

Public Document Pack



To: Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice Convener; Councillors Al-Samarai, Blake, Boulton, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Grant, 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, 4 September 2023

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, 12 SEPTEMBER 2023 at 10.00am**. This is a hybrid meeting and Members may also attend remotely.

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

JENNI LAWSON
INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER - GOVERNANCE

B U S I N E S S

NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1.1 There are no items of urgent business at this time

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2.1 Members are requested to determine that any exempt business be considered with the press and public excluded

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 Meeting of 4 July 2023 - for approval (Pages 5 - 14)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

6.1 Committee Business Planner (Pages 15 - 22)

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

PRESENTATION - MUSIC SERVICE

9.1 Music Service Update - CFS/23/232 (Pages 23 - 34)

PERFORMANCE AND RISK

10.1 Performance Management Framework Report - Children's and Family Service/Education Improvement Framework Data Tracker - COM/23/281
(Pages 35 - 102)

10.2 Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan - CFS/23/268
(Pages 103 - 290)

EDUCATION

11.1 Education and Children's Services reforms - CFS/23/228 (Pages 291 - 328)

11.2 Inspection Reporting - CFS/23/234 (Pages 329 - 360)

11.3 Northfield Advisory Group - CFS/23/229 (Pages 361 - 368)

- 11.4 Summer in the City Programme 2023 - CFS/23/257 (Pages 369 - 382)
- 11.5 Armed Forces Covenant - CFS/23/243 (Pages 383 - 396)
- 11.6 Community Learning and Development Plan - CUS/23/288 (Pages 397 - 474)
- 11.7 Accessibility Plan - CFS/23/263 (Pages 475 - 510)
- 11.8 Outline Business Case: Oldmachar Primary Schools Excess Capacity - RES/23/278 (Pages 511 - 516)
- 11.9 School Estate Plan Annual Update - RES/23/282 (Pages 517 - 544)
- 11.10 St Peter's RC School - Long Term Education Provision - RES/23/283 (Pages 545 - 558)

EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL EDUCATION BUSINESS

- 12.1 Outline Business Case: Oldmachar Primary Schools Excess Capacity - RES/23/278 – Exempt Appendix (Pages 559 - 600)

AT THIS JUNCTURE, THE EXTERNAL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WILL DEPART AND THE PUBLIC PART OF THE MEETING WILL RECONVENE

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- 13.1 Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2021-22, and an Aberdeen comparison - CFS/23/260 (Pages 601 - 610)
- 13.2 Bairns Hoose - CFS/23/289 (Pages 611 - 654)

Impact Assessments and Service Updates for this Committee can be viewed here:-
[Impact Assessments | Aberdeen City Council](#) / [Service Updates](#)

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

This page is intentionally left blank

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 4 July 2023. Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Grant, Lawrence, MacGregor, McLeod, Radley and van Sweeden. External Members:- Mrs Frances Cardno (Parent Representative - Primary Schools/ASN) (for articles 1 to 13 and 15), Mr Michael Crawford (Parent Representative - Secondary / ASN) (for articles 8 to 13 and 15), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative) (for article 1 to part of article 12), Mr Madhav Regmi (Third Religious Representative) (for articles 1 to 13 and 15), Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools) (for article 1 to part of article 12) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative) (for articles 1 to 13 and 15).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located [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.

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

1. The Committee was requested to determine that the following item of business which contained exempt information as described in Schedule 7(A) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 be taken in private – Item 12.1 (Newhills Additional Primary School Provision – Exempt Appendix).

The Committee resolved:-

in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the above-mentioned item so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraph 8.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

2. The Committee noted the following transparency statements:-

- In relation to item 10.4 (School Transport - Establishment of Catchment Areas for Gaelic Medium Education), the Vice Convener noted for reasons of transparency that her daughter would be attending Gilcomstoun School after the summer. Similarly, she noted for reasons of transparency in relation to item 10.6 (Inspection Reporting) that her daughter currently attended Gilcomstoun ELC provision, however she did not consider either connection to require a declaration of interest, and indicated that she would remain in the meeting for consideration of both items.
- In relation to item 10.3 (Free School Meals Annual Update), Councillor Grant advised for reasons of transparency that his daughter was currently in receipt of free school meals, and in relation to item 10.6 (Inspection Reporting), his youngest daughter currently attended Riverbank ELC provision, however he did not

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
4 July 2023

consider that either connection required him to make a declaration of interest and he would therefore remain in the meeting for consideration of both items.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF 23 MAY 2023

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

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the update provided by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services in relation to MCR Pathways, and that the evaluation would likely come to Committee in September; and
- (ii) to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

4. The Committee had before it the planner of committee business, as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance (Legal).

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the reasons outlined in the planner for the delays to items 6 (Hazlehead / Countesswells Secondary Provision – Outline Business Case), 21 (Annual Effectiveness Report), 28 (Autism Strategy and Action Plan) and 31 (National Delivery Framework for School Age Children);
- (ii) to note that service updates would be provided to Members prior to the September meeting in relation to items 6 (Hazlehead / Countesswells Secondary Provision – Outline Business Case) and 72 (Riverbank School – Learning Estate Investment Programme Funding Update); and
- (iii) to otherwise note the planner.

NEWHILLS ADDITIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION - REFERRED FROM FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF 17 MAY 2023

5. With reference to article 14 of the minute of the former Education Operational Delivery Committee of 8 September 2022, the Committee had before it, by way of referral from the Finance and Resources Committee of 17 May 2023, a report by the Director of Resources which provided information on the preferred design option for the new school at Newhills.

The report recommended:-

that the Finance and Resources Committee –

- (a) note and endorse the preferred design option which would be an exemplar school for net zero and green credentials;

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
4 July 2023

- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report back to a future meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in 2024 with the Full Business Case; and
- (c) refer the report for noting to the Education and Children’s Services Committee in July 2023.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK REPORT – EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES - COM/23/203

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which provided an update on the status of key performance measures relating to the Children’s and Family Services function.

The report recommended:-

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

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Interim Director of Children’s and Family Services had advised that officers would include further narrative around the performance indicator data relating to inspections (pages 42 and 43 of the report) in future reports to provide greater clarity for Members; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the report.

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED NEW SCHOOL AT BUCKSBURN/NEWHILLS - RES/23/205

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which sought approval to carry out a statutory public consultation on the establishment of a new primary school and catchment area to serve new housing developments at Bucksburn/Newhills.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new primary school at Bucksburn/Newhills, and on proposed changes to the existing school catchment area for Brimmond School, to create a new catchment area which would be served by the proposed new school; and
- (b) 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.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
4 July 2023

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new primary school at Bucksburn/Newhills, and on proposed changes to the existing school catchment area for Brimmond School, to create a new catchment area which would be served by the proposed new school;
- (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to provide Members with a firm date for the statutory consultation and to report the date to the next Committee meeting; and
- (iii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to report back to the Committee on the outcomes of the consultation at the first available meeting following conclusion of the consultation process.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND GUIDANCE - CFS/23/201

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which presented a refreshed anti-bullying policy for approval and sought approval to implement the refreshed policy from August 2023.

Members asked a number of questions in relation to the policy, and the Committee heard from Mrs Cardno that parents still had some concerns about communication from schools following the reporting of any incidents of bullying.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) approve the content of the policy; and
- (b) instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education to implement the policy from August 2023.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the feedback from the Aberdeen City Parent Forum in relation to the policy and to note that officers would take on board any feedback from parents gathered by the Aberdeen City Parent Forum throughout the initial review period of 12 months; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS ANNUAL UPDATE - CUS/23/172

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Customer Services which fulfilled the annual instruction 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.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
4 July 2023

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the progress in Free School Meal provision and actions to continue developing uptake.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved the recommendation contained in the report.

Councillor Blake, seconded by Councillor Lawrence, moved as an amendment:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) note the progress in Free School Meal provision and actions in 3.7;
- (b) agree that there was a moral imperative to ensure the children of Aberdeen were not hungry, as hungry children were not in the best position to learn;
- (c) support the Scottish Youth Parliament's "Right to Food" campaign and work with young people to ensure that any stigma associated with accessing food was eliminated;
- (d) recognise that young people should have meaningful involvement in decision-making about the content and quality of school meals, and in making improvements to their eating environment;
- (e) instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education in conjunction with the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services to conduct a pilot in a secondary school consulting young people on the above with the view of increasing the uptake of free school meals and to report back to committee;
- (f) note that Primary 6 and Primary 7 rollout of free school meals to all pupils promised for August 2022 had been delayed until 2026 and the pilot programme for secondary school had not been progressed by the Scottish Government, and that this continued to have a detrimental impact on our young people who suffered from food insecurity and hunger;
- (g) agree with Willie Rennie, the Liberal Democrat MSP, on the delays to free school meals for Primary 6 and 7 pupils - "these delays and broken pledges are a perfect illustration of why voters should not vote for the Scottish nationalists"; and
- (h) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance, in consultation with the Convener of the Finance and Resources Committee, to write to the Scottish Government asking for a response to the Council's request in October 2021 for an additional £15 million to expand catering facilities to enable the roll out to Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (10) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillors Al-Samarai, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, MacGregor, Radley and van Sweeden; and Mr Crawford and Mrs Smith; for the amendment (7) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Grant, Lawrence and McLeod; and Mrs Cardno and Mr Regmi; declined to vote (2) – Mr Murray and Miss Scott.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
4 July 2023

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services and the Interim Chief Officer – Education would undertake a trend analysis of the data contained in the appendices and provide a verbal update to the September meeting; and
- (ii) to approve the motion.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT - ESTABLISHMENT OF CATCHMENT AREAS FOR GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION - RES/23/208

10. With reference to article 8 of the minute of its previous meeting, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which confirmed the funding arrangements for the cost of providing free school transport to the Gaelic Medium Education (GME) provisions at Hazlehead Academy and Gilcomstoun School for those pupils eligible to receive it, for the 2023/24 Academic Year, and sought approval to implement the catchment areas for GME.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the provision of funding from the 2022/2023 Bus Lane Enforcement Surplus for the provision of school transport associated with Gaelic Medium Education for the 2023/24 Academic Year;
- (b) implement catchment areas for the existing Gaelic Medium Education provision at Hazlehead Academy and Gilcomstoun School as defined within Maps A and B in the consultation report at Appendix 1 of this report, with effect from 1 August 2023; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services, in conjunction with the Chief Officer - Finance to refer the provision of free school transport to the Gaelic Medium Education provisions at Hazlehead Academy and Gilcomstoun School for those pupils eligible to receive it, to the 2024/25 budget setting process.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

APPROACHES TO QUALITY IMPROVEMENT - CFS/23/204

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which detailed how Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings would be supported to improve performance against the Core Quality Indicators used by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) and The Care Inspectorate.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
4 July 2023

- (a) instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education to implement the approach detailed in the Early Learning and Childcare Quality Improvement Calendar;
- (b) instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education to implement the approach detailed in the Aberdeen City Council Quality Improvement Framework from August 2023 across all schools; and
- (c) instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education to review the impact of arrangements on evaluations of core Quality Indicators over school session 2023/24, amending approaches as required, and report back to Committee in advance of the 2024/25 school session.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that Early Learning and Childcare settings and schools were currently undertaking self-evaluation and following a period of quality assurance, the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services would share information with Members as to where each setting sat within the levels of support (set out on page 146 of the report) once that detail was available; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

INSPECTION REPORTING - CFS/23/202

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which detailed how Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings had engaged with His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and The Care Inspectorate since May 2023.

The report provided updates on the following:-

Sunnybank Primary School
Kingswells Primary School
Northfield Academy
Riverbank ELC
Gilcomstoun ELC
The Links Nursery and Hub
Duthie Park Outdoor Nursery
J Puddleducks
Cornhill Out of School Care
Kingsford ELC

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

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

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
4 July 2023

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved the recommendations contained in the report.

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

That the Committee:-

- (a) agree the recommendations within the report;
- (b) note that in 2014 and in 2017 Riverbank Nursery had scores of 5s and 4s respectively; and
- (c) instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education to lead a review of the circumstances resulting in the poor inspection outcomes at Riverbank Nursery Care Inspectorate report which highlighted, amongst other matters, issues with providing a clean and safe environment with some children not provided with "cuddles, warmth and comfort" on a regular basis, and for that report to be presented to Committee two cycles from now.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (11) - the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillors Al-Samarai, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, MacGregor, Radley and van Sweeden; and Mrs Cardno, Mr Crawford and Mr Regmi; for the amendment (5) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Grant, Lawrence and McLeod. Absent from the division (3) – Mr Murray, Miss Scott and Mrs Smith.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that some of the dates had been incorrectly labelled as 2023 in Appendix B (Sunnybank Action Plan) instead of 2024 and this would be corrected;
- (ii) with reference to Appendix C (Northfield Academy Update Action Plan) and the offer of specific courses through partner providers (for example, automotive, construction and make up artistry courses), to note that officers would provide an update to the next meeting as to whether there was an intention to roll this out more widely; and
- (iii) to approve the motion.

DEVELOPING A FAMILY SUPPORT MODEL AND THE EDGE OF CARE PILOTS - CFS/23/207

13. With reference to articles 7 and 8 of the minute of the meeting of the former Education Operational Delivery Committee of 8 September 2022, the Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which provided an update on progress in developing a Family Support Model for children and families; and an early evaluation of the impact of the two Edge of Care Pilots operating within Lochside and Northfield Academies and the proposed next steps.

Appended to the report were the pilot case studies and the Child Poverty Action Report 2022-2023.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
4 July 2023

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the progress being made to develop a family support model;
- (b) instruct the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services to report progress in developing a Family Support Model through the Children's Services Plan annual progress report;
- (c) note the high level evaluation of the two Edge of Care pilots;
- (d) instruct the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services to bring a final evaluative report to committee in early 2024 to include recommendations of how to scale up the Edge of Care pilots in a sustainable manner subject to positive final evaluation; and
- (e) note the content of the Child Poverty Report.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

At this juncture, the External Members of the Committee departed the meeting.

KINSHIP CARE SERVICE PLANNING - CFS/23/183

14. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which set out plans to enhance multi agency support to kinship families and use of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund to improve outcomes for children and young people living within a kinship arrangement.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note that the improvement planning in relation to supporting kinship carers was fully aligned to the Children's Services Plan and the development of the Family Support Model; and
- (b) instruct the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services to report progress on the impact of delivering improved multi-agency support to Kinship Carers through the Children's Services Plan annual progress report.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
4 July 2023

**NEWHILLS ADDITIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION - REFERRED FROM
FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF 17 MAY 2023 - EXEMPT APPENDIX**

15. The Committee had before it an exempt appendix in relation to Item 8.1 (Newhills Additional Primary School Provision) (article 5 refers).

The Committee resolved:-

to note the exempt appendix.

- COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, Convener

	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	12 September 2023								
4	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		
5	Armed Forces Covenant	This report outlines how the education service intend to continue to discharge their duties under the Covenant.		Linsey Hay	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
6	St Peter's RC School - Long Term Provision	To seek instruction to conduct a feasibility study for Old Aberdeen House to assess as an alternative option for providing improved facilities for St. Peter's RC school.		Maria Thies	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.2		
7	Community Learning and Development Plan	To update on progress towards delivery of the Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024 and propose a change in governance arrangements to better align the work of Community Learning to other partnership activity relating to our model of Family Support.		Margaret Stewart	Early Intervention and Community Empowerment	Customer	1.1.1		
8	Hazlehead / Countesswells Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (Rec HH1)	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	D	Work on the OBC is progressing well within the overall New Schools Programme however the timeline to present the project to OBC stage will take longer than originally anticipated. A service update has been provided to Members meantime
9	Education and Children's Services reforms	To provide Committee with an update. To include an update on the Children's Hearing System Review		Eleanor Sheppard / Graeme Simpson	Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1/2.1		
10	Bairns Hoose	To provide Committee with an update		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.3		
11	Summer in the City	E&CS 23/05/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Education to report to Committee on the impact of the summer, autumn (2023) and spring (2024) programmes following delivery.		Sharon Skene	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
12	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. E&CS 08/11/22 - to note that officers would incorporate an overview of		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	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	Education Reform	E&CS 24/01/23 - to instruct the Chief Education Officer to update Committee on further developments within one calendar year or earlier if on-going education reform triggered a change in the current operating model	January 2024 - if required may be reported as per item above	Shona Milne	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
42									
43	30 April 2024								
44	Integrated Children's Services Plan - Annual Update	E&CS 21/03/23 - to instruct the Interim Director Children's and Family Services to ensure that yearly progress reports are presented to Committee & thereafter for approval by the Community Planning Management Board over the lifetime of the Plan; and in relation to the action to improve breastfeeding initiation from 20 to 30% in targeted communities (Sheddocksley, Summerhill and Mastrick) and decrease drop off at 6-8 weeks, to note that officers could include further detail around this in the next report. E&CS 04/07/23 - to instruct the Interim Director Children's and Family Services to report progress in developing a Family Support Model and progress on the impact of delivering improved multi-agency support to Kinship Carers through the Children's Services Plan annual progress report.		Eleanor Sheppard	Education/ICFS	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
45	Education and Children's Services reforms	A standing item if required - To provide Committee with an update		Eleanor Sheppard	Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1/2.1		
46	Education Climate Change Annual Report	E&CS 21/03/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education to report back on progress in one calendar year; and to request that the report back include further detail about the work of the various eco-groups in schools		Stuart Craig	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
47	Riverbank School Excess Capacity - Options Appraisal (S1)	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		
48	Child Protection Committee (CPC) Annual Report	E&CS 21/03/23 - to instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to provide Committee with a further report in 2024 detailing the continuing impact and effectiveness of partnership work in relation to child protection.		Amy Anderson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1		
49	Inspection Reporting – Inspection of Regulatory Care Services	E&CS 21/03/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Children's & Family Services to bring an updated report to Committee in March 2024.		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.2		
50	School Estate Plan - Victorian Schools - feasibility study & options appraisal (CA1)	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.	TBC - May 2024	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	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	Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility - Outline Business Case (Rec RC1)	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 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.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
60	Loirston Loch Additional Primary Provision - Outline Business Case (L1)	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, 1.1.3, 1.5		
61	Approaches to Quality Improvement	EC&S 04/07/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education to review the impact of the arrangements on evaluations of core Quality Indicators over school session 2023/24, amending approaches as required, and report back to Committee in advance of the 2024/25 school session		Shona Milne	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
62									
63	17 September 2024								
64	Grandhome / Oldmachar / Bridge of Don Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (NA1)	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	September 2024	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
65	Education and Children's Services reforms	A standing item if required - To provide Committee with an update		Eleanor Sheppard	Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1/2.1		
66	Bucksburn & Dyce Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (NA2)	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	September 2024	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
67	26 November 2024								
68	Education and Children's Services reforms	A standing item if required - To provide Committee with an update		Eleanor Sheppard	Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1/2.1		

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	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	Consultation on proposed new school at Bucksburn / Newhills	EC&S 04/07/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new primary school at Bucksburn / Newhills, and on proposed changes to the existing school catchment area for Brimmond School, to create a new catchment areas which would be served by the proposed new school; to provide Members with a firm date for the statutory consultation and to report the date to the next Committee meeting; and to report back to the Committee on the outcomes of the consultation at the first available meeting following conclusion of the consultation process.	Date to be confirmed	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
69									
70	DATE TBC / BEYOND 2024								
71	Northfield Advisory Group	E&CS 23/05/23 - to instruct the Interim Director Children's and Family Services to routinely report the outputs of each meeting of the Advisory Group to the next scheduled meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee.	Dates for reports to be confirmed once meeting dates are arranged	Eleanor Sheppard	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	TBC		
72	Refreshed Local Authority Plan for implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	E&CS 24/01/23 - to instruct the Chief Education Officer to present a refreshed Local Authority Plan for implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to the Education and Children's Services Committee following receipt of the anticipated Statutory Guidance in 2023	Date to be confirmed - dependent on date when Statutory Guidance received	Shona Milne	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
73	Minimising Exclusion Policy	To present the revised exclusion policy for approval		Mhairi Shewan	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.5		
74	Early Learning and Childcare Concession Agreements	E&CS 24/01/23 - to instruct the Chief Education Officer to continue to monitor the concession contracts and report back to Committee at the end of the first 3 full years of the current concession agreement.	January 2026	Louise Beaton / Fiona Lawrie	Education	Children's and Family Services			
75	School Estate - decisions from Education Operational Delivery Committee 08/09/22								
76	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	No further update on Phase 3 of the Learning Estates Investment Programme funding has been announced therefore a service update was issued to Members in August	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Music Service
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/232
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Bethan Edwards
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At the Educational Operational Delivery Committee on 8th September 2022, there was an instruction for the Chief Education Officer to evaluate the quality and provision of music across the city and report the findings to Committee within one calendar year; to include details of the digital offering. This report responds to that Committee instruction.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the evaluation of the second year of free instrumental instruction.
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education officer to continue to extend opportunities for music making through partnership working between the Music Service and Aberdeen Music School and others; and
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to report back on progress within one calendar year.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

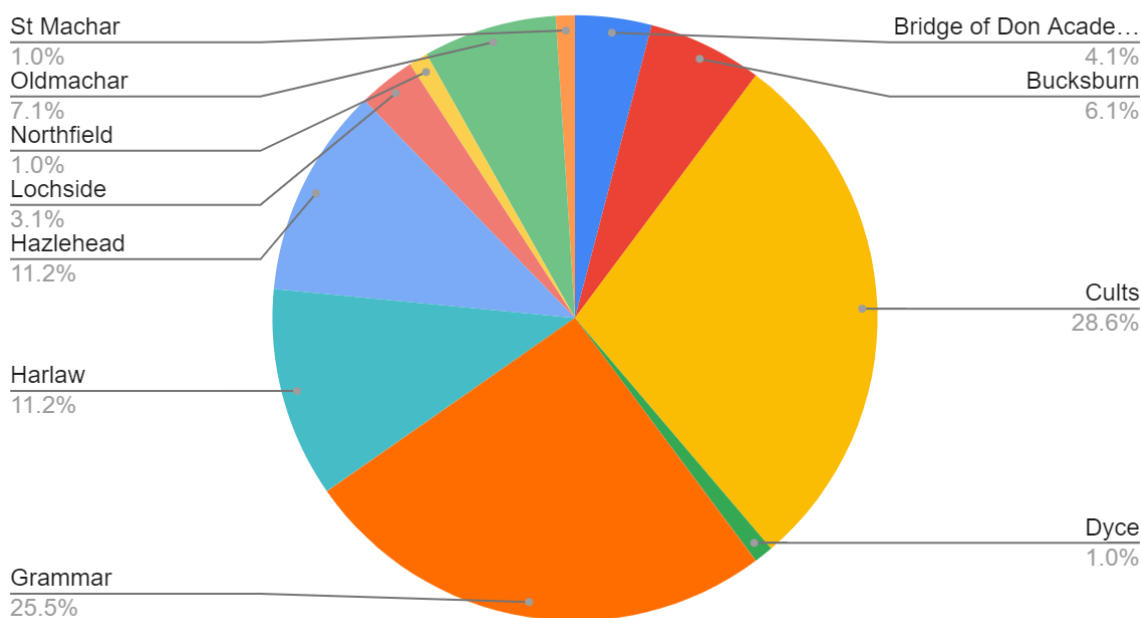
- 3.1. Elected Members requested that an evaluation on the quality and provision of music services across the city, to include details of the digital offering, be presented to the Education and Children's Services Committee in September 2023.
- 3.2. The aim of the Music Service is to offer high quality tuition to as many children and young people as possible. Currently there are **1989** children receiving lessons in a small group/individually on a weekly basis. In addition, over **5000** children have accessed whole class vocal and/or instrumental programmes over the course of the 2022/23 academic year.
- 3.3 This constitutes a significant increase from last year where only around **1821** young people benefited, due largely to the increased allocation of resource targeted towards whole class and large group instrumental and vocal projects.

This change was made to engage a higher proportion of children living in areas of deprivation with the service and there is evidence that this has been successful.

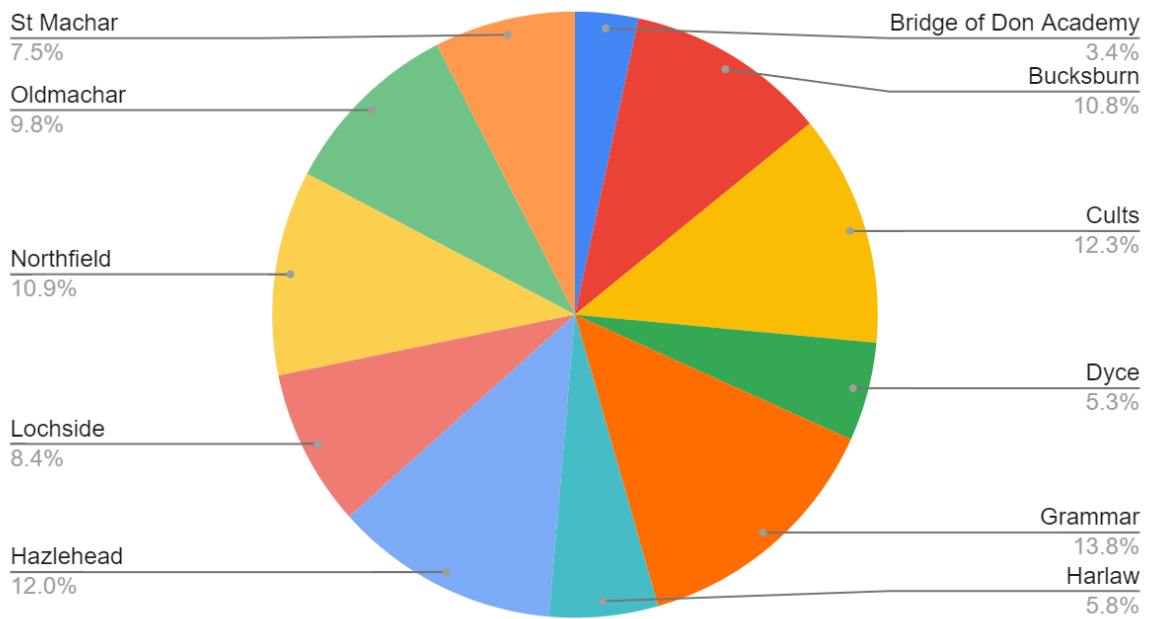
3.4 A significant change can be seen in regards to children in particular areas of the city accessing the service. For example, in April 2021 there were only seven pupils in the Northfield Associated Schools Group (ASG) accessing Music Service provision. This number now sits at 186 pupils. This change is welcomed by the Service.

3.5 The pie charts below show the change in the distribution of pupils accessing Music Service provision. It is evident that tuition is now more evenly distributed across all ASGs. These figures will continue to change as more children in areas of deprivation are offered the opportunity for tuition when they are at an appropriate school stage to begin learning an instrument.

Music Service Provision in August 2020

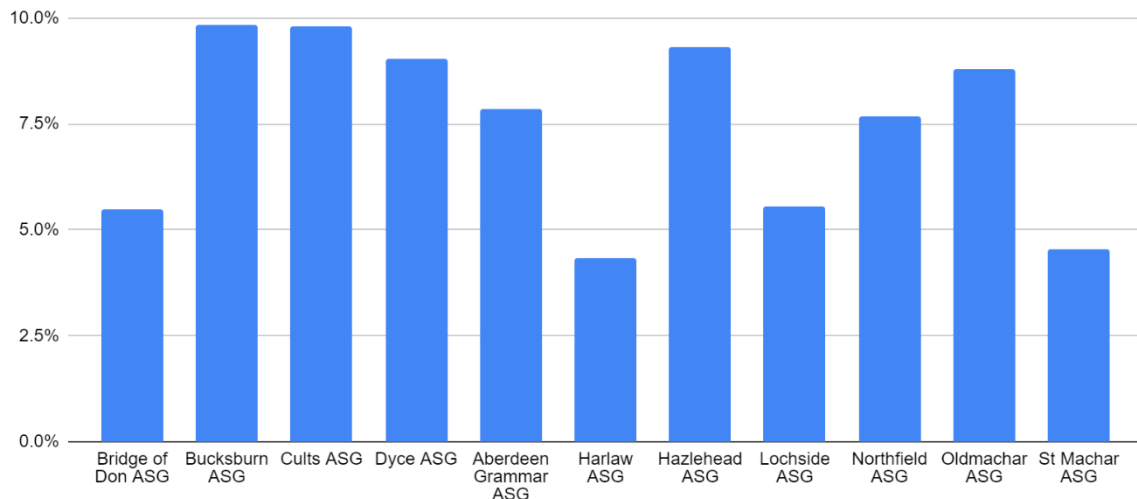


Music Service provision in June 2023



The chart below shows the percentage of children in each ASG receiving individual and small group music tuition. Through data analysis the service has identified priority schools for increasing numbers of pupils receiving tuition in the 23-24 academic session.

Percentage of ASG roll receiving group and individual tuition



3.6 The average number of pupils per instructor receiving small group and individual tuition in the 2020-21 academic year sat at 17. By June 2022 it sat at 63, and as of June 2023 it sits at 79. This change demonstrates a steady rise in the reach of each Instructor and is another positive change.

3.7 The Music Service looked to provide as many performing opportunities as possible for pupils in the 2022-2023 academic year given that the public health restrictions had compromised our ability to engage children in ensemble music making. Thanks to the flexibility of the Music Service these opportunities have been extensive over the school year having included:

- A Festive Concert at the Beach Ballroom in December 2022 with over 300 children involved
- Three locality concerts in October 2022
- The Aberdeen semi-finals of the Scottish Young Musician of the Year
- Performances at the Big Gig as part of the Aberdeen Performing Arts 'Light the Blue' festival
- Performances at the Aberdeen Highland Games
- A Cathedral at Noon Concert
- A Lunchbreak Concert at the Aberdeen Art Gallery
- Participation in the Mòd in Inverness
- A significant number of concerts in schools

The Service intend to maintain focus on this area over school session 2023/24.

3.8 The Music Service continues to be part of the 'Summer/Easter/October In the City' programme, with short holiday courses running in the Easter and October holidays and a week long course delivered in Summer 2022 and again in 2023. The Music Service worked closely with the 'In the City' team and activities were targeted towards the children most likely to be impacted by poverty. The Music Service Summer in the City 2023 programme included violin, ukulele, piano and vocal sessions and culminated in performances in the Marischal College Quad and the Duthie Park Bandstand. This inclusion of the Music Service in wider ACC run programmes is welcomed by the Service and this approach will be maintained.

3.9 A significant project for the Music Service in 2022-23 was the organisation of The Aberdeen Big Sing 2023. This unique event aimed to help children rediscover the joy of singing in larger groups and took considerable work from Music Service staff and those in schools. The event involved over 2500 children from every Primary 4 class in the city. The children had learnt and rehearsed songs over the course of the year, and then came together to sing them at Duthie Park on June 1st. A key component of the event was that pupils learnt British Sign Language (BSL) and were able to sign and sing together. This aspect was positively commented upon by members of the public who enjoyed the event.

The feedback from this event was overwhelmingly positive, for example from school staff members:

"It was such a wonderful event. I have been approached by staff and parents who really enjoyed it".

"Thank you so much for organising this event. The children had a fantastic morning and loved learning the songs on the lead up to the performance. We really appreciated the help and support in school from the music service. This really helped us learn the songs quickly and effectively. Thank you!"

"It was a great event. The children thoroughly enjoyed it and there was a lovely atmosphere. It was lovely to see so many family members attend."

Pupils also reported positive feedback:

"When I was singing I felt amazing, brilliant and powerful."

"When I was singing I felt joyful and excited."

"My favourite part was singing beautiful songs in Duthie Park".

"My favourite part was learning and performing the BSL".

Parents also made extremely positive comments, for example *"This was brilliant to see!"* and *'Aberdeen needs more of this!'*

Due to the success of this event, the service is looking to run a Big Sing annually and plans are currently being progressed for The Big Sing 2023/24..

3.10 During the course of the 2022-23 academic session, the service continued the focus on teaching and learning to ensure that the lessons provided are of high quality. This included teaching observations of Music Instructors by the Music Service leadership team, peer observations and engagement in quality improvement visits. Music Service staff worked together to develop a shared understanding of what an excellent lesson looks like. There will be a continuous focus on supporting staff to ensure that lessons are high quality and progress will be monitored through collegiate discussion and observations.

3.11 As part of a Music Service pupil survey in June 2023, pupils rated the level of enjoyment of their tuition at an average of 8.9/10. One young person said:

"I think that it's very important that young people are given the opportunity to know what music can give you. Music is a really good way to let out your emotions. It improves both your knowledge and understanding skills. Learning an instrument teaches you the ability to not give up. Lessons show you that music is beautiful and a life experience that you never forget."

Many responses highlighted the importance of the support provided by Music Instructors, and said that tuition was the highlight of their week. Some parents wanted to see more performance opportunities for their children, which will be addressed in 2023-24 by the re-introducing Music Centre. Another theme in the survey was that parents were unhappy when there was an instructor absence and their child missed lessons. The Music Service will work to improve communication with parents when there are instructor absences. We will look to

build up materials so that when there is an instructor absence pupils are provided with resources to continue their learning.

3.12 DIGITAL OFFERING

Upon returning to face to face teaching in August 2021, it was recognised that pupils had a degree of digital fatigue and that there was a preference for in person learning. From that point onwards, the service has focused on ensuring that face to face delivery is high quality and is supported by digital content used to support practise between lessons. Our digital offer is now supporting the wider work of the service.

3.13 Every child who receives lessons from the Music Service is added to a Google Classroom by their Music Instructor, alongside their parents/carers. In June 2023, 70.9% of pupils reported that they use Google Classroom regularly. The Google Classrooms are used in a range of ways, including:

- Accessing information about timetables
- Accessing recordings of pieces
- Accessing voice notes made by Music Instructors
- Completing quizzes
- Submitting own recordings
- Accessing backing tracks
- Asking for advice from Music Instructors between lessons

3.14 Pupils gave an average score of 7.5/10 in terms of how useful they found the Google Classroom. There was a range of parent feedback about Google Classroom and this will be used to further develop the use of Google Classroom going forward. This feedback included:

“The Google classroom updates are very useful as they let us know how our daughter is progressing. They also give small details as to how she performs at school and what best to focus on in her practice at home”

And

“I like the Google platform to monitor progress and it provides a means of communication”.

3.15 A particular use for Google Classrooms in 2022-23 was to share resources with pupils in the run up to the Big Sing and the Festive Concert.

3.16 Taking the Big Sing as an example; primary pupils from a range of schools were invited to come together at the start of the academic year to rehearse and record songs in partnership with Robert Gordon’s College primary division. The recordings of these songs were then placed on a Google Classroom that was then shared with all Primary 4 teachers in the city. The service also collaborated with Aberdeen School for the Deaf to create recordings of the British Sign Language for the songs. These videos were uploaded to the Google Classroom and were used widely in preparation for the event. The teachers reported that these videos were vital during the preparation period.

