are met.

CSW:

- Every child has a social worker, and a Plan ensuring health and educational needs are met.
- Plans are monitored through formal review processes.
- We strive to retain children and young people in placements within Aberdeen City.

What has been committed so far?

Children's Services Plan (CSP), National Improvement Framework (NIF), GIRFEC Operational Guidance (currently under review), ELC Delivery Plans (statutory plan)

Who are the lead organisations?

Aberdeen City Council, incorporating children's social work and education.

NHS Grampian

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient**Multi agency:**

- Systems Leadership Group work to develop and be reported to CSB
- Better understanding of Data in terms of what matters to children and young people will drive and support the planning of supports that work for those who need them.

Education:

- A need to agree a definition for those on the edge of care and identify the individuals with multi-agency partners
- Continue to review plans to ensure that children are accessing high quality full time and appropriate learning opportunities.
- Continue to reduce levels of exclusion by continuing to provide strong universal health and wellbeing arrangements and targeted supports
- Aligning SEEMiS and CSW/Health MIS system data
- Potential use of CIRCLE framework to support those with sensory/additional support needs. This obviously extends beyond those who are Looked after or on the edge of care
- Closer alignment between Craigielea/Westburn and the Virtual School

- We need the data work being progressed as part of the Family Support Model to act as that early warning system

NHS:

- Specialist Nurse for CECYP links with OOA colleagues in order to ensure initial health assessment. Virtual model has been developed through COVID enabling the assessment to be carried out by professional in the YP home board that may already have a relationship with them.
- Extension of access to Specialist Care Experience Children Nurse up to age 26 years
- CAMHS extension to age 26

Children's Social Work:

- Work required to achieve parity in service across all looked after children whether in foster placement, with kin or at home. Focus on consistent reviewing of Child's Plans for looked after at home and in kin
- Fit Like Hubs provide access to support to enable children and young people to stay at home and in the City
- In anticipation of improved digital monitoring through D365, a spreadsheet is in place to support better monitoring of Child's Plans for those looked after at home and with kin

Police:

- SPOCs of Police Sergeant Rank have been identified for all Aberdeen City Children's Homes. These Officers will be given additional support and 'Trauma Informed' training to ensure better relationships are built.
- Joint work with 'Who Cares Scotland' with a focussed participation group to build trusted relationships with CEYP to improve provided service.

1.2 Right to education

See The Promise, pages 71 to 72

What is required by Plan 21-24?

- Care experienced children and young people will receive all they need to thrive at school.
- There will be no barriers to their (CEYP) engagement with education and schools will know and cherish their care experienced pupils.
- School improvement plans will value and recognise the needs of their care experienced pupils with robust tracking of attendance and attainment so that support can be given early.
- Care experienced young people will be actively participating in all subjects and extra-curricular activities in schools.
- The formal and informal exclusion of care experienced children from education will end.
- Schools will support and ensure care experienced young people go on to genuinely positive destinations, such as further education or employment.

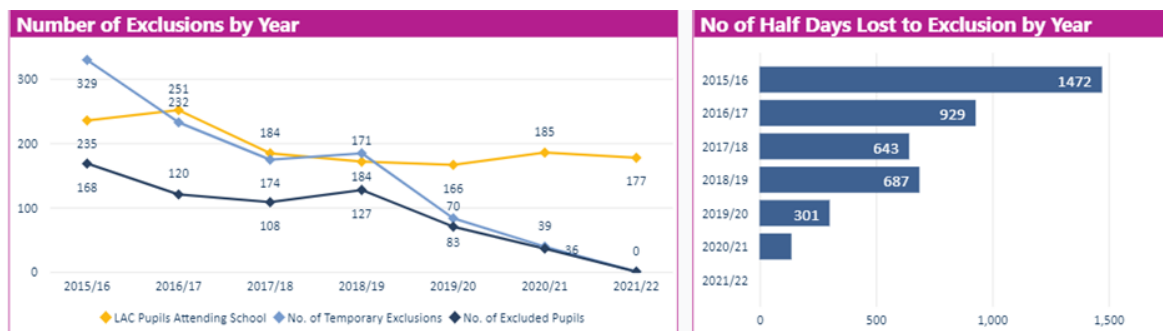
What has the CSB heard so far?

Multi-agency:

Education:

- The Virtual School is being expanded to take account of quantitative and qualitative data on current needs. This will help provide a more responsive service to children and young people.
- Power BI School profiles are being used to help track outcome trends for care experienced children and young people and this tracking will continue to inform service delivery. The service is becoming more informed by live data and this is enabling a more proactive response to need
- Mandatory training in children's rights across all schools and inclusion of children's rights in school improvement plans.
- Focus on the care experienced in improvement plans 22/23 and through internal quality improvement systems
- Mapping currently being undertaken to better understand the needs of children and young people who find it hard to engage in school in order to identify lessons learned for schools and others. We need to understand what contributed to the situation and design out the barriers but this will need a joined up and multi-agency response.
- Participation is a key measure in the primary prevention approaches being tested through use of the Education Recovery Grant. Targeted places will be held by Active Schools, in agreement with School Senior Leadership Team to offer extra-curricular activity to those who may require this as part of their package of support.
- The SPACE programme is working closely with Active Schools and the wider team to encourage schools to identify any possible barriers for those with experience of care who may not be taking part in activities
- A significant reduction in levels of exclusion (and increase in attendance for secondary pupils who are looked after) is evident in live data sets. Trends are monitored on a weekly basis with chronologies used to help identify areas for further improvement.

- Despite the drop in positive destination across the city in 2019/20, levels in our care experienced population were maintained. A new pathway planning process has been put in place to clarify roles and responsibilities in this potentially crowded space. This approach will be subject to on-going review and development.



NHS:

- School Nurses have close links with Care Experience Children specialist nurse. School nurses participate in reviews for these children. They will act on areas identified in child's plan.

CSW:

- Children's Social Work lead on the reviews of Child's Plans for all looked after children and young people.
- Pathway plans are created for young people no later than 15 years old which supports planning for positive destinations.
- Craigielea is an intensive, alternative to care provision which provides a holistic package of support to children, young people and their families where an escalating risk profile exists. A multi-professional team of social workers, teachers, family resource workers and a mental health practitioner wrap around children/young people and their family to support them to remain at home, within their communities and education provision.

NESCol:

- Collaboration with Virtual School Head Teacher (VSHT), Social Work and Widening Access Partners through regular meetings and collaboration are regular practice to ensure a smooth transition to and from College takes place.
- "Ready, Steady, Study!" Sessions are our supported transition programme and all applicants with care experience are invited to come along to at least one session to familiarise themselves with the College buildings, staff and IT platforms in advance of their course commencing.
- In February 2021, the Introduction of Our NESCol S.P.A.C.E (Student Platform for All our Care Experience) allowed the College to poll our students with care experience and find out what was important to them at College. They advised that having access to a named person was important as was a peer support group and regular updates. In April 2021 Our NESCol SPACE peer support group launched, regular quarterly Student Newsletters for those with care experience were sent out and the name contact within the Student Advice and Support Team was publicised. While this is a College Group the remit, title

and branding were chosen by students with care experience. One of whom we nominated to College Development Network as our Student of the Year in 2021. We were delighted that this student received a “highly commended” award at the National Awards in Glasgow in December 2021. The social peer support network takes place several times per academic year, to bring the regions students with care experience together to build relationships and support networks. Discussions and consultation with students with care experience, through the Our NESCol S.P.A.C.E. (ONS), helps shapes both the support provision and the agenda for the Our NESCol S.P.A.C.E. program for the current Academic Year.

- Enhanced support is provided by Academic Tutors and Curriculum Managers working in liaison with the named contact within the Student Advice and Support Team ensuring that a sympathetic and bespoke support approach is adopted for all our students with care experience.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Support is available to students via our Student Wellbeing Advisers, in-house Counselling Service provided by ACIS Student, via our online platform Togetherall and our regional partnerships with organisations such as Aberdeen Foyer. This ensures that a “timely, trauma informed, thoughtful support therapies” are available at the point of need. The Students’ Association provide information, guidance and events to support and promote health and wellbeing.
- NESCol support transitions in partnership with regional “North Forum – Widening Access” partners to ensure applicants with care experience feel supported, confident and empowered with moving into or away from College.
- New applicants with care experience coming to college for the first time are contacted via telephone by the Student Advice and Support Team to discuss and support their transition. This allows them to be in control of their transition, establish where they feel they need extra support and allow us implement support measures. In May 2022, the Student Advice and Support Team have contacted 124 new applicants* with care experience to build support plans with them to aid their transition.
- Applicants with care experience who choose to withdraw from their course who do not wish to participate in recovery planning and are facing withdrawal without a positive destination in place are offered a support appointment with SDS prior to final withdrawal to encourage a positive destination.

In 2021/22 (to date) the Student Advice and Support Team have provided the following additional support to Care Experienced Students:

- 6 Alternative Assessment Arrangements
- 74 General Support Appointments
- 12 Learning Support Appointments
- 37 Study Skills Appointments
- 24 Wellbeing Appointments
- 20 Counselling Appointments
- 7 Care Experienced Student Support Appointments
- 4 Money Management Appointments
- 2 UCAS (University Application Prep) Appointments
- 3 Estranged Student Support Appointments
- 1 Foodbank Referral Appointments
- 1 Disabled Students Allowance Support Appointments
- 12 Students were awarded a “Student Wellbeing Grant” to improve their wellbeing

- 149 Care Experienced Bursaries
- 5 FE Discretionary Grants
- 5 HE Discretionary Grants
- 136 Laptop or Wifi Devices
- [Report + Support - North East Scotland College \(nescol.ac.uk\)](https://nescol.ac.uk) NESCol will work with partner organisations to ensure that our “support” section is a useful resource for our Care Experienced Students.

*All college applicants, i.e. not just Aberdeen City care experienced young people

What has been committed so far?

Multi-agency:

- Attainment and Transitions Group
- Multi-agency planning to support young people on the edge of care and edge of school

Education:

- Virtual School Improvement Plan
- NIF

NESCol:

- 4 dates in the Academic Year for ONS to take place virtually. Demand and participation is tailing off, quite possibly due to a weariness with online sessions.

Who are the leads?

Education, College & Universities

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient

Multi-agency:

- Partnership approach to improving attendance and attainment for care experienced young people
- Development of and support for employment opportunities

Education:

- Continue to review and improve based on live data through the embedding and utilisation of PowerBI

NHS:

- Progressing guaranteed interview for CECYP applying for HCSW posts
- To reinvigorate promotion of work experience placements within NHSG for CECYP

NESCol:

- Seek to increase the number of support appointments or engagements to our enrolled Care Experienced Students in 2022/23.

- Changing the format of ONS to a blend of mainly in-person sessions with 1 online session per year to encourage greater participation and feedback.
- Continue to promote the Care Experience Skills Development Scotland (SDS) pre-withdrawal appointment to encourage better awareness amongst Academic Staff and increased participation.