- 3.17 The Festive Concert in December 2022 was ambitious in terms of the number of children involved and the available rehearsal time. In order to ensure that children were feeling confident when attending rehearsals we uploaded the music onto Google Classroom prior to rehearsals taking place to ensure that they had an opportunity to practise it and to look at it during their lessons. Staff and pupils found this approach beneficial, and therefore it is something we are looking to continue as we further develop ensemble opportunities.
- 3.18 During the 2022-23 year, the Music Service developed our partnership with Charanga. Charanga is an online platform providing music resources that can be used to deliver the curriculum and instrumental lessons. This partnership has included provision of Charanga for all primary schools, secondary schools and Music Instructors with associated training opportunities. In January 2023, there were ten primary schools regularly using Charanga. By June 2023 this had risen to 30 primary schools, with further training opportunities planned to extend the use to all schools. Over the past 12 months teachers have used Charanga in schools for 1766 hours in total, and we will be working with schools to this increase over the next 12 months. We are looking to use Charanga resources to support our whole class provision through their First Notes to First Band programme.
- 3.19 In November 2023 we have a planned INSET day with a Music Service from another authority where we are looking to share best practise in digital learning and further build our own expertise. The Music Service is proud of the new experiences offered to children and young people over the school session and look forward to developing our partnerships and opportunities further over school session 2023/24.

3.20 PROPOSALS FOR THE SERVICE IN THE LONGER TERM

- The service is working with the Digital First team to review music tuition registration procedures. The aim of this piece of work is to ensure that registration processes are straightforward, quick and that they show which instruments are offered in which schools so that parents are available of the choice available from the outset.
- 3.21 City-wide ensembles will be relaunched in autumn 2023, following trial ensembles during the 2022-23 academic session. The trial ensembles have introduced pupils in target areas to ensemble playing, and have helped staff gain confidence in working in these settings. Our ensemble plans for the 2023-24 year include a focus on inclusivity for all pupils. We are also looking to ensure that there is an appropriate level of challenge for our more advanced learners by inviting them to targeted ensembles working on a project basis in the lead up to performance opportunities, by offering a range of solo performance opportunities, and by working with Aberdeen City Music School to create more rehearsal and performance opportunities and by encouraging them to enter the Scottish Young Musician of the Year competition. We are aiming to provide as many high-quality performance opportunities as possible for our learners.
- 3.22 The Music Service Working Time Agreement for 2023-24 sees a change in staff meetings. The service will be moving from online to in-person meetings and these have been timetabled to allow more opportunities for collegiate working and planning. Due to the peripatetic nature of the Music Instructor role,

opportunities to have professional dialogue can be challenging logistically, but the new collegiate calendar should support staff in being able to progress improvement priorities together.

- 3.23 The service will continue to focus on maximising pupil numbers. This will include monthly pupil number scrutiny by the Music Service management team, and planned targeted pupil recruitment exercises in areas where there is capacity for more learners. An example of this in the 2022-23 academic year was a band project at Quarryhill Primary School, Abbottswell Primary School and Kirkhill Primary School where there had previously been very few learners. Music Instructors worked with a whole class to introduce them to woodwind, brass and percussion instruments, and the pupils then chose an instrument and began receiving small group lessons and rehearsing as a wind band. By the end of the academic year, the pupils were able to play several pieces together and it was clear that they really enjoyed the experience. Those pupils will be continuing to receive lessons and play in a band together throughout the 23-24 academic year, and this model is one that will be used where appropriate. The service will continue to focus on equity of provision and will continue to work closely with school staff in target areas. Analysis of pupil numbers at schools and school SIMD profiles has enabled the service to identify high priority schools to target in the 2023-24 academic session.
- 3.24 An exciting new project is beginning at Ashley Road School, where all upper stage pupils will learn a woodwind instrument, with support from a Music Instructor. We hope to provide performance opportunities for these pupils, for example they will be invited to play as part of the Big Sing 2024. Charanga will be used as a resource for this project, with bespoke training being provided for school staff.
- 3.25 The service will continue to develop our work with partner organisations, which will lead to further opportunities for collaboration. We will look to continue to develop our relationship with Aberdeen City Music School, and an example of this will be pupils working together to rehearse and perform at our Christmas Concert in December 2023. We will also look to create shared rehearsal and performance opportunities, and our aim going forward is to have at least one collaborative project per term in addition to collaboration at each 'closed weekend' where young people come together to have practice sessions during the day at the weekend. The service began working more closely with the Music School in 2023 with a joint Young Musician Competition, and the Music Service Co-ordinator being part of the judging panel for the ACMS Performer of the Year competition.
- 3.26 We hope to build upon our work with Scottish Culture and Traditions through a project in Seaton and Tillydrone which will introduce pupils to Scottish traditional instruments such as the tin whistle and clàrsach and will lead to performances as part of the Alec Green Tin Whistle Festival being run at the University of Aberdeen.
- 3.27 Music Service pupils have shown a strong interest in musical theatre, therefore we are hoping to further this by taking them to see a show in Aberdeen in the 2023-24 year. Following this we hope to launch new musical theatre provision which would lead to pupils performing a show in spring 2025. This would also

offer a new experience for our instrumental pupils who would be able to play in a musical theatre pit band/orchestra.

- 3.28 We are also planning performances as part of SPECTRA 2024, the Aberdeen Highland Games 2024 and at other cultural events with internal and external organisations. Alongside our large scale Christmas Concerts we are also planning Spring Concerts, a S6 Leaver’s Concert, a Lunchbreak Concert at the Art Gallery, Junior and Senior Aberdeen Young Musician of the Year and Cathedral at Noon lunchbreak concerts. We are also planning to work with the Aberdeen University, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland. We have also been working with professional musicians who are performing at venues in Aberdeen (Music Hall, Tivoli Theatre etc) to perform as part of their concerts.
- 3.29 The Music Service hopes to establish a partnership with the Scottish Schools Pipe Band Trust. The aim of this partnership would be to increase the capacity for piping tuition and to target provision towards schools in priority areas with the hope of developing a pipe band. This pipe band would be offered a range of performance and competition opportunities.
- 3.30 Over the last session the Music Service has worked hard to increase access to music tuition across the city for all learners. The work being done with class groups in primary schools is beginning to have impact on resilience and continuation rates into the secondary sector. The high number of partnerships developed during the year has led to a marked increase in opportunities for young people to perform and activities planned for next year will see this rise further.

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	None identified		L	Yes
Compliance	None identified		L	Yes

Operational	None identified		L	Yes
Financial	None identified		L	yes
Reputational	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	Data scrutiny and reporting enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None identified		L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<i>The Council's Delivery Plan states that the Music Service continues to work to maximise uptake, establish a Music Centre and welcome families back to concerts to celebrate the musical skills of our pupils. This report reinforces this aim and furthers it by offering increased rehearsal and performance opportunities for pupils. The report describes how we will work towards our 23/24 Partnership Agreement Commitment which is to actively work with partners to increase citywide delivery of music education, promoting excellence and enabling group performance.</i>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People	<i>This report supports the LOIP Key Driver 7.1 Improving pathways to education, employment and training for identified groups (including disability, ASN, term time leavers and those from priority neighbourhoods) because it supports the Music Service giving additional musical opportunities for children and young people through more rehearsal and performance opportunities led by the Music Service and in conjunction with partners.</i>
Regional and City Strategies Regional Cultural Strategy Prevention Strategy Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	The universal provision of education is fully aligned to the Prevention Strategy and a key partner to the Children's Services Plan.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 assessment completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

None

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Bethan Edwards
Title	Music Service Coordinator
Email Address	BeEdwards@aberdeencity.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Performance Management Framework Report – Children’s and Family Service/Education Improvement Framework Data Tracker
REPORT NUMBER	COM/23/281
DIRECTOR/INTERIM DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie/Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER/ INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER	Martin Murchie/Graeme Simpson/Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Alex Paterson/Reyna Stewart
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Committee with (a) the status of key performance measures relating to the Children’s and Family Services function and (b) Education Improvement Data Tracker information arising from analysis of National Benchmark data suites released over the course of the past 12 months.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the information contained in the report Appendices.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Report Purpose

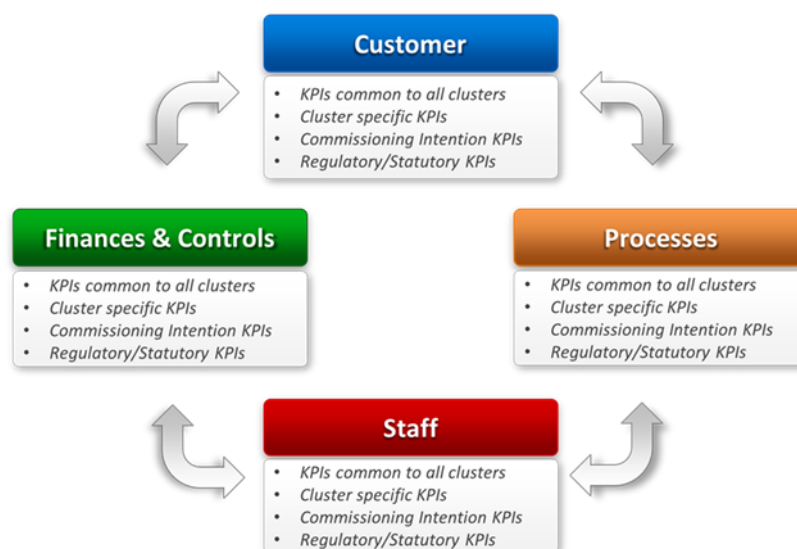
- 3.1 This report, within Appendix A, provides members with key performance measures in relation to Children’s and Family Services expressed within the 2023/24 Council Delivery Plan
- 3.2 Additionally, the report summarises analysis of educational data-sets and evidence linked to successive Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plans, through tracking of core measures, as outlined in Appendix B (Education Improvement Tracker)

Report Structure and Content

Performance Management Framework

- 3.3 Performance Management Framework Reporting against in-house delivery directly contributing to, or enabling delivery against, the City’s Local Outcome Improvement Plan, (LOIP) has informed development of successive Council Delivery Plans, including the [2023-24.Council Delivery Plan](#) that was agreed by Council on the 1st March 2023.

- 3.4 The Council's Performance Management Framework, supporting and enabling scrutiny against progress of the Council Delivery Plan and its key measures, establishes a robust performance management and reporting system which encompasses single and multi-service inputs, outputs and outcomes.
- 3.5 The refreshed Performance Management Framework for 2023/24 was approved at the meeting of Council on the 14th of June 2023.
- 3.6 Service Standards against each function/cluster, associated with Council Delivery planning, offer continuous insight into the effectiveness, and accessibility of core service provision to the Council's stakeholders and City communities.
- 3.7 Where appropriate, data capture against these Standards is directly incorporated within the suite of measures contained within Appendix A and will be reported against on either a quarterly or annual basis.
- 3.8 The Performance Management Framework provides for a consistent approach within which performance will be reported to Committees. This presents performance data and analysis within four core perspectives, as shown below, which provides for uniformity of performance reporting across Committee.



:

- 3.9 This report, in Appendix A, details annual operational performance measure trends for the current fiscal year 2023- 2024, rolling information around Service Standards derived from live datasets, along with data from recently published documents.
- 3.10 With the current academic year commencing on the 22nd of August, the first full round of reporting against additional Process measures for the Education Service will be provided to the meeting of this Committee in November 2023.
- 3.11 Within the summary dashboard the following symbols are also used:

Performance Measures

Within the summary dashboard the following symbols are used

Traffic Light Icon



On target or within 5% of target/benchmarked outcome



Within 5% and 20% of target/benchmarked outcome and being monitored



Below 20% of target/benchmarked outcome and being actively pursued



Data only – target not appropriate/benchmarked outcome not available

Education Improvement Data Tracker 2021-22

- 3.12 The Education Improvement Data Tracker (Appendix B) summarises and collates a range of core improvement measures, derived from national data availability, that supports continuous evaluation of Aberdeen City Council's National Improvement Framework planning, and has contributed to development of successive Plans.

Children's Rights

- 3.13 This report contains no recommendations or content that require for the direct accounting of impact on children's rights.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising out of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct 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) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic	None	NA	NA	NA
Compliance	No significant legal risks.	Publication of service performance	L	Yes

		information in the public domain ensures that the Council is meeting its legal obligations in the context of Best value reporting.		
Operational	No significant operational risks.	Oversight by Elected Members of core employee health and safety/attendance data supports the Council's obligations as an employer	L	Yes
Financial	No significant financial risks.	Overview data on specific limited aspects of the cluster's financial performance is provided within this report	L	Yes
Reputational	No significant reputational risks.	Reporting of service performance to Members and in the public domain serves to enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None	NA	NA	NA

8. OUTCOMES

<u>Council Delivery Plan</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Partnership Agreement</p> <p>Improving Educational Choices</p>	<p>This report supports the following key Council priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices. - Work with the city's universities, North East Scotland College and businesses to increase educational and training options and the number of care experienced young people and young people from deprived communities, going onto positive destinations, including further and higher education, vocational training and apprenticeships. - Promote the number of apprenticeships on offer through the council.

<p>Creating Better Learning Environments</p> <p>Caring for Young People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work to ensure that every school community provides a safe and respectful environment for young people and staff. - 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. - Work with the Scottish Government to expand free early learning and childcare to one- and two-year-olds from low-income households. - 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 - Ensure local education services identify young people with mental health problems and help them get early support and help, where appropriate, to transfer to adult services.
---	---

[Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#)

<p>Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The detail within Performance Management Framework reporting to this Committee contributes to evidence of how Education Service delivery leads, contributes to, or influences, Stretch Outcomes 2 and 3 in the LOIP through the following objectives.</p> <p>Support 15 care experienced young people to progress to employment through public sector funded employability programmes by 2023.</p> <p>Increase the number of people within Aberdeen City gaining qualifications in ICT and Digital skills at SCQF Levels 7 and above by 10% by 2023.</p>
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The detail within Performance Management reporting to this Committee evidences how Education Service delivery leads, contributes to, or influences, Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9 in the refreshed LOIP. This includes the following objectives</p> <p>Reduce the number of children starting P1 with an identified speech delay by 5% by 2023.</p>

	<p>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.</p> <p>100% of schools offer sustainable and equitable access to counselling for those children aged 10 and above who require it by 2022.</p> <p>100% of children and young people have free access to physical activity which improves mental health and wellbeing by 2022.</p> <p>Increase the number of care experienced young people accessing a positive and sustained destination by 25% by 2022.</p> <p>Increase the number of accredited courses directly associated with growth areas by 7% by 2023.</p> <p>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 SVQ 3 in literacy and numeracy and 4 other qualifications to 93% by 2023.</p> <p>Achieve UNICEF badges in: - Leadership - Culture - Communication - Place - Child Friendly Services – Participating</p> <p>Increase to 100% of staff working directly and indirectly with children who have received child friendly city training by 2023.</p> <p>Increase number of young people who need support in relation to trauma and bereavement having access to such support by 50% by 2023.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The detail within Performance Management reporting to this Committee evidences how Education Service delivery leads, contributes to, or influences, LOIP Stretch Outcomes 14 and 15. Respectively, this contributes to delivery of the following improvement projects:</p> <p>Increase % of people who walk as one mode of travel by 10% by 2023.</p> <p>Increase % of people who cycle as one mode of travel by 2% by 2023.</p> <p>Increase community food growing in schools, communities and workplaces by 12 by 2023</p>

Regional and City Strategies	<p>The detail within Performance Management reporting to this Committee evidences how Education Service delivery leads, contributes to, or influences outcomes aligned to the City's National Improvement Framework Plan, and outputs/outcomes related to the City's involvement in the Northern Alliance collaborative.</p> <p>Data contained in the report is also contextual evidence of the Education Services contribution to Children's Services planning, along with both regional Economic and Skills strategies.</p>
-------------------------------------	---

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	It is confirmed by Chief Officer, Martin Murchie, that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required for this report
Data Protection Impact Assessment	A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required for this report.
Other	No additional impact assessments have been completed for this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan 2022/23 – CUS/22/166

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Education and Children's Services Performance Summary Dashboard

Appendix B – Education Improvement Data Tracker 2021/22

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Alex Paterson
 Strategic Performance and Improvement Officer
apaterson@aberdeencity.gov.uk
 01224 045324 /07540 295159

Reyna Stewart
 Analytics and Insight Manager
ReyStewart@aberdeencity.gov.uk
 01224 067935









This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix A - Performance Management Framework Report – Children’s and Family Services

Education

1. Customer

Service Level Measures – 2023-24 Service Standards

Performance Indicator	2023/24 Academic Year to Date Value	2023/24 Target	Status	Long Trend - Annual
We will meet all requests for early learning and childcare placements.	100%	100%		
We will meet all requests for a primary and secondary school placement.	100%	100%		
ACC managed/funded Early Learning and Childcare settings will meet the National Standard *	100%	100%		
Primary, secondary, and special schools will achieve an average evaluation of ‘good’ or better in formal evaluations of core Quality Indicators by Education Scotland **	NA	100%		
We will process requests for additional support to meet the wellbeing needs of children and young people within 40 days	100%	100%		

Service Commentary

The metric suite above offers evidence against the Service Level Standards which were agreed at the Budget meeting of Council on 1st March 2023, In some instances, the phrasing around these may differ marginally from that expressed in the Appendix of that report to enable conversion of the statements in the Standards for presentation as reportable measures.

There have been no changes to the Standards or metadata underlying these measures for 2023/24. Two additional Standards were outlined in the report (a) ‘Broad General Education Attainment at P1, P4, P7 and S3 is in line with the National Average’ and (b) ‘Senior Phase Attainment is in line with National Average’ which will be reported against at future points, as and when local and national benchmark data for 2023/24 is released and reported to Committee as part of the standing oversight of these attainment and achievement results.

ELC National Standard – Day Care of Children and Out of School Care

*The National Standard is deemed not to have been met where, subsequent to full inspection, a provider is unable to meet the recommendations for improvement within a reasonable timescale, and to the satisfaction of the inspecting agency. through a series of follow-up visits.

As reflected in the Inspections report also being considered at this, and previous, meetings of Committee, five ELC establishments are/were implementing actionable requirements arising from previous Care Inspectorate inspections in the 12-month monitoring period. Officers provide more intensive support to ELC settings who are implementing requirements/recommendations and in almost all cases, this helps to successfully implement these within agreed timescales. Appropriate action is taken when settings cannot demonstrate improvement within reasonable timescales as these settings cannot be funded to provide 1140 hours of ELC.

The Service is presently reviewing the collation and presentation of data related to ELC inspections and the National Standard with a view to enhancing transparency around this measure. The outcome of this consideration will be reflected in the PMF report to the November meeting of this Committee.

On-going activity around assessments of core Quality Indicators in ELC provision that resulted in improvement requirements is outlined below. Updating of these values is dependent on the timings of new inspections and follow up visits by the inspecting authority. This is, therefore, a dynamic indicator that offers a unique snapshot in time and significant caution must be exercised in comparing or developing trend patterns from this information with that reported at future dates.



Interim Activity Measure	Value
Number of published assessments of Quality Indicators in ELC that resulted in actionable requirements (12 month rolling period)	10/64
% of published assessments of Quality Indicators in ELC that resulted in actionable requirements (12 month rolling period)	15.6%

The measure is based on published inspections and follow up visits over the course of a 12-month rolling period. (August 2022-July 2023) that coincides with the 2022 academic year.

Inspection reporting

There have been no published inspections against the current academic year to date. The data presented to the July meeting of this Committee captured the full academic year outcomes for the 2022 session with an average of 80% of Education Scotland evaluations of Quality Indicators being graded as Good or Better. The instruction provided at the previous Committee around offering additional definition on inspection metrics will be captured in the context of reporting of future inspection publications.

Service Level Measures – 2022-23 Statutory Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23 Target	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value			
% of Eligible Population of 3–4-year-olds registered for ELC provision	96%	91%	95%	97%		

Service Commentary





The 2022/2023 outcome, with the exception of that in 2020/21, is the highest outcome against this measure to date with 4,302 of the eligible 4,541 children being registered in a funded ELC setting (including those registered for Deferred Entry) The 2020/21 data was influenced by a substantive reduction in the Eligible Population (which has now reversed), alongside a less significant dip in the number of registrations.

Surveying for this measure is conducted locally in Spring of each year to ensure the capture of the final birth date related intake to funded City settings. This differs from the Pupil Census point in September which reflects only those registrations at the commencement of each academic year,

The increase in registrations of both 3- and 4-year-olds marginally exceeds the population increase for these separate age groups, indicating that the rise in this measure represents an extension of uptake on a like for like basis.

Taking these factors into account, the City has been experiencing a sustained pattern of meeting an increased proportion of demand for ELC provision over the course of the previous seven years with the number of placements rising by 397 (+10.2%) year-on-year and exceeding the extended average since 2015/16 of 4,251 registrations.

Corporate Measures – 2023/24 Cluster Level Indicators



Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022/23	Quarter 3 2022/23	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	2022/23 Target	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Education	18	29	38	33			
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Education	77.8%	86.2%	60.5%	78.8%	75.0%		
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Education	16.7%	17.2%	7.9%	12.1%			
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Education	3	5	3	5			





2. Process

There are no process related metrics available at this time e.g., attendance etc, due to the passing of a limited number of weeks since commencement of the current academic year.

3. Staff

Corporate Measure – 2023/24 Service Level Indicators







Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022-23	Quarter 3 2022-23	Quarter 4 2022-23	Quarter 1 2023-24	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Education	3053.41	3101.2	3122.08	3,103.2		

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022-23	Quarter 3 2022-23	Quarter 4 2022-23	Quarter 1 2023-24	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
H&S Employee Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education	0	2	2	1		
H&S Employee Non-Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education	116	236	281	145		

Service Commentary

The number of Non-Reportable Accidents showed a material reduction in Quarter 1, in comparison with both of the previous quarterly periods and at a level which was below that of the comparable period in 2022/23 (160). The Q1 figure is below the average number of accidents across the past 18 months which was 191 reports

A full analysis of the factors underlying this improvement is currently being undertaken in collaboration with colleagues in P&O but indications are that the number of incidents involving pupil behavioural issues in the school environment are, in part, contributing to the gains made in this quarterly period. A more detailed understanding of the majority influences will be provided through close monitoring of trend patterns.

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022/23	Quarter 3 2022/23	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 1 2023/24 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Education (12 month rolling figure at quarter end)	5.2	5.6	6.25	7.1	8.3		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Primary and Secondary Schools (12 month rolling figure at quarter end)	5.05	5.4	6	6.9	8.3		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Early Learning and Childcare (12 month rolling figure at quarter end)	4.1	5.5	6.8	7.7	8.3		

Service Commentary





The trend patterns in absence levels are in line with, although at a lower level than, those in comparable front-line services, and below that being recorded at a corporate level.

The Service is keenly aware of the increase in the average number of working days lost and, in concert with the application of P&OD corporate policy measures, has been working closely with school senior management teams to ensure that current support frameworks provide the maximum opportunities to employees seeking to return to work following periods of absence.

The meeting of the Staff Governance Committee on the 13th of November is due to consider six-month data relating to sickness absence, including comparative Cluster absence levels, and will offer Members with observations and corporate recommendations around this theme. Any actions or intelligence arising from this report will be assimilated by the Service at pace.

In the meantime, the Service maintains a continuous watching brief on levels of absence and encourages employees to access the various well-being tools provided by the Council to mitigate against illnesses/aid the process of recovery from absence.

4. Finance & Controls

Performance Indicator	Quarter 2 2022/23		Quarter 3 2022/23		Quarter 4 2022/23		Quarter 1 2023/24	
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to full year budget profile – Education *	50.3%		75.3%		102.35%		26.7%	

Service Commentary

Budgetary and financial information relating to each Cluster for each quarterly period end is captured in reporting to the Finance and Resources Committee. Data covering Quarter 1 was reported to the meeting of the Committee on 8th August 2023 [Council Financial Performance Quarter 1](#)







Where Service savings, agreed as part of the Council's 2023/24 budget setting process, have a staffing element e.g., the application of VSER, removal of vacancies,, these will be reflected against later quarterly outcomes as implementation plans at individual Cluster/Service levels are progressed.


* Reported data does not take account of subsequent re-charges into and out of the Staff Expenditure budget line which may result in revisions to the projected trajectory to year-end financial forecasts as each periodic re-charge exercise is concluded

Children's Social Work and Child Protection














Corporate Measures – 2023-24 Cluster Level Indicators

5. Customer

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022/23	Quarter 3 2022/23	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Status	2023/24 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. of Complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work/Child Protection	7	5	13	6			
% of Complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work/Child Protection	85.7%	80.0%	92.3%	83.3%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	0%	40.0%	15.4%	16.7%			

Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	0	0	0	0			
---	---	---	---	---	---	--	--

Service Level Standards 2023/24

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022/23	Quarter 3 2022/23	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Status	2023/24 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
% of care provided in Council children's homes, fostering and adoption services achieve a care standard of Good or better	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	
We will ensure care provided by the Council's fostering service achieves a care standard of good or better through regulatory inspections.	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	
We will ensure care provided by the Council's adoption service achieves a care standard of good or better through regulatory inspections.	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	
% of children open to Children's Social Work supported to live at home, where safe to do so	NA	NA	NA	75.5%		75%	
% of Looked After Children looked after in a residential setting where living at home is not appropriate	13%	11%	12%	12%		10%	
% of Looked After Children looked after in Kinship where living at home is not appropriate	21%	25%	24%	24%		31%	
% of Looked After Children looked after in Foster Care where living at home is not appropriate	46%	45%	46%	45%		33%	

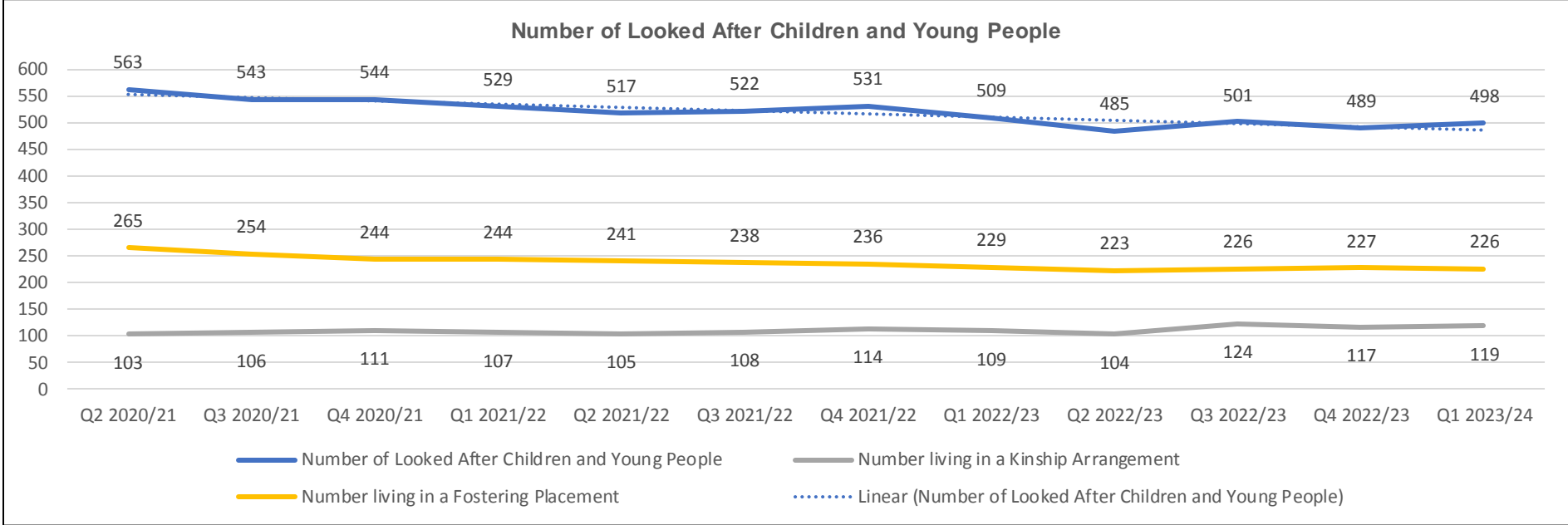
Service Commentary

The metric suite above offers evidence against the Service Level Standards which were presented at the Budget meeting of Council on 1st March 2023, in some instances, the phrasing around these may differ marginally from that expressed in the Appendix of that report to enable conversion of the statements in the Standards to a reportable measure.

The measures around children supported to live at home and Foster Carer satisfaction are both new measures for 2023/24 but those around the Balance of Care for Looked After Children and Young People were retained from prior years which enables direct comparison with previous quarterly data.

The Standard around satisfaction levels among Foster Carers and Adopters, agreed by Council in March, will be reported to Committee on an annual basis to ensure that the outcomes are representative of a sufficiently robust sample size to gain material intelligence on this theme

Service Level Measure



Service Commentary

Trend Analysis of the number of Looked After Children offers supplementary, and longer term, oversight of the Balance of Care measures outlined within the Service Level Standard above and how this relates to these children and young people’s placements within the care system. It also contextualises the data in terms of the ambitions of the Service, and the extent to which progress towards the objective of matching the National level outcomes, as captured in the Service Standard targets, is being made.

The number of Looked After Children and Young People saw a minor uptick in Quarter 1 2023/24 but the linear projection for a continuously reducing number of children and young people in this category is unchanged.








Children and Young People in kinship arrangements shows the largest increase over the course of the timeline and in proportion to the number of Looked After Children overall whilst the number of Children and Young People looked after in Foster Care is reducing at a roughly similar rate to the overall number of Looked After Children and Young People.

Children and Young People looked after in a Residential setting has been a relatively constant number of around 60 persons over the timeline, a position reflected in continuation of the target figure above and which, although with some minor variation from quarter to quarter, is a target that is generally achieved.

The Children's Social Work Statistics 2021/22 report being considered at this Committee, offers additional insight around the direction of travel in relation to the Balance of Care measures.

6. Process

Service Level Standards 2023/24

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022/23	Quarter 3 2022/23	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Status	2023/24 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
% of initial screenings undertaken and decisions on action required on all new referrals within seven days	N/A	N/A	N/A	95%		80%	
% of Child Protection (SCIM) interviews completed within 5 working days	N/A	N/A	N/A	91%		90%	
% initial Child Protection Case Conferences held within 28 days	79%	73%	45%	71%		80%	
% Care experienced children and young people with three or more placements in 12 months	3%	2%	3%	2%		10%	
% Care Experienced Children and Young People with a pathway plan by the age of 15 years	N/A	N/A	N/A	73%		95%	

Service Commentary

The metric suite offers evidence against the Service Level Standards which were presented at the Budget meeting of Council on 1st March 2023, In some instances, the phrasing around these may differ marginally from that expressed in the Appendix of that report to enable conversion of the statements in the Standards to a reportable measure.



In the instance of the measures around Care Experienced Children and Young People and Case Conferences, data from prior quarters is provided as the Standard, and metadata (how the metric is constructed) is unchanged from that in 2022/23.





The remaining measures, have either been adopted as new Standards for 2023/24 or reflect adjustments to the metadata which preclude direct comparison with similarly titled prior year metrics.

CSW moved to using D365 in October 2022. Since January 2023 planned improvement activity of the D365 system activity enabled increased functionality. The functionality in relation to the recording of Pathway Plan's has come on stream during Quarter 1. This explains the reported level of performance of Pathway Plans. As staff increasingly utilise the functionality of D365 Elected Members can expect to see the level of performance increase in future reports.



7. Staff

Corporate Measure – 2023/24 Service Level Indicators

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022-23	Quarter 3 2022-23	Quarter 4 2022-23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Children's Social Work	340.35	342.3	338.4	341.4		

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022/23	Quarter 3 2022-23	Quarter 4 2022-23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Status	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – Children's Social Work	0	1	0	0		
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter - Children's Social Work	0	0	1	0		

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022/23	Quarter 3 2022/23	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 1 2023/24	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
---------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	--------	---------------------------





	Value	Value	Value	Value	Corporate Figure		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Children’s Social Work (12 month rolling figure)	4.5	4.7	5.8	6.9	8.3		

Service Commentary

As expressed above for the Education Service, Children’s Social Work and Child Protection management through the Integrated Children’s Services SMT, monitors absence levels on a consistent and detailed basis and has been taking steps to mitigate the impacts and durations of absence through the active signposting, and direction, of employees to the corporate advice and supports available to all Council employees.

The absence trend is very similar to that in Education with a rising level of average days absence through illness, again at rates which are below that of most other front-facing service teams where direct personal contacts with a significant clientele base, and other well understood risk factors within social work settings, are prevalent.

8. Finance & Controls

Performance Measure	Quarter 2 2022/23		Quarter 3 2022/23		Quarter 4 2022/23		Quarter 1 2023/24	
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to full year budget profile – Children’s Social Work *	50.3%		75.0%		100.1%		30.9%	

Service Commentary












Budgetary and financial information relating to each Cluster for Quarter is captured in reporting to the Finance and Resources Committee. Data covering Quarter 1 was reported to the meeting of the Committee on 8th August 2023 [Council Financial Performance Quarter 1](#)

Specific Service savings, agreed as part of the Council's 2023/24 budget setting process, which have a staffing element e.g., the application of VSER and removal of vacancies have been delivered and will be reflected against later quarterly outcomes as implementation plans at individual Cluster/Service levels are progressed.

* Reported data does not take account of subsequent re-charges into and out of the Staff Expenditure budget line which may result in revisions to the projected trajectory to year-end financial forecasts as each periodic re-charge exercise is concluded

Appendix Data Notes

- Complaints Data: Complaints data should be viewed in the round across each of the four measures in terms of the performance of individual Clusters. Targets are set by the Ombudsman as reportable annualised measures for the Council without adjustment for seasonal operational, and other external influences.
- Trend Directions: Unless stated to the contrary, Long-Term Trends are based on the average of 24 monthly, 8 quarterly and 3 annual consecutive periods, respectively.

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert (figure more than 20% out with target)		Improving/Increasing		Improving/Increasing
	Warning (figure between 5% and 20% out with target)		No or Limited Change		No or Limited Change
	OK (figure within target or better)		Getting Worse/Decreasing		Getting Worse/Decreasing
	Unknown				
	Data Only				

APPENDIX B

EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY TRACKER – INDICATOR DATASETS

1 DATA CONTEXT

- 1.1. Nationally Benchmarked Education Measures for each academic year are released at various times of the subsequent year, concluding with the release of Education Outcomes for Looked After Children in July/August in the following year when all validated data is available. As a result, this report provides a compendium of data covering the various data releases covering the 2021/22 academic year that have been made available in the past 12 months,
- 1.2. The data contained within this report should be considered alongside the [2021-22 Attainment and Achievement Data Report](#) presented to this Committee in November 2022, prior to all validated data sets being available, which reflected Local Benchmark outcomes.
- 1.3. When developing the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan, Officers look at all live and validated data sets available at that time to inform planning but each release of a data set throughout the year triggers a review of the ACC National Improvement Framework Plan. This approach ensures that the Plan continues to be ideally placed to support improvement.
- 1.4. The full re-instatement of Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) in both primary and secondary schools had improved the availability of local datasets in the 2021/22 academic year.
- 1.5. However, the absence of ACEL data covering Third/Fourth Levels and the introduction of the Alternative Certification Model (ACM) in the Senior Phase for 2021/22 had impacted on the ability to track continuous progression solely through data trends.
- 1.6. As a result, the Service has incorporated a greater element of professional judgement and observational assessment within both self-evaluation and planning. This has enabled the Service to respond to changes in an agile and decisive way and not be negatively affected by the lack of trend data. Taking this approach guides the service to look at final validated data carefully in order to determine the accuracy of earlier professional judgements made.

2.0 HIGH LEVEL ANALYSIS

- 2.1 Analysis of available attainment and achievement data confirms that the ACC National Improvement Framework Plan 2021/22 was appropriate to meet the needs, educational and pastoral, of pupils and supported their progress throughout the academic year.
- 2.2 There were some undeniable residual and legacy impacts on attainment and achievement data arising from the pandemic, that correlated with national and international research on the impact of the pandemic on children and young people. These were limited to specific subject areas and phases, as noted below, rather than impacting on the educational journey of pupils as a whole.
- 2.3 Analysis of the 2021/22 Curriculum for Excellence data at Primary level shows that future potential impacts of most significant periods of COVID-19 disruption had been well mitigated by the Service with a substantive recovery in the majority of phases and organisers, with some closing of the gaps to national and Virtual Comparator data.
- 2.4 At Secondary level, the picture is more complex with the S3 and Senior Phase results closely tracking the national pattern and experiencing some reduction in attainment in comparison with 2020/21. This is largely due to changed examination assessment methodologies in place over examination years 2020, 2021 and 2022.
- 2.5 Baselining of the 2021/22 secondary data with 2018/19 however, offers a more consistent overall picture of long-term improvement in the outcomes at Senior Phase. At the same time, the following note repeated across various national publications relating to Senior Phase outcomes should also be kept in mind when considering data within this document

‘Care must be taken when comparing the attainment of cohorts over the past 3 years and when comparing these years to the attainment of earlier cohorts. any changes between the attainment levels of the last 3 cohorts and those of previous years should not be seen as an indication that performance has improved or worsened, without further evidence’

Source: LGBF 2021/22 Report

3.0 ATTAINMENT FOR ALL

Primary Phase - Attainment

- 3.1 Across the range of Primary phases, the trends for the majority of Components (Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking and Numeracy) showed significant recovery in outcomes from 2020/21 in keeping with national trends.
- 3.2 The 2021/22 data, although improved overall, indicates some level of residual impact from the pandemic in Reading and Writing when compared with the pre-COVID period with the levels of achievement in P4 being the most affected and yet to recover to 2018/19 levels.
- 3.3 Primary 7 outcomes, in contrast, showed strong trend outcomes across each of the four Components and the combined Literacy & Numeracy themes, matching or exceeding prior high tide levels.

Chart 3.1 % of P1 pupils achieving Early Level by Component

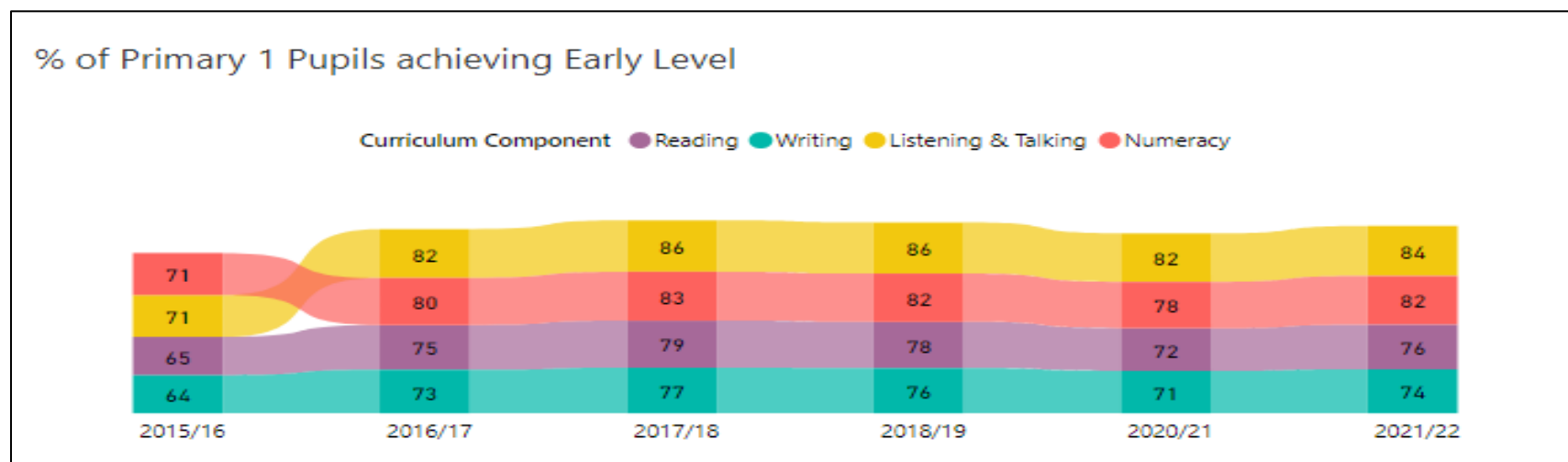


Chart 3.2 % of P4 pupils achieving First Level by Component

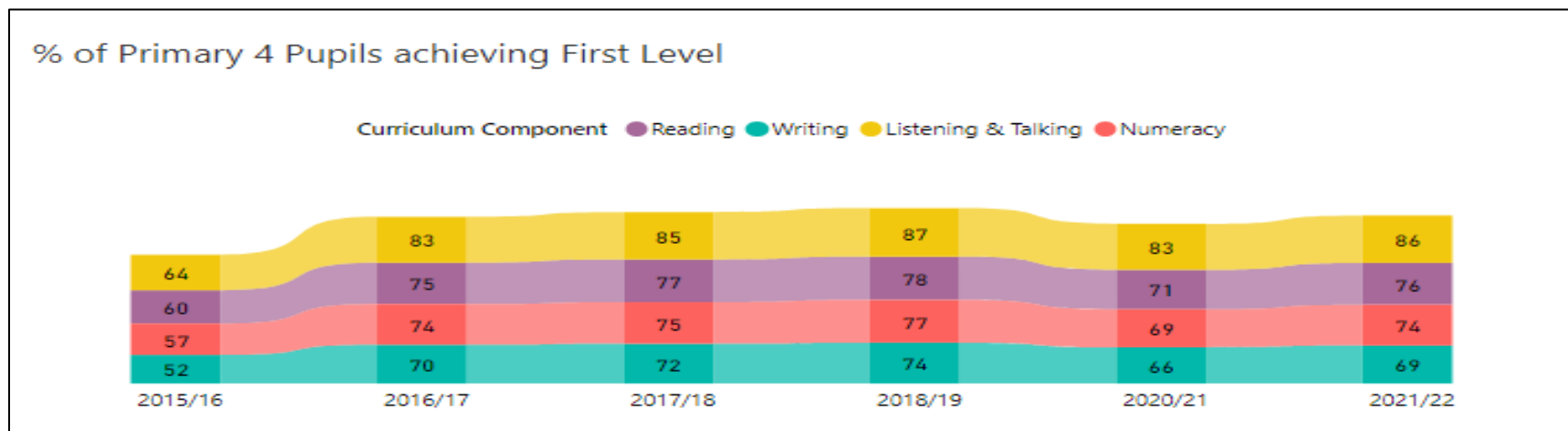
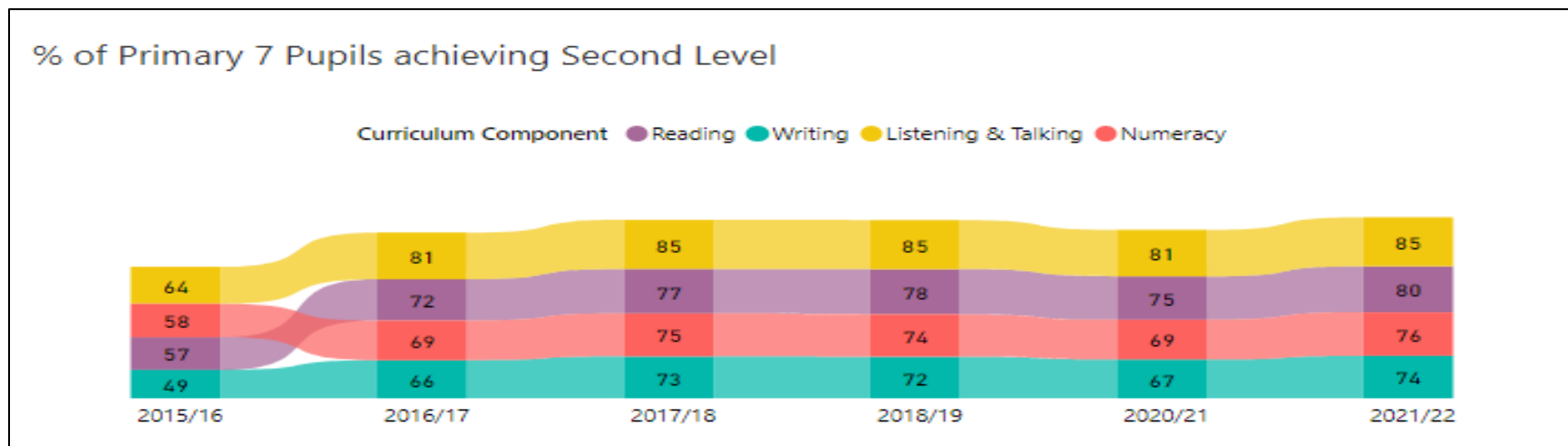


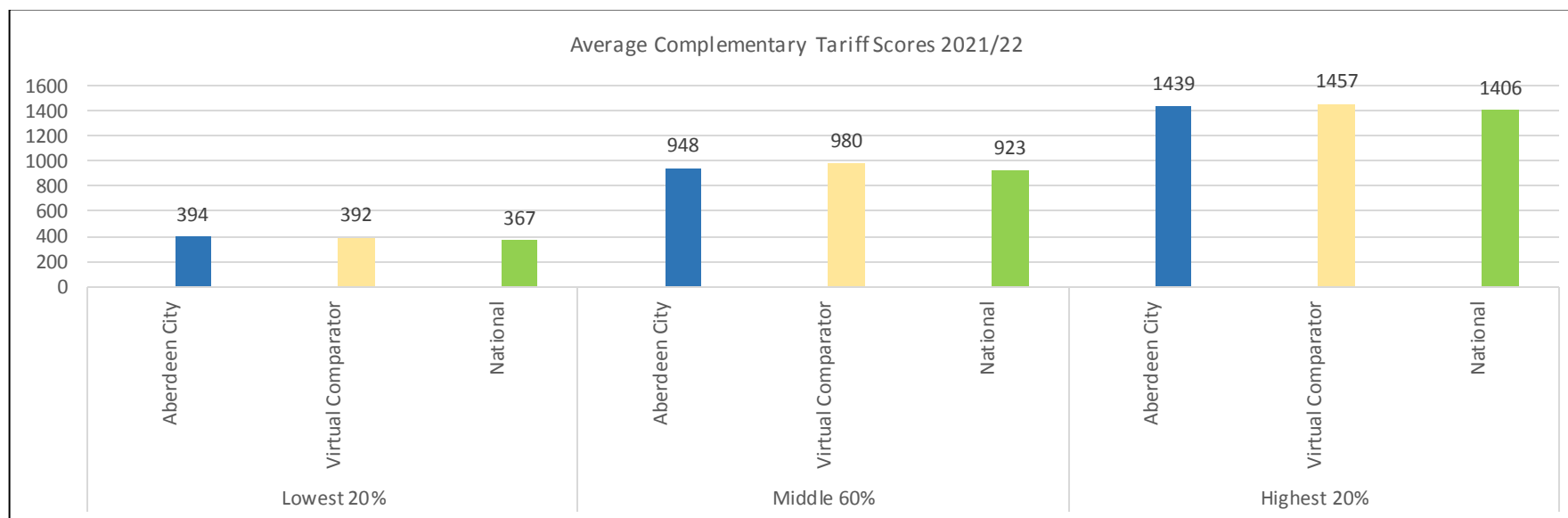
Chart 3.3 % of P7 pupils achieving Second Level by Component



Senior Phase - Attainment

- 3.4 Average Complimentary Tariff Point Scoring is a data methodology used in the Insight Tool which facilitates comparisons of attainment between cohorts, schools and local authorities when the number of courses sat by pupils differs. Scoring is based on the allocation of SCQF Credit Points for each attained qualification or unit (higher levels of qualification attract more SCQF Credit Points) but for a fixed volume of attainment, and weighting taking account of the national value of the qualification attained.
- 3.5 In effect this, for comparison purposes, captures the 'best or highest' overall educational outcomes of Senior Phase pupils rather than the cumulation of all SCQF Credit Points, which is a measure of the volume of learning across a pupil's education journey.
- 3.6 In 2021/22 the Average Complementary Tariff Point (ACTP) scoring (by quintile cohort) for Aberdeen City was greater than the national figure with the performance of the Lowest 20% of outcomes also matching the Virtual Comparator.

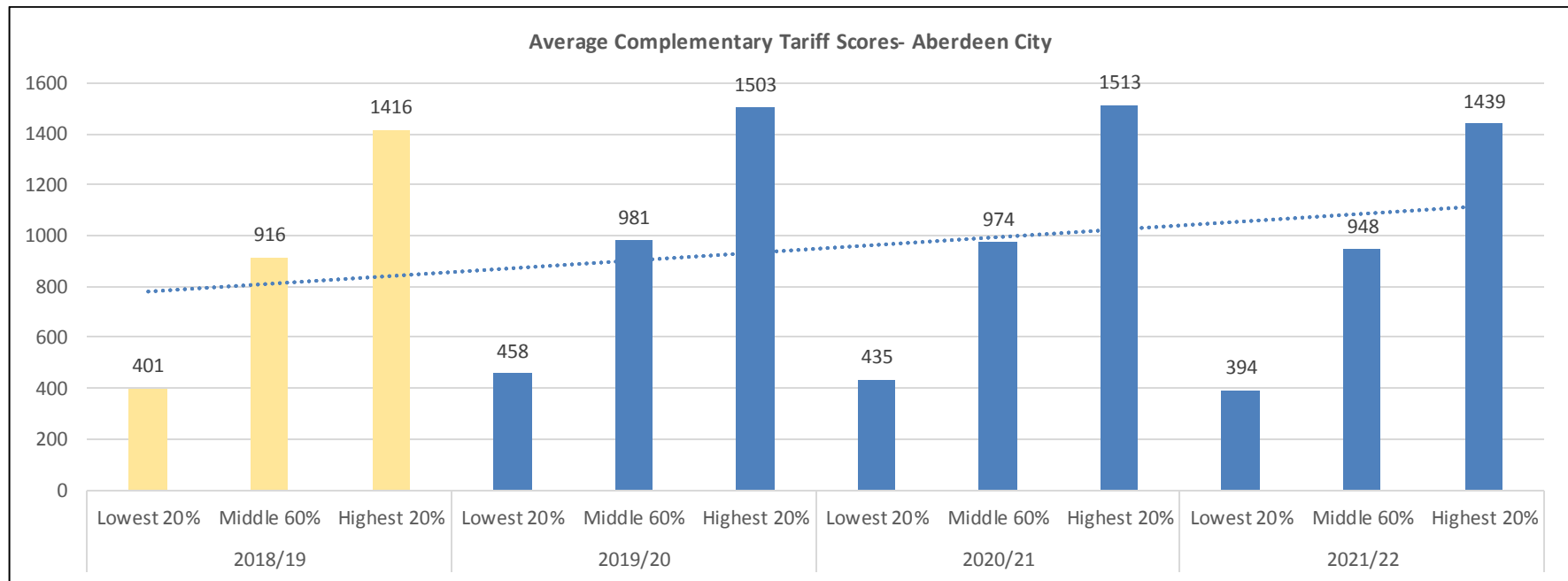
Chart 3.6 Average Complementary Tariff Point Scores 2021/22 – Benchmarks



3.7 Reflecting on time series outcomes, looking at the education improvement journey over time, the ACTP scores for the Lowest 20% had reduced very marginally. The scores for both the Middle 60% of and the Highest 20% were demonstrating a more sustained Improvement trend although with a lesser closing of the distances to the Virtual Comparator scoring. As noted above, the introduction of ACM assessments in 2021/22 was an influential factor in the small reductions in ACTP scores between 2020/21 and 2021/22.

3.8 In each of the chart years, the Aberdeen City outcomes at each quintile cohort level, exceeded the National figures.

Chart 3.7 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Cohort Quintile (Time Series)



4.0 LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Primary Phase – Literacy and Numeracy

- 4.1 In terms of CfE outcomes, the overall picture in 2021/22 was one of general improvement in outcomes, with reversion to the levels of achievement in the 2018/19 pre-COVID-19 period. There was also noticeable closing of the gap to National data which had widened in 2020/21.
- 4.2 At the same time, there are instances, by component and phase, which demonstrated less robust improvement with more limited gains on national levels with Literacy achievement at P1 being the most statistically significant. This likely was as a result of restrictions around ELC attendance and social gathering, known to support literacy development, during the COVID-19 Public Health restrictions.
- 4.3 On this basis, in overview, the data offers assurance that the direction of travel for Literacy and Numeracy is positive but that the rate of improvement requires speeding up for particular aspects of CfE achievement to close the marginal gaps to Scotland levels.

Table 4.1 a % of P1 pupils achieving expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy

	Aberdeen		National	
Year	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Literacy	65%	70%	71%	74%
Numeracy	78%	82%	81%	84%

Table 4.1 b % of P4 pupils achieving expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy

	Aberdeen		National	
Year	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Literacy	61%	66%	64%	67%
Numeracy	69%	74%	72%	75%

Table 4.1 c % of P7 pupils achieving expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy

	Aberdeen		National	
Year	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Literacy	64%	71%	66%	71%
Numeracy	69%	76%	72%	76%

Secondary (S3) Phase– Literacy and Numeracy

- 4.4 CfE assessments at S3 were not undertaken in either of the previous years which limits effective progression benchmarking. In these terms, the 2021/22 outcomes represent a renewed baseline against which future improvement tracking will be projected.
- 4.5 On in-year terms, however, Literacy at Third Level was below that of the Scotland figure with the outcome at Fourth Level also being lower than the National figure of 48%, although with both being close to the Virtual Comparator.
- 4.6 Numeracy, at both Third and Fourth Levels, by contrast, matched or exceeded the Scotland figures with a sustained long term improvement trend.

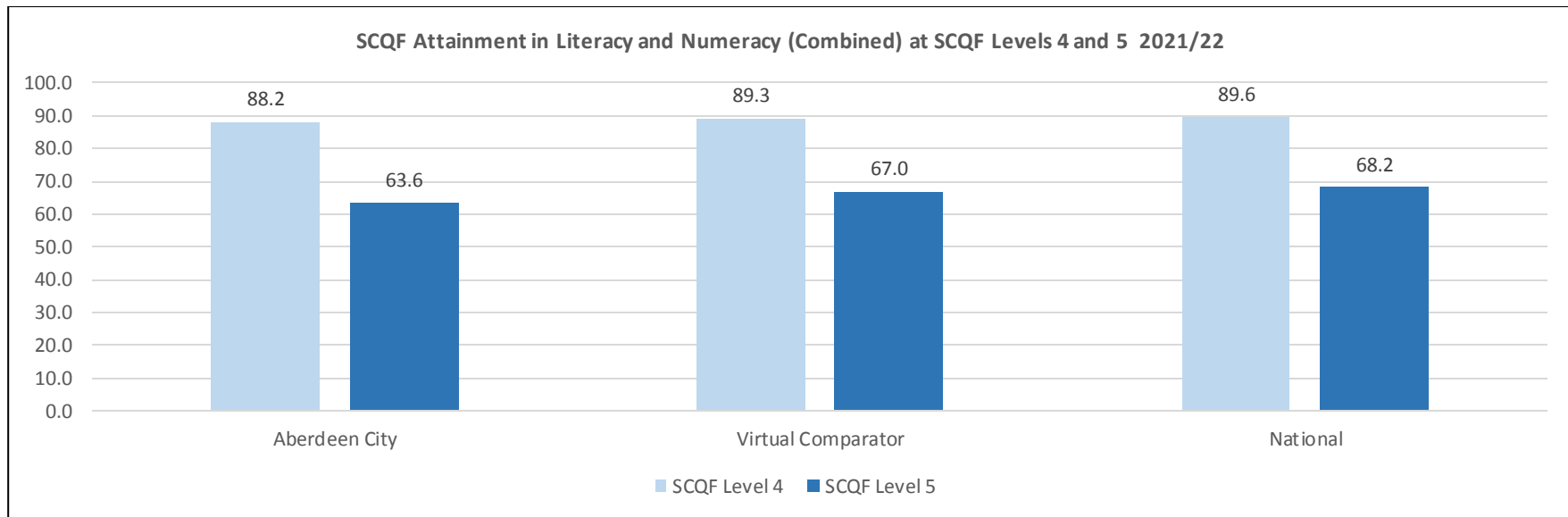
Table 4.4 % of S3 pupils achieving expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy at Third and Fourth Level 2021/22

	Aberdeen		National	
Level	Literacy	Numeracy	Literacy	Numeracy
Third Level	80%	89%	85.5%	89%
Fourth Level	44%	61%	48%	59%

Senior Phase - Literacy and Numeracy

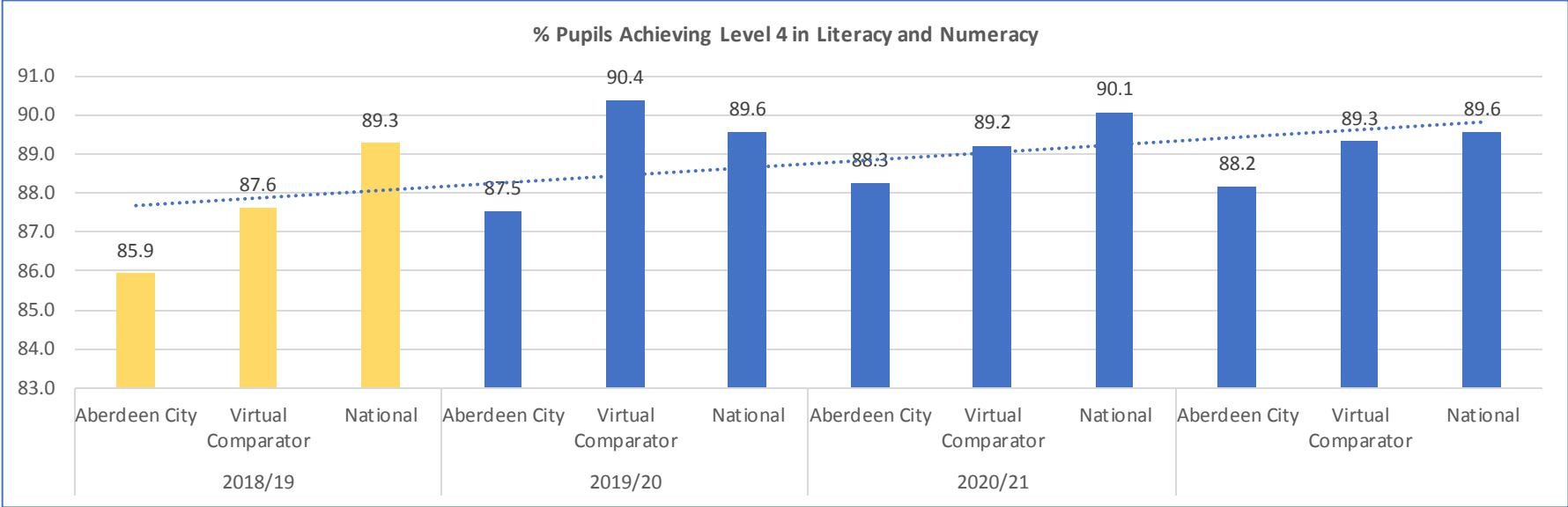
- 4.7 Pupil Candidate outcomes for Literacy and Numeracy combined were largely in line with the standing benchmarks at both SCQF Levels 4 and 5, although a more statistically significant gap was observable at Level 5 to the Virtual Comparator. This gap in numeracy and mathematics is being addressed by secondary schools working collaboratively to identify shared short-, medium- and long-term interventions.

Chart 4.7 % of pupil candidates achieving SCQF Levels 4 and 5 Literacy And Numeracy combined by Benchmarks



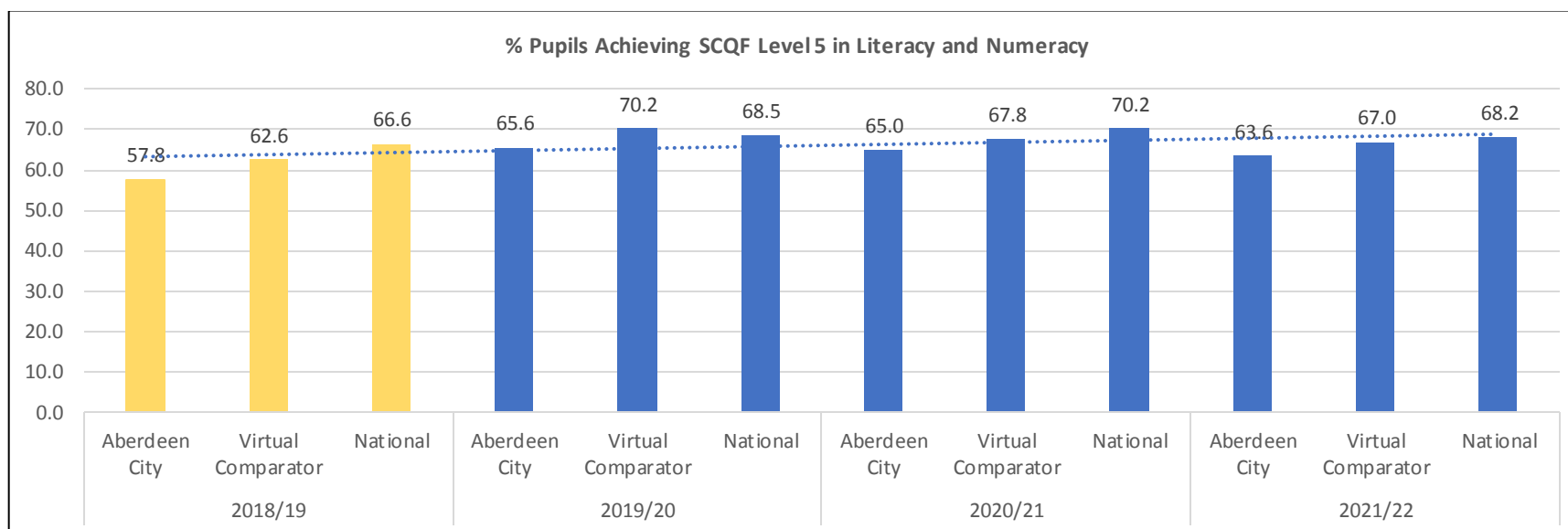
- 4.8 In concert with a rising trend in outcomes, the gap to both National and Virtual Comparators at SCQF Level 4 in 2021/22 had reduced to levels which were marginally above the rates that infer statistical significance (+/-1%) These differentials were the lowest recorded over the five-year period since introduction of the National Certification model.

Chart 4.8 % of pupil candidates achieving SCQF Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy combined by Benchmarks



4.9 At SCQF Level 5, there is a similar but more varied improvement journey in terms of the differentials between Aberdeen City outcomes and those of the benchmarks across the four years noted below. Much of this relates to the circumstances of examination diets in 2019/20 and 2020/21 but, as with SCQF Level 4, the long trend indicated that, in 2021/22, the distance to the Virtual Comparator and National figures had closed materially from where this stood in 2018/19.

Chart 4.9 % of pupil candidates achieving SCQF Level 5 Literacy and Numeracy combined by Benchmarks



5.0 ATTAINMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF DEPRIVATION

Primary Phase – Literacy and Numeracy

- 5.1 Primary One to Seven outcomes, as a combined measure, for Literacy and Numeracy showed an improving position on 2020/21, suggestive of positive recovery in outcomes from the previous year.
- 5.2 The rate of year-on-year improvement is greatest at SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) Levels 1 and 2 across both Literacy and Numeracy components with Numeracy overall being the stronger performance area. Literacy, across the Quintiles, however, demonstrated a marginally higher rate of improvement which was consistent with national trends.

Table 5 P1-7 Combined – Pupils achieving expected ACEL levels – Literacy and Numeracy by SIMD Quintile

	SIMD Quintile	2020/21		2021/22	
		Literacy	Numeracy	Literacy	Numeracy
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Quintile 1	47%	57%	58%	66%
	Quintile 2	51 %	60%	61%	69%
	Quintile 3	60%	70%	64%	72%
	Quintile 4	69%	77%	74.5%	82.5%
	Quintile 5	78%	84.5%	79%	87%

Primary Phase Achievement – Most Deprived

- 5.3 Achievement levels of the Most Deprived Quintile (SIMD 1) across each phase are outlined below. These indicated significant year-on-year gains across the majority of Components with consequential narrowing of the gap to the Least Deprived (SIMD 5) The greatest improvements were being seen in Primary 1 and 7, and more limited change at Primary 4.
- 5.4 Relating the 2021/22 outcomes to 2018/19 baselines, Primary 1 achievement had returned to pre-Covid levels, with a materially reducing gap to SIMD 5 achievement in Reading and Writing
- 5.5 At Primary 4, there was a less positive improvement trend against the baseline year and a marginally worsened position in terms of the distance to outcomes of the Least Deprived. This triggered a focussed writing project to help improve outcomes in this area.
- 5.6 Achievement levels in Primary 7 demonstrated the greatest positive change on 2018/19 baselines and a consistent pattern of relative improvement between SIMD 1-4 and SIMD 5 outcomes.

Chart 5.3 a – P1 Pupils achieving expected ACEL levels - SIMD Quintile 1

Year	Curriculum Component	Achieved Level (%)	Difference from Quintile 5 (%)
2018/19	Reading	67%	21%
	Writing	64%	22%
	Listening & Talking	79%	15%
	Numeracy	75%	13%
2020/21	Reading	58%	26%
	Writing	55%	30%
	Listening & Talking	71%	19%
	Numeracy	68%	20%
2021/22	Reading	66.5%	16.5%
	Writing	66%	15%
	Listening & Talking	76%	15%
	Numeracy	75%	13.5%

Chart 5.3 b – P4 Pupils achieving expected ACEL levels - SIMD Quintile 1

Year	Curriculum Component	Achieved Level (%)	Difference from Quintile 5 (%)
2018/19	Reading	67%	19%
	Writing	62%	20%
	Listening & Talking	77%	16%
	Numeracy	61%	23.5%
2020/21	Reading	57%	27%
	Writing	50%	31%
	Listening & Talking	76%	14%
	Numeracy	53%	29%

2021/22	Reading	59%	28%
	Writing	53%	28%
	Listening & Talking	74%	21%
	Numeracy	57%	31%

Chart 5.3 c – P7 Pupils achieving expected ACEL levels by SIMD Quintile 1 and Curriculum Components

Year	Curriculum Component	Achieved Level (%)	Difference from Quintile 5 (%)
2018/19	Reading	67%	17%
	Writing	56%	26%
	Listening & Talking	72%	20%
	Numeracy	58%	25%
2020/21	Reading	56.5%	30%
	Writing	46%	35%
	Listening & Talking	69%	19%
	Numeracy	47%	35.5%
2021/22	Reading	70%	19%
	Writing	67%	15%
	Listening & Talking	80%	12%
	Numeracy	65%	20%

Secondary (S3) Phase - Achievement

- 5.7 Curriculum for Excellence achievement of S3 pupils in the highest quintile of deprivation (SIMD1) offers some assurance that, in the absence of available data for 2019-20 and 2020-21, considerable progress was being made in both the outcomes of this cohort and the gap to those pupils in the lowest 20% of deprivation (SIMD 5). National CfE assessments at S3 were suspended in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Chart 5.7 % of S3 pupils by SIMD 1 Achieving Third Level or Better

Year	Curriculum Organiser	Achieved Level (%)	Difference from Quintile 5 (%)
2018/19	Reading	65%	30%
	Writing	65%	30%
	Listening & Talking	64.5%	32%
	Numeracy	59%	36%
2021/22	Reading	70.5%	22%
	Writing	65%	26%
	Listening & Talking	67%	26%
	Numeracy	77%	17%

Senior Phase - Literacy and Numeracy

- 5.8 The year-on-year outcomes for each quintile at SCQF Level 4 Literacy and Numeracy showed statistically significant improvements on 2020/21 with the percentage point improvement increasing as the data moved from Least to Most Deprived. This pattern of exponentially higher rates of improvement at the higher Quintiles of deprivation was repeated in terms of comparison with the 2018/19 baseline.
- 5.9 At SCQF Level 5, a similar pattern of improvement from 2020/21 to 2021/22 was recorded across the Quintiles, with the exception of a dip in Quintile 1 attainment from 44.7% to 41.9%.
- 5.10 Long trend data for SCQF Level 4 indicates that in both 2019/20 and 2020/21, there was a dip in outcomes across the lower Quintiles with this being most pronounced in 2019/20, coinciding with most significant impacts in attainment at a national level. 2020/21, however showed some recovery in Quintiles 3-5 at that stage.
- 5.11 The attainment of pupils at SCQF 5 Literacy and Numeracy by contrast has shown almost universal year-on-year outcome improvement in each Quintile since the 2018/19, including in 2019/20, with the exception of Quintile 4 in 2019/20 and Quintile 1 in 2021/22 mentioned above.

5.12 The spread of improvement, both year-on-year and in comparison, with the baseline was less clear at SCQF Level 5 with those pupils in Quintile 2 showing the most improvement from 2020/21 and Quintile 3 noting the most improved position on 2018/19.