Police:

- The NE Division 'Pledge' is focussed on assisting CEYP with support, should they wish it, in the Local Authority they are residing. It also provides avenues of support to CEYP who wish to join the police and provides a commitment to provide a mentor throughout the probationary period. Work is ongoing to embed this pledge as a multi-agency commitment as part of our Corporate Parenting responsibilities

1.3 Relationships

See The Promise, page 63

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All children living in and around Scotland's 'care system' will be maintaining safe, loving relationships that are important to them.• There will be no barriers to 'contact' and children will be supported to have time with people they care about.
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All schools in the city are engaging with Compassionate and Connected Communities with early impact already evident in reduced levels of exclusion.• The Virtual School will have increased capacity to help provide a mechanism to support the development of positive relationships at the point of transition. <p>Children's Social Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All infants, children and young people who are looked-after away from home have 'contact' arrangements considered and regularly reviewed within their child's plans. This is currently an operational requirement, however, barriers remain, and we do not always deliver on this.• Direct contact with children on the child protection register continued throughout the pandemic• Face-to-face, direct contact for looked-after child has increased as Covid-19 restrictions have eased• Flexibility and extended use of digital means to maintain relationships have continued as Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted• Trauma informed, relational approaches are well embedded within children's social work and are noted to be extending across the partnership• Authority to Accommodate processes have been refreshed to have greater focus on identifying and maintaining family relationship and promote Kinship options• Former residents of Children's Homes locally able to maintain relationships with staff and other residents after they move out e.g. by being invited to join for meals, etc.• Embedding support with Digital Inclusivity for care experienced young people
What has been committed so far?
Children's Services Plan
Who are the leads?
Social Work, Education, NHS Grampian
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient

Multi-agency:

- Workforce development required to understand the benefits and risks of keeping a child at home/with family versus the lifelong impact of removal
- Professionals across the partnership are acute to the views and voice of children their families and the relationships important to them

Education:

- Continue to review and improve based on live data

Children's Social Work:

- Ensuring children and young people are supported in their understanding and connections with important relationships to them throughout their lives and in a variety of ways considering their individual needs and stage of development
- Aspiring to place children within one-hour distance of Aberdeen.
- Working with parents across partnership to enhance contact experience for the child e.g., support to recover from their own trauma
- Enhancing skills of workers undertaking contact supervision

1.4 Brothers and Sisters

See The Promise, page 62

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scotland will stop the practice of separating brothers and sisters, unless for reasons of safety.• Relationships between brothers and sisters will be cherished and protected across decision making and through the culture and values of the people who care for them.
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Corporate Parenting Performance and Improvement Group is reviewing a draft position statement in respect of Brothers and Sisters. <p>Children's Social Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a recognition that supporting brothers and sisters to stay together requires a national approach, however, Aberdeen City welcomed the change in legislation in The Children (Scotland) Act 2020, placing a requirement on local authorities to promote the relationships of looked after children and young people with their brothers and sisters.• Children's social work continue to work closely with our SCRA partners to provide the level of information about sibling and sibling-like relationships required to make informed decisions that maintain and promote a child's important relationships.
What has been committed so far?
<p>Aberdeen's Children's Services Plan has set an intention to build upon our commitment to delivering the aims and findings of the Independent Care Review and specifically that "<i>children stay with their brothers and sisters where possible.</i>"</p> <p>Commitment is high, however, availability and flexibility of homes for sibling groups continues to be a challenge.</p>
Who are the leads?
Children's Social Work Children's Services Board
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
<p>Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient</p> <p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reporting and analysis of the data in relation to brothers and sisters to be routinely shared at the Children's Services Board• Universal services role in the identification of brother and sisters and sibling-like relationships to support comprehensive genograms

- Working group to role out and implement position statement

Children's Social Work:

- Work required to developing consistent recording and monitoring of decisions in relation to brothers and sisters being kept together and whether their relationships are being upheld. D365 build to support baseline data gathering.
- Development of practice guidance to be clear on the implementation of the Position Statement
- Enhanced focus and support offer to kinship carers

1.5 Youth Justice

See The Promise, pages 89 to 91

What is required by Plan 21-24?

- The disproportionate criminalisation of care experienced children and young people will end.
- 16- and 17-year-olds will no longer be placed in Young Offenders Institutes for sentence or on remand.
- There will be sufficient community-based alternatives so that detention is a last resort.
- Children who do need to have their liberty restricted will be cared for in small, secure, safe, trauma-informed environments that uphold their rights.

What has the CSB heard so far?

Multi-agency:

- The multi-agency Youth Justice Improvement Group have delivered a series of Workforce knowledge sessions, focusing on the interface between Children's Rights/CEYP drawing on the principles and research informed approaches to young people in conflict with the law.
- Whole Systems Approach (WSA) interrogation of information about young people and their circumstances to create better quality information that will trigger trauma sensitive responses.
- Youth Justice Improvement Group (YJIG) Strategy and Action Plan Summer 2021 developed in line with local data profile and alignment with national policy and guidance. Care experienced young people a focus within this strategy and action plan.
- Work undertaken with COPFS to determine what information should be shared as part of Diversion from Prosecution Assessments that will support more opportunities for Diversion for care experienced young people in the case marking process.
- Age of Criminal Responsibility Act (ACRA) implementation group and information sessions delivered to the workforce. Local briefing produced along with information available on Aberdeen Protects site Age of Criminal Responsibility
- Project Charter on higher support young people, those at risk of secure care or custody developed. Multi agency team identified to progress this work.
- Improved interface with Children's Social Work and Police locally, particularly in local Children's Homes. Children's social work and Who Cares? Scotland supporting improved Police understanding of impact of trauma and care experience.
- EEI Workshop event co facilitated with CYCJ, planned for April 2022 to assess EEI pathways and create local EEI guidance.

Education:

- The Education Recovery Fund is being used to make a youth work provision available to all secondary schools. This has the potential to impact positively on this area.
- The Virtual School continues to work in partnership with colleagues in Police Scotland to address any issues or incidents related to care experienced young people in order to promote a relational approach.

- There is a lack of clarity around the early intervention supports available to support young people and these are currently being refined.

Children's Social Work:

- Refreshed Secure Care Guidance and procedure, incorporating Scottish Government's Secure Care Standards, published in January 2022. Specific focus on the voice and views of children and young people for whom secure care is being considered and promotion of refreshed CARM process and guidance.
- Higher support needs project charter developed, and team identified.
- Commissioned use of close support specialist providers, such as Includem

Police:

- 'Not at Home' Policy embedded with care establishments
- Police Scotland (PPI) are part of a short life working group which has been set up to provide written guidance on Early and Effective Intervention exploring if more CEYP can be diverted from prosecution

What has been committed so far?

6 LOIP Improvement Charters in various stages of development

Charter on jointly reported young people has progressed well. Workforce development sessions have been delivered in 2022. These have been positively evaluated and have served to increase workforce knowledge of the Jointly Reported process and has established a Single Point of Contact between SCRA and CSW.

Higher support needs charter is in development which focuses on those young people at risk of secure care (or custody).

Data from Police Scotland refined to enable more accurate assessment of numbers of care experienced young people accruing charges.

Who are the leads?

Children's Services Board

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Work is underway

Multi-agency:

- Age of Criminal Responsibility Implementation Group to assess the impact raising the age of criminal responsibility has.
- Consultation for the Care and Justice Bill will support a focus on local consideration of multi-agency responses when young people with known multiple complexities are being considered for support provision.
- Specific Police Scotland local Practice guidance in terms of the expected Police response to young people looked after in local children's homes should be forthcoming after a cohort of PS staff are supported to attend trauma awareness sessions.

- Project work in development between Who Cares? Scotland and Police Scotland addressing the perceptions of CEYP and impact of stereotyping which can lead to Children's Rights not being recognised.
- Developing information systems across boundaries which helps in understanding need better and recognising built in bias which discriminates against CEYP.
- Partnership awareness of and contribution to the work of the Systems Leadership Group, in particular for this section, the work of the Young People in Conflict with the Law subgroup.

Children's Social Work:

- Working with Secure Care providers to ensure that the value statement in our refreshed Secure Care guidance is consistently adhered to
- Reducing our numbers of young people in secure care by increasing use of close support specialist providers
- Work with partners to further explore options to support 16/17 year olds who are potentially facing remand/custody disposals

Police:

- Re-establish County Lines Task and Finish Group, ensuring exploited CEYP are properly supported and prevent further CCE
- Identify establishments where exploited or trafficked children can be taken to safely, avoiding Police Offices
- Working with a Charity in England who escort CEYP back to their homes to establish if this could be implemented in Scotland

1.6 Advocacy

See The Promise, pages 114 to 116

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All care experienced children and their families will have access to independent advocacy at all stages of their experience of care.• Advocacy provision will follow the principles set out in the promise.• Care experienced children and young people will be able to easily access child centred legal advice and representation.
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operationally embedded from a children and young person's perspective, however, route map for ensuring care experienced people can access lifelong advocacy unclear.• This is an issue for care experienced young people given that local arrangements for accessing legal representation have created delays in processing for some circumstances. There is a lack of specialised child rights lawyers nationally who have skills and knowledge to advocate and support children in legal proceedings. Approaches have been made to local faculty <p>Children's Social Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Rights Service works closely with the local primary and secondary Advocacy Services providers (Who Cares? Scotland and Advocacy Services Aberdeen), to provide independent advocacy for those children and young people who want it at their Children's Hearing – see Independent Advocacy animation• The Rights Service provide access to independent advocacy for care experienced children, young people, and young adults in line with its remit. This includes those being cared for or living outside of the city. Those children and young people can also access other independent advocacy services, aligned to their current care arrangements• Work ongoing to improve the transition planning for young people with a disability/enduring health needs.
What has been committed to so far?
Corporate Parenting Plan in relation to Young Person's Rights Service
Who are the leads?
Local Authority, SCRA, Scottish Government, Children's Services Partnerships have key responsibility, along with advocacy and legal aid providers
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient

Multi-agency:

- The Promise Scotland will look at scoping a national model for the provision of advocacy services to ensure independence and rigour in providing advocacy that is easily available across all care placements.
- How adult services ensure care experienced people can access lifelong advocacy unknown.

1.7 Moving on

See The Promise pages 68 and 92 to 93

What is required by Plan 21-24?

- Decisions about transitions for young care experienced people who move onto independent living or need to return to a caring environment, will be made based on individual need.
- Each young care experienced adult will experience their transition as consistent, caring, integrated and focussed on their needs, not on 'age of services' criteria
- Housing pathways for care experienced young people will include a range of affordable options that are specifically tailored to their needs and preferences.
- Youth homelessness will be eradicated.

What has the CSB heard so far?**Multi-agency:**

- Housing Support Protocol for care experienced young people signed off in 2021.
- Housing Support Worker for care leavers co located in Youth Team

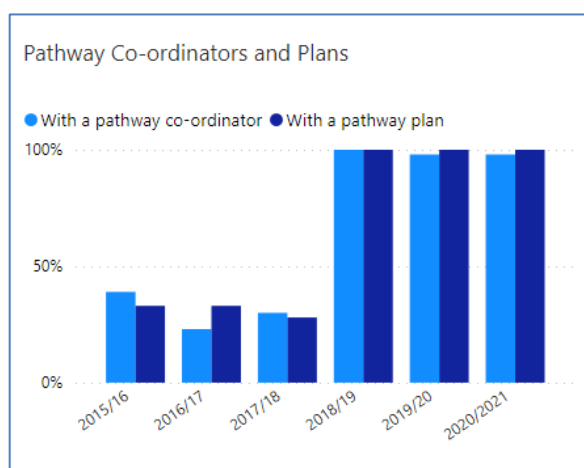
Education:

- There is a need to develop a more responsive service to act as a bridge back into community-based supports but need to tidy the community based resources through the Family Support Model
- Provision of ELC provision for children of the care experienced being promoted across the CPP. Uptake high. Roll out of PEEP universally

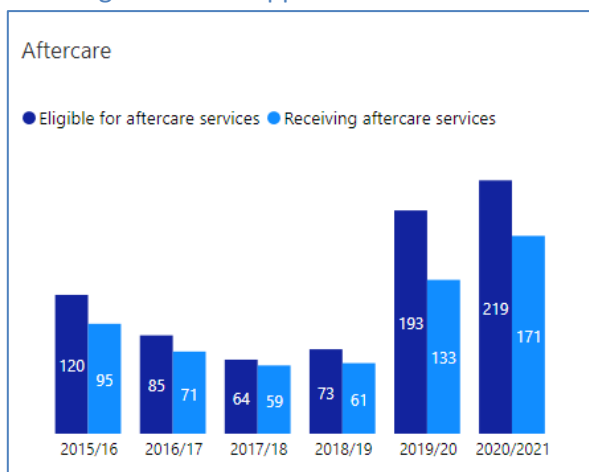
CSW:

- Continuing Care options are promoted and there is growing number of looked after young people remaining in placement on a Continuing Care basis

- Pathway Planning for a looked after young person's independence and transition into adulthood have consistently increased



- As of February 2022, there had been an increase of 52% in the number of young people receiving Aftercare Support from the Youth Team.



- There is also now a planned and structured local residential aftercare programme delivered as part of core local residential children's home support which currently supports 20 young people.

What has been committed so far?

Corporate Parenting Plan

Who are the leads?

Local Authority, Corporate Parents

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient

- Multi-agency audit currently being completed to inform next steps
- Recognising who is vulnerable to homelessness and amending our pathways to embed better recognition and response

NHS:

- NHSG resource development project for care experienced young people aged 17+

1.8 Physical Intervention

See The Promise, pages 85 to 86

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All care experienced children, wherever they live, will be protected from violence and experience the safeguard of equal protection legislation.• Restraint will always be pain free, will be used rarely, and only when required to keep a child safe.• There will be well communicated and understood guidance in place that upholds children's rights and reflects equal protection legislation.• The workforce will feel supported to respond to behaviour in a trauma informed way that reflects a deep understanding of the children in their care*
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of Restraint and Restrictive Practices Position Statement in development by Corporate Parenting Performance and Improvement Group <p>*See 'Supporting the workforce' section for detail on how the workforce will be supported to respond to behaviour in a trauma informed way that reflects a deep understanding of the children in their care</p> <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A small number of fully qualified CALM trainers being put in place in education. The access to intensive theory will support a reduction in the need for a physical intervention. <p>CSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restraint is not utilised within our local children's homes• Preparation of and training for kinship carers and foster carers reinforces restraint is not to be utilised and the equal protection of children and young people.
What has been committed so far?
<p>Corporate Parenting Plan</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>Equal Protection From Assault Aberdeen City Council</p>
Who are the leads?
Corporate Parents
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient

Multi-agency:

- Agreement and implementation of the Position Statement on Use of Restraint and Restrictive Practices
- The reporting and monitoring on the use of physical intervention across the partnership

Education:

- Awaiting national guidance on this in Education – local guidance drafted and ready to implement

Children's Social Work:

- Work with external care providers to ensure Aberdeen's ethos of care and position statement on use of restraint and restrictive practices to be developed

Police:

- Engagement has begun with national OST (Officer Safety Training) and PPCW discussing the use of restraint linking in with trauma informed training. This will include training our local OST instructors to become 'trauma informed' whilst engaging in discussions surrounding to including this in the national syllabus.

Whole Family Support

All families need support at different times of their lives and family support is a crucial emphasis for 21-24. The United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises family as the fundamental group in society and the natural environment for growth and wellbeing. Supporting families is a children's rights imperative.

'Families' means all families including families of origin, kinship, foster and adoptive families. Support will not be predicated on the setting of care.

Supporting families to stay together and thrive was an imperative before the pandemic and is of even greater import now.

2.1 Family Support

See The Promise, pages 57 to 58

What is required by Plan 21-24?

The 10 principles of intensive family support will be embedded into the practice (planning, commissioning and delivery) of all organisations that support children and their families, directly or indirectly.

- Holistic and relational
- Therapeutic
- Non-stigmatising
- Patient and persistent
- Underpinned by children's rights
- Community Based
- Responsive and timely
- Work with family assets
- Empowerment and agency
- Flexible

What has the CSB heard so far?

Multi agency:

- The Fit Like Family Wellbeing Team is a collaboration of children's services, health and voluntary sector working together to support the mental health and wellbeing needs of children, young people, and families in Aberdeen City. The Family wellbeing Team is designed to be an integrated whole system approach to change the way in which early help services support families.
- Delivery of Fit Like family wellbeing is underpinned by embracing a children's rights approach and work to develop Fit Like Hubs has been and continues to be directly informed by the voices of service users.

NHS:

- Provision of a Universal service for health visiting and school nursing promotes a holistic approach to the family with the child's needs at the centre.

What has been committed so far?

Children's Services Plan (once refreshed)

Who are the leads?

Systems Leadership Group

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient

Multi-agency:

The establishment of the Systems Leadership Group will drive the development of holistic family support models across four key groups:

- Children with a disability
- Children exposed to the risk of trauma
- Children in conflict with the law
- Children on the edges of care

In addition to the 4 key groups, there are a further 2 focusing on Workforce Development and Request for Assistance.

Each group will take a data led approach to developing family support that ensures early and preventative support.



2a. Family Support
Model PDD_draft.doc

- Whole Family Approach / Interface with adult services and ADP
- Interface with mental health services regarding parental mental health
- Supporting Birth Parents who have had their child permanently removed
- We need to better align funding and resources (including commissioned services) across the whole partnership

Education:

- Need to improve visibility of parents who were care experienced so we can target them proactively for ELC placements

NHS:

- More focus on healthcare and the NHS, because lifelong care cannot exist if care experienced adults and young people are not included

Children's Social Work:

- Ensuring procured services delivering family support are fully aligned to the principles of intensive of family support
- The Promise Investment Project, led by Children’s Social Work, intends to improve how we design and provide non-stigmatising, relational and whole family support

2.2 Peer and community support

See The Promise, page 49

What is required by Plan 21-24?
There will be a consistent, national approach to ensure there are places in every community for parents of young children to meet other local parents, to stay and play with their children, and get support and advice
What has the CSB heard so far?
We're aware of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PEEP Programme• Summer/Easter of Play• Family Time Hub (formerly Contact Centre)• Fit Like Hubs based within communities in 3 targeted areas
What has been committed so far?
Scottish Government – Family Support Delivery Group
Who are the leads?
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient Evidence required on a routine basis from Communities and others in relation to this improvement area

2.3 Service Integration

See The Promise, chapter 3 and chapter 6

What is required by Plan 21-24?
Scotland's family support services will feel and be experienced as integrated to those who use them.
What has the CSB heard so far?
The following multi-agency partnerships are already in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Protection Committee (CPC)• Children's Services Board (CSB)• Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (ADP)• Adult Protection Committee (APC)• Violence Against Women Partnership Of which the COG has an oversight role.
What has been committed so far?
Systems Leadership Group Health – Integrated Family Portfolio
Who are the leads?
Community Planning Partnership and affiliated other groups and boards
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient Multi-agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multi-agency partnership interface across transitional points e.g., from children's to adult's services needs to improve• We aspire to offer family support services which as easily accessible, prevent families from having to re-tell their stories, and are experienced as integrated by all who use them• We will be data led in terms of informing the shape and design of family support• We aspire to offer multi-agency support to families through the Family Support Model which will provide early and preventable support to families• We will be looking for some direction from the national Family Support Delivery Group who are currently considering this area as part of their work programme

2.4 Family therapies

See The Promise, chapter 3

What is required by Plan 21-24?
All families will have direct and clear access to family therapies and specific support across a range of issues, so that accessing support is seen as something that a range of families may need throughout life.
What has the CSB heard so far?
Multi-agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) and initial scoping around a Bairn's Hoose Model Children's Social Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All residential staff trained in DDP• Theraplay training provided to kinship & foster carers.• Family Network Team offering intensive therapeutic family support
What has been committed so far?
Who are the leads?
Community Planning Partnership and affiliated other groups and boards
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient Multi-agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trauma informed, relational approaches to be embedded across the partnership• Need to define understanding and plans for family therapies locally• Bairn's Hoose Model – aim for one stop shop for children and families accessing support

Supporting the Workforce

Children experience the 'care system' through people. Over Plan 21-24, support for people who care and continue to care if times get tough, will improve. There will be consistency of approach, values and understanding across Scotland's workforce.

3.1 Workforce Values

See The Promise chapter 5

What is required by Plan 21-24?
There will be a national values-based recruitment and workforce development framework in place and adhered to by all organisations and professions involved in supporting children and their families.
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <p>Whilst we await further information from the Scottish Government/Promise Team about the national direction of travel the following value-based and workforce development activities have been underway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children's Services Board asked that Project Charter Leads to review their charters and ensure they were sufficiently ambitious and re-focused on the Promise• Despite budgetary challenges, multi-agency learning, and development leads are sighted on incorporating The Promise into learning programmes• The Youth Justice Multi Agency Group have delivered a series of Workforce knowledge sessions, focusing on the interface between Children's Rights/CEYP drawing on the principles and research informed approaches to young people in conflict with the law. <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are a range of self led professional learning opportunities available to all staff through our Supporting Learners CLPL Sway.• Our wider offer of training available for staff and parents has been well received and continues to be developed by Education Teams including our Educational Psychology Service.• Further training and support is required to ensure that all staff feel equipped to respond to the increasing range of needs identified following the pandemic. <p>NHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well educated staff to understand the impact of adverse events on children and supporting health and wellbeing to minimise the impact.• Staff are knowledgeable and informed on legislation and discussion with parents and young people regarding legislation. <p>CSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CSW Learning and Development Team Leader attending and reporting back from Trauma Informed Social Work Services - Expert Advisory Group

- Safety Planning workforce development re harmful sexual behaviour and Care and Risk Management
- Development of CARM guidance, Secure Care guidance and webinars on CARM and FRAME created. [CARM - Care and Risk Management | Aberdeen City Council](#) [Secure Care | Aberdeen City Council](#)
- Training delivered is trauma informed, for example session on connection between brain development and children in conflict with the law.
- National trauma training programme promoted and utilised

NESCol:

- Corporate Parenting CPD Refresher Sessions to be implemented on a rolling program to ensure Corporate Parenting duties remain at the heart of our work with our Care Experienced Students.
- Corporate Parenting Mandatory CPD is undertaken by all new members of staff at NESCol. This includes an online course followed by a NESCol context session to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities.
- Several of the Student Advice and Support Team have undertaken CPD on UNCRC with the remainder planned for the coming months. Once complete a review of services will take place to ensure best practice.

Police:

- Corporate Parenting Plan 21-24 shared with Local Area Commanders for dissemination to all officers
- An internal Microsite is being updated/amended to include more info/guidance on all things CEYP/The Promise/Corporate Parenting and the NE Division's Pledge
- A Corporate Parent Working Group for the North East has been setup to discuss the Promise and share good practice

What has been committed so far?

National value-based recruitment and workforce development framework (awaited from the Scottish Government). This will help steer direction of travel.

Who are the leads?

Scottish Government

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient

Multi-agency:

- Project Charter Leads to report back on how their projects align, or have been refreshed to align, with The Promise
- Multi-agency Care and Risk Management workforce development sessions are being planned
- CSB has a role in ensuring that organisational learning and development departments across the partnership are picking up on implementing the Promise

- All agencies and services have a responsibility to promote cultural change to uphold the Promise and to develop a shared value-base across the partnership
- Further develop and embed trauma informed practice across the workforce and whether or systems and processes reflect such.

3.2 Trauma-informed

see the promise chapter 5

What is required by Plan 21-24?
Organisations that have responsibilities towards care experienced children and families and those on the edge of care will be able to demonstrate that they are embedding trauma informed practice across their work and within their workforce.
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Trauma Training Programme and resources promoted to all organisations and services within the partnership <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is universal engagement with the Compassionate and Connected Communities (CCC) programme which is key to our work to deliver on The Promise and ensure the relational approach required in our schools. <p>NHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotion of national training which is available on TURAS for staff re: trauma informed care. <p>CSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All professional staff trauma informed. <p>NESCOL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• North East Scotland College have to date trained 5 members of the Student Advice and Support Team in Trauma Informed Practice.• All staff members will be informed and educated on the impact and benefits of adopting a trauma informed approach to everything we do at NESCol. This will be achieved through our RESPECT Campaign in 22/23.• The Safeguarding Team at NESCol accept reports from staff, students and members of the public through our Report + Support System. The Safeguarding Team will work with those who require support and external agencies as required. NESCol have supported 13 Care Experienced Students with Safeguarding Referrals in 21/22 to date. <p>Police:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trauma Informed sessions have been completed in Aberdeen City with plans for the same in Aberdeenshire and Moray. Probationers now receive an hour and a half input on being trauma informed
What has been committed so far?
North East Chief Officers Group (NE COG) plan

Who are the leads?

All organisations

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Work is underway

Multi-agency:

- Awaiting Scottish Government resources as outlined in Change One Programme (<https://thepromise.scot/change-programme-one-pdf.pdf> - page 52)

NHS:

- Growth of trauma champions (linking to NE Trauma Leads Network)

Children's Social Work:

- Working towards increasing staff's training levels to Trauma Skilled and Trauma Specialist

NESCOL:

- Trauma Informed Practice/A Trauma Informed Approach will be embedded into the curriculum and support functions at NESCOL through the RESPECT Campaign in 2022/23

Police:

- Implementation of Trauma Informed Champions to be embedded throughout the workforce. These Officers have been identified and training to be given over coming weeks
- Identified SPOCs for Children's Homes to be given additional Trauma informed Training to disseminate to their teams

3.3 Ongoing Relationships

see the promise chapter 5 and page 79

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<p>There will be no blanket policies or guidance that prevent the maintenance of relationships between young people and those who care for them.</p> <p>Settings of care will be able to facilitate the protection of relationships that are important to children and young people.</p>
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">On a multi-agency basis, the children's services board has not yet heard about the review of policies and guidance across the partnership in this respect <p>Children's Social Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Relational approaches well embedded in local residential care with many young people maintaining relationships with staff and others beyond moving onRelational approaches embedded across fostering service via increase in continuing care numbers and relationships being sustained beyond formal arrangements
What has been committed so far?
Who are the leads?
All organisations
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
<p>There is little work underway</p> <p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">All organisations to review policies and guidance to ensure they don't prevent the maintenance of relationships between young people and those who care for them

3.4 Workforce support

see the promise, pages 107 to 108

What is required by Plan 21-24?
A new framework of support will be in place to ensure people involved in the care of care experienced children and young people feel valued, encouraged and have supportive relationships for reflection with high quality supervision and environmental conditions.
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Peer support networks have been established and have provided key support to those supporting pupils directly. <p>NESCOL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Queries regarding supporting young people with care experience at NESCOL can be directed to the Student Advice and Support Team named contact. Collaboration between the Support Teams and the Curriculum Teams are normal practice to ensure the best outcomes for our Care Experienced Students. <p>Children's Social Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Staff across CSW provided with professional supervision and support recognising the complexity of the role and personal impact working intensively with children, young people and families who have experienced significant trauma has on the workforce.
What has been committed so far?
National workforce development framework (awaited from the Scottish Government). This will help steer direction of travel.
Who are the leads?
Scottish Government and all organisations involved in the care of care experienced children and young people
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
<p>There is little work underway</p> <p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Board to be informed of workforce support arrangements in accordance with Plan 21-24 <p>NHSG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">NHS Corporate Parenting Plan – needs of the workforce, raising awareness/responsibility/accountability, shared learning opportunities, professional supervision

Children's Social Work:

- To inform the board of ongoing work with P&OD in relation to recruitment and retention

Planning

There needs to be a different approach to investment and planning.