Chart 5.8 % of pupils achieving SCQF Levels 4 and 5 in Literacy and Numeracy by SIMD Quintile *

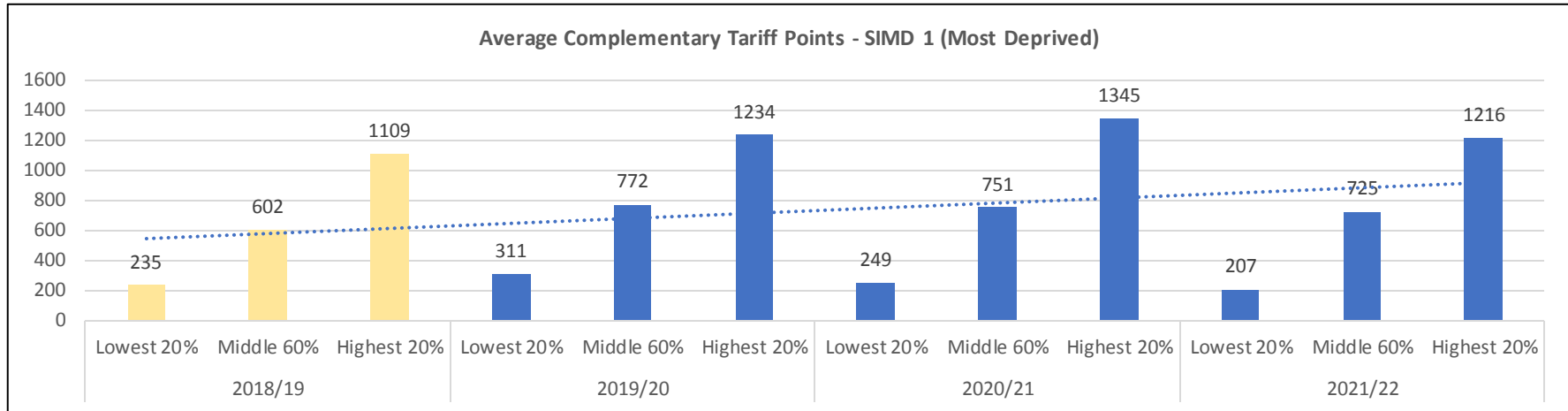
Year	SIMD Quintile	SCQF Level 4 -Literacy and Numeracy Combined	SCQF Level 5 – Literacy and Numeracy Combined
2018/19	Quintile 1 - 20% Most Deprived	75%	36%
	Quintile 2	81%	46%
	Quintile 3	89%	50%
	Quintile 4	92%	65%
	Quintile 5 - 20% Least Deprived	93%	76%
2020/21	Quintile 1 20% Most Deprived	71%	45%
	Quintile 2	76.5%	47%
	Quintile 3	84%	56%
	Quintile 4	89%	65.5%
	Quintile 5 20% Least Deprived	93.5%	77%
2021/22	Quintile 1 20% Most Deprived	78%	42%
	Quintile 2	82%	56%
	Quintile 3	90%	64%
	Quintile 4	91%	70%
	Quintile 5 20% Least Deprived	95%	80%

* All figures are rounded to nearest whole number

Senior Phase - Attainment

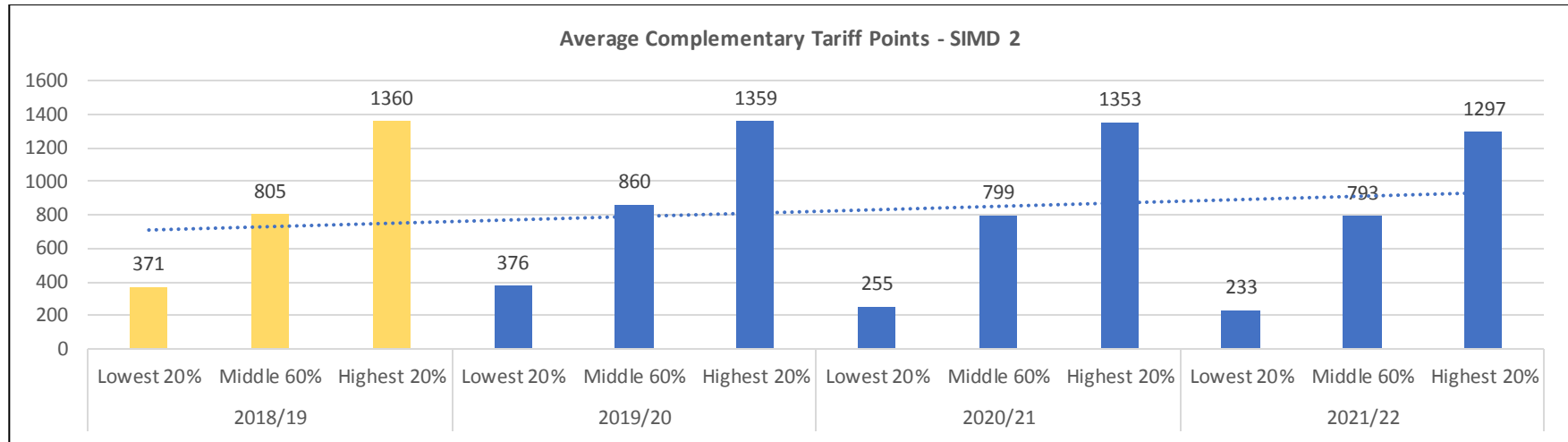
- 5.13 In regards to interpretation of the data charts below, considerable caution should be exercised in comparative analysis between SIMD groupings (Charts below) not least as the cohort sizes vary significantly and proportionately reduce moving down (SIMD 5 to 1) the poverty related cohorts in each chart. The trendline reflects the long-term direction of travel of each performance quintile group in aggregate.
- 5.14 It is also important to recognise that the profiles of those in the Lowest Quintiles of attainment, regardless of SIMD placing, may include those who have multiple levels of disadvantage out with deprivation levels e.g., significant additional support needs, for whom attainment of tariff score qualifying outcomes is a less effective methodology for gauging cohort improvement. These pupils are more likely to be fully supported on an individual basis through targeted interventions to achieve their fullest academic and social potential within the education framework.
- 5.15 Focusing on the outcomes of pupils defined as being within the Most Deprived Quintile (SIMD 1) in comparison with the 2018/19 baseline, Average Complementary Tariff Scores, the measure of ‘best’ cohort attainment overall (see 3.4 above) show a pattern of improvement. The tariff scores of the Middle 60% of attainment rose from 602 to 725 in 2021/22. The Highest 20% of candidate outcomes rose, although the figures for the Lowest 20% fell by 11.9% from 235 to 207. This suggested the need to maintain our approach to testing new ways of working for those with multiple challenges through our Edge of Care Pilots.
- 5.16 The 2021/22 outcomes for this Most Deprived Quintile, when compared with the Virtual Comparator and National Benchmarks, showed outcomes for each attainment cohort that were above the Comparator, an advance on the 2018/19 baseline with extended positive distances. Each of the three attainment quintile group scores also exceeded, or closely matched the National figures which was an across-the-board phase shift from the position in 2018/19, where only the Lowest Quintile of attainment exceeded the National comparator.

Chart 5.16 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Attainment Cohort – SIMD Quintile 1 (20% Most Deprived)



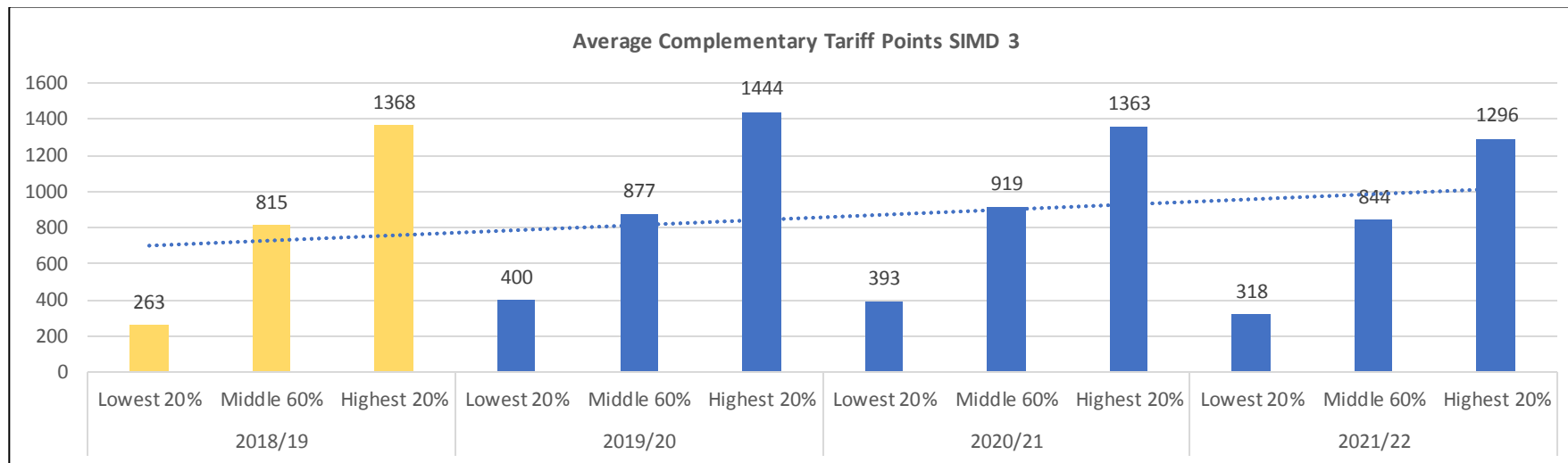
5.17 At SIMD 2, the change trend on baseline ACTP Scores was less well defined with each of the three attainment groupings closely matching, or just under the levels, of the two Comparators in 2021/22 and some limited value losses on 2018/19 amongst the Lowest 20% of attainment. There is no significant data trend for Aberdeen City or either of the Comparators around overall value reductions from the baseline year to 2021/22 for this Deprivation Quintile.

Chart 5.17 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Attainment Cohort – SIMD Quintile 2



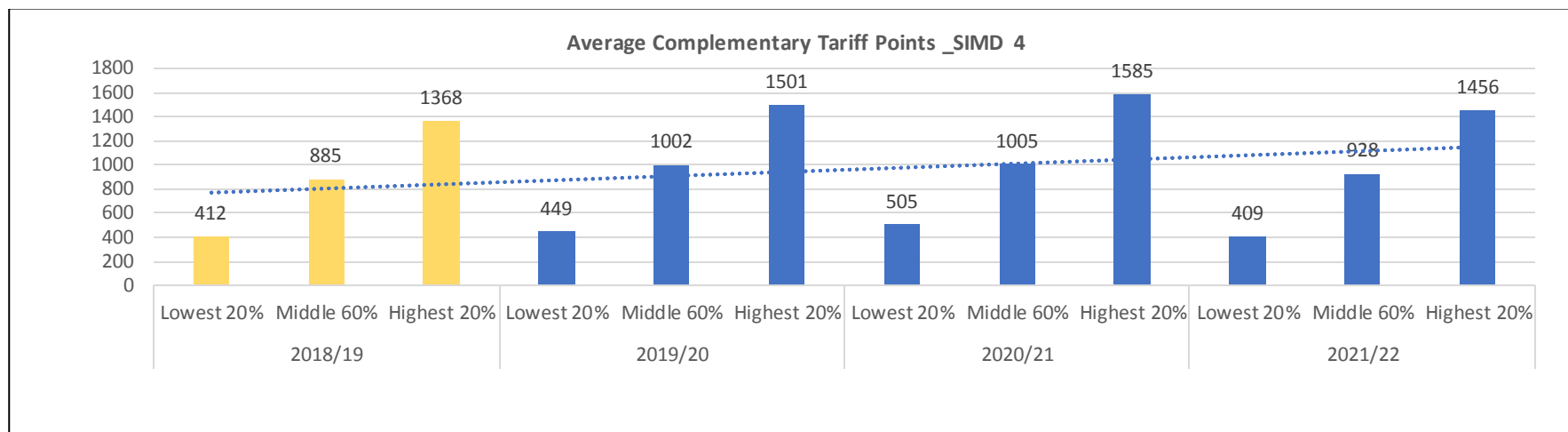
5.18 SIMD 3 aggregate outcomes for the City showed a very stable position against the baseline year with only the scores of the Lowest 20% of attainers demonstrating significant variation of +20.9% and those of the Highest 20% being marginally reduced. Both of the Virtual Comparator and National benchmark values grew over the same period, creating a small extension of the differences to Aberdeen City overall and for each attainment quintile grouping.

Chart 5.18 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Attainment Cohort - SIMD Quintile 3



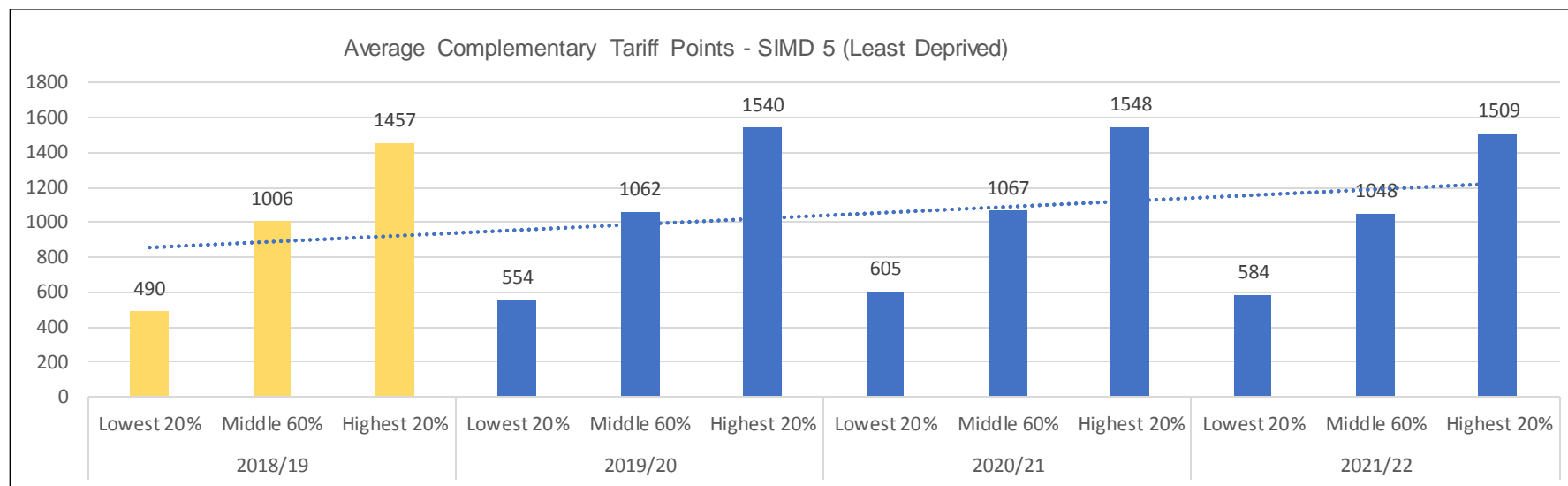
5.19 The outcomes for pupils at SIMD 4 in 2021/22 showed general improvements in the Middle 60% and Highest 20% of attainment of +4.9% and +6.4% respectively against the baseline, whilst the scoring of the Lowest 20% was static. Overall, the rate of improvement for Aberdeen City was greater than the Virtual Comparator and National trend with closing of the gap to these benchmarks, although only exceeding both of the Comparator scores at the Highest 20% of attainment, which is in itself is a gain on the 2018/19 position.

Chart 5.19 Average Complementary Tariff Scores by Attainment Cohort – SIMD Quintile 4



- 5.20 In aggregate, the Tariff scores for Aberdeen City at SIMD 5 had improved on the baseline with the marginal gap to the National comparator that existed in 2018/19 being entirely closed, having improved across each of the three quintile-based attainment cohorts.
- 5.21 This had resulted in Aberdeen City exceeding or matching the National scores in the Lowest and Highest 20% of attainment respectively whilst the Middle 60% remained unchanged. In 2018/19, the Tariff scores for each attainment cohort, and the Lowest 20% in particular, were lower than the National benchmark. Comparing with the Virtual Comparator indicated that Aberdeen City was displaying a slightly faster rate of improvement than the Comparator in each attainment cohort with the Lowest 20% now above the Comparator figure for 2021/22 but not at a rate that closed the attainment gaps for the Middle 60% and Highest 20%

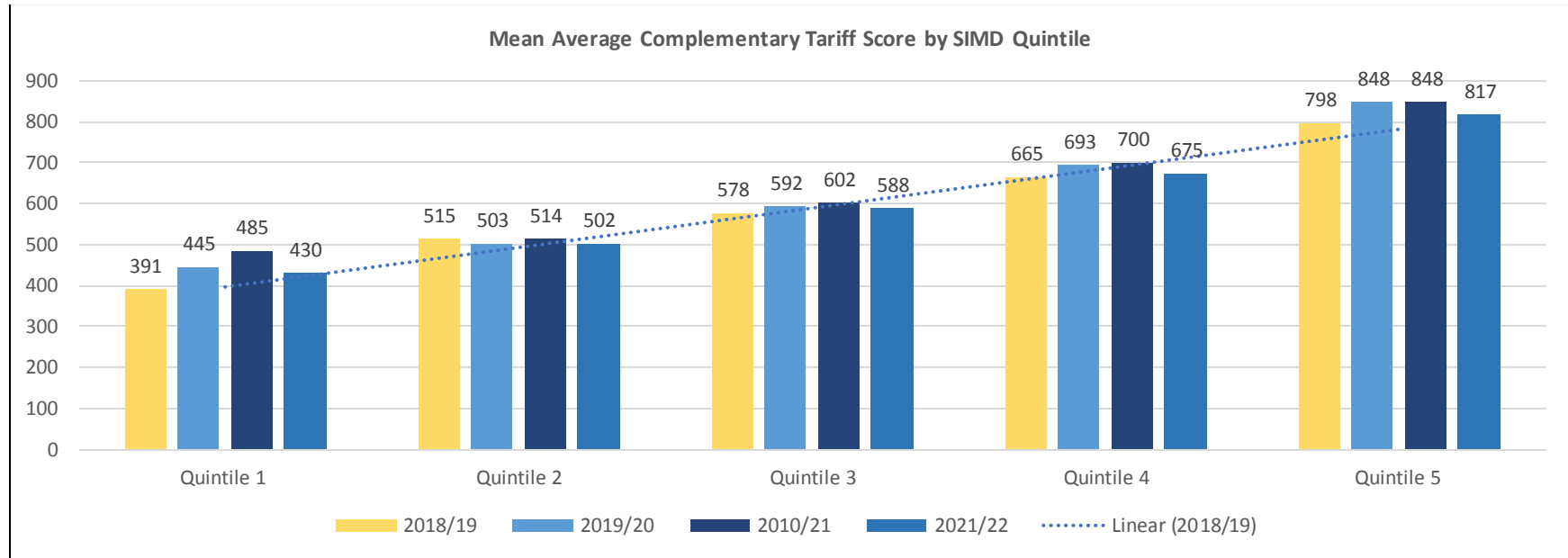
Chart 5.20 Average Complementary Tariff Scores – SIMD Quintile 5 – 20% Least Deprived



- 5.22 The chart below provides Mean Data around relative performance by SIMD Quintile which offers an additional weighted trend approach to Average Complimentary Tarriff Score data, and provides supplementary information to that available through the publication of National Benchmark measures.
- 5.23 Use of Mean Average Complementary Tariff Score modelling primarily assists in mitigating against year-on-year and SIMD Quintile variations by cohort size but is not, in itself, part of the National Benchmark suite.
- 5.24 This data indicates that the performance of pupils defined as being in SIMD 1 (Most Deprived) are proportionately the most improved on the 2018/19 baseline, sharing the improving trend demonstrated by Quintiles 3, 4 and 5.
- 5.25 The outcomes for SIMD 2 pupils shows the least variation across the time series with a marginal fall in scoring against both the baseline and previous year outcomes. This could be regarded as a static position over time which, unlike the remaining Quintiles, has been less affected by variations in assessment models and improvement activity, which will warrant life review

of progress through the newly adopted tracking system in place to better understand the challenges.

Chart 5.22 Mean Average Complementary Tariff Scores by SIMD Quintile



6.0 CLOSING THE ATTAINMENT GAP

Primary Phase - Literacy and Numeracy

- 6.1 There had been a material year-on- year closing of the gaps between the majority of SIMD based bands and the Least Deprived cohort (SIMD 5) with greatest absolute and relative gains being made at SIMD’s 1 and 2.
- 6.2 As outlined above, Numeracy outcomes in general demonstrated the stronger outcomes in absolute values but, in terms of closing the gap, Literacy showed greater progress with the Mean Gap reducing by just under seven percentage points.

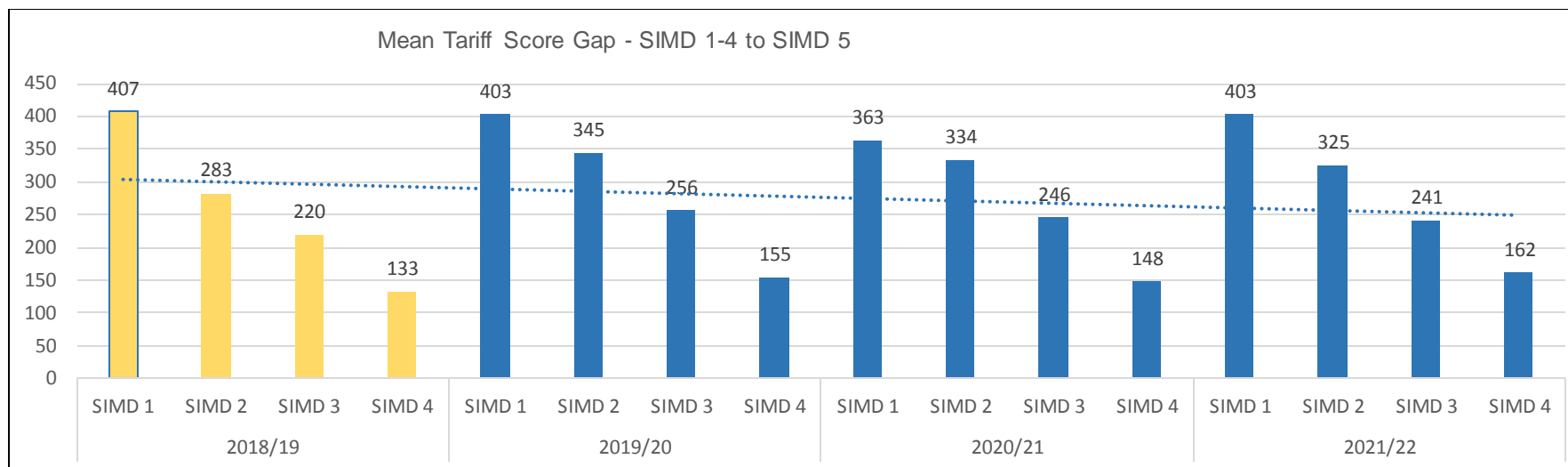
Table 6.1 – P1,4 and 7 combined CfE achievement - Differentials to SIMD 5 by Percentage Points

		2021/22		2020/21	
		Literacy SIMD Gap (Percentage Points)	Numeracy SIMD Gap (Percentage Points)	Literacy SIMD Gap (Percentage Points)	Numeracy SIMD Gap (Percentage Points)
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Quintile 1	-21 p.p	-21 p.p.	-31 p.p	-28 p,p
	Quintile 2	-18 p.p.	-17 p.p.	-27 p.p	-24.5 p,p
	Quintile 3	-15 p.p.	-15 p.p.	-18 p.p	-14 p,p
	Quintile 4	-4 p.p	-4.p.p	-9 p.p	-7 p.p
	Mean Gap	-15p.p	-14 p.p	-21 p.p	-18.5 p.p

Senior Phase – Attainment

- 6.4 The data for 2021/22 indicated marginal shifts in the gaps between SIMD's 1-4 in relation to the outcomes at SIMD 5 when compared with 2020/21. This is influenced by application of the Alternative Curriculum Model which created a cross-phase adjustment in outcomes.
- 6.5 Taking this into account and considering the longer-term direction of travel against the 2018/19 baseline year, the outcomes of the Most Deprived Quintile (SIMD 1) in comparison with the Least Deprived (SIMD 5) have remained stable which is a source of assurance that the impacts of the pandemic, which had been expected to affect the attainment of those pupils from areas of the highest deprivation most, have been well managed by the Education Service and its partners.
- 6.6 The mean data does, however, indicate that for pupils in SIMD 2 there were continued impacts, related to the pandemic and post pandemic periods, in terms of closing the gap to the Least Deprived. This is a result of outcomes of this cohort being static whilst those in SIMD 5 were on an improving trend over the long term.
- 6.7 Statistically, the outcomes for pupils in SIMD's 3 and 4 show more limited changes which are within normal tolerances in terms of whether these represent areas that are suggestive of a material shift in educational outcomes for either of these Quintiles, particularly as both cohorts are demonstrating longer term improvement (see above).

Chart 6.4 Average Complementary Tariff Scores – Differentials to SIMD 5 by Quintile Mean Figure



Senior Phase - Literacy and Numeracy

- 6.8 At SCQF Level 4 in Literacy and Numeracy, the differential between SIMD 1 (Most Deprived) and SIMD 5 (Least Deprived) outcomes for Aberdeen City in 2021/22 showed a year-on-year improvement of 6 percentage points from -22.7p.p. in 2020/21 to 16.7 p.p with SIMD 1 attainment of 77.9%, the highest outcome for this cohort against that measure to date.
- 6.9 This was the largest positive change in a single year over the course of the four years from the 2018/19 baseline and was, by a slim margin, the lowest gap over the course of the extended lifetime of this national measure.
- 6.10 In comparison with the two benchmarks the City, in 2021/22, had closed the year-on-year gap at a rate which exceed both the Virtual Comparator and National outcomes, resulting in closer alignment with the benchmarks, after an extending of the gap in both previous years.

Table 6.8 Attainment Gap between Most and Least Deprived Pupils - Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 4

Year	Establishment	Percentage Candidate Attainment	Attainment Gap between Most and Least Deprived Pupils
------	---------------	---------------------------------	---

		(%)	(Percentage Points)
2018/19	Aberdeen City	75.6	-17.2
	Virtual Comparator	79.4	-16.6
	National	80.6	-14.7
2020/21	Aberdeen City	70.8	-22.7
	Virtual Comparator	82.3	-14.3
	National	80.5	-15.1
2021/22	Aberdeen City	77.9	-16.7
	Virtual Comparator	83.0	-12.9
	National	81.8	-14.2

- 6.11 As reflected in the chart below, the outcomes across the majority of SIMD–based Quintiles for Literacy and Numeracy were overwhelmingly positive at SCQF Level 5 in 2021/22, although the improvement trend for those in the Most Deprived Quintile has been less continuous.
- 6.12 Although significantly improved on the 2018/19 baseline and following the national upwards trends in 2019/20 and 2020/21, potentially reflecting the impacts of differing assessment models in these years, the 2021/22 outcome fell year-on-year.
- 6.13 Consequently, and as the attainment of the Least Deprived Pupils (SIMD 5) sustained a more continuous period of consecutive improvement, despite having a lower rate of improvement, the distance between SIMD 1 and 5 had extended in 2021/22 but reduced slightly on the baseline year.

Table 6.11 Attainment Gap between Most and Least Deprived Pupils - Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF Level 5

Year	Establishment	Percentage Candidate Attainment (%)	Attainment Gap between Most and Least Deprived Pupils (Percentage Points)
2018/19	Aberdeen City	36.25	-39.52
	Virtual Comparator	47.06	-37.18
	National	49.17	-33.69

2020/21	Aberdeen City	44.72	-32.71
	Virtual Comparator	53.29	-33.18
	National	51.7	-32.97
2021/22	Aberdeen City	41.86	-38.54
	Virtual Comparator	54.48	-31.72
	National	53.67	-31.79

7.0 EDUCATION OUTCOMES FOR CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.1 Considerable caution needs to be exercised around interpreting and comparing both year-on-year and trend patterns arising from the education outcomes of Care Experienced Children and Young People at a local level.
- 7.2 Due to the variations in numbers involved this is best conducted in the context of the Virtual Headteacher role where support of individual pupils, and detailed ongoing data evaluations from the cohort outcomes, is most effectively delivered.
- 7.3 On this basis, and as it is not possible to publish continuity of data against each level of qualification, due to necessary suppression because of the numbers of pupils involved, trend summaries for Care Experienced Children and Young People are not specifically offered in this report. Annual Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework reporting, however, contains in-year datasets which capture the outcomes of Care Experienced Children and Young People in some additional detail.
- 7.4 Publication of the wider nationally benchmarked Educational Outcomes of Looked After Children data in mid-August 2023 will offer the first opportunity for sample size appropriate comparison.

8.0 ATTENDANCE

- 8.1 Overall, the level of attendance by Openings (half-days) in session 2022 was marginally reduced from 91.45% to 91.12% but with an increase in Primary School attendance year-on-year.
- 8.2 Accounting for the rise in both school rolls, and the number of Possible Openings from the 2021 Session, (+1.55%) the level of change in Unauthorised Absence is the most numerically influential factor between years with Primary Schools

experiencing a proportionately greater increase than Secondary Schools, although the overall percentage of Unauthorised Absence was below that in Secondary.

- 8.3 In the absence of any clear outlying data trend highlighting differentials in approaches or drivers of Unauthorized Absence at school level, the small rise year-on-year was understood to be a consequential impact of a variety of circumstantial factors aligning with the changing characteristics of the pupil profile, including a greater proportion of pupils with Additional Support Needs, rising in term enrolments, which can be unsettling for new pupils, and some residual post pandemic influences.
- 8.4 Authorised Absence and Exclusions were statistically unchanged from the previous year at Authority level with the former being the most significant value influence on the increase in Total Absence at Secondary.

Table 8a School Pupil Attendance and Absence by sector (Openings)

School Type	Session Year	% Attendance	% Authorised Absence	% Unauthorised Absence	% Exclusions	% Total Absence
Primary	2021	91.97	6.15	1.87	0.003	8.03
Secondary		90.72	6.49	2.75	0.04	9.28
Aberdeen		91.45	6.30	2.23	0.02	8.55
Primary	2022	92.24	5.54	2.21	0.01	7.76
Secondary		89.52	7.30	3.13	0.001	10.48
Aberdeen		91.12	6.28	2.58	0.02	8.88

9.0 EXCLUSIONS

- 9.1 In terms of Exclusion data there are, evidenced by national statistics, a wide variety of influences which have an impact on the rates of exclusion, of which policy, is only one. Of equal influence are aspects relating to the characteristics of pupil cohorts and the proportions of each characteristic within the pupil body.

- 9.2 From the national publication for 2021, those pupils with Additional Support Needs were more likely to experience an increased frequency of exclusion than those without Additional Support Need, and there was some evidence that ethnic background, and competence levels in English language were associated with differential experiences of exclusion.
- 9.3 As noted in the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework report to this Committee, there is also narrative at a national level that an increase in dysregulated behaviours among pupils had coincided with a more complete return to normal school-based attendance models.
- 9.4 This latter factor, and the increased physical presence of pupils in schools from 2021/22 onwards, on the basis of current data (which for 2022/23 is yet to be validated and subsequently published by the Scottish Government through the Statistics in Schools release later in the year) is likely to be the main statistical driver of exclusion data in 2022/23.
- 9.5 At the same, the duration of exclusions had shown an improvement with this reducing from an average of 3.7 days to 3.5, an indication that the educational impacts on these pupils, in terms of the effects of temporary exclusion, were being managed and maintained to a minimum.

Table 9 a Cases and Numbers of Exclusions per 1,000 pupils

Year	Number of Exclusion Incidents	Exclusion Incidents Per 1,000 pupils	Number of pupils excluded
2018/19	1221	52.9	626
2020/21	408	17.9	294
2021/22	477	19.7	309

10.0 SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATIONS

- 10.1 The overall initial destination outcomes for 2021/22 were marginally below that of the previous year (which was the highest figure recorded to date) and reflected the extent to which variations in leaver choices were influenced by the accessibility of opportunities. With a larger % of leavers choosing continued education as a destination, with the positive assurance that this presented in pandemic years, this was an expected outcome.

10.2 This most recent data indicates some ‘settling’ of the post school destination data for Aberdeen to levels, and proportions in each category, similar to that in 2018/19 which previous to 2020/21 been the highest outcome for the City’s school leavers

Table 10.a Percentage of School Leavers in an Initial Positive Destination

Year	% of school leavers in a positive initial destination
2018/19	93.7%
2020/21	95.4%
2021/22	93.9%

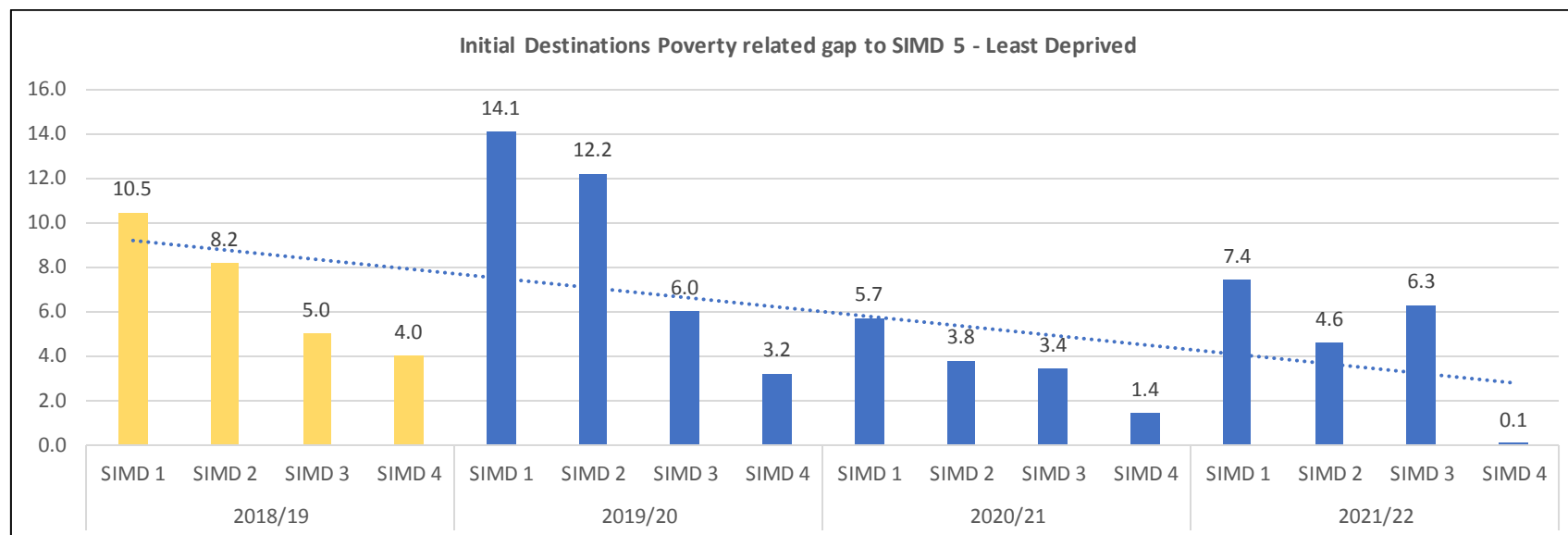
Table 10.b School Leaver Outcomes by Initial Destination – Breakdown (%)

Year	Positive Destination	Higher Education	Further Education	Training	Employment	Voluntary Work	Personal Skills Development	Unemployed Seeking	Unemployed Not Seeking	Unknown
2018/19	93.7	39.6	33.4	2.0	17.7	0.5	0.4	4.0	1.4	0.8
2020/21	95.4	45.7	30.8	4.1	13.8	0.5	0.3	2.2	1.8	0.6
2021/22	93.9	43.7	29.4	2.6	17.4	0.4	0.4	3.2	1.9	1.1

10.3 Accounting for the variabilities in economic circumstances and COVID-19 restrictions, which are heavy influences in both of the previous years, the trajectories around the deprivation related gap indicate an improving trend against the 2018/19 baselines. 2019/20 figures at both local and national levels were materially influenced by the early stages of the pandemic with the survey point falling in the Autumn of 2020.

- 10.4 Destinations for pupils in SIMD levels 1,2 and 4 are all equally improved on 2018/19 in terms of percentage point change, with the gap between SIMD 4 and 5 eradicated in 2021/22, whilst the outcomes for SIMD 3 pupils shows a marginal increase in the poverty related gap from the baseline.