National partners have a significant role to play in ensuring a new context for funding, investment and planning.

Children and families live in local communities and use local services. It is important that their experiences and outcomes are not determined simply by which local community they live in or local service they use. Planning and investment should be nationally coordinated to ensure that children and families get what they need.

Whilst the majority of the promise relates to matters which are reserved to The Scottish Parliament, the English Independent Review of Children's Social Care has relevance in respect of cross-jurisdiction issues.

4.1 Planning

See The Promise chapter 6

What is required by Plan 21-24?

Scotland will have a national, strategic planning process in place that ensures that children who are cared for away from their family of origin 'belong to a loving home.'

The planning process will reflect the needs of Scotland's children and young people whilst operating with the expectation that more children will remain with their families.

It will reflect the principles of the promise ensuring:

- Scotland's most vulnerable children are not profited from (page 111)
- Standards of care are consistent (page 111)
- End to the selling of care placements to Local Authorities outside Scotland (page 110)
- Acute and crisis services are phased out to promote early intervention and prevention (page 111)

What has the CSB heard so far?

Multi-agency:

- Systems Leadership Group, specifically 'Edge of Care' workstream
- LOIP Balance of Care Charter
- Brothers & Sisters Position Statement
- Aim to reduce the number of out of authority placements
- Aim that where a child lives out of authority they will live within 1 hour's travelling distance of Aberdeen
- Continuing care is promoted and our numbers of young people in continuing care have increased

Children's Social Work:

- [Secure Care guidance refreshed and commitment to ethos of care within external secure care provisions](#)

- Local residential children's homes committed to relational practice and ensuring these are loving homes for children and young people whilst staying there and beyond

What has been committed so far?

LOIP, Systems Leadership Group, Children's Services Plan

Who are the leads?

Scottish Government, Community Planning Partners

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Work is underway but not yet sufficient

Multi-agency:

- The proposed changes to the Children's Hearing System to include 16 and 17 year olds will have implications for resource and practice locally
- The role of earlier identification of family and kinship options by universal services to be developed

4.2 Investment

See The Promise, Chapter 6; The Money; Follow The Money

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<p>Investment in the lives of children and families will be considered strategically and holistically in the context of their experiences.</p> <p>The Human and Economic Cost modelling that underpinned Follow the Money and The Money reports will be embedded into organisational and budgeting processes across Scotland. That process will have involved organisations working together to spread investment and align budgets.</p>
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National funding has been sporadic and challenging to plan for. Some applications have been successful and we're aware of partners having been awarded recent monies under A Good Childhood (e.g. NHSG with Moray and Aberlour)• Recognise that funding in itself is not sufficient and creative reallocation of resource is required to realise improvement aims
What has been committed so far?
Who are the leads?
Scottish Government/ Community Planning Partners
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
<p>Work is underway but not yet sufficient</p> <p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a role for joined up investment and planning across the partnership• The anticipated report and learning from the 3 pilot local authorities currently undertaking Human and Economic Cost modelling will be used to inform local priorities• Proposal to invest in a Promise Lead Officer to support governance and accountability in relation to funding, amongst other areas of work• All services and partnerships will be required to contribute to the work of the Promise Lead Officer and Partnership #KeepthePromise Group

4.3 Information Sharing

see the promise, page 36

What is required by Plan 21-24?
Organisations with responsibilities towards children and families will be confident about when, where, why and how to share information with partners. Information sharing will not be a barrier to supporting children and families.
What has the CSB heard so far?
Multi-agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information Sharing Protocol for Children and Young People awaiting final sign-off. Organisations sharing information are Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, NHS Grampian, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Ambulance Service, University of Aberdeen, Robert Gordon's University and North East Scotland College• Revised IRD process and planning for SCIM implementation• We have an established Quality Assurance Programme for multi-agency audits which monitors improvement and informs future improvement planning• COVID-19 escalated routine use of Microsoft Teams to better enable colleagues across the partnership to better support the protection and welfare of children as a result of cross-agency information sharing• In some areas the information and data sharing, monitoring and analysing is quite advanced e.g. CPC
What has been committed so far?
Multi-agency Information Sharing Protocol
Who are the leads?
Aberdeen City Council have led on the Information Sharing Protocol
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
Work is underway but not yet sufficient Multi-agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion and sharing of Information Sharing Protocol• Extension of revised IRD process based on Aberdeen City model across Grampian• Revision of GIRFEC guidance• The consistency and quality of data reporting, monitoring and analysing across the partnership needs to improve

Building Capacity

Over the next 3 years, there will be a focus on work that ensures that the structural underpinning of the 'care system' is orientated to the needs of children and families. This work to build capacity and coherence reflects the planned obsolescence of The Promise Scotland. It will not always be there to provide oversight and accountability and the structures need to move to ensure that the scaffolding around the 'care system' facilitates and upholds children's rights.

5.1 Legislation

See The Promise, page 112

What is required by Plan 21-24?
Over the course of the next Parliamentary term, there will be identifiable progress made towards ensuring Scotland's legislative framework around the breadth of the 'care system' is coherent and cohesive, upholds the conclusions of the Independent Care Review and is compliant with the UNCRC.
What has the CSB heard so far?
Multi-agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Children's Services Board is alert to and looks out for proposed legislative change• ACC-led response to Care and Justice Bill Consultation
What has been committed so far?
Ongoing commitment to consultation processes
Who are the leads?
Scottish Government
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
Work is underway (Scottish Government status) Multi-agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awaiting proposed legislative changes and will respond as appropriate

5.2 Children's Hearing System

See The Promise, pages 39 to 44

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<p>The Children's Hearing System will have gone through a redesign process.</p> <p>That redesign process will bring together children and families, and organisations that hold the responsibility, to rethink the structures, processes and legislation that underpin the hearing system.</p> <p>The aim will be to ensure there are coherent, cohesive and collaborative proposals on an operating framework for The Children's Hearings System that has been designed with children and families.</p> <p>That redesign process will be underpinned by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• giving effect to the promise;• ensuring compliance with the UNCRC,• upholding the original intention of The Kilbrandon Review that children involved in offending need care and protection; and• ensuring The Children's Hearing System and The Courts can facilitate child friendly justice that upholds children's rights and enables their effective participation.
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Children's Services Board is alert to and looks out for proposed change• Creation of the Hearings Systems Working Group and their Issues List• Implementation of SCRA requirements around sibling assessments <p>CSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local practice forum established between CSW/SCRA/CHS to identify shared learning opportunities and practice improvement
What has been committed so far?
<p>Scottish Government/CHS/SCRA</p> <p>Local interface from Area Reporter Manager</p>
Who are the leads?
<p>Scottish Government/CHS/SCRA</p>
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
<p>Work is underway (Scottish Government status)</p> <p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awaiting proposed practice and legislative changes and will respond as appropriate

5.3 Inspection and Regulation

See The Promise, pages 119 to 120

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<p>A new, holistic framework for inspection and regulation that values what children and family's value, will have been scoped and developed.</p> <p>It will understand the necessary legislative change required to focus on children's experiences and will be underpinned by the principles set out in the promise and give full effect to the secure care pathway and standards.</p>
What has the CSB heard so far?
What has been committed so far?
Local interface with Link Inspector
Who are the leads?
Scottish Government, Care Inspectorate, SSSC, Audit Scotland, NHS Education for Scotland, Nursing and Midwifery Council, Association of Directors of Education Services and OFSTED
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
<p>Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient (Scottish Government status)</p> <p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are aware of the Care Inspectorate's intention to conduct thematic inspections e.g., secure care

5.4 Policy Coherence

See The Promise, page 25

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<p>There will be cohesive alignment in the policy initiatives and frameworks across Scotland. Policy development across Scotland will reflect the realities of people's lives and create a coherent policy environment.</p> <p>The focus of the 21-24 period will be on implementation and alignment not inquiries and reviews.</p>
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poverty action plan in place across the partnership
What has been committed so far?
Who are the leads?
Scottish Government/ COSLA
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
<p>Work is underway but does not yet appear sufficient (Scottish Government status)</p> <p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work required across the partnership to create a coherent policy environment <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education policies all align with the UNCRC, when next reviewed they should also consider The Promise <p>CSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All policies and practice guidance will align to the UNCRC and The Promise

5.5 Data Mapping and Collection

See The Promise, page 114

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<p>Scotland will have a cohesive central picture of all data on the processes and systems that directly and indirectly impact on children and their families, including wider socio-structural factors.</p> <p>The data picture will have been used to fully align data systems, collection and analysis methodologies to what matters to children and families, and the needs of those who take decisions on how best to support children and their families.</p>
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data challenges have been flagged• Significant time has been spent identifying available data and gaps• Better access to and sharing of data is a focus• Development of Information Sharing Protocol• LOIP project charter data routinely reported on• Corporate Parenting data set• D365 to replace existing council data systems• NHSG-led predictive analytics project in relation to mental health
What has been committed so far?
Who are the leads?
Scottish Government
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
<p>Work is underway</p> <p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• GIRFEC data set to be developed and shared with the children's services board• Single request for assistance process being developed across the partnership• Maturing of reporting and analysing of data at the children's service board <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being worked on as part of the Family Support Model

5.6 Governance Structures

See The Promise chapter 6

What is required by Plan 21-24?
<p>All public appointments to any of Scotland's Boards and Public Bodies which have an impact on the 'care system' will ensure that the values of the promise are embedded in recruitment frameworks.</p> <p>The governance landscape around the various Boards, networks and groups that sit around the 'care system' will be rationalised to enable effective and accountable shared working around the lives of children and families.</p>
What has the CSB heard so far?
<p>Multi-agency:</p> <p>Principally an area of work for Scottish Government, however, locally the following work is underway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All members of the partnership are represented at the board and all subsidiary groups and responsible for multi-agency accountability of implementation of The Promise• Representation and inclusion of individuals with care experience to Corporate Parenting Performance and Improvement Group membership <p>CSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment to the children's social work service has ensured a focus on the applicant's understanding of The Promise• Representation and inclusion of individuals with care experience on recruitment panels
What has been committed so far?
Who are the leads?
Scottish Government
Links, Next Steps and Assessment:
<p>Work is underway</p> <p>Multi-agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awaiting proposed changes from Scottish Government and will respond as appropriate, meantime we will continue to ensure structures and appointments have regards to implementation for the Promise• Proposal to appoint to Promise Lead Officer with identified structure around the post to support reporting and accountability

The 5 Promise Foundations

What is required by Plan 21-24?

Promise Foundation - VOICE

Children must be listened to, and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care, with all those involved properly listening and responding to what children want and need. There must be a compassionate, caring decision-making culture focused on children and those they trust.

What has the Children's Services Board (CSB) heard so far?

As well as multi-agency activity, the CSB is aware of a considerable amount of single-agency activity which is supporting the implementation of Participation and Voice across the partnership.

Multi-agency activity:

The vision of our **Champions Board Plan 2021-2023** is that:

'Our care experienced children, young people and care leavers have a right to participate in decision-making about their own lives and have their voices heard'.

To achieve this, we have identified the following priorities:

- Champions will listen to and learn from the voice and experience of our children and young people,
- Champions will seek and promote opportunities to enable our children and young people to have the same life opportunities as their peers,
- Embedding a children's and young person's rights approach into services, focusing on embedding participation, protection and provision of children and young people's rights

LOIP Charters under Stretch Outcome 8 *'Child friendly city where all decision which impact on children and young people are informed by them by 2026'.*

National GIRFEC guidance under review and refreshed local guidance will reflect this. The Promise will be embedded throughout to ensure the voice and the needs of the child/young person and families is heard, valued and acted upon. Concurrently, child's plans, chronologies and criteria for universal, targeted and specialist support will be reviewed and amended as required.

The multi-agency **audit of Children with Disabilities** highlighted opportunities to learn from staff and practice at Orchardbrae School in capturing the voices of children with additional support needs.

Education:

- Building capacity in different techniques to listen to children
- starting to establish a webpage within the city site to encourage participation
- Pupil Climate Change group
- Summer of Play and Easter of Play
- Reshape of education ASN and Outreach
- Children's rights and participation in school improvement plans including the use of HGIOURS

- Young Leaders of Learning

NHS:

Project underway to understand the health needs of older CEYP (17+) as they transition into adulthood and ultimately out of care. The intent is to co-produce a resource (medium to be informed by CEYP) to meet this need, with the scope to scale up in future to offer wider interaction between CEYP and the health system. CEYP will be supported to develop work-based skills and experience during the process.

Children’s Social Work:

The Children’s Social Work Service has invested in the Mind of my Own App (MOMO). The MOMO app supports our children and young people to have a voice and for their views to be recorded accurately. It is the only digital tool that comprehensively supports Article 12 of the UNCRC. In 2021 we saw an increase to 221 Young Person Accounts and 417 Worker Accounts.

What has been committed so far?

Multi Agency:

- Corporate Parenting Plan
- Champions Board Plan

Education:

- National Improvement Framework Plan

NHS:

- NHSG Corporate Parenting Plan reflects our intent to improve how we learn from the lived experience of care experienced children and young people.

Children’s Social Work:

- Champions Board and Corporate Parenting plans have enabled development of connection and belonging across parts of specific commissioned participation
- Workforce development sessions have been delivered to introduce the multi-agency workforce to Children’s Rights via Children in Conflict with the Law and Needs not Deeds sessions.
- Aberdeen Young Person’s Rights Service will support the wider CSW service development of a feedback loop which is more effectively linked to the voice and service experience of young people.
- Rights Service Annual Report and learning plan to be progressed

NESCol:

- Corporate Parenting Plan – Full Version and Student Version
- Our NESCol Space (Student Platform for All Our Care Experienced) (**ONS**) Peer Support Group for Students and specific sessions for applicants to capture feedback and shape fit for purpose services and procedures for supporting our Care Experienced.

- Care Experience Welcome Survey to identify elements of induction where further support was required.

Who are the leads?

Children's Services Board and single agency leads

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Multi-agency:

- Voice and how this is being supported to be expressed across education/health systems.
- Progression and reporting of work under Child Friendly Cities - Participation, Culture, Child Friendly Services (WRAM)
- Participation scoping being undertaken by WSA lead re edges of engagement and how this could be developed support from CYCJ agreed.
- YJIG participation group formed and strategy in development
- Update to single and multi-agency training and professional development
- Progress partnership Corra funded project – supporting birth parents who have had a child permanently removed from their care. Understanding the lived experience of parents in order to inform a strategy for better support.

Education

- Narrow the focus on Looked after children
- Continue to embed HGIOURS and widen the approaches used to encourage participation and voice

Children's Social Work:

- Structural and cultural nudges required to support shift in emphasis toward day to day understanding of being participative
- Info management systems being developed to support improved uptake of MOMO

NESCol:

- Our NESCol SPACE (ONS) will move from a fully remote model in 20/21 and 21/22 to a blended approach (mainly in person) approach in 22/23 to encourage further participation in sessions to improve and increase feedback to help further shape provision.

What is required by Plan 21-24?

Promise Foundation – Scaffolding

Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.

What has the CSB heard so far?

Multi-agency:

- UNICEF Child Friendly Cities
- Children’s rights embedded in decision making of the council through the committee process and through the commissioning intentions

Education:

- Mentoring programmes in schools
- NIF Plan to committee including mandatory training in UNCRC, The Promise and the Morgan review
- Virtual School

NHS:

- NHSG single agency contribution to children’s rights - comm’s and action plan developed. Work in progress to embed CR’s in decision making – starting with leaders in the organisation
- ‘Children’ one of 5 priorities within NHSG forward looking strategic plan – opportunity to raise profile, scale up and hold to account

Children’s Social Work:

- [Aberdeen Young Person’s Rights Service \(AYPRS\)](#) works closely with the local primary and secondary Advocacy Services providers (Who Cares? Scotland and Advocacy Services Aberdeen), to provide independent advocacy for those children and young people who want it at their Children’s Hearing. The AYPRS provides access to independent advocacy for care experienced children, young people, and young adults in line with its remit. This includes those being cared for or living outside of the city. Those children and young people can also access other independent advocacy services, aligned to their current care arrangements

What has been committed so far?

UNICEF Plan to Community Planning Aberdeen through focus on the following badges:

- *Culture* - The ‘vision of childhood’, fundamental to a child rights-based approach (CRBA) is understood and promoted because staff know how to effectively practice and embed a child rights-based approach.
- *Cooperation & Leadership* - Leaders within and beyond the local authority understand and value the importance of incorporating children’s rights, needs and views in decision-making.

- *Communications* – Comms staff and local media understand and value a child rights perspective and CFC status is regularly communicated to all members of the community (including children and young people) in a manner that is accessible and appropriate.
- *Child Friendly Services* - All services, including health, justice, social services, and others are child friendly.
- *Participating* - Children and young people's views are considered in decision making processes and there is clarity about how their participation has made an impact.
- *Place* - Urban planning services apply a child rights-based approach (CRBA) to design, development, and provision, this will include participatory research.

Who are the leads?

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Education:

- Continue to develop practice in keeping with the UNCRC as outlined in school improvement plans
- Continue to improve post school transitions
- Priority to look at ASN over session 22/23 and respond to the Morgan recommendations
- Reshape of virtual school to ensure that those who are already looked after or on the edge of care have access to their full entitlements and that services (education and beyond) mould around their needs.

NHS:

- Development of NHSG strategic plan to reflect CR's at all levels of the organisation.

Children's Social Work:

- Embedding a children's and young person's rights approach into all areas of service, focusing on embedding participation, protection and provision of children and young people's rights
- Refresh or development of procedures to ensure all guidance upholds children's rights and reflects equal protection legislation

What is required by Plan 21-24?

Promise Foundation – Family

Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way.

What has the CSB heard so far?

Education:

- NIF Plan including use of recovery funding (Money Advisors for families), improved school profiles and improved tracking arrangements, work to align secondary curriculum to growth areas and curriculum alignment by August 2023.
- Provision of hardship and free school meal grants to families

NHS:

- Working on financial inclusion pathway – education for all HV’s on what financial support is available
- Protocol for emergency access to formula milk for infants
- Research project to understand the acceptability of the FIP (early years) for women/parents and for health professionals. Final report about to be published.
- Income Max Pilot within health – about to be evaluated as a MSc student project.
- Pathway for emergency access to baby formula

Children’s Social Work:

- Children’s Social Work are committed to reducing the number of children and young people becoming looked after and have invested in a range of internal and commissioned ‘edge of care’ supports and services to support children remaining safely in their families e.g. Family Network Team, Includem, etc.
- For those children and young people where it is not safe for them to live with their family of origin, looked after at home support and kinship options are used more proactively to keep children within their family networks.

NESCoL:

- FE Bursary for Care Experienced Students is normally paid once every 4 weeks. To allow us to support students to manage their money and budget better, Care Experienced Student can request to receive their funding weekly, allowing them better control of their finances
- Free Sanitary Products for College Students

What has been committed so far?

Child Poverty Action plan

NIF

Who are the leads?

All partnership agencies

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Education

- Roll out of tracking in secondary, continued commissioning of Youth Work, Family Learning and Money advisors through SAC 2.0 and Family Wellbeing Fund
- Refocus of summer of play to those in the 6 groups most likely to be adversely impacted by poverty for 2022
- Implementation of SAC 2.0

Children's Social Work:

- Pilot of shopping cards – reduce reliance on food banks
- Cost of travel (to appointments)
- Workforce – awareness raising
- Embedding poverty into wider inequalities agenda

NESCoI

- Partnerships with Cyrenians and "Ditch Debt with Dignity" being explored to offer in-house financial wellbeing support on campus to reduce the amount of students experiencing poverty.
- Partnership with Trusell Trust allows for same access to food parcels for Care Experienced Students in need of emergency food.

What is required by Plan 21-24?

Foundation – Care

Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.

What has the CSB heard so far?

Multi-agency:

- Write right about Me (WRAM) is starting to drive a decisive shift in professional writing about children and young people. The Project has listened directly to those with care experience to understand the impact of poorly chosen language on those accessing their records and is driving a change in writing about children and young people across the partnership.

Education:

- Some of the language used to describe health and safety incidents and near misses is thought to be at odds with the language of the UNCRC and The Promise. Colleagues across the cluster are working with Health and Safety colleagues to address this whilst still meeting statutory obligations in terms of The Health and Safety Executive. It is hoped that more careful use of the language used to report near misses and incidents will help shift the narrative from ‘assault’ and ‘violence’ to trauma, dysregulation and compassion.

NESCol:

- Needs Assessment Reports and Support documents are produced in a professional and respectful manner without the use of acronyms.
- Staff members sit on the WRAM Group and will feedback good practice within the organisation.

What has been committed so far?

Who are the leads?

All partnership agencies

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Education:

- Monitoring of impact of Compassionate and Connected Communities and use of circle framework (mandatory training still to be agreed as part of NIF 22/23)

NHSG:

- Trauma informed workforce

Children's Social Work:

- Date and launch for change in language and acronyms
- Use of new national CP guidance chunks as a vehicle to reset and reinforce change e.g. Child Protection Planning Meeting

NESCol:

- Further revisions of Needs Assessment Questioning and Report Writing will be updated following recent and upcoming Trauma Informed CPD within the Student Advice and Support Team

What is required by Plan 21-24?

Foundation – People

The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to listen and be compassionate in their decision-making and care.

What has the CSB heard so far?

Education:

- CCC rolled out across education
- Several LIAM trainers
- DBI (Distress brief Intervention) is currently being piloted in 4 of our Secondary Schools in partnership with CAMHS and Penumbra.
- Emotion Coaching and Emotional Literacy Support Assistant training
- 90 staff being trained in counselling skills
- Provision of counselling in secondary schools and over school holiday periods

NHS:

- All health staff have access to e-learning on trauma informed care through Turas
- All school nurses are LIAM trained.
- School nursing & Health Visiting cascade training on the Solihull approach. RGU will be training all trainee's in school nursing and health visiting in this approach.
- Peri-natal mental health team established. There are Peri-natal MH champions within health services who support staff/families.

CSW:

- Continuing Care options are promoted and there is growing number of looked after young people remaining in placement on a Continuing Care basis
- Relational approaches well embedded in local residential care with many young people maintaining relationships with staff and others beyond moving on
- Relational approaches embedded across fostering service via increase in continuing care numbers and relationships being sustained beyond formal arrangements.
- Providing staff with relational, trauma-informed training opportunities e.g. DDP, Theraplay, etc.

NESCol:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing Support is available to be triaged for our Care Experienced Students to support them to work through past or present trauma. 21/22 has seen;
- 20 Care Experienced Students be offered at least 8 weeks of in-person counselling.
- 24 Care Experienced Students attended a Mental Health and Wellbeing Appointment
- 12 Care Experience students received funds from the “Student Wellbeing Grant” initiative rolled out in January 2022.

What has been committed so far?

NIF Plan

Who are the leads?

NIF - Eleanor

Links, Next Steps and Assessment:

Multi-agency:

- Working with parents across partnership to support to recover from their own trauma

Education:

- review of impact on wellbeing of learners and planning next steps. This will aligned to SHINE survey responses and our own internal HWB survey. Time to take stock and plan in collaboration with health colleagues

Children’s Social Work:

- Ensuring children and young people are supported in their understanding and connections with important relationships to them throughout their lives and in a variety of ways considering their individual needs and stage of development
- Aspiring to place children within one-hour distance of Aberdeen.
- The workforce will feel supported to respond to behaviour in a trauma skilled and specialist way that reflects a deep understanding of the children in their care and support recovery
- Enhancement of staff wellbeing and support

NESCOI:

- The Student Advice and Support Team Managers and Student Wellbeing Advisers have undertaken Trauma Informed Practice Training in 2022.
- The RESPECT Group at NESCol will be working to embed a “Trauma Informed” approach across all curriculum and support activity as part of their 22/23 theme through awareness raising and CPD.