Chart 10.3 Poverty Related Gap to the Least Deprived Quintile (SIMD 5)



12.0 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK

- 12.1 The data shared above, highlights that there continues to be evidence of sustained improvement year on year. In order to determine our rate of progress against other Local Authorities, the service also makes supplementary use of the Improvement Service Local Government Benchmarking data to establish an understanding of progress over time.
- 12.2 As reported in Appendix B within the [Performance Management Framework Report Appendix B](#) in March 2023, this national Improvement Service tool is routinely updated when validated data is available. This data helps Service judgements on how we are performing against national averages over time, and how we are performing against the other Local Authorities (our

Family Group) thought to be most like us in terms of SIMD based population characteristics, Considering our position against others helps us to draw high level conclusions to inform next steps.

12.3 The following charts and narratives function as summary of the outcomes that were captured in that report. The Family Groupings for each Local Education Authority are based on four groups of eight authorities, constructed on the basis of similarity of Deprivation Levels.

12.4 The Aberdeen City grouping consists of the following Education Authorities, with significant variations in population, economic and geographic environments which are all influential in the ability to form direct comparisons but is an additional form of benchmarking supported by the Accounts Commission, and which is scrutinised by Audit Scotland in terms of establishing Best Value Assessments of local authority provision and delivery.

Table 12.1 Local Government Benchmarking Framework – Family Group 1

Authority	Geography
East Renfrewshire	Mixed
East Dunbartonshire	Urban
Aberdeenshire	Rural
Edinburgh, City of	Urban
Perth & Kinross	Rural
Aberdeen City	Urban
Shetland Islands	Rural

Orkney Islands	Rural
----------------	-------

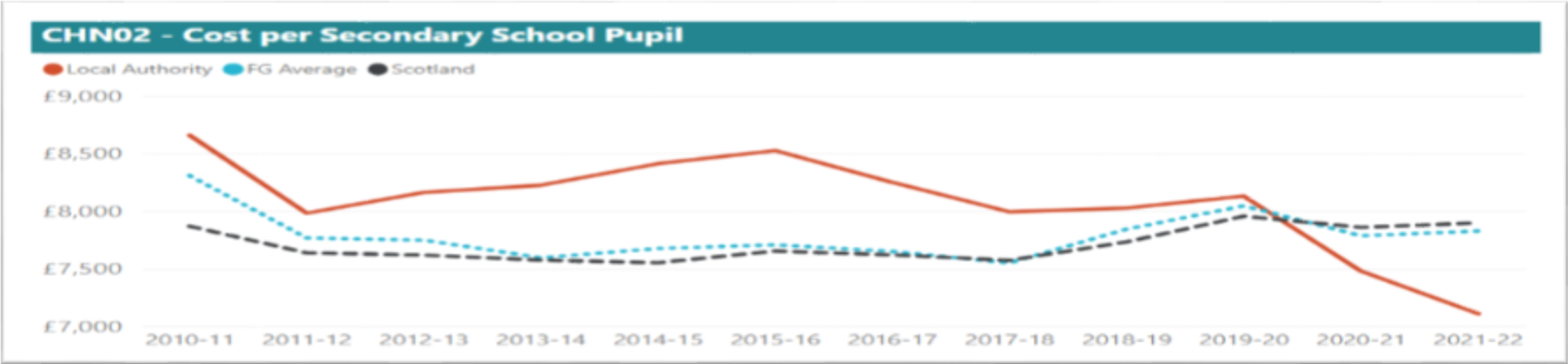
Summary of Children’s Services Outcomes

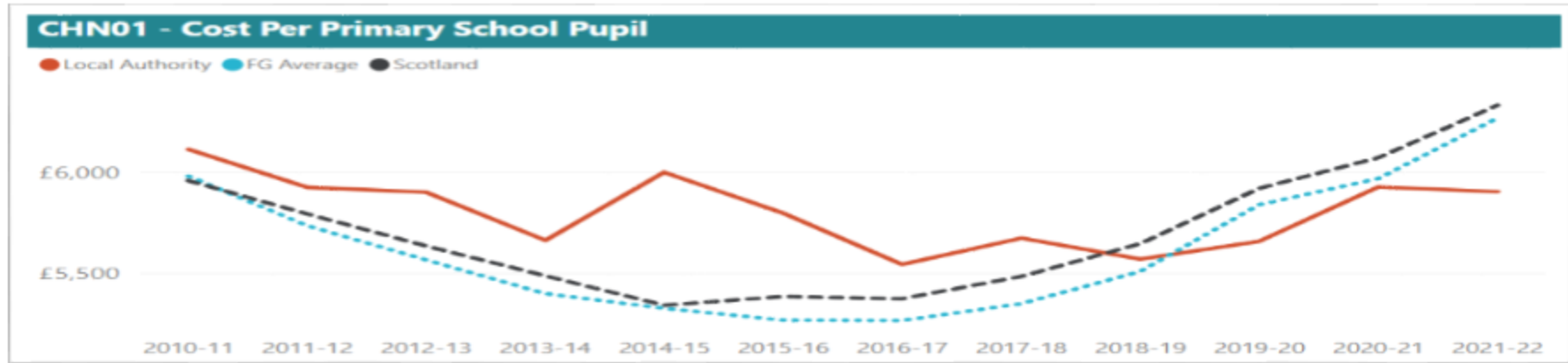
12.4 On publication of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework Report, the 2021-12 suite of outcomes relating to the Children’s Services theme, incorporating attainment and achievement measures for Aberdeen City, was showing the greatest proportion of improved metrics year-on-year of all local authorities. At the same time, it also highlighted that the pace of improvement was not uniform across all these measures and that further progress was needed to match the Family Group outcomes in particular.

Cost Measures

12.5 The cost of per pupil primary and secondary education in 2021/22 was significantly lower than both the national average and the family group and have been on a reducing trend over an extended timeline.

Charts 12 a and b – Cost per Secondary and Primary School Pupil

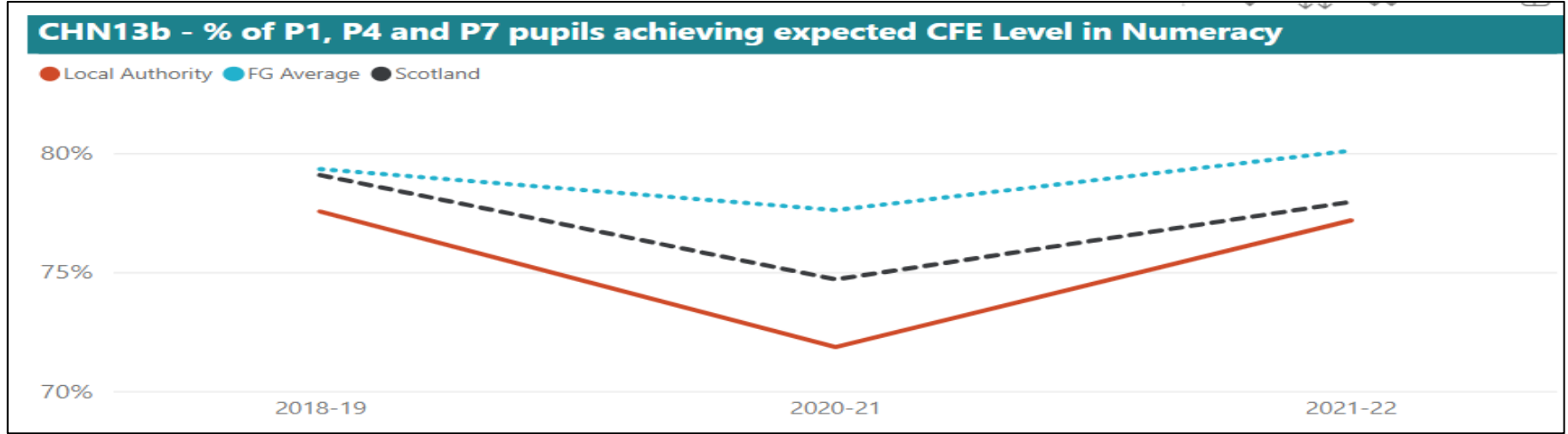
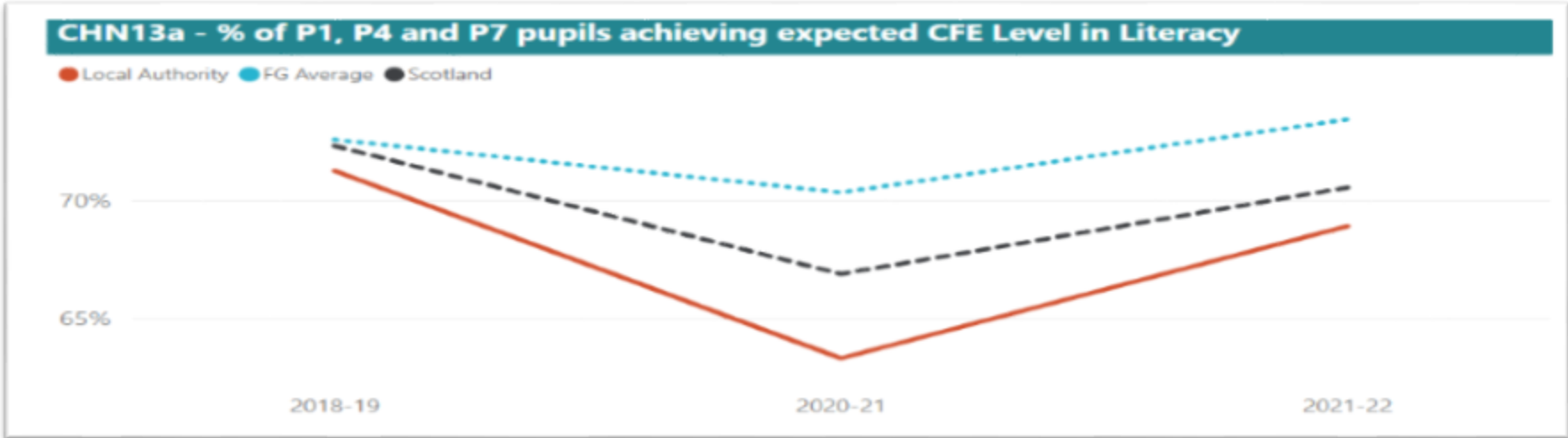




Primary Phase – Literacy and Numeracy

- 12.6 The impact on Literacy and Numeracy achievement at P1-7 over the course of the pandemic, in the absence of a national Curriculum for Excellence assessment programme in 2019/20, was subsequently reflected in the outcomes for 2020/21, with the City mirroring the National and Family Group trends.
- 12.7 The 2020/21 outcome incurred an extension of the gap to both benchmarks, a situation which had been recovered to a substantial extent in 2021/22 but still showed that the City, at an aggregated level, had some scope for additional improvement to close the distance to the benchmarks, particularly around Literacy. The detailed information above demonstrates where this was already being achieved in specific phases and curriculum areas.

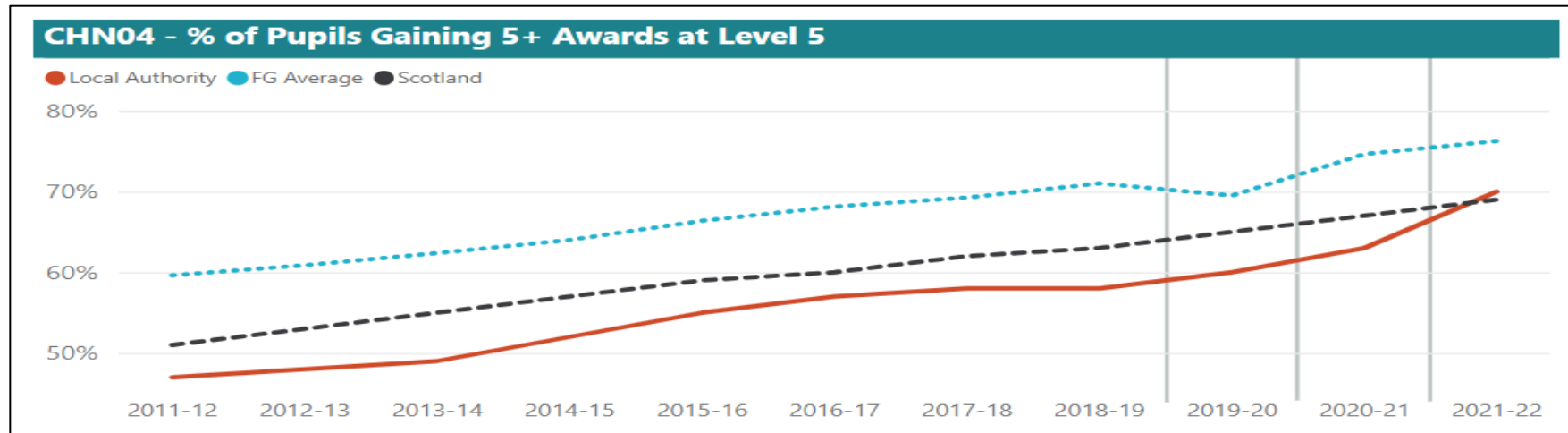
Charts 12 c and d – Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (P1-7) 2018-22

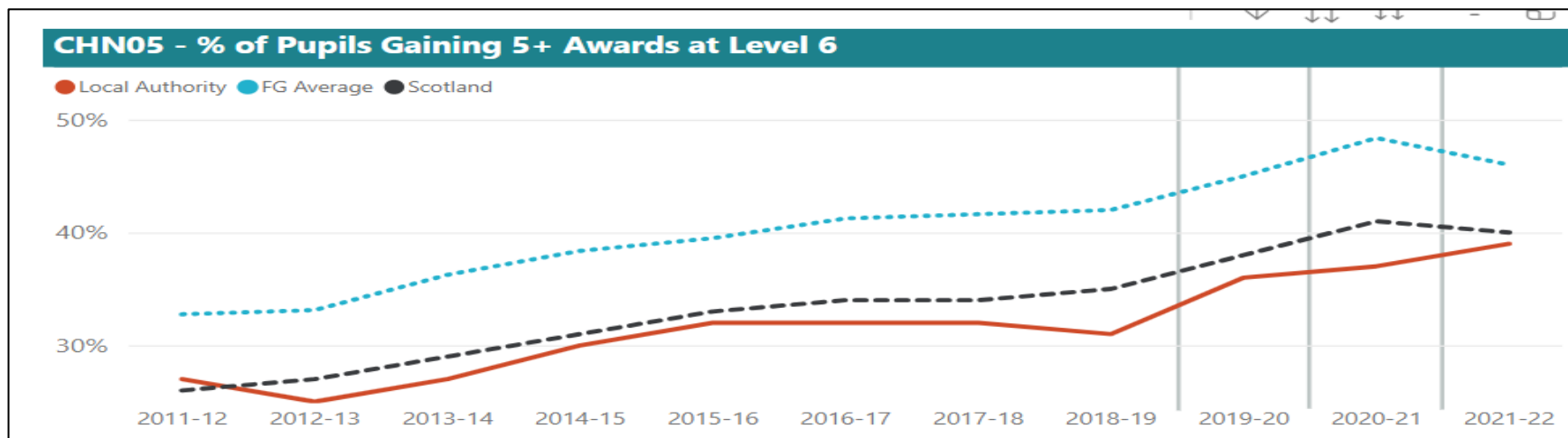


Breadth and Depth in Senior Phase Attainment

- 12.8 These measures reflect the extent to which Senior Phase attainment, against four specific measures from the National Improvement Framework evidential base, are being met. These are distinct from the SCQF indicator data captured above and are an indication of higher-level outcomes across a range of subjects in aggregate.
- 12.9 The percentage of City pupils in Senior Phase attaining 5 or more awards at SCQF Levels 5 and 6 have closely tracked both the National and Family Group trends over time and in 2021/22 entirely closed the statistical gap to the former and has shown material gains against the Family Group averages.
- 12.10 Long term, both of the Level 5+ measures demonstrated advances that were ahead of the National, Average and Median rate of improvement with the greater positive movement being reflected against the outcomes of the Most Deprived cohort. At Level 6+. The improvement rates of both indicators were behind the three comparator measures of improvement with the outcomes of those in the Most Deprived Quintile, as a result of the 2021/22 dip in attainment, being more pronounced. This year-on-year fall in outcomes of the Most Deprived was noted across more than a third of all authorities.

Charts 12 e and f – Pupils Attaining 5 or more awards at SCQF Levels 5 and 6

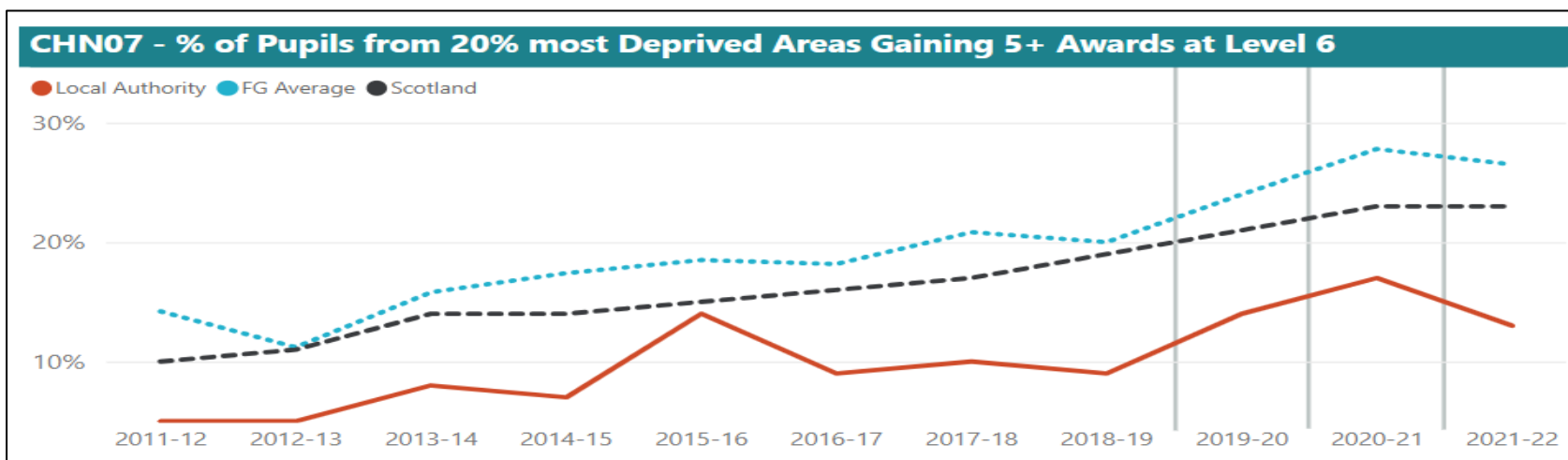
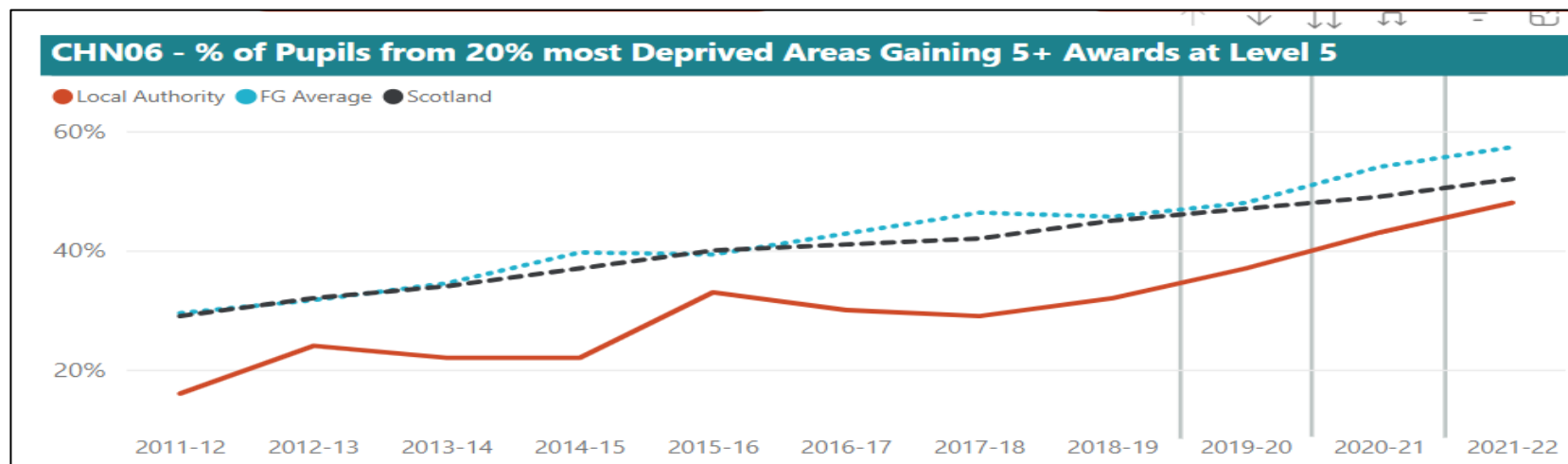




12.11 Attainment against the deprivation related award measures demonstrated diverging outcomes and trends in 2021/22, with the rate of improvement at SCQF Level 5 rising at a rate that exceeded the benchmarks, consequently resulting in sustained material gains on both over time.

12.12 At SCQF Level 6, there was a less robust trend in improvement with an unexpected dip in outcome in 2021/22, subsequent to two years of consecutive growth that was similar to, if not greater than the benchmarks. The backgrounds to this year-on-year change are outlined in the sections above relating to attainment.

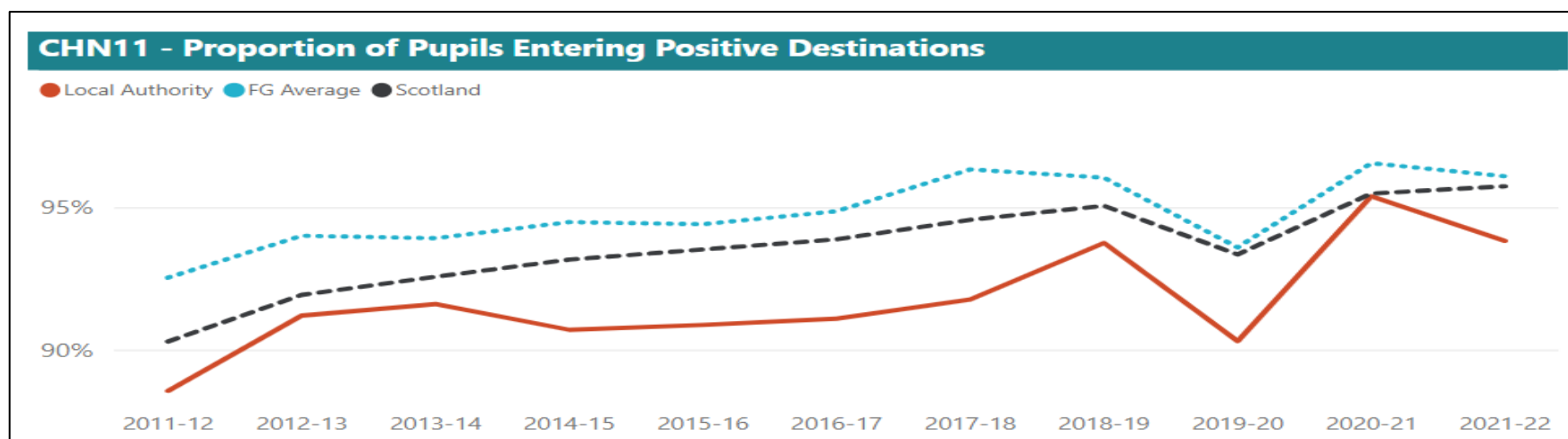
Charts 12 g and h – Pupils from SIMD 1 (Most Deprived Areas) Attaining 5 or more awards at SCQF Levels 5 and 6



Post School Destinations

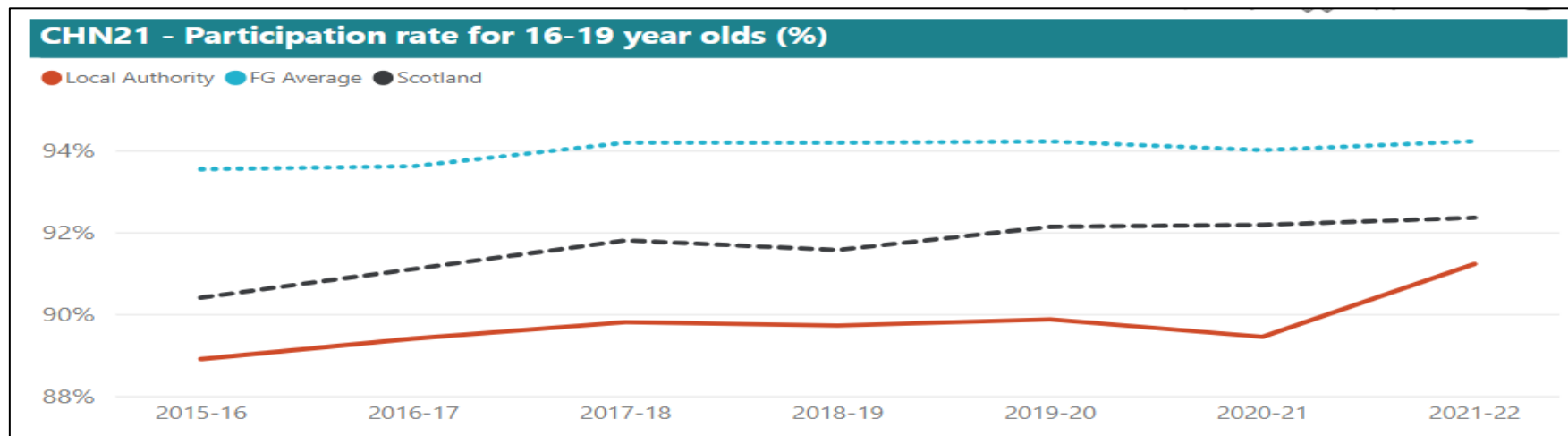
- 12.13 The extended trend in Positive Destinations of school leavers for Aberdeen City had been consistently below that at a national and Family Group level but had been on an improvement curve between 2014/15 and 2018/19, despite material economic impacts arising from the oil and gas downturn towards the end of this timeline.
- 12.14 2019/20 and 2020/21, reflecting the peak years of the pandemic impacts, saw Aberdeen City experience disproportionate impacts (negative and positive respectively) in the percentage of school leavers achieving a positive destination.
- 12.15 2021/22 however, saw re-instatement of the underlying linear improvement trend that was developing in pre-pandemic years, although it is clear that as noted above and in previous reports to this Committee around post school outcomes of our young people, employment-based opportunities remain depressed in comparison with almost all of the City's deprivation and geographic comparators. This is a circumstance that has now been prevalent over an extended period and contributes significantly to the distance between the City's overall Positive Destinations and those of different benchmarks.

Chart 12 i – Percentage of Initial School Leavers in a Positive Destination



- 12.16 The Annual Participation Measure which captures destination outcomes of 16–19-year-olds across a full 12 monthly period has traditionally seen Aberdeen City performing at levels below both the National and LGBF benchmarks but with a material rise in 2021/22, at a significantly faster rate than the majority of local authorities.
- 12.17 The context around this increase and influences within the more recent timeline (2018/19 onwards) are intimately linked to the circumstances outlined in the paragraphs above around Initial School Leaver Destinations and were touched on in the previous PMF report content to this Committee on the Interim Participation Snapshot.

Chart 12.j – Annual Participation Measure

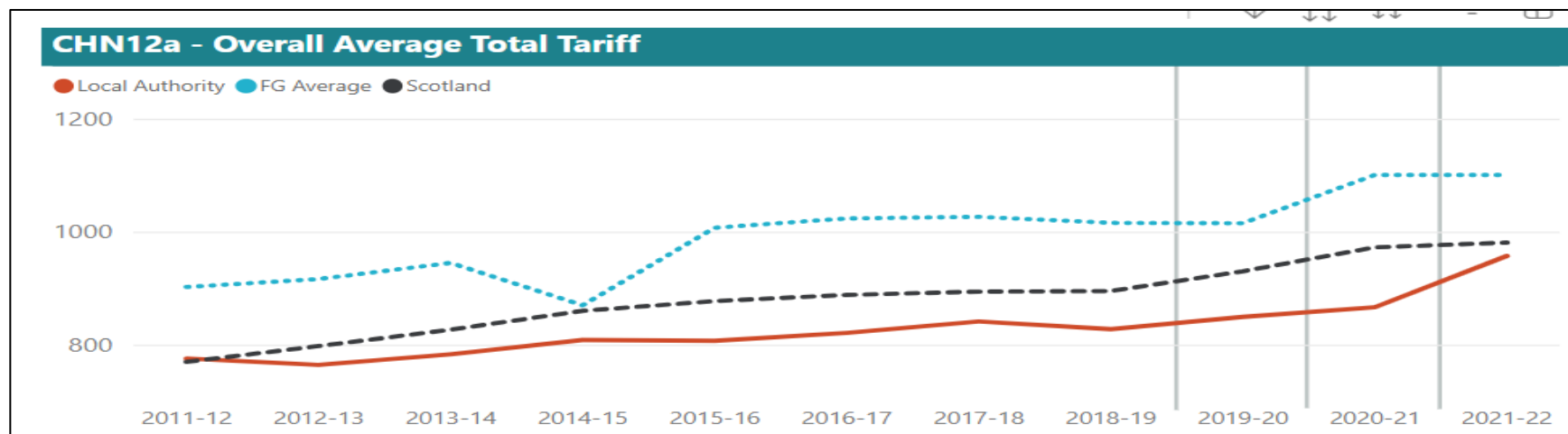


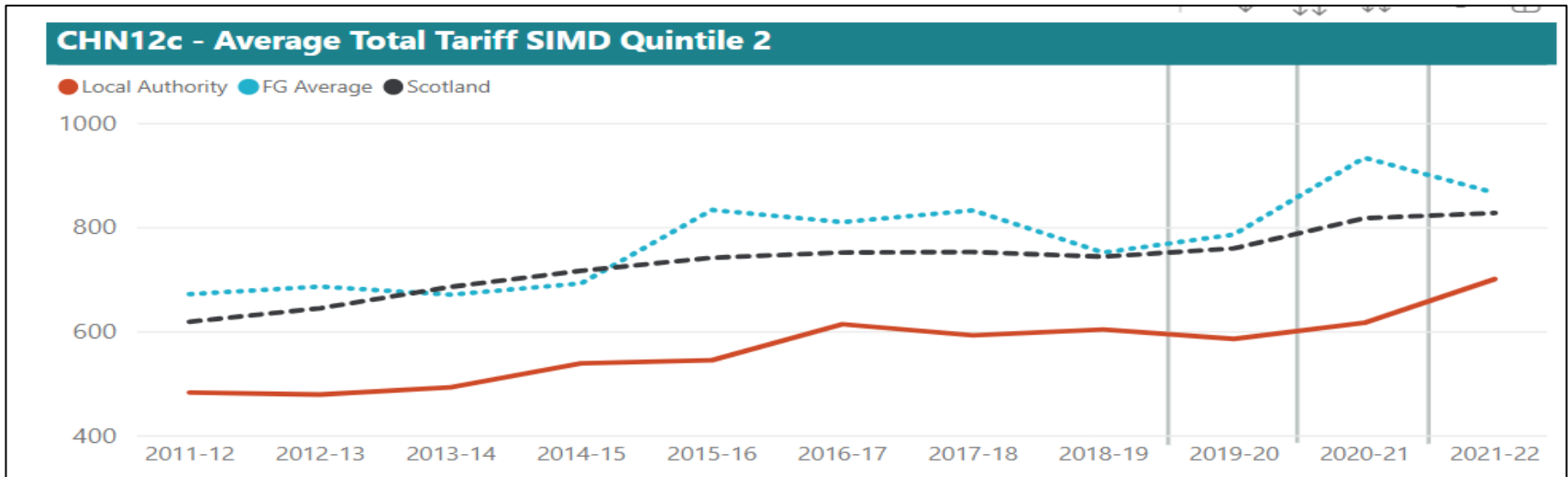
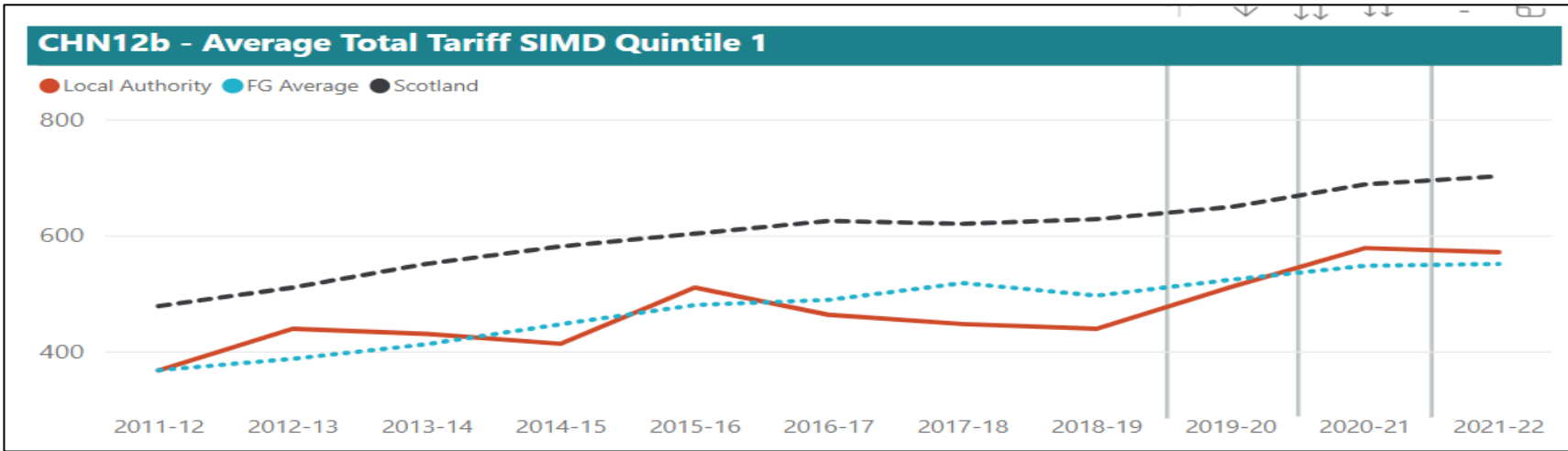
Overall Average Total Tariff Point Scores