Tailored questioning as part of our transition support contact with new Care Experienced Applicants ensures that a trauma informed approach has been adopted.

Kymme Fraser, Children’s Services Manager, Aberdeen City Council
Amy Evans, Corporate Parenting Lead Officer, Aberdeen City Council
8 August 2022

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	8 November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Implementation of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/22/243
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Amy Anderson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of the implementation of the new National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the progress of the implementation of the National Guidance to date and is assured that the Child Protection Committee (CPC) will continue to oversee the implementation of the identified areas requiring local development.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021

- 3.1 This non-statutory National Guidance was published on 2 September 2021 with an expectation that Child Protection Committees consider and implement any local areas for improvement within an 18-month timeframe. The Guidance supersedes the previous National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014. The new Guidance describes the responsibilities and expectations for all involved in protecting children in Scotland and will support the care and protection of children across Scotland. It aims to provide a national framework for services and local inter-agency forums to develop further their local multi-agency protocols, training plans and procedures. The Guidance outlines how statutory and non-government agencies should work together with parents, families and communities to prevent harm and to protect children from abuse and neglect. The Guidance emphasises that everyone has a role in protecting children from harm.
- 3.2 The 2021 Guidance builds on the structure of the 2014 Guidance although all sections have been revised and supplemented. Children's rights and human rights underpin the whole of the guidance. The modern emphasis is on early, attuned, trauma-informed and sufficiently sustained support whether a child

remains at home or at an alternative secure home base when this is not possible. Real engagement with children and their families in the child protection process is an expectation.

- 3.3 Following the publication of the new Guidance, the CPC has completed a self-evaluation identifying a number of main changes, Aberdeen City's current position, and action required to implement the changes into local practice. A review of the self-evaluation (Appendix 1), undertaken in July 2022, indicated that action has been taken to implement 65% of the identified changes, and that 32% of the identified changes are in progress of being implemented. The CPC have been assured that the expectations set out in the new National Guidance will be met by the multi-agency partnership, and the CPC will continue to implement and monitor the remaining identified changes through quarterly CPC meetings and CPC development sessions.

Implementation of National Guidance Status (July 2022)

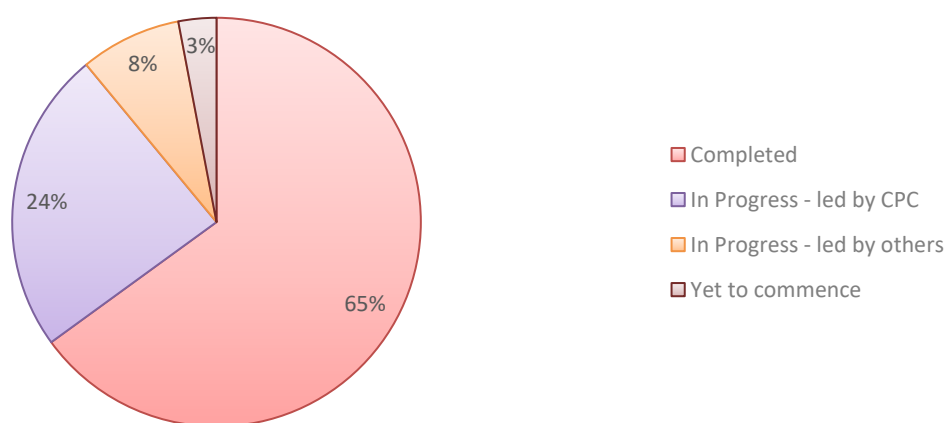


Figure 1: Implementation of National Guidance (July 2022)

- 3.4 As Figure 1 illustrates, a significant amount of the changes identified in the self-evaluation have been implemented or are already embedded in local practice. A significant change, implemented in 2022, was the adoption of new timescales and terminology in relation to Child Protection Planning Meetings, formally known as Child Protection Case Conferences. Furthermore, Aberdeen City are confident that an addition to the National Guidance (Part 2B), referring to an approach to multi agency assessment in child protection, is ongoing in practice and threaded through existing strategic practice.
- 3.5 Over the course of 2022, work has been underway to implement three considerable changes from the new National Guidance, due to take effect in Aberdeen City from 1 November 2022:

- Refreshed categories of concern for children who are placed on the Child Protection Register, and are subject of an inter-agency Child Protection Plan.
- The revision of Interagency Referral Discussions (IRDs) – Local IRD processes have been in place since the outbreak of Covid-19, however revisions have been made to implement the full intentions of the National Guidance and the implementation of Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM).
- National Minimum Dataset Version 2 – Aberdeen City will adopt the new dataset from 1 November 2022, which aligns with the new National Guidance, delivering robust datasets to support analysis and child protection improvement.

3.6 It is expected that by September 2023, the remaining required developments will be initiated in Aberdeen City. The CPC will monitor and evaluate the impact of implementing the new National Guidance beyond 2023, and how changes made to strategy and practice improve outcomes for children and young people.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

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?
Strategic Risk	Many of the requirements of the new National Guidance are already in place in practice in the City. The remaining areas are	The CPC's strategic plan (Child Protection Improvement Programme) is well governed by the CPC and the Chief Officer Group. They will be ensuring that the terms of the new National Guidance are incorporated into	L	Yes

	already incorporated into strategic planning.	current and future strategic planning.		
Compliance	No significant risk identified	Services across all multi-agency partners are aware of National Guidance requirements and ensure compliance.	L	Yes
Operational	Required improvements and developments in practice are not identified and actioned.	Leadership supports participation and planning across the multi-agency partnership in the delivery of changes required as a result of the new National Guidance.	L	Yes
Financial	No significant risk identified			Yes
Reputational	Organisational failings in relation to child protection can bring significant media interest and scrutiny of services delivered to children and young people.	The public can be assured that: the Council ensures compliance with legal requirements, national standards and guidance; partners respond to self and external scrutiny; and identified areas for improvement are addressed.	M	Yes
Environment / Climate	Not applicable for this report			Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	The contents of this report have no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.

<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The new National Guidance supports the functions of the CPC which is central to assuring that the multi-agency Children's Services partners deliver on the outcomes of the LOIP Prosperous People (Children & Young People) Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9 and to ensure our children are safe and protected from harm. Children, young people and families who are adequately protected from threats to their health, safety and economic wellbeing are more likely to prosper than those who are not.
Regional and City Strategies	The work of the CPC, incorporating the new National Guidance is relevant to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, the Children's Services Plan and the Child Protection Improvement Programme. The CPC progresses the policy ambitions and expectations of the Scottish Government and is key to the local implementation of new National Guidance for Child Protection 2021

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	This report to introduce members to new National Guidance does not require a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment to be completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#)

11. APPENDICES

11.1 National Guidance – CPC self-evaluation Year 1 review

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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National Guidance for Child Protection 2021

Self-Evaluation for Aberdeen City CPC of main changes and actions required – status update July 2022

Main changes	Aberdeen City current position	Action required	Timeframe (completed by) & identified Lead	Practice Insights signposting where helpful for Aberdeen City	Status
Part 1 – The context for child protection					
Overarching observation that the Guidance contains more visual charts and uses plain language	We would wish to replicate this approach in our procedures, processes and all communications	For adherence from now on	Immediate applicability		Complete
Outline of the various legislative definitions of “child”. Notwithstanding variations, the national expectation is that the Guidance will be applicable up to 18years	This has been our position for a number of years	None			Complete

The definition of Child Abuse and Neglect has been brought up-to-date; now includes the online and digital environment, criminal exploitation, child trafficking, FGM and Forced Marriage	All covered by local CPC guidance and/or multi agency L&D modules	Identified for updates in CP Programme 2021-24	Programmed between 2021-24		Complete
CP Guidance is linked better with GIRFEC principles and recognises the continuum. The Guidance is part of the suite of tools to support practitioners in responding to concerns. The detailed child protection procedures are utilised where the child is at risk of significant harm.	This is our current position. (There may be something here for the Children’s Services Board in relation to contextual safeguarding at universal services level.)	Useful to highlight the paragraphs 1.55-1.73 discussing the difference between harm and significant harm in a child protection context. To be reinforced in L&D programme L+D - CP Guidance and GIRFEC principles are well linked through MA training – we discuss GIRFEC in CP training and encourage access to Aberlour courses.	<i>Lead: L&D sub committee and GIRFEC group</i> March 2022	Practice Insight – 6. Contextual Safeguarding	Complete
“Likelihood” of significant harm has been removed; only “risk of significant” referred to.	A helpful change for practitioners and parents. Query this here – as “likely” significant harm is test for Children’s Hearing	SCRA to comment and advise	<i>Lead: SCRA</i> March 2022		Complete
Whilst the reference to the Children & Young People (S) Act 2014 has been removed, the getting it right approach is restated outlining the	Support for an identified point of contact is a helpful statement in the Guidance. This accords with practice in Aberdeen City	Reinforce in L&D, communication required from CPC L+D – Training has been updated to discuss the role of the lead professional and named person.	<i>Lead: CP Lead for NHSG & Education</i> Immediate		In Progress – led by CPC

roles of named person and lead professional		Will be picked up in the GIRFEC refreshed operational guidance			
Principles and Standards for CP: Emphasis on UNCRC in Scots Law and The Promise	This forms part of the range of strategic plans in Aberdeen City currently: CP Programme, LOIP, Children's Services Plan, NIF	Per strategic plans	Per strategic plans In the education NIF and Child Friendly City Log Frame		Complete
Emphasis on inter-agency responsibility for CP, particularly in relation to staff development and training at paras 1.120-1.127	Our approach to L&D is Multi-Agency First, Single-Agency Second	None			Complete
Information Sharing paras 1.128 – 1.152	Remains an area of anxiety for professionals in relation to the 'grey' areas	CPC liaison with Data Protection and Legal to match the national guidance with local position. Require clarity for practitioners and to enable quality assurance to progress without hurdles. GIRFEC operational guidance can support this.	Ongoing, ISP being developed, likely to be completed by Aug 2022.		Complete
Part 2A – Roles and responsibilities for child protection					
Support for Practitioners: Supervision. This is a new addition to the guidance to support role out of supervision across range of partners 2.35	Well embedded in CSW	Require partners to add their single-agency position on Supervision here Education don't offer formal supervision, support is offered	All services to update current position June 2022		Complete

		<p>through QIM/QIO when required.</p> <p>NHS Grampian has a mandatory Case Supervision Policy for Community Midwives, Health Visitors, School Nurses and Family Nurses. Case Supervision follows a specific model and is quality assured</p>			
Participation of agencies	Work required across all agencies to improve meaningful participation of professionals involved in child protection processes	Significant element of all current strategic plans across the partnership to implement the expectations of The Promise.	<p><i>Lead: CPC</i></p> <p>Dec 2022</p>	Practice Insight – 18. Participation and engagement	In progress led by CPC
Single agency responsibilities for CP commences para 2.45. The order has been restructured to illustrate the GIRFEC continuum – families are likely to be known to a range of services before they are known to C&F SW services	Helpful to reinforce the multi-agency approach and critical role of universal services	<p>All education guidance updated. Training developed and shared which will be led by HTs on the first day of school session 22/23. Resources made available to schools (grab and go guides of all key risks) in Feb 2022 with exemplar school safeguarding and child protection policy issued for schools to put in place for 22/23 school session. Audit tool shared with schools to support effective delivery against updated guidance.</p> <p>All NHS guidance is currently being updated to reflect the changes within the new Guidance</p>			Complete

		All NHS training has been updated to reflect the changes within the new Guidance			
Reference to the British Transport Police – role perhaps overlooked in CP context until now so this is welcome para 2.80	No rep at CPC	No BTP rep required at CPC, this is covered by services already represented on the CPC.			Complete
Note: COPFS and SFRS rep/attendance at CPC is not something we have ever achieved.	No rep at CPC	CPC to consider inviting COPFS and SFRS for relevant CPC meetings. Contact to be identified Alison McKenzie identified as COPFS rep to join CPC meetings when appropriate	<i>Lead: Campbell Thomson, Independent Chair and Carron McKellar, DCI Police Scotland</i> June 2022		Complete
Part 2B – Approach to multi agency assessment in child protection					
New section: Part 2B This identifies Practice methodologies or approaches relevant to Part 3 (how we identify and respond to concerns)	We are confident that we: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are multi-agency in our approach • Have children’s rights as a priority • Utilise GIRFEC • Adopt a strength based approach • Are trauma informed • Support a learning culture • Understand parental capacity for change 	Ongoing in practice and incorporated in existing strategic planning		These are more fully explored in the practice insights document	Complete