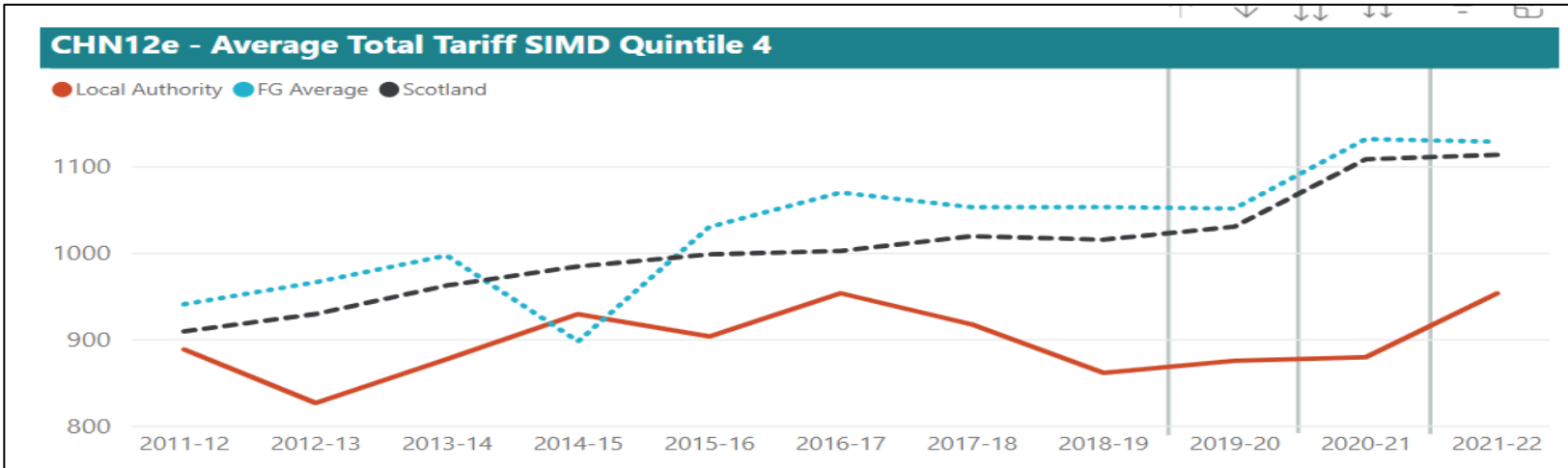
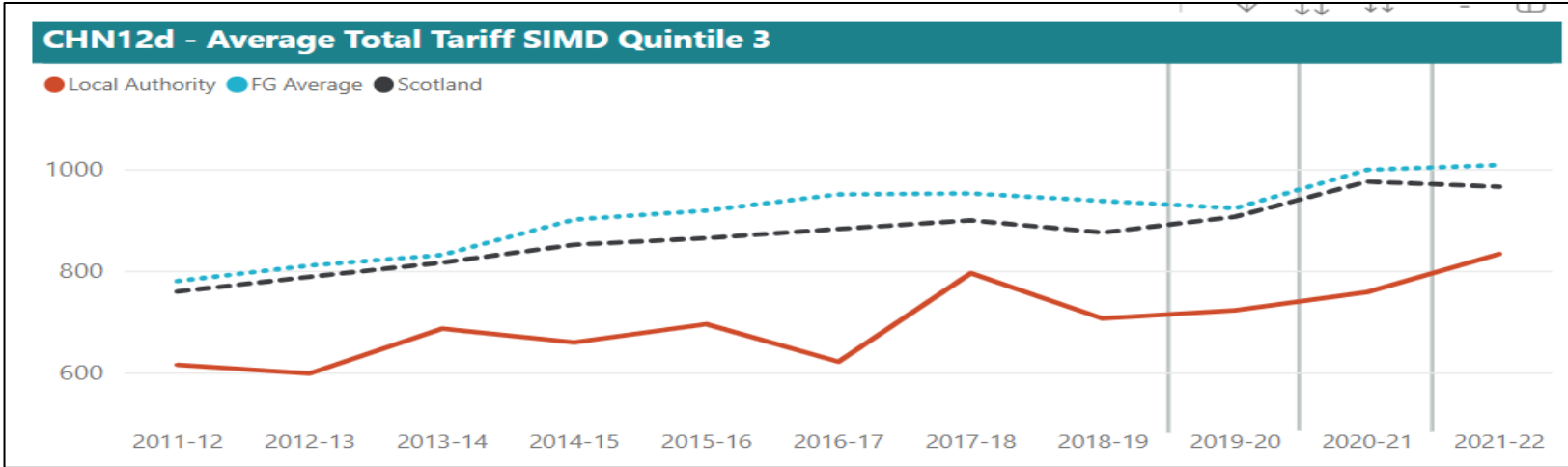
- 12.18 The charts below highlight Aberdeen City's direction of travel over the longer term and performance relative to the two standard benchmarks defined by the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

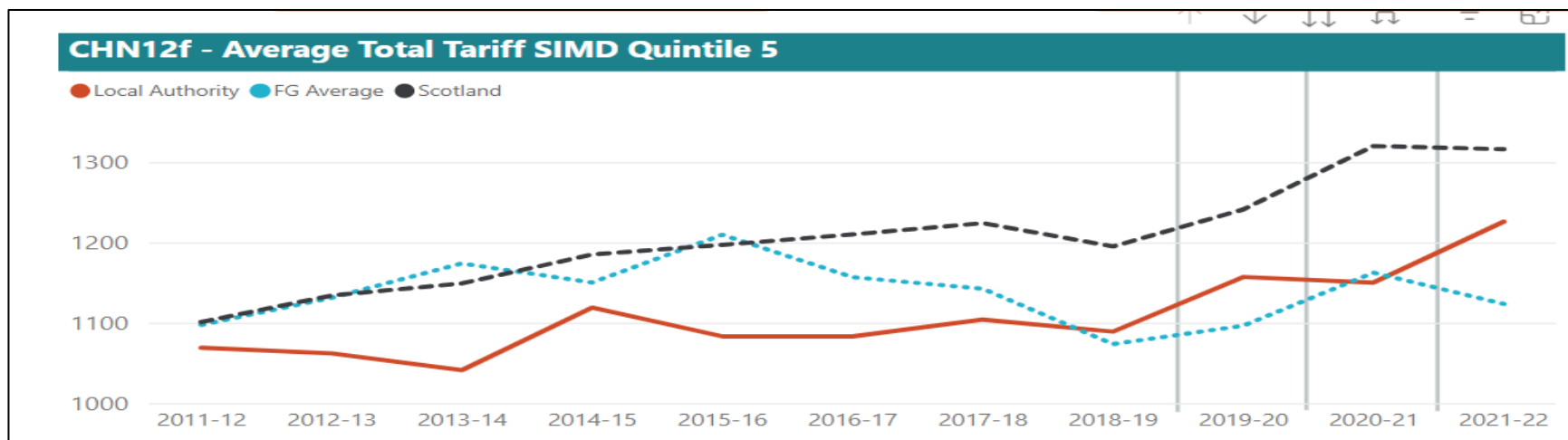
- 12.19 An element of caution should be exercised in comparing this data directly with that referred to above as the metadata descriptor for this information differs from that captured in the post review National Benchmark Measures which form the basis of the analysis under paragraph 5.3.
- 12.20 Overall, the City's journey and trend pattern had closely followed that of the Scotland benchmark and, in 2021/22, closed the pre-existing gap in performance to a statistically insignificant level.
- 12.21 A similar linear pattern was being displayed at each of the SIMD Quintiles although the extent of alignment with the national level outcomes, despite more recent improvements relative to the national data in SIMD 2,3,4 and 5, tracking against Aberdeen City outcomes is generally at levels below Scotland averages.
- 12.22 The long-term improvement data trends covering the timelines outlined in the charts below indicate that the City's outcomes had risen at a substantially faster rate than the National, average and median levels in each of the lower three quintiles (SIMD 1, 2 and 3) but was behind each of these comparators at SIMD 4 and 5, with the greatest distances being noted at SIMD 4.

Charts 12 k-p Overall Average Tariff Points by Whole Cohort and SIMD Quintiles







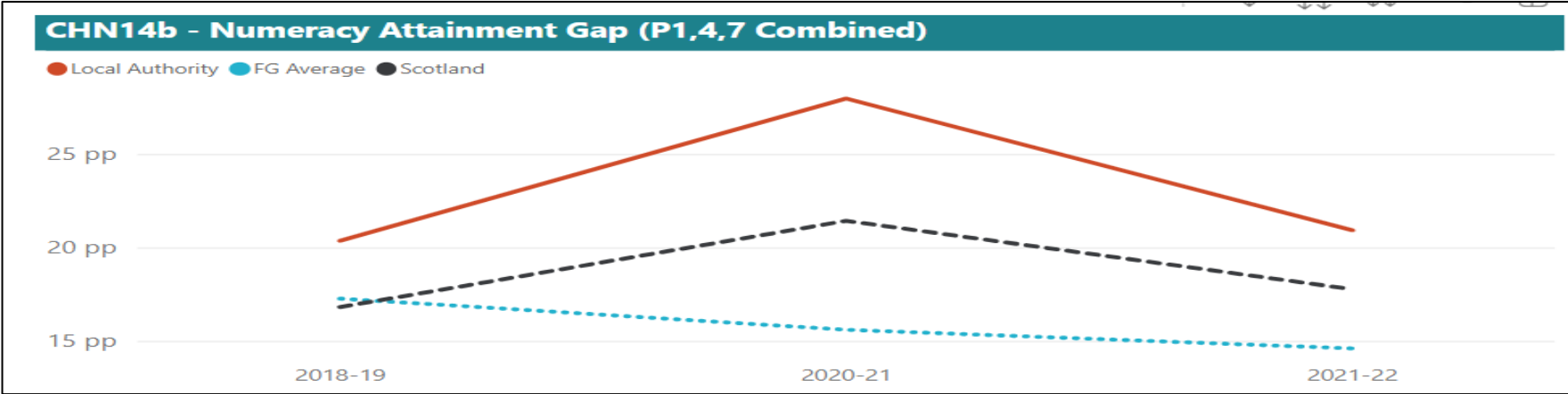
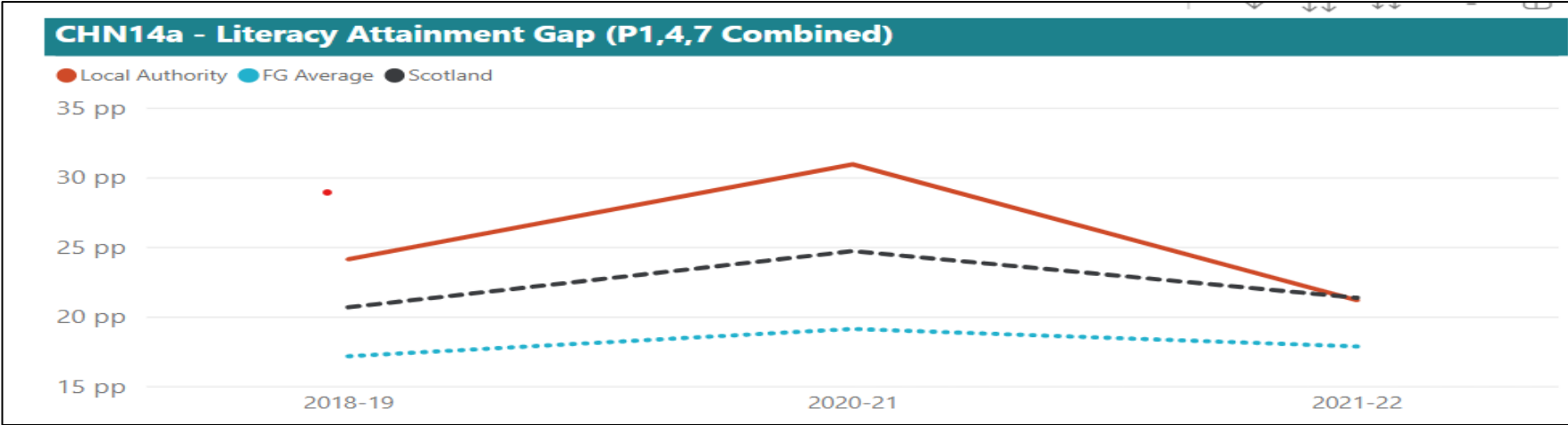


Closing the Gap

Primary Phase – Literacy and Numeracy

- 12.22 In common with the Average Tariff Point data above, there is a variable picture in terms of the extent to which the City has been closing the gap between the Most and Least Deprived for the two high level measures of Literacy and Numeracy respectively at P1-7 combined.
- 12.23 The City, in 2021/22, had materially closed the deprivation related gap in Literacy and removed the distance to the National outcome in comparison with both previous years. Numeracy mirrored a similar data pattern over the three-year period but showed a lesser rate of improvement with minimal change on the 2018/19 baseline and an outcome which was poorer than the Scotland level.

Charts 12 q -r P1-7 Literacy and Numeracy Deprivation Related Gap between the Least and Most Deprived SIMD Quintiles



13.0 DATA EVIDENCE CONCLUSIONS

- 13.1 Contextually the pandemic, its consequences for the models of delivery for education, and the challenges that this has posed to our teaching professionals in evaluating the impacts on our young people's attainment and achievement through a data led approach, are evidenced across the Indicator suite that forms the basis of this tracking report.
- 13.2 At the same time, taking account of the data availability restrictions that arose during and across this extended period, there is firm statistical evidence that, both in the short term and over the course of the Service's Improvement Journey to date, the outcomes of pupils are, in the main, showing advances.
- 13.3 These advances are more materially, but admittedly not universally, highlighted amongst those pupils who are defined as being in the Highest Levels of Deprivation where the professional expectations of the potential negative impacts of the pandemic on this cohort were initially significant.
- 13.4 At the same, the granular data has also highlighted is that there were individual cohorts and subjects, at both Senior Phase and in Broad General Education, where, in terms of sustained improvement trends, the mitigations put in place by the Service have had a lesser influence in countering the circumstances of the pandemic. This data is leading to a clearer understanding of the points of new or renewed focus necessary to drive continuous improvement in the outcomes of all our pupils.
- 13.5 Comparatively, over the extended period, there was strong data-based evidence that:
- (a) a significant tranche of the deprivation related pupil outcomes for Aberdeen City, where these were behind the benchmark measures in 2018/19, had gained ground by 2021/22 and that;
 - (b) the direction of travel for general attainment and achievement in the City over the course of the pandemic, and subsequent recovery period, matched that of the National and comparator authorities in each of these years.
- 13.6 Taking these factors into account, although acknowledging that data-based interpretation forms only a part of the assessment of the Education Improvement Journey, this evidence, when taken in context with the various other detailed reports to Committee over the past 12 months, offers proportionate assurance that the National Improvement Framework approaches taken by the Service have been positively impactful and appropriate to the circumstances in each year to date.

13.7 In review, analysis of the extended and National Benchmark Measures data, supports the professional judgements expressed within the report to the November 2022 meeting of this Committee.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/268
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to implement the refreshed Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan for 2023/24 following submission of the Self-Evaluation and Plan to the Scottish Government.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of the service Self-Evaluation and Plan contained in Appendices A and B;
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to implement the proposed Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan 23/24;
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to maintain a review of the 23/24 Plan in light of any impacting national legislative or policy provisions through the education reform agendas and advise Committee of any required changes in due course;
- 2.4 notes the evaluative reports on MCR pathways included in Appendices C and D of this report; and
- 2.5 instructs the Chief Education Officer to work with MCR Pathways to address the data issues to inform a further review in March 2024 to help shape a longer term and sustainable approach to the delivery of mentoring for young people.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan is a statutory submission to the Scottish Government that requires to be provided by the end of September each year. The document brings together an analysis of a range of data sets and resultant areas for improvement in keeping with the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc.2000 legislation.

- 3.2 The service self-evaluation process begins in February and concludes when draft School Improvement Plans and updated Scottish Qualifications Authority data are available for review. In real terms, Officers keep the Plan under constant review as new data sets are released and available for analysis.
- 3.3 Staff from across the Education Service collectively consider data trends in order to conclude a high level analysis in order to determine next steps. This analysis is informed by and informs school improvement priorities and the Children's Services Plan. The Council Performance Board and Strategy Board both play a role in reviewing the draft documentation prior to it being presented to Committee for approval. This approach ensures that the interconnection of Council business is reflected in the final Plan presented for Committee approval.
- 3.4 Updated national guidance on the management of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding has led to the inclusion of amended Stretch Aims in the Plan. Stretch aims are no longer to be set against a baseline year, but rather look at trends over time and provide clearly articulated trajectories for progress towards 2025/26 stretch aims. These stretch aims and the proposed priorities for improvement have been scrutinised by Education Scotland who noted the comprehensive analysis undertaken and endorsed the direction of travel. Officers propose to keep members of the Education and Children's Services Committee sighted on progress through the now well established tracking appendix linked to routine Performance Reports.
- 3.5 This year has seen a significant rise in pupil population and a strong humanitarian response to those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. The school roll is now around 12% higher than in 2019 and this has led to changes in the use of spaces in some schools to increase the number of classrooms. Our roll is far more fluid than before. 6.74% of our current school population arrived in the city after the school census in September 2022.
- 3.6 The impact of the cost of living is impacting families as they recover from the public health restrictions in place during the pandemic. This is impacting on the needs of children, young people and their families.
- 3.7 Despite the challenges the service has experienced over the last 12 months, a number of national and local programmes and policies have been successfully delivered with support from across the organisation and wider partnership. These include:
- An increase in the uptake of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in the city with 94.74% of our eligible population placed in 2022/23 compared to 91.22% in 2021/22
 - Successful delivery of holiday programmes targeted at the 6 groups most at risk of poverty, with average enjoyment ratings sitting at 9.7 out of 10
 - Development of our Children's Services Plan and associated GIRFEC Operational Guidance
 - Further development of school profiles by making use of Power BI to improve the accessibility of data to support school improvement and development of an authority wide PEF tracker to support evaluation of interventions at an authority level to help ensure best value

- Early response to the issues Logan found in the national review of the technology ecosystem. Successful launch event for Aberdeen Computing Collaborative working closely with local higher education institutes, local independent schools and Opportunity North East.
- Completion of phase 1 of ABZ Campus. Producing a parent information video for parents and carers and offering young people a total of 37 courses with a projected occupancy of 87%.
- A coalesced programme of 'clearing' to provide better opportunities for young people to be able to access their chosen courses.
- Close collaboration between secondary schools and partners seeing an increase in the number of pathways available for young people in the senior phase. An example of this can be found in the projected increase in successful National Progression Awards (NPA) from 390 in 2021-22 to approximately 800 in 2022-23.
- Providing Settle in the City programmes for Ukrainian families arriving in Aberdeen and supporting families to access school placements
- Establishment of a refreshed Quality Assurance calendar and proportionate model of support with a clear focus on professional development against Core QIs.
- On-going work to support mental health and wellbeing and commissioning of Mental Health Aberdeen to provide city wide counselling for those aged 10+
- Increased opportunities for young musicians to play and sing together.
- Successful partnership working with the Attainment Advisor and Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) National Improving Writing Programme resulting in improved attainment in 11 city primary schools

3.8 Our high level Strategic Plan, agreed by the former Education Operational Delivery Committee in September 2022 remains valid. However the resumption of inspection regimes and associated inspection outcomes has evidenced continued variability across our Early Learning and Childcare settings and schools. This has triggered changes in approaches to quality improvement. Addressing variability will be a key focus over school session 2023/24.

3.9 There are positive signs of improvement in the mental and physical health of our learners which needs to be maintained. We now need to ensure that we consider our approach for those identified with poorer wellbeing outcomes such as those in the LGBT+ community.

3.10 The rapid rise in school roll has impacted on high level attainment data over this school session. We would expect that impact to reduce over coming years and now have high quality data dashboards to support the monitoring of progress. We now need to work with schools to ensure high levels of data literacy so that the valuable resources are fully utilised

3.11 Long terms areas for development such as our Edge of Care Pilots and work associated with those who are care experienced, work to meet the needs of those with additional support needs, further development of ABZ Campus and work with Aberdeen Computing Collaborative remain a focus.

- 3.12 It is proposed that Scottish Attainment Challenge resource continues to be utilised to support the provision of Youth Work, Family Learning and Money Advisors in school and that the place of these supports within a wider model of Family Support be explored and aligned with our work to develop our Bairns Hoose.
- 3.13 The need to carefully consider approaches to raising attainment in our care experienced young people triggered an evaluation of the impact of the MCR Pathways programme on our young people to help determine the best use of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding.
- 3.14 The evaluation undertaken by officers is available in Appendix C. An MCR led evaluation is available in Appendix D. It is recommended that Officers continue to work with MCR Pathways to address the data issues identified to enable more effective monitoring with schools opting to use Pupil Equity Funding to cover the cost of the Pathways Coordinator over school session 2023/24. Taking this step will enable Care Experienced Scottish Attainment Challenge funding to be utilised to support a larger group of care experienced young people (and those on the edge of care) by accelerating work on Phase 2 of ABZ Campus, ensuring adequate provision of Pathways Advocates and extending the Edge of Care pilots to St Machar Academy.
- 3.15 It is proposed that a further evaluation of our approach to mentoring begin in March 2024 to determine a sustainable Mentoring model for vulnerable pupils across Aberdeen City.

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 and grants

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 National Improvement Framework.
 - Undertake annual planning and reporting and annual school improvement planning to address the four priorities of the National Improvement Framework
 - 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.

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) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*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.	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 staff engagement on the draft National Improvement Framework and the ongoing commitment to delivering high quality professional learning for staff to ensure	L	Yes

		that they meet their statutory duties under the relevant Acts.		
Financial	Risk of not having sufficient resource.	Mitigated by realigning service delivery and resource through the National Improvement Framework to better meet the needs of our young people in Aberdeen City and make best use of Officer time.	L	yes
Reputational	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	Data scrutiny and reporting enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	Risk of lack of awareness of environmental/climate issues.	Mitigated by breadth and scope of Curriculum for Excellence.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>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>	
Prosperous People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The detail within this report supports the delivery of Children & Young People Stretch

	<p>Outcomes 4 to 9 in the refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan. This includes the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026 (Baseline 77.5% 2015-16) • Increase the number of ELC settings achieving good or better from 83.7% in 2022 to 90% by 2025. • Establish a single source of information for parents, carers and children and young people to improve the accessibility of mental health services and support. • Implement 'One Good Adult' programme in education • Increase the range of accessible options for children and young people with sensory and physical impairments. Ensure a more equal distribution of gender participation in physical activity. • Increase the understanding of creating child friendly environments within local communities to help reduce the gap between the number of children living in areas of deprivation who report feeling safe in their community with their peers living in less deprived communities. Better understand the inequalities associated with the mental health needs of the 6 priority groups from a programme of engagement and co-design • Continued prioritisation for children aged 5-18 from the 6 priority groups for extra-curricular activities and holiday programmes with particular reference to young carers and those for whom we have Corporate Parenting responsibility. Maintain spread of uptake for holiday programmes against the 6 priority groups • Evaluate the impact of the intensive Edge of Care Pilots at Lochside and Northfield Academies to inform next steps for school session 23/24 and beyond • Evaluate the impact of Pathways Associates on CEYP attainment, achievement and positive destinations by 2024 to inform next steps. • 100% of schools with care experienced young people will continue to plan for Care
--	---

	<p>Experienced young people within School Improvement Plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a live and effective tracking system for all CEYP or those on the edge of care by 2023. • All secondary schools to establish effective systems to support their LGBTQIA community transitions from Primary 7 to Secondary 1. Ensure our senior primary pupils have opportunities to share examples of their learning as part of the transition programme from Primary 7 to S1. Ensure tracking information for all curricular areas transfers from P7 to S1 • Delivery of Phase 2 of ABZ Campus to further increase the number of available courses from June 2024. • Increase the number attaining 1@L6 to be ahead of the Virtual Comparator by 2025. • Increase the Attainment For All Total Tariff point measure for leavers at L20, M60 and H20 so these are ahead of the Virtual Comparator by 2025. • Maintain through Scottish Attainment Challenge funding the provision of youth work and Family Learning to improve core educational measures through the delivery of bespoke learning pathways where appropriate. • Ensure tracking at individual pupil level. • Ensure cohesion across school, college and university. • Develop and deliver effective and current professional learning for computing science and other teachers. • Develop and deliver collaborative extra-curricular Computing Science and Digital activities. • Develop communication for parents/carers/young people to promote the opportunities in the sector.
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p> <p>Children’s Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework 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>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	NA

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A– Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Evaluation

Appendix B – Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan

Appendix C – ACC led evaluation

Appendix D – MCR led evaluation

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Shona Milne
Title	Chief Education Officer
Email Address	shmilne@aberdeencity.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank



Evaluation of the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan 2022/23



CONTENTS

Context	3
Reflections from the Chief Education Officer	3
Key achievements of the last year	9
Governance	10
TOM Foundations which continue to be developed	11
Strategic Priorities	14
Excellence.....	14
Equity.....	39
Strategic Enablers	70
Workforce	70
Data	77
Standards.....	80
Partnerships	81

Context

This evaluation of the education service aims to critique how effectively the service has contributed to the improvements outlined in the [Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#) (LOIP) and associated [Children's Services Plan](#) as well as reflecting on the improvements detailed in the Aberdeen City Council [National Improvement Framework Plan](#) in order to determine if the service is successfully improving outcomes for children and young people. The evaluation draws on the Scottish Government Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress to ensure that our approach to evaluation and planning, including the setting of stretch aims across the service, is reflective of national guidance and complements work already undertaken to evaluate progress against the [children's rights](#) and [child poverty agenda](#). The report also considers our progress towards delivery of The Promise and our readiness to respond to the anticipated education reforms.

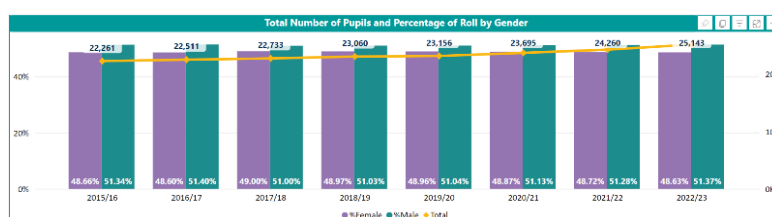
This evaluation aims to align in structure with other key plans for children including that of the Integrated Joint Board and the Children's Services Plan. This builds on the good progress made in aligning planning for children and families to ensure full alignment of work across the Community Planning Partnership.

Reflections from the Chief Education Officer

Session 2022/23 saw the Local Authority respond positively in support of those fleeing their homeland due to conflict. The city now supports the highest proportion of those in need of humanitarian aid with 6.68 people per 1000 (or 0.67% of the city population) being supported locally compared to a national average of 3.08 per 1000 (or 0.31%). Education and health staff proactively collaborated in June 2022 to design and deliver our 5-week Settle in the City programme. Delivery of the programme helped the Education Service better understand the needs of children and young people and make effective arrangements to enrol our Ukrainian guests into Early Learning and Childcare settings and schools from August whilst enabling health colleagues in identify and address any identified health concerns.

The service continues to welcome a high volume of international families coming to the city to study at one of the 2 Higher Education Institutions, with demand for school enrolments placing considerable pressure on schools and the central team. In real terms this pressure has reduced the quality improvement resource available to support schools. Despite the challenges, our schools have responded positively.

The school roll is now around 12% higher than in 2019 and this has led to changes in the use of spaces in some schools to increase classroom capacity. Our roll is far more fluid than before. 6.74% of our current school population arrived in the city after the school census date in September 2022.



Although there is an over provision of school accommodation across some Associated Schools Groups being explored through ongoing work on the School Estate Review, families are choosing to locate in communities within easy reach of the Universities and established international communities resulting in spaces not being available where needed most.

Despite the challenges, the children and young people have benefited from relatively consistent staffing and the trend of being able to recruit to school based posts has been maintained. Some challenges in the recruitment of high quality senior and middle leaders are evident, and this trend is mirrored nationally.

Quality improvement visits have evidenced improvement against some core Quality Indicators, but the level of improvement is inconsistent with different patterns emerging across sectors. In many settings there remains a need to continue to focus on high quality learning, teaching and assessment and to improve approaches to planning for individuals and groups. The Local Authorities in the Regional Improvement Collaborative have committed to work together with Education Scotland to address this vulnerability further over school session 2023/24.

Although there is evidence of improvement in inspection outcomes compared to the outcomes being realised before the pandemic, there is evidence of considerable variation signalling a need to take a more proportionate approach to quality improvement. A refreshed Quality Improvement Framework for 2023/34 has been developed to support this change and the approach was endorsed by the Education and Children's Services Committee in July 2023. Approaches to quality improvement have latterly drawn on the considerable experience of high performing school leaders and this approach will be mainstreamed across all sectors from August 2023.

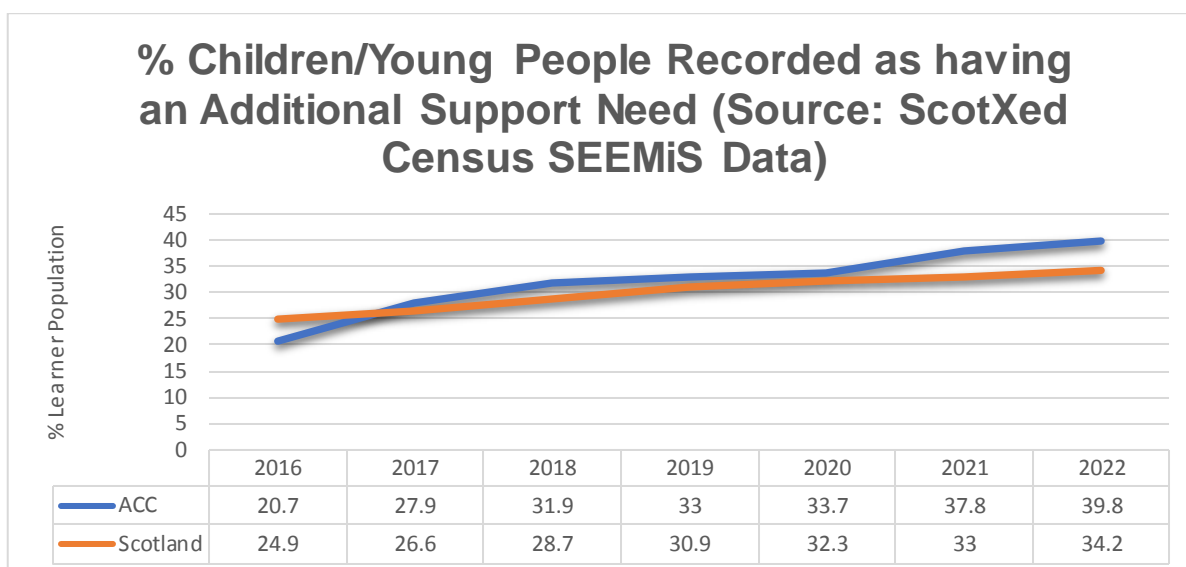
Targeted Early Learning and Childcare settings established as part of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (such as the Links Hub and Duthie Park Outdoor provision), have achieved very positive evaluations from recent Care Inspectorate Inspections and there are more Early Learning and Childcare settings now achieving evaluations of good or better, but there is still work to be done. The Education Service will maintain a relentless focus on this area and welcome a peer review of our approach in November 2023. We now plan to utilise the expertise of staff achieving high evaluations to support less confident settings to address variation. Taking this approach will provide capacity beyond the 6 Early Learning and Childcare Locality Leads and help realise improvement at greater pace. It is thought that the impending publication of the single quality framework for Early Learning and Childcare will help further clarify standards.

There has been an encouraging increase in the uptake of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in the city with 94.74% of our eligible population placed in 2022/23 compared to 91.22% in 2021/22. There has also been a 50% increase in the number of eligible 2s placed. In line with national policy, we will consider how best to extend provision for some aged 1 and 2 and consider how best to develop the provision of wrap around childcare for others of primary age when more details of the national policy are known.

Working in collaboration with the Data and Insights team, the service has continued to drive the further development of Power BI dashboards which provide Central Officers,

Head Teachers and other school staff with access to a wide range of data to support improvement both locally and city wide. These tools are of high quality, their strength recognised by national agencies, but there are indications that they have not been fully exploited at school level. Data literacy will be an area of focus over session 2023/24.

The service continues to support a high number of children with additional support needs. Although data for 2022/23 has yet to be validated, 39.4% of children and young people have been identified as having an additional support need. There are indications that the number of children with additional support needs is continuing to rise. This rise has triggered the inclusion of those with additional support needs and disability within our Integrated Children’s Services Plan.



Increased collaboration across the organisation and wider partnership continues to be prioritised with the refreshed Children’s Services Plan outlining our shared ambitions. The pooling of resource, co-location and joint decision making around available resource has become more universal. It is now necessary to consider how to develop this approach further at community as well as city level given the emerging learning from the CELCIS research into Children’s Services.

The Children’s Services Plan is driving our work on the development of a model of partnership Family Support in keeping with The Promise, an improved neurodevelopmental pathway as a pathfinder for the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Delivery Board and a sharper focus on child poverty.

The service anticipates on-going consideration of how the implementation of the National Care Service (NCS) will impact on current arrangements to ensure that children and families continue to receive a consistent offer of support during any period of transition. The City’s Chief Officers Group (COG) is overseeing early consideration of the implications of the NCS to ensure continued close collaboration between the universal service of education and the specialist service of Children’s Social Work. Work is progressing at pace to design and deliver a ‘Bairns Hoose’ for those who experience the care and justice systems.

The refreshed Children's Services Plan encourages senior leaders from across the Community Planning Partnership to hold each other to account for the quality of services being delivered. Local Government Benchmarking data shows that Aberdeen City's children's services are the most improved over the last year. This focus on improvement will be maintained as there is still much to do.



The cost of living crisis, changes in the population as a result of inward migration and the number of families seeking refuge in the city has resulted in the needs of our children, young people, families and staff continuing to change. The service continues to be responsive and agile.

Recent pupil mental health and wellbeing surveys evidence improvement in almost all areas compared to 6 months ago, indicating that interventions have impacted positively. 5% more children in Aberdeen City report having good health compared to the national average now, with self-reported peer relationships, hyperactivity, conduct and emotional symptoms more positive than the national mean. There are signs however, that perceptions of affluence impact our children to a greater degree and that young people who did not choose to disclose gender report more negative outcomes than their peers nationally. There is a need to work with Community Planning Partners to address these findings.

Levels of child poverty in the city are below the national average, however, levels are relatively high when compared with our comparator authorities. We need to maintain a clear focus on the child poverty agenda. In response to the cost-of-living crisis, our ongoing partnership with the Financial Inclusion Team, funded through Scottish Attainment Challenge funding, has continued to provide timely support for families experiencing financial difficulties. Taking this approach has ensured that families are accessing the support they are entitled to with school referrals realising financial gains of £1,077,325.24 for families.

The education service worked with officers from across the organisation and local partnership to plan and deliver holiday programmes during Summer, October, and Easter school holidays. The offer consists of a priority programme for those families at greatest risk of poverty and a universal offer. Evaluations from parents and young people continue to be consistently high sitting at 9.7 out of 10. The allocation of £100,000 as part of the council budget and allocation of a Central Officer to coordinate the programme will allow the service to provide an offer during holiday periods over school session 2023/24.

The service continues to build on the positive gains made in its use of technology. 48% of our pupil population now have access to a chrome book and this will increase with the national commitment to ensure all children and young people have access to a device. We are using the Logan Report on the Technology Ecosystem as a catalyst for change and collaborating with partners across Further and Higher Education to ensure our children and young people are well placed to succeed in this growth sector. This work is being driven alongside our work on senior phase curriculum alignment through the provision of a maximised ABZ Campus offer designed to expand the range of pathways for young people. Phase 1 was launched in June 2023, and we are now working hard on Phase 2. This whole system approach will continue to be a focus over 23/24 and will help ensure that our young people are well placed to secure a positive destination and aid the long-term prosperity of the city.

After a few years of restrictions, the Music Service has now planned for the roll out of city-wide ensembles. In preparation, group performances at locality and city level resumed in 2022/23 with a Christmas concert at the Beach Ballroom involving over 500 learners and culminating in an exceptional finale. Our first Big Sing, organised in partnership with Robert Gordon's College and involving every P4 pupil in the city, was held in Duthie Park in June. Plans are now progressing to build these events into our yearly calendar.

Work to keep the Promise has seen two Edge of Care Pilots operational with emerging evidence that the approach is successfully helping to mitigate risk in these two communities. On-going development and subsequent evaluation will help us determine next steps as we continue to shape our Family Support Model. We need to consider how we might scale up the pilots to extend the approach across other communities who would benefit.

During session 22/23 schools actively reintroduced the aspects of outdoor learning which were halted during the pandemic, these include P7 residentials, day visits using coach transport, and Duke of Edinburgh's award camping expeditions. Secondary schools started planning overseas visits in late 2022 when restrictions were lifted, with most of these scheduled to take place in summer 2023 and beyond due to need for a long lead in time.

The Duke of Edinburgh's award programme has returned to pre pandemic levels across the city with new groups at Oldmachar Academy, the Virtual School and the Open Award Centre who are now based at Northfield Academy. There are currently 992 pupils active in DofE across the city.

The publication of 'All Learners in Scotland Matter' in late May 2023 presents an opportunity to respond positively to on-going education reforms. The guiding values and Call to Action steer the service to continue to sharpen its focus on high-quality teaching and learning, continue to widen the range of different learner pathways, establish alternative routes to success, and consider the range of appropriate assessments required to reflect the unique talents of each learner, support their ambitions, and meet the needs of a changing world. The service will continue to work on these key themes and has considered the report fully in establishing priorities for 2023/24.

The report that follows has been colour coded to make it easier for the reader to reference progress made in relation to the Plan, text in either blue or pink highlights a direct reference to the Plan.

I am exceptionally proud of how the service continues to reshape and respond whilst maintaining a focus on improving outcomes, I also appreciate that there will be a need to become increasingly focussed on how we use a reducing central resource to ensure that we identify the small number of key changes that will realise the greatest improvement. I greatly appreciate the considerable expertise at our disposal from across the organisation and wider partnership.

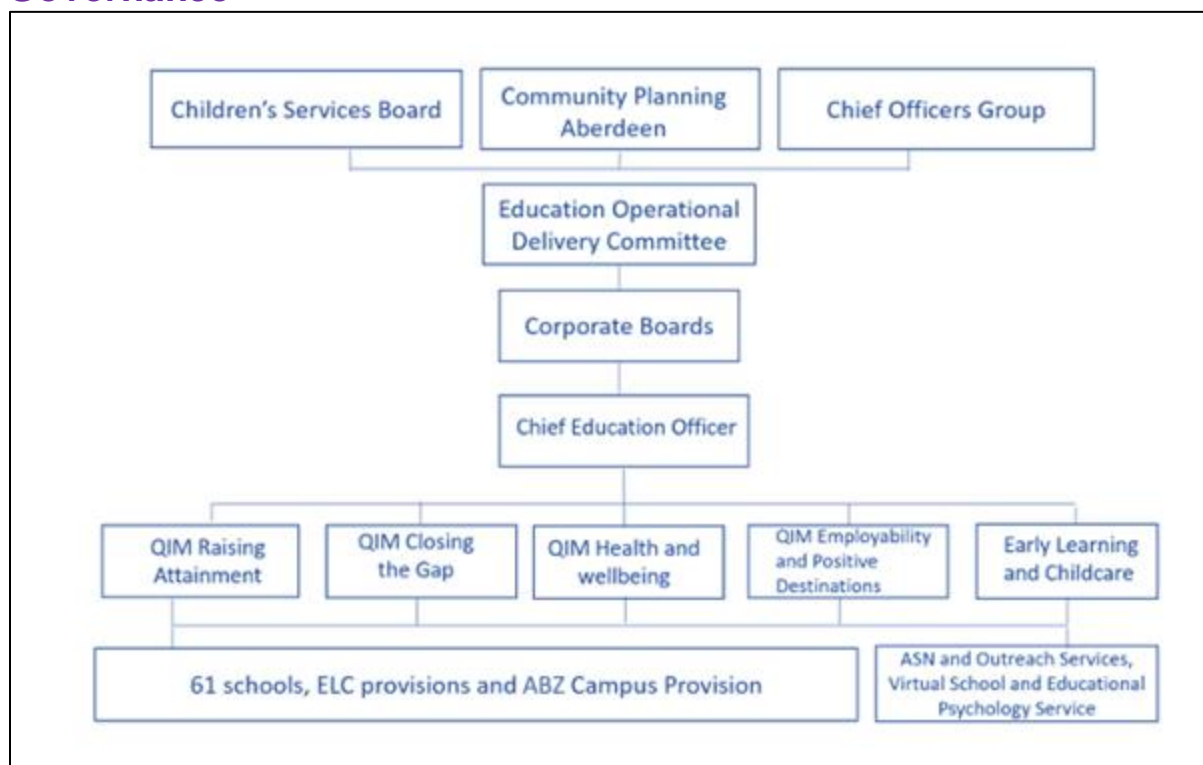
Strategic intent 2022-26			
Excellence		Equity	
Strategic Priorities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the leadership of change in schools Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports in response to changes in need Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services that directly and indirectly affect them Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas Continue to improve the delivery of Computer Science from 3-18 and beyond 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs Reshape the Virtual School to ensure that those on the edge of care and those who are care experienced achieve at the highest levels in keeping with The Promise Close the poverty related attainment gap Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible Partnership delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with The Promise Implement the Anti-bullying policy 	
Strategic Enablers			
Workforce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality professional learning for all Senior and Middle Leadership development Continue to support staff health and wellbeing Monitor workforce levels to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families 	Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop School Profiles Implement improved tracking and reporting Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures 	Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city 	Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway More closely align the universal services of health and education

Key achievements of the last year

Despite the challenges the service has experienced over the last 12 months, a number of national and local programmes and policies have been successfully delivered with support from across the organisation and wider partnership. These include:

- An increase in the uptake of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in the city with 94.74% of our eligible population placed in 2022/23 compared to 91.22% in 2021/22
- Successful delivery of holiday programmes targeted at the 6 groups most at risk of poverty, with average enjoyment ratings sitting at 9.7 out of 10.
- Development of our Children's Services Plan and associated GIRFEC Operational Guidance
- Further development of school profiles by making use of Power BI to improve the accessibility of data to support school improvement and development of an authority wide PEF tracker to support evaluation of interventions at an authority level to help ensure best value.
- Early response to the issues Logan found in the national review of the technology ecosystem. Successful launch event for Aberdeen Computing Collaborative working closely with local higher education institutes, local independent schools and Opportunity Northeast.
- Completion of Phase 1 of ABZ Campus. Producing a parent information video for parents and carers and offering young people a total of 37 courses with a projected occupancy of 87%.
- A coalesced programme of 'clearing' to provide better opportunities for young people to be able to access their chosen courses.
- Close collaboration between secondary schools and partners seeing an increase in the number of pathways available for young people in the senior phase. An example of this can be found in the projected increase in successful National Progression Awards (NPA) from 390 in 2021-22 to approximately 800 in 2022-23.
- Providing Settle in the City programmes for Ukrainian families arriving in Aberdeen and supporting families to access school placements.
- Establishment of a refreshed Quality Assurance calendar and proportionate model of support with a clear focus on professional development against Core QIs.
- On-going work to support mental health and wellbeing and commissioning of Mental Health Aberdeen to provide city wide counselling for those aged 10+
- Increased opportunities for young musicians to play and sing together.
- Successful partnership working with the Attainment Advisor and Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) National Improving Writing Programme resulting in improved attainment in 11 city primary schools.

Governance



Each Quality Improvement Manager oversees a strategic remit and retains operational oversight of the performance of a group of education settings/targeted services in collaboration with the Quality Improvement Officer team. Strategic work is developed and delivered in partnership with school leaders.

Partnership improvement work is predominantly coordinated through the Attainment and Transition to Adulthood Improvement Group which reports to the Children's Services Board. In real terms however, this encompasses a range of healthy partnerships including those with the Developing the Young Workforce Board and with Further and Higher Education partners as we collaborate on a North East pathfinder, on our response to the Logan Report, and our further development of ABZ Campus.

As well as external scrutiny from inspection agencies, the Corporate Board structure monitors data and seeks assurance on education performance. Elected Members scrutinise performance through Council Committees and significant work has been undertaken to present the data in an accessible format to allow effective scrutiny. In addition, partnership scrutiny is available through Community Planning Aberdeen and the Aberdeen City Executive Group (Chief Officers Group) for Public Protection.

Over session 22/23 around 15% of all schools benefited from engagement with His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and all schools were subject to internal scrutiny arrangements. External scrutiny ranged from return inspection visits, engagement through short and full model inspections and thematic reviews. A healthy appetite for scrutiny is believed to be a key strength of the service.

TOM Foundations which continue to be developed

TOM FOUNDATIONS: Organisational Design and A Culture of Collaboration

The Council Target Operating Model (TOM) continues to drive innovation and build the confidence and working practices of the service.

The service has welcomed new high calibre colleagues over the past year and continues to be agile in how staff are deployed, particularly in response to the need to address variation. Our biannual ELC consultation is currently live and outcomes from the consultation will inform the design of our ELC offer for session 2024/25 ensuring we provide an agile service which meets the needs of the children and families within the resource available.



Head Teachers continue to see their responsibilities as extending beyond their own school community and this has helped the service respond positively to the challenges of the last year. Tactical teams are being established where required to support school operational teams in order to secure improvement, this has extended beyond our Associate Assessors as originally planned. School Leaders continue to make considerable contributions to service and partnership improvement activity.

The universal services of health and education have benefited from co-location at The Links Hub. There are now plans in place to collocate the Bairn's House within the Hub and this will provide opportunities to strengthen multiagency practice further. The universal services now readily pool resources to support the children and families in greatest need as seen by health funding two Place2Be pilots in schools.

The Music Service has developed pupil uptake strategies for settings where the uptake of music tuition was lower. The strategies are based around whole classes learning instruments together in an ensemble setting. These targeted programmes give children the opportunity to learn an instrument and perform alongside their peers and afford some parents the opportunity to learn an instrument alongside their child so that they can be fully involved in their child's musical journey. Music Service Ensembles will start rehearsing in Autumn 2023 and have been designed to include as many young people as possible.

The service continues to value weekly meetings with Trade Unions and benefits from shared working groups and collaboration on key documentation to support the workforce. Trade Union workplace inspections are a welcomed part of this partnership.

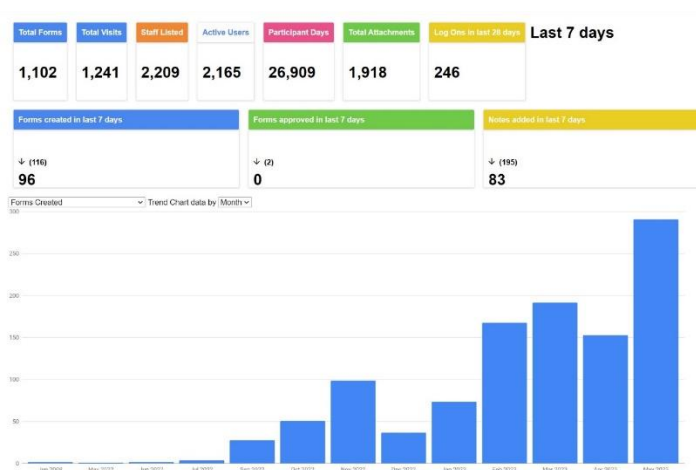
The unwavering commitment to work together to improve outcomes for children and families has considerably increased our capacity for improvement and will continue to be maintained over the coming year. There are strong indications from research that close multi-disciplinary and multi-agency working at locality level is most likely to support improved outcomes for families and this will be explored further over the coming school session.

TOM FOUNDATIONS: Digital

Education Digital Transformation Project

As part of the digital transformation strategy, ACC collaborated with Evolve, an existing web based, digital platform for the planning, approval and management of educational visits, sports fixtures, and extracurricular activities. The system was set up in autumn 2022 and following on from some testing went live in October 2022. Training and familiarisation sessions were organised and undertaken online and also upon request from individual schools. Evolve has the reporting capabilities to develop performance analysis of participation and attainment inclusive of wider achievement awards (including DoE.). The Evolve team are currently developing in-system links to secure payment systems such as ParentPay which ACC currently use.

6 months after the launch of Evolve in Aberdeen we have 2165 active users, 1239 registered off site visits, and 26,908 participant days recorded.



Throughout session 22/23 discussions have taken place with Microsoft to look at creating a single identity to improve the login experience for teachers and learners. Woodside Primary and St Machar Academy have agreed to pilot the use of Microsoft Teams for education for learning and teaching.

From September 2023 a group of 11 early adopters will be brought online and trained as 'champions' to support the roll out across the rest of the pilot school communities in January 2024.

As part of the pilot each learner will be provisioned with their own device and staff will receive intensive training in how to use Teams for Education tools to support learning and teaching. Evidence will be gathered throughout the testing and implementation stages and the findings will be used to inform the direction of travel for the future. This is likely to see an increased focus on the Microsoft tools in schools going forward.

TOM FOUNDATIONS: Partner Alliances

The Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant was initially a 'promise' between the Nation and its people to ensure that military personnel who are serving, or have served, and their families, do not suffer any disadvantage as a result of their service. This agreement, recognised across all nations of the United Kingdom, was signed by all 32 local authorities in Scotland.

The Armed Forces Covenant legislation places a new duty of 'due regard' for the Covenant on **all** Scottish local authorities and health boards. It is important to note that the terms of the new Act are compatible with the existing body of Scottish educational law and existing statutory responsibilities.

The Duty must be complied with when decisions relating to admissions, educational attainment and curriculum, child wellbeing, transport, attendance, and additional support needs are being considered.

A presentation outlining the scope of the Duty was shared with all head teachers of Aberdeen schools over the 2022/23 school session with some immediate next steps identified for head teachers in terms of determining who our armed forces families and children are and understanding the need to ensure enquiries from armed forces families/ELC/school staff are dealt with in a timely and informed manner, consistent with our existing policies and procedures.

Our action plan for session 23/24 addresses

- updating our systems to ensure all the necessary data is captured.
- tracking attainment and wellbeing of young people to ensure appropriate interventions are offered timeously.
- updating processes to ensure support, if required, is offered from other council services including housing and the financial inclusion team.



Strategic Priorities

Excellence

Improve the leadership of change in schools

Roll out a programme of training associated with the Quality Improvement Framework

In keeping with the recommendations of the OECD reports of 2015 and 2021, the development of Middle leadership continues to be a priority. Secondary Head Teachers ran a series of successful middle leadership courses which were attended by all middle leaders in the sector; it is hoped that these events will enable more consistent delivery of standards. This programme will continue in session 23/24 to ensure we continue to develop the Senior Leaders of the future.

The Middle Leadership Programme offered to both Primary and Secondary Head Teachers has provided training with a clear focus on the Quality Improvement Framework, the Local Authority Quality Indicator Standards, therefore improving awareness of expectations.

We continue to see changes in our leadership teams with nearly 10% of our Head Teachers new to post this session. As a result, Quality Indicator 3.1 Leadership of Change has dropped slightly from 65% of evaluations rated Good or above in 21/22 to 60% in 22/23. The continued focus on the Leadership of Change and the development of our middle leaders will be maintained over the coming year.

Further develop collaboration across the service through the use of Trios and sharing best practice across schools

Primary Head Teachers have been working in trios for the last 3 years. Working in this way has allowed colleagues to offer support and challenge during Quality Improvement visits. Initially all members of the Senior Leadership Team were only involved in visits in their own schools. During session 22/23 trios have evolved to include members of the extended leadership team visiting other schools, providing opportunities to share best practice and increase collaborative working.

A tactical team made up of peer Head Teachers and Central Officers was established to support improvement at Northfield Academy. The impact of this approach will be closely monitored over the school session to determine next steps. During session 23/24 secondary schools will be organised into 3 trios and a pair to support increased collaboration during quality improvement activities.

Enlist the help of Associate Assessors to help drive improvement at school and Local Authority level

Associate Assessors have worked with colleagues to advise on preparing for inspection. Workshops on learning, teaching and assessment and self-evaluation have been well received by colleagues. The insight and experience of the Associate Assessors has been invaluable in supporting schools in a number of areas, but in particular to improve their processes for self-evaluation. Recent inspections have praised school leaders for the clarity of the self-evaluation summaries submitted prior to inspection.

Eight schools were visited by HMle during session 22/23 and there were 4 Local Authority reports requested for schools previously inspected. Three of the eight schools visited have been identified for a return inspection and all Local Authority reports have resulted in schools being signed off by HMle. Following analysis of inspection grades and discussion with HMle colleagues, it was confirmed that there is closer alignment between the outcome of external inspections and internal quality assurance findings with external scrutiny now validating internal evaluations in many cases. This evidences our improved capacity for improvement but also the need to address the variation at pace.

The service has participated in 2 national thematic reviews looking at bullying and the curriculum. Case studies have been requested from the schools visited in relation to the two reviews and these will form part of a national report on best practice. The learning from the thematic reviews has helped to inform our refresh of the Aberdeen City Anti-Bullying Policy.

Edutopia visited Dyce Primary School as one of 5 schools visited across the world who have play central to their pedagogy and the learning is being shared across all settings in the city.

Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools

Use of Attainment Advisor and Lead Teacher to establish greater consistency based on our agreed Learning, Teaching and Assessment Standard

The Education Scotland Attainment Adviser has worked with an Education Support Officer to support 11 city schools' involvement with the Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) National Improving Writing Programme which aims to:

- Improve children's writing attainment
- Spread a successful QI writing programme
- Equip class teachers with QI knowledge so they can understand and apply tools and techniques that have been rigorously tested and work

Phase 1 schools began the process in October 2022, with Phase 2 commencing in February 2023. Phase 1 schools are already reporting encouraging progress with their first cohort and are seeing the positive impact on attainment data. A further 5 schools have been identified for Phase 3 of the programme which will begin in August 2023.

Improving attainment at Quarryhill School

What problem were we trying to solve? 72% of our school population is within the first two SIMD quintiles and in P1 a third of the year group are being supported within our PEF plan. Our aim is to improve attainment generally but also for the pupils within the lower quintiles for reading, writing, listening & talking, numeracy.

What did we do? We embarked on a journey to improve our P1 experience towards a play-based approach, considering current research with the aim to raise attainment. Our journey included:

- Professional learning for teachers, including visits to other settings, collegiate working, professional reading, and online learning to support the development of our vision, as well as improve staff confidence.
- We resourced both classrooms, changed the physical environment in partnership with nursery staff, and experimented with free-flow learning between classes to increase varied play opportunities, share resources and support differentiation.
- An EYP transitioned with the children from nursery to P1 and supported the development of this approach. A PSA then took over from November onwards working with both classes, focusing also on small group interventions.

What happened? Attainment in listening and talking increased by 1%, reading improved by 24%, writing by 17% and numeracy by 14% over the year.

What next? Our approach needs to further embed in P1 with further opportunities for outdoor learning. Staff will continue to engage with professional learning and network with other settings.

The Lead Teacher (Secondary) has supported city wide training in Learning Teaching and Assessment for Middle Leaders as well as providing customised training for individual secondary schools. She is a member of the city learning teaching and assessment working group and is currently supporting the planning of the digital learning and teaching event planned for November 2023.

Targeting the writing attainment gap at Woodside Primary School

What problem were we trying to solve? We wanted to close the writing attainment gap in P4 and P5.

What did we do? We used Pupil Equity Funding to secure supply teaching staff to enable three teachers to attend two whole day CYPIC National Improving Writing Collaborative training sessions and additional development days. This is a sustainable use of PEF as these members of staff will share their learning with the wider team.

What happened? The approach has positively impacted upon the attainment gap in writing within P4 and P5. Within Primary 4 of the 55% of children who have achieved 1st level, 12% of them were 'below track' at the start of P4. Of the 55% of children who have achieved 1st level, 35% of them are now predicted to achieve 2nd Level earlier than the end of P7. Six children had not achieved Early level at the start of P4 and now have. Of these children, who had been significantly behind track, current predictions for achieving 1st Level show that 71% have closed the gap by at least 1 year.

What next? The next step for the school is to embed this approach to writing and introduce it via the trained staff to two other stages. This will support wider attainment and sustainability, benefiting children in receipt of PEF and FSM.

Launch the Quality Assurance and Moderation QAMSO website to support city wide moderation activities

49 QAMSOs (recruited from our teaching workforce) who have undertaken Education Scotland training, support practitioners across the City to develop and improve their understanding of the moderation cycle, with the aim to ensure all learners experience high-quality learning and teaching: access to a curriculum which meets their needs, appropriate challenge and support in all curricular areas, and opportunities to collaborate in planning and assessing their learning to inform next steps. The QAMSO programme allows us to develop leadership capacity within our schools and across the City. All QAMSOs have been invited to join a North QAMSO network facilitated by Education Scotland. This network further enhances opportunities to develop moderation across the city and the Northern Alliance.

A QAMSO [website](#) is being developed which will support moderation across all levels in Literacy and Numeracy. The website will signpost teachers and school leaders to appropriate training materials as well as guidance around achievement of a level. The site went live in June 2023 and will be maintained by a small QAMSO team.

Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports in response to changes in need

The health and wellbeing of children and young people continues to be of local and national concern and the service has maintained and enhanced the range of interventions and approaches available. We are beginning to see a positive impact of these approaches in some areas as evidenced through the Health & Wellbeing Surveys undertaken by children & young people in November 2022, which gave us comparable data to those undertaken in March 2022.

We continue to work with SHINE (Scottish Health Improvement Research Network) to undertake mental wellbeing surveys with learners from P6-S6 so that we can address any emerging needs within our schools and across the city. This year we have increased the level of reporting and now have access to reports at school, ASG and sector specific levels with additional reports focusing on affluence levels and gender reporting. This alongside the physical wellbeing survey, both undertaken in November 2022, have provided us with a clear picture at 2 data points, showing areas of improvement and highlighting some areas for further consideration. Outcomes from these surveys continue to be shared with the Mental Health Collaborative, established following the Mental Health Summit in October 2022 and the PEPAS (Physical Education, Physical Activity & Sport) Group established in April 2021, to support multi-agency decision making and areas of focus through the Children's Services Plan.

Child development

Several Scottish and UK publications acknowledge the impact the periods of lockdown continue to have on our children and young people. Of the 205 requests, Child's planning support received requests for assistance from 157 learners with communication difficulties. Although the number of requests is down on last year the percentage with communication difficulties continues to be high. Use of the CIRCLE framework continues to support consideration of environmental factors and pedagogies to support learners.

Barnardo's Northern Star at Cornhill Primary School funded through Pupil Equity Funding

What problem were we trying to solve? Pupil readiness to learn, parental engagement, emotional/nurture support, behaviour regulation

What did we do? We have a full-time Barnardo's worker who is fully integrated into school life. Continuity and consistency have been key to the quality and effectiveness of the intervention where relationships are fundamental.

What happened? Over the last year our worker has worked closely with 18 individual pupils and their families, 49 pupils in groups plus several pupils informally. Individual attainment has improved in most cases, with wider attainment improving in almost all supported classes. The majority of the work is carefully planned and targeted but the worker has also been invaluable supporting with ad hoc behaviour and 'crisis management'

What next? We aim to further develop pupil and parental relationships to the benefit of individual pupils and the school more widely.

Attendance

Unvalidated secondary school attendance is currently sitting slightly below 2018 levels. This figure is impacted by a small number of young people who found it challenging to return to school buildings following the pandemic. Schools are working closely with families to identify the most appropriate supports for individuals.



The picture in primary schools is more positive as although still below 2018 levels there are early signs of an increase back towards pre pandemic levels. Special school attendance continues to be impacted by the complexity of conditions of young people and absence has been mitigated through an increased offer of outreach to support learning in the home when a young person is unable to attend the school building. There is a need for more focussed work on attendance as we move forward.

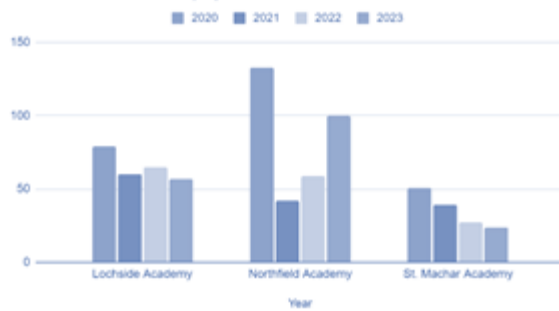
Exclusion incidents

Exclusion rates have considerably reduced from 52.9 per 1000 children in 18/19 to 17.9 per 1000 children in 20/21. Early indications show there will be a slight increase in exclusion rates for session 22/23 and this is linked to an increase in dysregulated behaviours being demonstrated locally and nationally. Levels remain significantly below those reported in session 18/19. There is evidence that some children are still struggling with the return to school following the pandemic. Any exclusions are short and used to review plans to mitigate against repeated incidents.

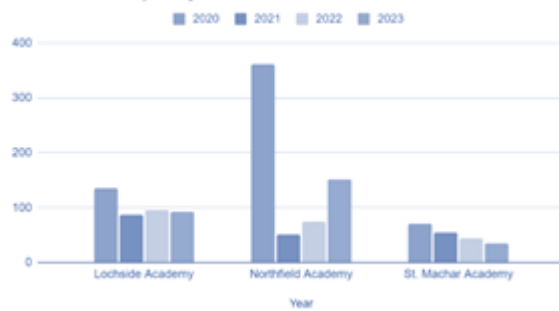
Work in schools continues to promote whole school approaches to inclusion and promoting positive relationships, including Compassionate Connected Communities. Schools follow ACC's Staged Intervention Framework and Single Request for Assistance procedure to consider appropriate supports for learners. GIRFEC principles are embedded in our schools and fundamental to this is the partnership approach, which considers the complexity of the lives of some of our learners, to prevent exclusion.

Schools are supported by the Quality Improvement Team to promote inclusion and prevent exclusion. Officers continue to monitor data on a monthly basis to enable earlier discussion with Senior Leadership Teams and proactive planning where trends are becoming established. This includes regular, active dialogue to ensure robust Individual Education Plans, Child's Plans, Coordinated Support Plans and Person-Centred Risk Assessments are in place to support individual learners as required, consideration of relevant supports for individuals.

Number of excluded pupils:

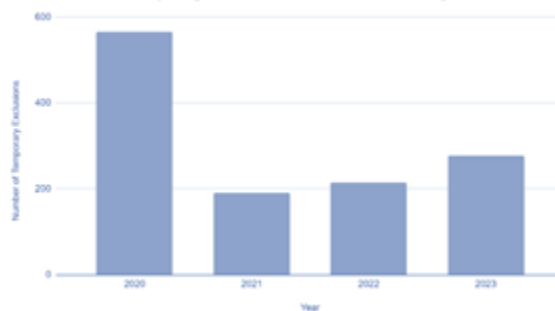


Number of temporary exclusions:



The total number of exclusions in secondary schools serving the 3 priority areas continues to demonstrate a decline in the numbers that were witnessed in 2020. Of note is the continued decreasing pattern of exclusions witnessed at St. Machar Academy. Lochside Academy also demonstrates a declining trend overall. Exclusion figures for Northfield Academy have demonstrated a slight increase on the 2021 and 2022 figures. Supports have been put in place at Northfield Academy. We will continue to consider the positive steps that have potentially impacted on one setting and look to share the learning more broadly.

Total Number of Temporary Exclusions for 3 Focus Schools by Year



Work with school health and wellbeing leads to audit the in school provision

All settings have had an increased focus on the holistic wellbeing of children and young people. Through recent survey results we are beginning to see an improvement in many aspects of wellbeing including that of general health, happiness with particular aspects of life including body image and learners feeling less lonely with an increase in the number of learners reporting they have someone to listen to them about their mental health needs.

All schools continue to engage with the Compassionate and Connected Communities (CCC) programme. We have built the capacity of 11 further members of staff to act as trainers for the programme. Taking this approach of on-going training for trainers ensures that we maintain a full 64 trainers across the city with a trainer available in each city school when there is staff movement or retiral. This ensures an on-going focus on trauma informed practice.

Physical Health Support Visits

Between November 2022 and February 2023 all schools were visited in order to undertake an audit of Physical Health provision. This covered several areas including Free Period Products, Relationships, Sexual Health & Parenthood, Physical Education curriculum, extracurricular activities as well as physical space and resources. Findings from these visits included low staff confidence in the teaching of PE and in particular the area of gymnastics. This is being addressed through our current professional learning offer and continues to inform the work of the Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) Group. Free period product awareness and provision was good in almost all schools with a small number receiving support to improve marketing with learners and parents.

25% of schools were taking significant steps to improve food and nutrition provision, ranging from free breakfast offers to bespoke cooking facilities.

Active Travel

An active travel survey was undertaken in October 2022, and we received a return from 40 of our 61 schools. Responses allowed us to consider the approaches already in place and consider next steps to improve active travel within each school community.

Officers plan to relaunch the travel plan guidance with clear agreed expectations around this as we focus on improving active travel and addressing the increasing concerns around the environmental impact that transport has on us reaching net zero.

Schools are currently offering opportunities to increase active travel through park and stride, providing parking for bike and scooters and providing bikeability training in partnership with Active Schools.

We work in close partnership with ACC I Bike officer and Adventure Aberdeen to support Bikeability and Cycle training and offer Level 2 training in all of our Primary school settings in response to feedback from the Aberdeen Parent Council Forum. Other supports include the offer of cycle maintenance and cycling events including opportunities led by Adventure Aberdeen and the Aberdeen City I Bike Officer projects, some of which are highlighted below.



Active Schools Assistants

The service used COVID recovery funding to increase capacity for physical activity through the recruitment of Active Schools Assistants. The additional resource increased support for physical activity in our playgrounds when schools first re-opened following periods of national lockdown and encouraged healthy choices and targeted physical wellbeing interventions at school level. Schools have also seen the positive impact of this work, with some now making use of pupil equity funding to sustain this support.

We have seen a 3% increase in young people reporting that their general health is good or excellent since our last report in March 2022.

Free Period Products

A survey of school pupils in July 2022 showed that a significant number of pupils were still unaware that Free period Products (FPP) were available in school to anyone who needs them. Around 50% pupils requested re-usable products in various forms. Overwhelmingly, pupils wanted products to be available in a toilet or designated place where they didn't have to ask for them.

Several activities have been undertaken by the Education service to increase support for children and young people by increasing the understanding of menstruation, its impact and providing increased awareness of how to access resources. These include:

- Free period products distributed to School Health leads.
- Launch of FPP posters in schools
- Launch of animation to promote reusable products in partnership with Waste and Recycling
- Reusable products education resources for schools
- Health & Wellbeing network input from Hannah Miley focusing on Demystifying Menstruation
- Parent Newsletter update provided for parents about how and where to access resources

965 boxes of products have been delivered to schools since January 2023.

Health and wellbeing in the early years

We have established a funding and application process for all registered childcare settings to deliver free milk and healthy snack (fruit and vegetables) to all children attending an ELC setting for 2 or more hours per day via the Scottish Government Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme (SMHSS). The Scheme aims to ensure that as many pre-school children as possible will receive a daily serving of milk and healthy snack to contribute towards healthy growth development and the promotion of healthy eating habits for later life. One of the principles of the scheme is that it is provided free of charge and ELC settings must not charge families for this benefit.

As of 1 April 2023, a total of 130 registered childcare settings have signed up to deliver the Scheme in the city, with 6608 children receiving a serving of milk and healthy snack on each day they attend their ELC setting. This is up more than 1000 from the 5426 children receiving this benefit in 2022.

Reflect on the outcome of the SHINE and health and wellbeing surveys to determine next steps.

Fitlike Aberdeen continues to offer wellbeing supports to families, with one to one, group work and activities available to help address early indicators of distress in children and families. In April 2023 401 young people/families were engaging with the service and 146 of the 401 are families who were being supported for the first time. We see a higher number of males (229) being supported by Fitlike with current numbers of females lower (163) and 9 young people who identify as non-binary, transgender or gender fluid. Reasons for presenting also vary here, however greater support is required for those presenting with low mood, anxiety, emotional literacy/regulation, and wider family support needs.

We are currently working in partnership with Fitlike Aberdeen and CAMHS colleagues to further develop our supports in LIAM (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management). This multi-agency collaboration will continue to build on the current supports we have in place across many schools in order to strengthen the universal offer to children and families. All school nurses are currently trained to deliver LIAM, as are a team of Fitlike staff and currently we have staff in 25 schools trained to deliver this support. A further round of training will take place in June increasing the number of trained staff by a further 23 individuals.

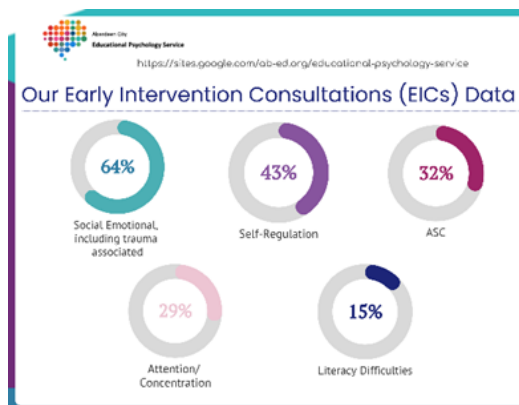
A range of additional interventions above and beyond the school curriculum continue to be in place. We continue to commission Mental Health Aberdeen to support all children from age 10+ with counselling support where required, this can be through referral by school staff or self-referral. Through our last reporting period (October to December 2022) 330 young people were being supported and 100% of the 103 children who had completed an end of session questionnaire at that time, reported an improved wellbeing outcome following this support.

Counselling has a higher percentage of females being supported with this approach and the divide between male and female is 225/96 with 9 young people who identify as transgender or nonbinary receiving this support. Reasons for seeking support vary, however a high number of learners are receiving support for anxiety, bereavement, low confidence/self-esteem, low mood, and relationship issues.

We currently have a small number of Primary schools building a partnership with Place2Be through a pilot project. Place2Be offer in person supports within the primary school setting for children aged 3 and up, families and staff. The impact of this new initiative will be evaluated in due course.

The pilot of DBI (Distress Brief Intervention) has extended to 6 Secondary Schools in partnership with CAMHS and Penumbra focusing on learners aged 14-16. This programme offers more targeted support for young people who have been identified or self-identify the need for support and helps some of our most vulnerable learners to access trained staff and a pathway to support through Penumbra and CAMHS if required. We are beginning to see early signs of improvement through our data report in relation to the Who-5 wellbeing index, which may suggest that earlier responsive intervention is supporting young people previously indicating low mood.