	The one element here we do not utilise is Family Group Decision Making in a formally recognised sense – but we do this through other forms of meetings				
Part 3 – Identifying and responding to concerns about children					
National Guidance has identified IRDs as the key role in accessing CP processes. In the Guidance the IRD is the only route into CP Processes. Any agency can call for an IRD. Decision to convene is made by Police, Health or Social Work (Health added here)	Local IRD processes have been in course of revision since May 2020 when the draft Guidance was circulated and SG covid-guidance was issued. We are therefore on track to implement the intentions of the new guidance in accordance with our local practice IRD QA group established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final consultation with key multi-agency personnel • Launch new IRD process • Awareness raising sessions • New local flowchart with covering guidance • New template documentation • Inclusion of Care and Risk Management meetings (CARM) • Documentation for pre-birth or ongoing cases to get to CPPM (not IRD process) • Extension of IRD QA Group responsibilities in relation to data (national guidance and National Minimum Dataset) 	Dec 2021- June 2022 <i>Lead: CPC Lead Officer and the IRD QA group</i>		In progress led by CPC
Change in language from CP Case Conference to CP Planning Meetings.		Acknowledge a transitional process but aim to change language with effect from 1	With effect from 1 January 2022.		Complete

Change in timescale from 21 days to CPCC to 28 days for CPPM		<p>January 2022. All CP Admin templates to be changed from that date.</p> <p>Comms to be issued by CPC after Dev Session</p> <p>All existing processes and guidance to be reviewed to pick this up over time</p>	18 Nov 2021		
Joint Investigative Interviews	Current JII processes will remain in place. Training on new Scottish Child Interview Model commences in Aberdeen City Sept 2022.	Local Working Group to propose implementation of new model and interface with existing local practice to CPC after Sept 2022	After Sept 2022 <i>Lead: SCIM working group</i>		In progress led by CPC
Interim Safety Plan Para 3.110	Unsure what is meant by "Interim Safety Plan". We have worked towards only having one document, the Child's Plan, for many years. We would wish to liaise with practitioners on the meaning of this as it implies a separate document.	<p>Information gathering on understanding nationally of an "Interim Safety Plan" and the style of documentation</p> <p>Whilst we don't use this terminology as such, we do have immediate safety plans prior to CP plans and ultimately child plans.</p>	Update April 2022		Complete
<p>Involving children & families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy • Additional support needs • Parents and carers as lead contributors <p>Para 3.114</p>	We are going further than the National Guidance in really including children in decisions and planning. Guidance still feels more "do to", rather "do with" – it references listening to and providing information but does not	This aligns with our work around participation of Children & Families in our CP processes.			Complete

	<p>go as far as we intend to locally.</p> <p>The Guidance and Practice Insights documents reference FGDM. We consider our practice utilises this approach, albeit not by that name.</p>				
Reference to Supplementary National Guidance on Child Protection during COVID-19 pandemic	Unclear why this is still referenced in the new national guidance (which should be covid- aware)	CPC continues to respond to Supplementary Guidance as it is issued. This has been in place throughout the pandemic			Complete
Child Protection Plan and fit with Child's Plan Para 3.138	<p>We are clear on use of Child's Plan in child protection and other circumstances. Guidance suggests Interim Safety Plan – Child Protection Plan – Child's Plan. This does not feel like what we want locally. Nor does it comply with the drive to use plain language.</p> <p>However, we have work to do to make a Child's Plan more meaningful for the child.</p>	See above re para 3.110		Practice Insight - 17. Child Participation: sharing a child's protection plan with a child	Complete
Review CPPMs to be held within 6 months (rather than 3 months) Para 3.141	We have been reviewing within 3 months in compliance with 2014 Guidance although recognise that	The shift to 6 months will require some adjustment for practitioners and reviewing officers	Implemented 1 Jan 2022		Complete

	assessments can be difficult to complete within that timeframe.				
Transfer cases Para 3.147	The Guidance has historically not felt to meet need in the variety of transfer circumstances. New Guidance does not seem to be any more helpful. Seems cumbersome and labour intensive.	Require further consideration of requirements in relation to transfer circumstances. IRO team are developing refreshed Practice Guidance which will pick this up Helpful to know numbers each year (CPR Team)	<i>Lead: IRO Team</i> Sep 2022	(Practice Insight reference)	In progress by CPC
Child Protection Planning Meetings Quorate Para 3.156 (para 407 in 2014 Guidance)	This para is unfortunately an opportunity missed to clarify this often problematic aspect	Local Guidance required to make this clear. IRO team are developing refreshed Practice Guidance which will pick this up	Within 18 months timeframe (March 2023) <i>Lead: IRO Team (and additional support from CPC if required)</i>		In progress led by CPC
Participation in CPPMs Para 3.159 – 3.164	We consider our use of language to be better than the national guidance in having participation and attendance of parents and children as our starting point.			Practice Insight - 13. Understanding a child's journey and keeping child at the centre of decision making	Complete
CPPM record Para 3.165	"Record" replaces the "Minute" and is now required within 5 rather than 15 days. National consensus is that this is unachievable	Either we have to accept that we will be non-compliant with this timescale or we need to radically reform the record produced. This requires consideration across practice, IRO, CP Admin team.	Within 18 months timeframe (Check in with CPC- Dec 2022) <i>Lead: IRO Team</i>		In progress led by CPC
Provision of reports Para 3.166	Timescales are often missed by agencies	CPC to require agencies to circulate their own reports (if	Comms required Check in - June 2022		Complete

		timescales are missed for CP admin to do it for them) After professional enquiry, it was decided to retain existing arrangements. We will use the data to identify adherence to timescales.			
Closed Sessions Para 3.167	We are considering national practice and neighbouring CPCs	Requires review with Police Scotland	<i>Lead: Police Scotland</i> June 2022		Yet to commence
Summary of key decisions within one day Para 3.168	We do this anyway				Complete
Practitioners issues with process or decisions Para 3.171		Multi-agency Reflective Discussion Guidance to be finalised	<i>Lead: Lead Nurse and CPC Lead Officer.</i> Feb 2022		Complete
Chronologies Para 3.172 - 180	Chronologies are of mixed quality; some too lengthy and information lost, others too sparse and missing key information. Reality is staff do not have time to rectify historic chronologies and are inclined to continue them in the same vein	Align with the Write Right About Me (WRAM) work – to pick up on chronologies, child’s plans (often 43pages in length) and professional reports. This is an opportunity to really invest in this work and improve the way we write and the reports/plans/chronologies produced across the partnership. Considerations of new technologies. Some investment is required to make this happen - joint work across CPC and CSB	Realistically a 3 year plan to implement this to a conclusion <i>Lead: Joint Thematic Group across CPC and CSB</i> Proposal to CPC in March 2022 then CSB in April 2022	Practice Insight - 2. Joint chronologies common approach Practice Insight - 17. Child Participation: sharing a child’s protection plan with a child Standardised suite of tools – gettingitright website	In progress led by CPC

Criminal proceedings Para 3.181 - 195	Guidance has greater emphasis on support for children in criminal proceedings. We do not have rep on CPC from COPFS	CPC to consider rep from COPFS. Alison McKenzie identified as rep			Complete
Child Protection Flowchart P130	Local practice well understood. Revised Local flowchart nearing completion to include notifications, IRDs, investigations, medicals, Strategy Meetings etc	Being developed	CPC June 2022 <i>Lead: CPC Lead Officer and IRD QA group</i>		In progress led by CPC
Part 4 - Specific Support Needs and Concerns					
Refreshed Categories of Concern	Identified in NMDset V2	Work commenced with relevant professionals to understand definitions of new categories of concern (eg Chairs of CPPMs).	CPC Lead Officer Aiming to implement from 1/11/22.		In progress led by CPC
Poverty – new to Guidance Para 4.2	Poverty Action Plan in place. Case Reviews suggest professionals are acute to impact of poverty	Current plans in place to reflect the revised National Child Protection Guidance	Lead for CPC, DM to update June 2022		Complete
When Services find it hard to Engage Para 4.8	CPC Guidance reference non-engaging families	Review CPC guidance to shift tone. Identify 2-3 professionals to progress this L+D – Will wait for updated Guidance – already not using ‘non engaging families’ as language in our training.	CPC June 2022 <i>Lead: Alison McAlpine, Lead Service Manager, Social Work; Fiona Miele Lead Nurse for Child Protection, NHS; and Emma</i>		In progress led by CPC

			<i>Scrimger, SCRA</i>		
Protection of Disabled Children Para 4.21	CPC – part of CP Improvement programme.	Check training meets requirements of national guidance. Local shift in language to recognise children with disability (rather than ‘disabled children’) QAF audit – findings from audit to be implemented. L+D – Members have looked at Practice Insights and agree our training is meeting requirements of the national guidance.	<i>Lead: L&D sub committee and QAF,</i> <i>Ongoing</i>	Practice Insight - 10. Disabled Children and child protection investigative interviews	Complete
Parents with Learning Disabilities Para 4.42a	Identified area for development, particularly in relation to interface with adult services	Joint work CPC/APC proposed. Build into both child and adult improvement programmes.	<i>Lead: CPC/APC</i> <i>CPC/APC – joint work.</i> <i>Potentially for PP event. Sept 22</i>	Practice Insight - 12. Supporting parents with learning/intellectual disabilities	In progress led by CPC
Impact of Parental Mental Health Para 4.48 Impact of children’s mental health Para 4.56 Suicide and Self Harm Para 4.65	Identified area for development, particularly in relation to interface with adult services. Recognise CSB has OIG re Mental Health services Transitions remains an area for improvement Strategically picked up by ADP Working with SAMH	CPC to be kept apprised of work of Children’s Services Board Mental Health group	Annually <i>Lead: CSB.</i> <i>CPC/APC – joint work.</i> <i>Potentially for PP event. Sept 22</i>	Practice Insight – 11. Child protection in transitions to adult life and services for disabled children	In progress led by others

Neglect and Emotional Abuse Para 4.70	Incorporated in strategic planning. Responding to Neglect audit and reestablishment of Neglect Group.	CPC Neglect Group to consider Guidance, Practice Insights and the Neglect Framework (just launched 18 October 2021) Recognise this is a constant area of improvement activity and professional intervention	<i>Lead: Neglect Thematic Group and L&D sub committee</i> June 2022	Practice Insights - 15. Identifying and addressing neglect: applying the graded care profile 16. Addressing Neglect and Enhancing Wellbeing (ANEW)	Complete
Domestic Abuse Para 4.93	Strategic interface with Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership in place	Implement the Safe & Together model across CPC and AVAWP L+D – Learning and Development Coordinator has completed the online S+T training course. All learnings have been added to our existing MA training - it has received very positive feedback from attendees.	<i>Lead: VAWP</i> June 2023		Complete
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Para 4.122	Strategic work through ADP to which CPC willing to contribute	ADP to update the CPC on progressing the Whole Family Approach	<i>Lead: ADP</i>		In progress led by others
Physical Abuse, Equal Protection, and Restraint Para 4.136	Physical Abuse is relatively high on the CPR at the moment, but not identified as requiring any specific strategic intervention at the moment. EPA – local guidance available and to be picked up in QAF in 2022 programme	No specific actions for CPC		Practice Insight - 9. Equal Protection, child protection and cultural competence	Complete

	Restraint – picked up in Plan 21-24 and being progressed by CSB				
Obesity Para 4.161	An escalating area of concern. May need incorporation into CP Programme down the line but not currently. Current professional response seen as appropriate and proportionate.	To be considered alongside Neglect as above. Recognise this is a constant area of improvement activity and professional intervention L+D – Will await future Neglect Group discussion RE Obesity before adding additional info to Neglect course.	<i>Lead: Neglect Thematic Group and L&D sub committee</i> Dec 2022		Complete
Child Sexual Abuse Para 4.164 CSE Para 4.184a Significantly extended section in the National Guidance	CPC Exploitation Group has this in hand	CPC Exploitation Group – to make sure redrafted documents have regard to this Guidance L+D – Will support Child Exploitation Group in redraft of this document.	<i>Lead: Exploitation Thematic group</i> March 2022	Practice Insight - 7. Safeguarding and CSE 8. Familial Sexual Abuse	Complete
Indecent Images and Internet-enabled sexual offending by adults Para 4.207 Note: change in language	Rapidly emerging area of concern.	Potentially requires CPC to support. Practice Review to highlight areas requiring development and local learning Role for CPC Exploitation Group and the L&D sub committee Improved data capture through Education and IRO Teams L+D - Have well reviewed training on Online Safety, CSE (and 'sexting') L+D agree with potential requirement for a practice review – aware this may	Within 18 month timescale (March 2023) <i>Lead: Exploitation Thematic group and data through P&QA sub committee</i>		In progress led by CPC

		result in requirement to develop additional MA training module and supporting materials/guidance/tools.			
Child Protection in the digital environment/ online safety Para 4.234	CPC has dealt with this strategically for some time. Issue with uptake of local L&D re current Apps and online issues. We have an expert in the field delivering this training – high quality and up-to-the-minute (as it requires to be). Police report this as largest emerging area of concern, yet peculiar drop-off in professional uptake of this L&D.	CPC to press for compulsory online safety training for professionals across the Partnership annually. We can record this for access at any time or for use at in-service CP training L+D Coordinator has developed an e-module which provides a basic overview of Online Safety, CSE, Trafficking and Neglect.	<i>Lead: L&D sub committee to handle the training and CPC to lead on making this compulsory for services</i> Annually		Complete
Harmful Sexual Behaviour Para 4.216	Significant area for local development Been at CPC – deferred pending Bucksburn Academy Practice Review AIM3 training for CSW	Recognise need to roll out across partnership. Christine McCarlie to be approached for multi-agency input. First stage in much longer improvement process. CPC improvement activity requires to be part of a much larger programme L+D - Harmful sexual behaviours and Indecent Images and Internet-enabled sexual offending by adults to	<i>Lead: Exploitation Thematic group and L&D sub committee</i> June 2023		In progress led by CPC

		potentially become one full day MA training module.			
Under-age Sexual activity Para 4.246	CPC understand Police and Education have in hand (details to be provided)	Updates to be provided by services	<i>Lead: Police Scotland and Education</i> June 2022		In progress led by CPC
Pre-birth assessment and support Para 4.259	Local area of strength	Pathway to ensure that there is robust discharge planning for all babies being discharged from Maternity who have been identified pre-birth as vulnerable	<i>Lead: NHS Grampian</i> May 2022		Complete
Children who are looked after away from home	CP procedures well embedded and utilised	None			Complete
Re-unification and 'return home' Para 4.295 Preventing the repeated removal of children Para 4.296	Unclear why these are separate headings in Guidance. Covered by implementation of Plan 21-24/ #KeepingThe Promise	None			
Children who are Missing Para 4.299	Funding bid successful - Working with Missing People to take forward locally and assess success of Missing Persons protocol	Ongoing, first sessions Nov 2021. Discussions in place in relation to data development.	<i>Lead: Police Scotland and CPC Lead Officer</i> Sep 2022		Complete
Protecting UASC and trafficked children	Child Trafficking Guidance revised and relaunched in 2020 and updated L&D module UASC – progressed strategically through CSB	None			Complete

Child Trafficking and child criminal exploitation Para 4.332		Criminal Exploitation - On agenda for Exploitation Group Late 2022	Dec 2022 <i>Lead: Exploitation Thematic group</i>		Complete
Protection in Transitional phases Para 4.354	Already highlighted as area of vulnerability. Identified as area of cross-over work with APC and nationally	QAF audit 6 (through CSB) on transition from Health to Education in programme 2022/23	Date TBC by CSB <i>Lead: CSB</i>	Practice Insight - 11. Child protection in transitions to adult life and services for disabled children	In progress led by CPC
Bullying Para 4.358		Increased section in new Guidance. CPC to be assured by Education re this section and any action required to be flagged Review of bullying policy in National Improvement Framework plan for session 22/23. Changed trends evident in the data which will inform the review.	<i>Lead: Education</i> June 2022		Complete
Hate Crime Para 4.367		New section in new Guidance. CPC to be assured by Police re this section and any action required to be flagged	<i>Lead: Police Scotland</i> June 2022		Yet to commence
Offending Behaviour Para 4.374 Heading in Guidance is "Serious harmful behaviour shown by children above and below the age of criminal responsibility"	Children's Services Board sub group – Justice – has eye on this area	CPC to request the CSB (Justice Group) consider this section and flag any action required	<i>Lead: CSB</i> Quarterly/annual updates as required		In progress led by others
Prevent Para 4.392	Flagged in CP Programme	Police to interface with APC and report back to CPC	<i>Lead: Susan Carr NHSG and APC</i>		In progress led by others

Heading in Guidance is “Vulnerability to be drawn into Terrorism”			Dec 2022		
Complex Investigations Para 4.393		Check interface with our processes around Strategy Meetings. CARM – refreshed, IRDs – refreshed, Review processes – refreshed.			Complete
FGM Para 4.411	Interface in place re FGM across AVAWP and CPC	L&D FGM module in place	<i>Lead: L&D sub committee, ongoing</i>		Complete
Honour-based abuse and Forced Marriage Para 4.425	Interface in place across AVAWP and CPC		<i>Lead: VAWP CPC/ADP joint working. PP event Ongoing</i>		In progress led by others
Fabricated or Induced Illness Para 4.439	Child D SCR Sub Judice case is delaying progress	Implementing findings of SCR: Is Lead Paed required? FII Guidance to be progressed Foster/ kinship carer checks	<i>Lead: SLR sub committee (as soon as case is no longer sub- judice)</i>		Complete
SUDI Para 4.446	Child Death Review Hub links to the SLR sub committee to ensure only one review takes place		<i>Lead: SLR sub committee</i> 2 monthly and as and when review required		Complete

Note: Practice Insights – sections have been flagged only in relation to areas we have identified for local development activity.

Authors: Kymme Fraser, Children’s Services Manager; Sarah Burnett, Lead Independent Reviewing Officer; Stuart Lamberton, CPC Lead Officer (to March 2022), Amy Anderson, CPC Lead Officer (from May 2022).

Date compiled: 4 Nov 2021

Dates revised: 27 Jan 2022

Dates revised: Year 1 update – 19 July 2022

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services Committee
DATE	8 November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Secure Care – Children’s Rights
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/22/245
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpso
REPORT AUTHOR	Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Public Protection Committee in December 2021 requested that the Chief Social Work Officer provide committee with an update report on the use of Secure Care and compliance with the Secure Care regulations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 2.1 notes the report;
- 2.2 notes the ‘Secure Care Pathway Review’ thematic inspection currently being undertaken by the Care Inspectorate and instructs the Chief Social Work Officer to report back to committee on the findings of the inspection when it is published in Autumn 2023 and learning for Aberdeen City; and
- 2.3 requests the Chief Social Work Officer to report to committee on the provisions of the Children’s Care and Justice Bill and their implications for practice in Aberdeen City.

3.1 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1.1 In June 2021 the Children’s Commissioner published a report entitled “[Statutory Duties in Secure Accommodation: Unlocking Children’s Rights](#)”. The report examined the level of compliance by Local Authorities with their statutory duties when determining that it was in a young person’s best interest to be placed in secure care.
- 3.1.2 Taking away a child’s liberty is one of the most serious restrictions a state can impose. It has deep and long-lasting consequences, particularly on a child’s emotional and social development. For children who have been traumatised already, often as a result of abuse or neglect, the impacts of being deprived of their liberty can be devastating. It must therefore be a last resort, used for the shortest possible time, and be in the best interest of the child.

- 3.1.3 The statutory regulations that surround the decision-making process of placing young people in secure care, place strong emphasis on safeguarding the young person's rights. The Chief Social Worker Officer (CSWO) must consult with and record the views of the young person, demonstrating their views were fully considered within their decision.
- 3.1.4 The Children's Commissioner's report recognised the challenges gaining meaningful participation from vulnerable and distressed young people within the statutory timescales. It recognised that for some young people seeking their views may heighten their vulnerability with an increased risk of absconding or other types of self-harming behaviour. The report highlighted the statutory duty of the Local Authority to formally notify young people and their families of the decision made by the CSWO, including how they can appeal any decision. In this aspect the Children's Commissioner's report emphasised the importance of ensuring young people have access to independent advocacy or representation.
- 3.1.5 It was reassuring that Aberdeen City was held up as an example of good practice, whereby children were informed of their rights and pointed towards supportive adults who could assist them to appeal if they wished to do so.
- 3.1.6 Independent advocacy and support to young people being considered for secure care is provided by the Aberdeen Young Person's Rights Service (AYPRS). The AYPRS seeks to build trusting relationships with young people prior to, during and beyond their secure care placement, ensuring their views are actively heard and considered by all partners. Feedback from young people speaks highly of the support provided by the AYPRS.

3.2 Update

- 3.2.1 While social work practice in Aberdeen City was considered positively within the Children's Commissioner's Report, a detailed review of our Practice Guidance in relation to Secure Care was undertaken ensuring identified learning was incorporated into our practice guidance. This review also ensured our guidance was fully reflective of United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child.
- 3.2.2 Aberdeen City has over the past number of years placed very few young people in secure care. Since the report to Committee in December 2021 only one young person has been placed in secure care for a brief period. (At the point of writing no young person from Aberdeen City is in secure care.) In this instance the young person was notified of their rights and was supported to exercise these by appealing the subsequent decision of the Children's Hearing to Court.
- 3.2.3 [The Promise - Independent Care Review](#) states "*Scotland's response to the small number of children who need secure care must look radically different*". The [Children's Care and Justice Bill](#) currently going through the Scottish parliament recognises the need for alternative community-based support options which can meet the educational, health and care needs of young people who otherwise might be placed in secure care. Details on what such support looks like have yet to be set out.

3.2.4 The Children’s Care and Justice Bill further proposes that the circumstances of 16- and 17-year-olds, whose behaviour has brought them into conflict with the law, should be considered via the Children’s Hearing System and not through the adult justice system. Consequently, secure care will be considered as an option for the small number of 16 and 17-year-olds who might previously been placed within an adult prison setting.

3.3 Inspection Activity

3.3.1 In July 2022 the Care Inspectorate intimated their intention to undertake a national review of the experiences of young people in, or on the edges, of secure care accommodation. The review commenced in August 2022 and will conclude in August 2023.

3.3.2 As well as meeting directly with Chief Social Work Officers the review will identify and track 30 young people from across Scotland. This will involve meeting with the young people, their parents/carers, lead professional and other staff involved in their care, at various points over the year. They will also review key documents in relation to each young person.

3.3.3 A national report will be published in Autumn 2023 which will identify learning for all local authority areas and secure providers to consider.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Aberdeen City has a legal duty to fully comply with the legislative requirements relating to the placement of young people in secure care. Failure to do so would have a reputational impact on the local authority but more significantly undermine the intervention to support some of our most vulnerable young people.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising out of this report.

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?
Strategic Risk	No significant related risks.		L	Yes

Compliance	Failure to comply with our statutory duties' risks undermining the Council and social work service.	Managers across Children's Social Work are aware of legislative requirements and ensure compliance	L	Yes
Operational	Compliance with the statutory framework relating to the use of secure care provides assurance to the young person, their family and to social work staff that the use of secure care must always be considered as a last resort.	Leadership supports compliance with the statutory duties Council needs to deliver on ensuring participation and engagement with young people in their planning within a risk informed approach.	L	Yes
Financial	No significant related financial risks from this report.		L	Yes
Reputational	Failure to comply with our statutory duties' risks undermining the reputation of the Council.	The report evidence strong compliance with our statutory duties.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant environmental risks		N/A	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people for whom secure care might be

	<p>considered has a direct relevance to the delivery of the following statements contained within the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems • Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce “out of authority” placements. • Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices. • Seek to make Aberdeen a UNICEF Child Friendly City
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people for whom secure care might be considered has a direct relevance to the following stretch outcomes in the LOIP:</p> <p>5. 90% of children and young people will report that they feel mentally well by 2026.</p> <p>6. 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.</p> <p>7. 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> <p>8. Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026.</p> <p>9. 25% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p>
Regional and City Strategies	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people for whom secure care might be considered is relevant to Aberdeen City Council Delivery Plan, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, and the Children’s Services Plan.</p>
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people for whom secure care might be considered supports the Scottish Government’s</p>

	drive to #KeepthePromise. This wide ranging and ambitious programme impacts on a range of statutory duties on the Council in relation to vulnerable and care experienced children including those contained in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and Children (Scotland) Act 2020.
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	This report provides members with assurance on the Council’s compliance with their statutory duties relating to the placement of young people in secure care and does not require a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment to be completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Public Protection Committee 7 December 2021	Secure Care – Children’s Rights http://councilcommittees/documents/s126969/10.4 Committee Report PPC Secure Care Nov 21 Final.pdf

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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