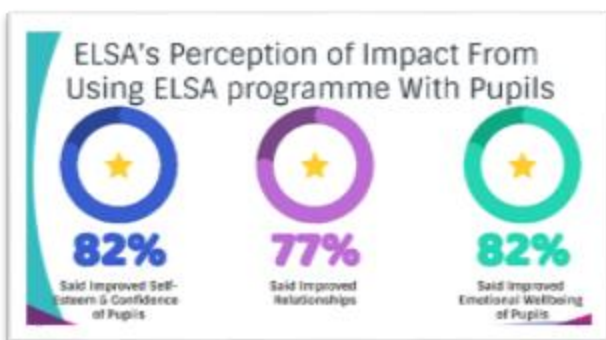
Our Educational Psychology Service (EPS) support schools through [Early Intervention Consultations](#) (EICs), which take place between staff at all levels of the school and the EPS. **424** EICs took place last year, and this academic year to date, **338** have taken place.



The EPS review and update their [digital hub](#) to offer supports to pupils, parents and staff based on information gathered throughout the year about topics and areas of need arising through their work in Education. The EPS continue to review their supports and delivery of several programmes:

- Seasons for Growth – Ongoing training and re-connector groups, offered throughout each session by the EPS. This allows highly skilled groups to be run across education supporting pupils with significant loss and change. This year to date, 89 children have been part of loss and change groups in the Seasons programme. Both the training by the EPS, and the groups continue to be positively evaluated.
- Emotion Coaching – Fully digital training programme, with follow-up EPS coaching and facilitation around implementation and effectiveness. Training programmes run for parents, with content available on the EPS digital hub.
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) training. Aberdeen remains the only local authority to offer this programme that has a strong evidence base and is used across England and Wales.

Local Aberdeen City data shows the positive impact this training programme has had to support staff working with children with a range of emotional regulation needs.



39 staff are currently trained, with a further 13 in training, which will give 52 fully trained ELSAs across Aberdeen City schools to work 1:1 and in groups to support children and young-people's development of their emotional literacy and regulation. Each ELSA has ongoing support of 12 hours of psychological group supervision each year.

Where a child displays distressed behaviours, this may result in recording a near miss incident. Collaborative working with Trade Unions and central officers ensures consistency of reporting, investigating and actions. Themes are identified and data analysed by the Quality Improvement Team to support schools where appropriate. Trade Unions continue to provide support regarding conducting investigations.

All Headteachers have accessed training from the Health and Safety team on near misses, investigations, and the new reporting system. We are encouraging reporting of incidents to ensure transparency of data and supports required. This data will inform planning and support measures.

Aberdeen School for the Deaf: Emotional Literacy Curriculum funded through Pupil Equity Funding

What problem were we trying to solve? Self-evaluation in session 2021-22 highlighted that there were significant gaps (school wide) in emotional literacy. Whilst tracking data highlighted that **almost all** learners were on track for individual milestones, **most** were behind track for national expectations in health and wellbeing. Discussions at tracking meetings indicated that most gaps linked to emotional literacy.

What did we do? We commissioned a bespoke Emotional Literacy intervention with our BSL tutor from the National Deaf Children's Society aimed at increasing learner's emotional literacy and developing their understanding of emotions, feelings, and strategies for self-regulation.

What happened? Each class received 1 x 45 minute session per week for a 12 week block. By the end of this block, data has highlighted that:

- **all** learners display increased confidence when talking about their emotions
- All learners have an increased bank of emotion words/signs that they are now using when talking about their emotions
- **most** learners are now working in line with national expectations in HWB
- instances of dis-regulation have reduced with **most** staff reporting learners are accessing self-regulation strategies more successfully

What next? Extend this programme by using Emotion Works resources to:

- supplement this work in order to embed emotional literacy into the curriculum
- develop staff confidence in delivery of emotional literacy curriculum
- consolidate learning and application of knowledge to encourage self-regulation and communication around emotional wellbeing.

Work with the established Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) Group to increase provision of physical activity for children and young people

Supporting physical health and wellbeing of our people

The PEPAS Group continue to work in partnership, taking a lead role as advocates and advisors on Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport on a city-wide basis.

There have been some positive pieces of work developed through the PEPAS group this session including the development of a Primary PE progression toolkit, which provides a clear progression of learning in PE for Primary practitioners and signposts staff to relevant resources and lesson plans. This has been linked to our Grassroots Professional Learning programme led by PE specialists and is improving the confidence of staff in delivering high quality PE. Since the launch of this toolkit, it has been accessed 527 times.

We have undertaken a large scale roll out of Boccia Training in schools. Boccia is a sport designed for all. It is a target sport played indoors with soft leather balls. Boccia (pronounced bot-cha) is a Paralympic sport with no Olympic equivalent and is similar to bowls. This has been delivered to pupil leaders in Primary 6 across the city who have disseminated this training in their school communities. It has also been

delivered to over 400 school staff. Schools are working towards delivery of a city wide Boccia Festival in ASGs.

The PEPAS Group has agreed a standard format for gathering data and will continue to work collaboratively to draw it through MySport, a Sport Scotland tool, which will allow us to have a clearer picture of the activities available to children and young people across the city, identifying strengths and areas for development.

Developing skills at St Joseph's Primary School through Pupil Equity funding.

What problem were we trying to solve? We were trying to create extra in-school activity sessions to meet the needs of learners who are bussed to and from school and therefore not always able to engage in immediate after-school activities on site. Most of our children living in SIMD 1 – 3 are children who arrive by bus and although attainment in literacy and numeracy remains consistent within this group, for the most part, the children need access to a greater range of team and leadership activities with their school peers.

What did we do? We engaged 2 skills-based partners in our work: AFCCT and Ace Voices

What happened? Interim feedback from both the children and the leaders indicates a high level of engagement and participation in the activities.

Each partner is working to develop a different set of skills in children, but both have resilience in unfamiliar territory at their core. The wellbeing assessments and anecdotal data from the children is very positive (currently being updated). Relationships at the school are very positive and restoration is very successful in almost all cases where the learners are participating in the activities.

What next? Make the interventions available to younger children to ensure a broader reach and development of skills and tie this work into the development of a skills framework within the school. Explore the potential to Look engage partners in expressive arts to broaden access to a wider range of skills.

Continue to deliver holiday programmes

Following the success of previous programmes (Summer of Play 2021, Easter of Play 2022, Summer in the City 2022, and Easter in the City 2023) the Council allocated £100,000 for holiday programmes to be delivered over school holiday periods (summer and autumn 2023 and spring 2024).

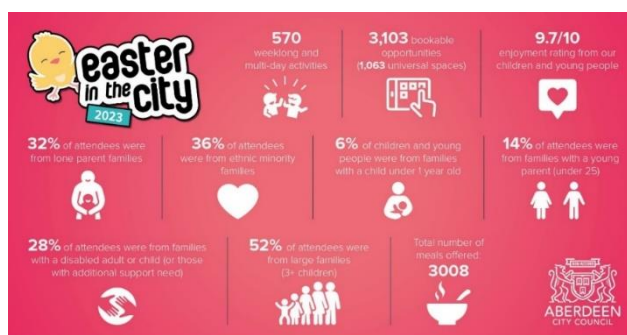
In line with the aims of the previous 'In the City' holiday programmes, the main focus remains to encourage participation and to maximise the positive opportunities available to young people and their families with a particular focus on those within the Tackling Child Poverty Plan priority groupings.

The programme will continue to engage with the widest demographics, providing opportunities for both priority families and those who do not identify as part of a priority group to take part. The programme will also continue to target the 5-14 years age group with some activities still being made available for those not in this age range.

Bookable opportunities for priority families will take the form of short, family, half-day and full-day session.

Since summer 2021, the programmes have provided more than 39,000 bookable opportunities, including weeklong/ multiday camps and childcare camps, day long and short activities being offered, as well as numerous drop-in activities in parks, museums, galleries and local communities and bespoke programmes for those with complex additional support needs. More than 18,000 bookable opportunities have been made available since summer 2022.

The enjoyability rating as provided by children and young people for the most recent programme (Easter in the City, 2023) was 9.7 out of 10.



Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services that directly and indirectly affect them

Exceleerate

Six secondary schools within the local authority are at different stages in engaging with the support of the *Exceleerate* (link [here](#)) programme, a community-connected learning initiative supported by the Wood Foundation. Through the programme staff in the schools are supported to develop innovative learning and teaching methods which become embedded and sustainable through creating school based champions to lead and cascade to others. This programme has included a number of collaborative visits to the XP Academy in Doncaster, and study visits to the Academies of Nashville. Supported by *Exceleerate*, each school uses their own unique context to identify the areas they seek to progress. These areas include Project Based Learning, Crew, School Leaver Profiles and Oracy to name but a few.

A sharing event was held in May 2023 which allowed schools to showcase the impact of the programme. The event, which was learner focused and learner led, was well attended by staff from across Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and partners.

Continue to support our Pupil Climate Change Group

In November there was a celebration of several Climate Change and Net Zero activities that had taken place over the session at NESCOL, as part of World Children's Day. Children and young people from across the city gathered with Aberdeen City Councillors to showcase their work. The theme of World Children's Day in 2022 was "Inclusion for Every Child". Young people at the event highlighted their involvement in the City Centre and Beach Masterplan and the model they created to demonstrate what they would like to see included in these plans.

Charlie Turner, the Youth Climate Change President, had the opportunity to discuss his role and the work of the Youth Climate Change group. S1 pupils from Bucksburn Academy presented their interdisciplinary project: "Eating to Save the Planet".

The Youth Climate Change Group have been able to increase their awareness of the local authority's policies towards climate change and net zero by inviting guests from several council departments to their meetings. Alongside regular meetings the group have created a Google Classroom space for the creation and collaboration of further ideas for sustainability. There is an active discussion forum that the group has created. The Eco Group at Harlaw Academy were able to collate information from this space to inform a meeting that they arranged with the catering service to lobby them for the return of sustainable food packaging in schools. The group are a focal point to promote citywide initiatives to other children and young people across the city, e.g. the bike sharing scheme that launched in Aberdeen recently was promoted by the group across all schools.

Charlie's term as president came to an end in June and he was part of the process to select a replacement. Interviews took place across several of the city's Secondary schools during the last week of the school term. The quality of interviews was very strong. Saanvi Kumar a S5 pupil from Cults Academy has been appointed as the City's 2nd Youth Climate Change President.

Establish a webpage on the ACC site to encourage engagement and participation by children and young people

Work has begun on gathering the voice of children and young people and empowering them to share their messages and influence policy through the Health and Wellbeing Summit and the Climate Change group. Having established high levels of participation and engagement with these two groups, it is important that they are part of the design process of any method of gathering the views of others and encouraging participation and reflect on approaches tested through the web based consultation on the school estate review. During 23/24 we will use the meaningful participation of the two groups to support the design and implementation of a tool to encourage engagement and participation of their peers.

Continue to work with community planning partners on the UNCRC

All policies relating to children take full account of the United National Convention on the Rights of the Child with considerable work undertaken to develop our practice in this area as exemplified in our [children's rights report](#). The service remains poised to undertake a rapid review of our readiness for incorporation following publication of statutory guidance over session 2023/24.

All School Improvement Plans reference the UNCRC, and all staff continue to participate in mandatory training at the start of the school session.



A few primary school learners have produced child friendly versions of the SQUIP. These help learners to understand what improvements are planned and when they are achieved. Best practice has been shared to support spread.

Collaborate with children and young people to report on the extent to which ACC supports and promotes Children's Rights and set next steps

As part of the work of the Children & Young People's Mental Health Task & Delivery Board, we are currently piloting the 'One Good Adult' project. This allows us to directly respond to the views of children and young people at our Health and Wellbeing Summit by placing the voice of children and young people at the heart of our recruitment processes. One Good Adult is now established within our recruitment processes for all education staff. This is to be extended to other services within the local authority and partner agencies for those supporting children and young people in their daily positions over the coming year.

Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas

Support the introduction of ABZ Campus comprising an aligned set of curricular opportunities for Senior Phase young people.

Following work started in session 2021-22 with a review of collective provision and identification of key areas to address across Aberdeen City secondary schools, session 2022-23 has been focusing around planning and implementing Phase 1 of ABZ Campus for launch in session 2023-24.

During this planning session, a set of focus groups took place with young people and facilitated by staff from *Skills Development Scotland*. These focus groups provided direction and justification for the planning of ABZ Campus. There was a mirrored process with work closely aligned with engagement with parent council groups to gather the views of parents and carers.

Secondary school leadership teams gathered with the challenging task of seeking curricular alignment across a set of four columns. This work was completed by April 2022, allowing for a smooth timetabling cycle in each school.

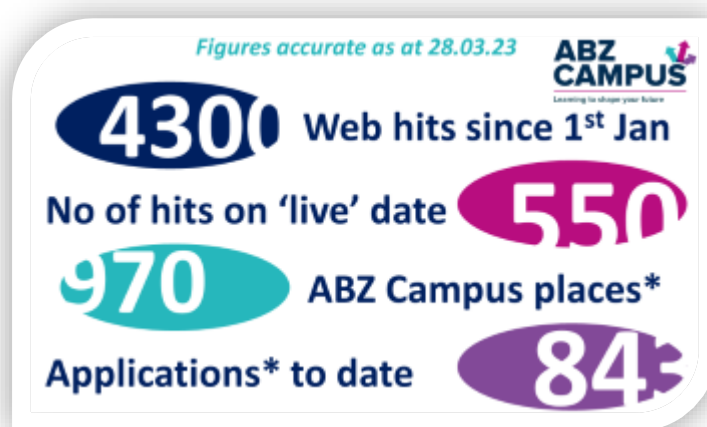
Together with partners, a set of 37 growth sector aligned courses were programmed across each of the four new columns with delivery partners and target capacities agreed.

Building on the feedback from young people, ABZ Campus launched a new application portal with deliver partners *Pinnacle VL*. Not only does the portal streamline and simplify the process of applications from young people to ABZ Campus courses, the new portal also allows better data analysis on successful and unsuccessful applications, course withdrawals and the ability for partners to connect and communicate with participating young people. Feedback from young people, parents and carers suggested that better publicity and information about courses would support young people and families to make more informed decisions in making choices. Between June and December, refreshed course guidance summaries and publicity videos were created for ABZ Campus courses.

The application portal, course overviews and publicity materials were all housed in a newly created section of the ABZ Works website (found [here](#)).

As preparation for launch of choices approached, a series of publicity events were held to support families and staff through their understanding of the process. For staff, an event was held at Cults Academy on 18th November during an in-service day for all choice teams. Helpful input was provided by partners such as *NESCOL*, *Skills Development Scotland* and *Aberdeenshire Council*. For families, a pre-recorded event was released (link [here](#)) in January 2023.

Demand and interest for ABZ Campus courses was high, with well over 1,100 applications made for ABZ and NESCOL link courses through the portal.



An incredibly positive outcome of the work on timetable alignment is that there now exists an opportunity for schools to work together to provide even greater access to courses for young people through a 'clearing' system. As young people made their choices during March 2023, schools shared where there was surplus capacity in their schools and, if a course in one school is over-subscribed, it was possible that the young people could access the course in another school.

During the latter part of the 2022-23 session, planning has turned to a design for Phase 2 of ABZ Campus in session 2024-25. Six groups comprising staff from the local authority and partners have formed to progress work in the following key areas:-

- Seek collaborative work on a regional basis with Aberdeenshire Council.
- Pilot an employability and placement solution for a group of young people with ASN.
- Explore the introduction of a twilight column with a suite of partner-driven courses.
- Develop a quality assurance programme that results in a more consistent offer across all ABZ Campus courses.
- Continue to develop a common monitoring, tracking, and reporting system for all ABZ Campus courses.
- Finally, a desire to continue to extend the growth-sector aligned courses, with a particular focus on Level 4 and 5 in growth sectors where coverage is least strong.

As part of thinking towards how ABZ Campus could be further developed in phase 2, a pilot connection has been made with a school in Aberdeenshire to open up access to some of the courses on offer.

There is a commitment to equity contained within the plans for ABZ Campus. All courses offered will carry an opportunity based on merit rather than where the young person has their 'home' school.

ABZ CAMPUS

Mentoring and Internships

In total 278 young people have engaged with and report benefiting from the MCR Pathways programme. As of February 2023, of those young people who are active or have previously been active with MCR Pathways, 12.59% are currently cared for, 16.14% previously care experienced with the remaining 71.25% being identified as vulnerable.

More consistent staffing (Pathways Coordinators and MCR Managers) may help shift the balance to include a higher proportion of those who are care experienced.

The high number of volunteers (144 trained volunteer mentors and 66 progressing through training) committed to delivering one to one mentoring is exceptionally positive and helping us discharge our Corporate Parenting responsibilities. Young people who choose to engage with the programme tell us that they value and benefit from time with their one to one mentor and qualitative evidence is positive.

Research continues to highlight the positive impact of mentoring programmes, but the pandemic and data quality issues have impacted our ability to gather strong quantitative evidence of impact against key measures. Many of the data sets shared by MCR, when matched with ACC data, have contained significant errors which has made data matching extremely challenging and labour intensive, the split of responsibilities across ACC and MCR may be contributing to this challenge. There is a need to address these data issues to enable more effective on-going monitoring.

In 2023 59 Aberdeen City pupils completed their internships with Career Ready. Of the 11 Secondary schools in Aberdeen 9 provided pupils for the programme. In session 23-24 we anticipate all 11 Secondary schools accessing the scheme with in excess of 100 internships for city pupils planned.

Improve the delivery of Computer Science from 3-18 and beyond

**Establish Aberdeen Computing Collaborative to bring all key partners together
Work with Prof Mark Logan to address the issues raised in his report.**



Professor Mark Logan's report, [Scottish Technology Ecosystem: Review](#), highlights how ill prepared local systems are to respond to the need for the current and future workforce to have strong digital skills which will increasingly be a necessity for employers. Problems to be solved include:

- The lack of qualified computer science teachers
- The lack of clear digital skills progression
- The need to attract economic investment in Aberdeen City through the ready availability of those with advanced digital skills.

The Aberdeen Computing Collaborative has been formed by Aberdeen City Council, in partnership with North East Scotland College, Robert Gordon University, the University of Aberdeen, and Opportunity North East. The collaborative's focus is on improving computing science education in the city, in line with the recommendations made by the [Scottish Technology Ecosystem: Review](#).

The collaborative aims to support a coherent, innovative, and skills-based computing science curriculum from early learning to senior phase and beyond. This includes creating multiple pathways for all learners to maximize access to computing science learning and qualifications in and out of school. Focussing on the development of computer science skills will ensure that pupils across Aberdeen City are well positioned to benefit from post school opportunities.

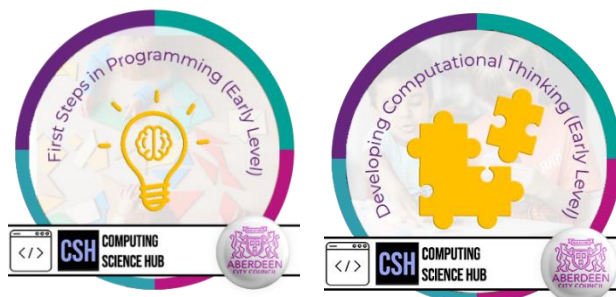
The collaborative plans to increase opportunities for young people, develop the skills of staff and promote the sector through engagement, curriculum support and professional learning. The collaborative held a successful launch event in September 2022, at ONE Tech Hub, which was attended by over 250 pupils and teaching staff. The event included practical computing science workshops and professional development discussions for teaching staff. Feedback indicates that almost all children and young people attending were more likely to consider a computing science career following the event.

North East Scotland College, Robert Gordon University and University of Aberdeen each have outreach programmes to promote computing science both in and outside of school. These partners are currently reviewing their outreach activities to reduce overlap and increase areas for collaboration, with a view to improving the experience for children and young people attending these programmes. It is hoped that a greater aligned offer will be available to schools from August 2023 onwards.

Esports is gaining popularity as a tool for education. We recognise the benefits of esports in education, including promoting teamwork, problem-solving, and strategic thinking. Esports can engage learners with technology and act as a gateway to interest in computing science and the tech sector. An Esports hub is being developed at St

Machar Academy, which will deliver a new National Qualification in Esports at SCQF Level 4 and 5 from August 2023. Collaborative partner, North East Scotland College, will support this development in working with the central team and the staff of St Machar Academy.

To support professional development, ACC officers have created “grab and go” resources for staff supporting the youngest learners in our primary schools. A classroom teacher has been commissioned to continue production of these resources and will coordinate this development with partners.



Digital badges for professional learning

To address the local shortfall in computer science teachers, Aberdeen City has entered a separate partnership with University of Highlands and Islands (UHI), to provide a distance learning Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) to support those in the city with an interest in becoming a Computing Science teacher. Entrants to this course will be given placements in ACC schools to encourage them to seek employment locally when fully qualified.

To host these materials, we have developed an online platform to provide on-demand access to professional learning for teaching staff. This platform will include digital badges and awards, linked to our learning and teaching standard, to recognise the learning and achievement of staff.

The Collaborative will take forward the following areas of work over the next 12 months:

- working with ABZ Campus, review the curriculum to broaden opportunities in the sector (including development of Esports and Computing Science hubs to further engagement with Computing Science).
- develop and deliver extra-curricular Computing Science and Digital activities.
- develop communication for parents/carers/young people to promote the opportunities in the sector and the range of pathways available for those seeking to develop careers in the industry.
- continue the development of materials and an online delivery platform for professional learning to provide upskilling for Computing Science and other teachers, to deliver computing science from early to fourth level and beyond with the aim of increasing the number of young people completing courses aligned to support the digital and tech sector by 20% by 2026.

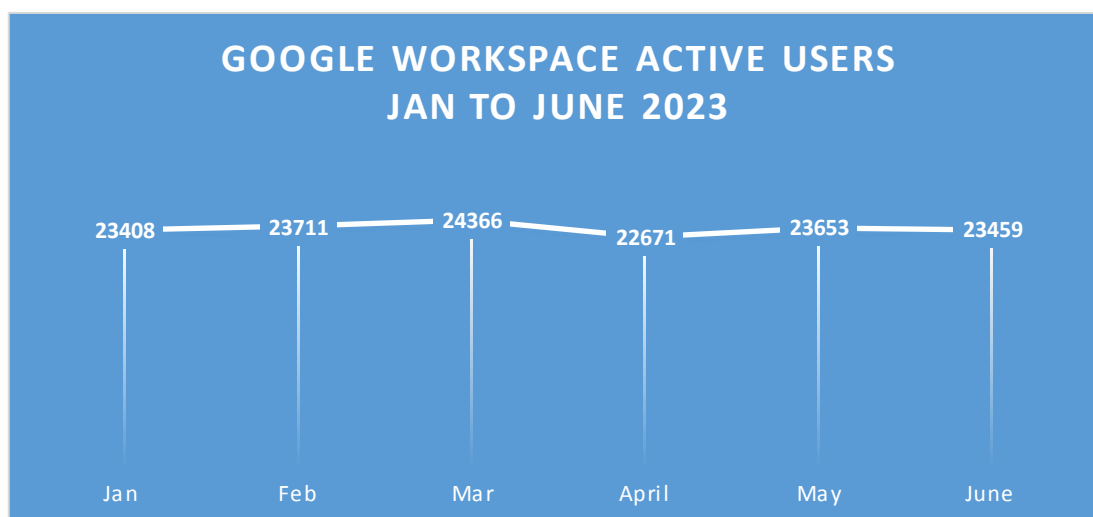
The collaborative has met with Professor Mark Logan, author of the Scottish Technology Ecosystem: Review, to welcome his reflections and on-going challenge of our work.

Maximising our use of digital technology

To maximise our use of digital technology, we have continued development and support for Google Workspace and the closely integrated suite of tools which work within the platform. Our online “Workspace Skills” training package has been completed by 168 teachers at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. This on-demand training has proven popular this year however session 2023/24 will feature some

return to face to face digital learning sessions supported by our partners: Education City, Text Help, Thinglink and Google. Our digital tools maximise our investment in Chromebooks while also making digital learning available to pupils in any location; home, school, or any other place.

Our schools continue to be supported to achieve the Digital Schools Award with 9 schools having achieved this award, an increase of 4 since June 2022, 1 gaining an additional Cybersecurity award and 41 working towards accreditation.



Our learners continue to make use of our Chromebooks in session 2022/23 with a device available for all P7, S1, S2 and Senior Phase pupils.

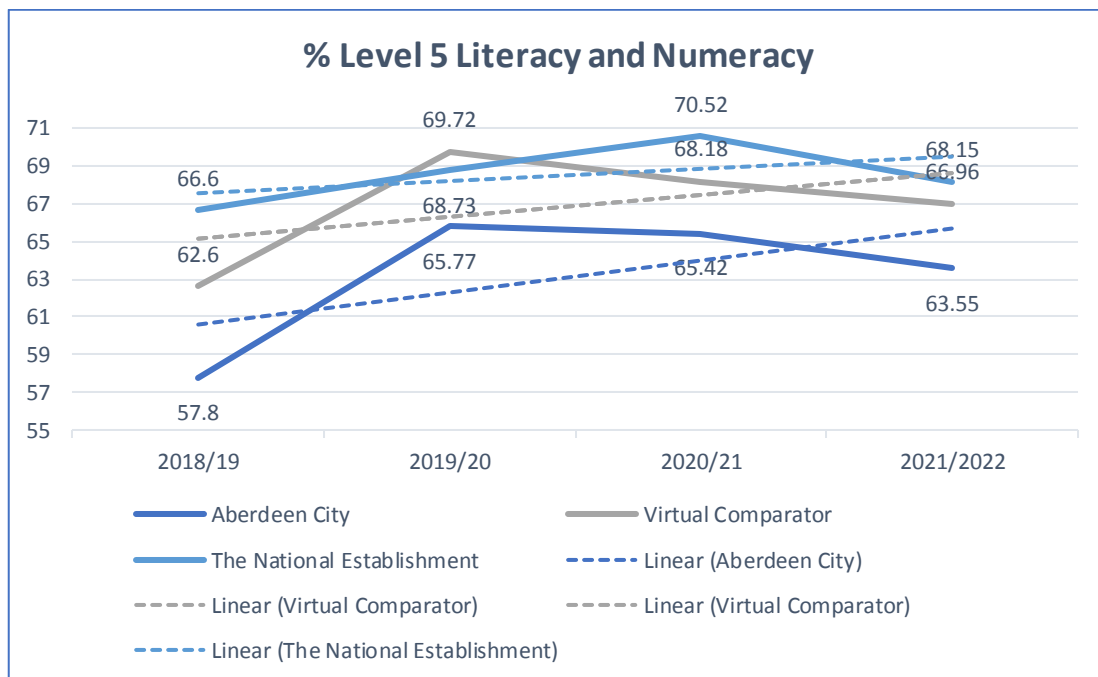
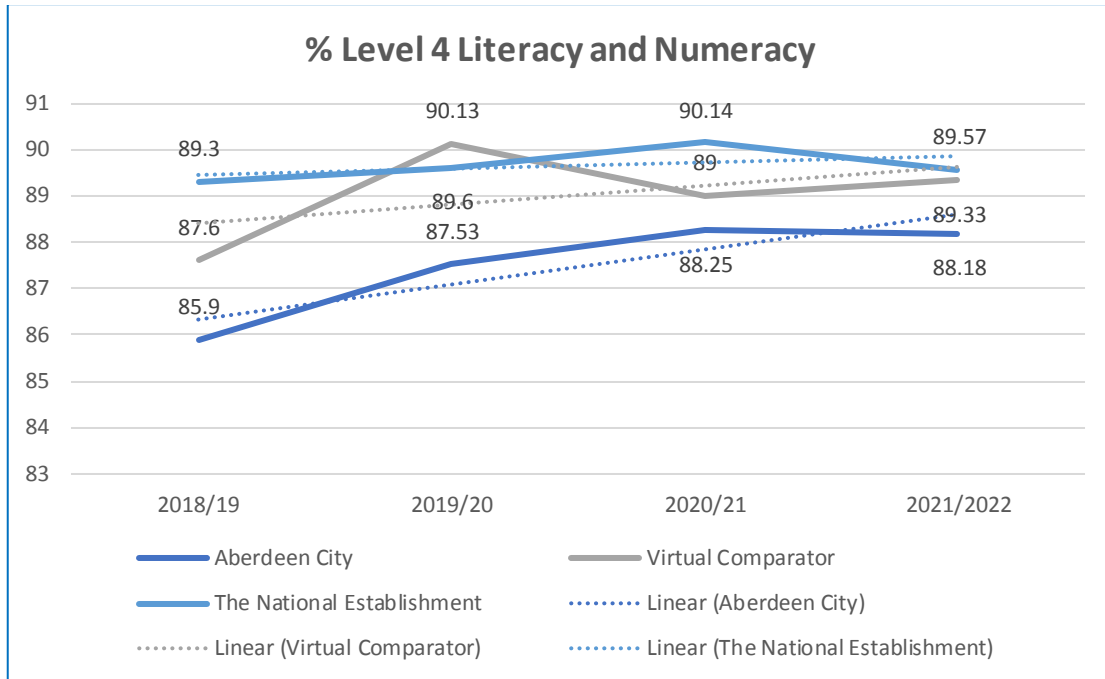
Almost all pupils engage with Google Classroom each month, with most users engaging weekly (typically over 21,000, 86.3% of learners). We have over 4000 active Google Classrooms where learning and teaching resources are shared with pupils and assignments set for learners to complete.

Monthly engagement has continued at similar levels to during periods of home learning with pupils returning over 1 million assignments between September 2022 and March 2023. A typical pupil in ACC will complete between 40 and 50 online assignments during the school year.

Work has begun with 2 pilot schools to look at developing a single login identity to improve access to digital resources. The two pilot schools are also going to evaluate the use of the Microsoft environment for teaching and learning. A group of early adopters in each school will begin the pilot program in August with each pilot school having full school implementation from January 24.

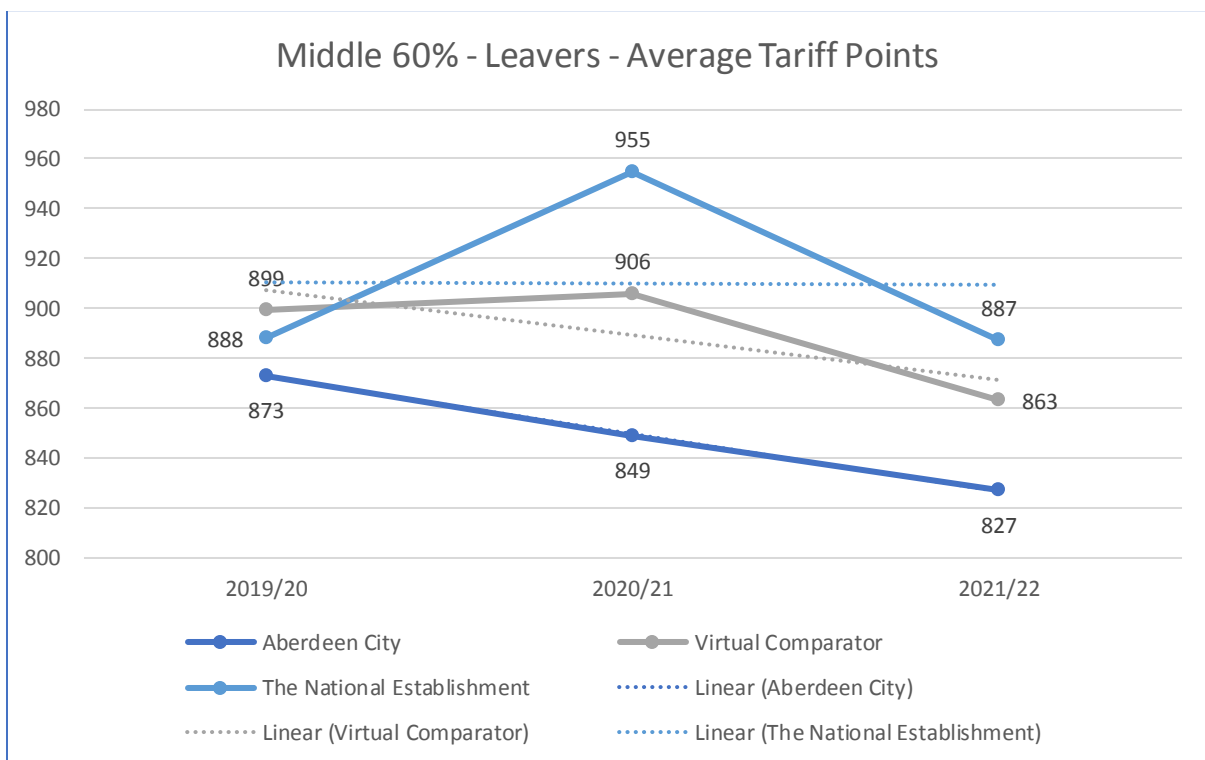
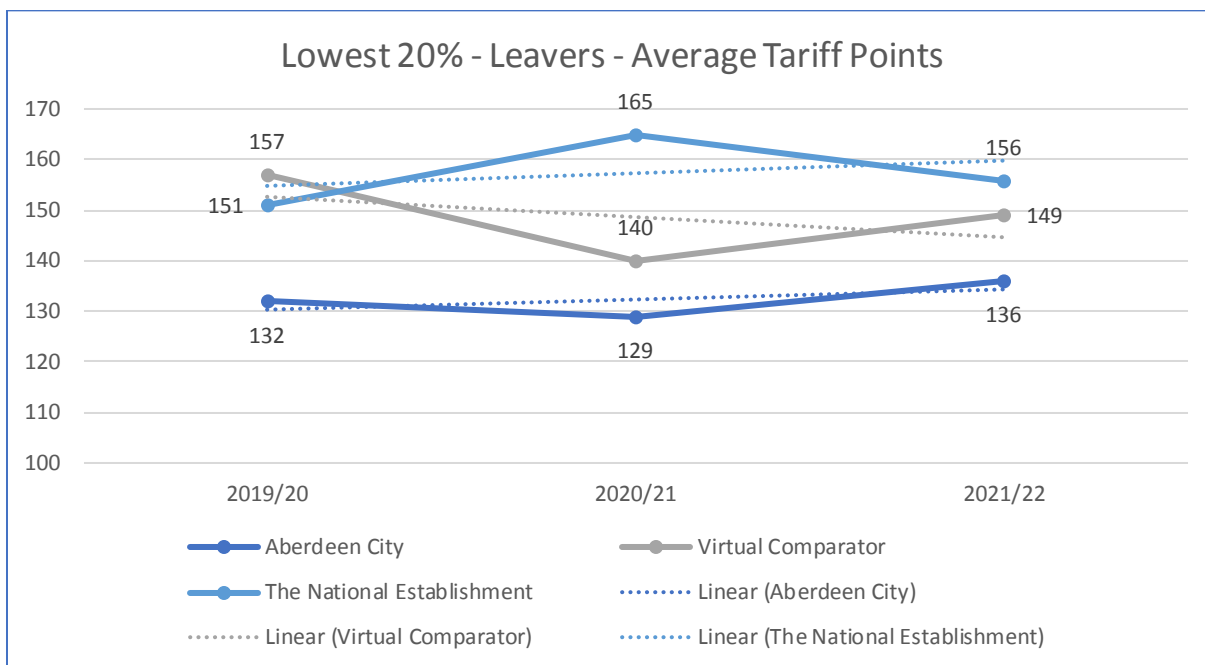
Planning for positive destinations

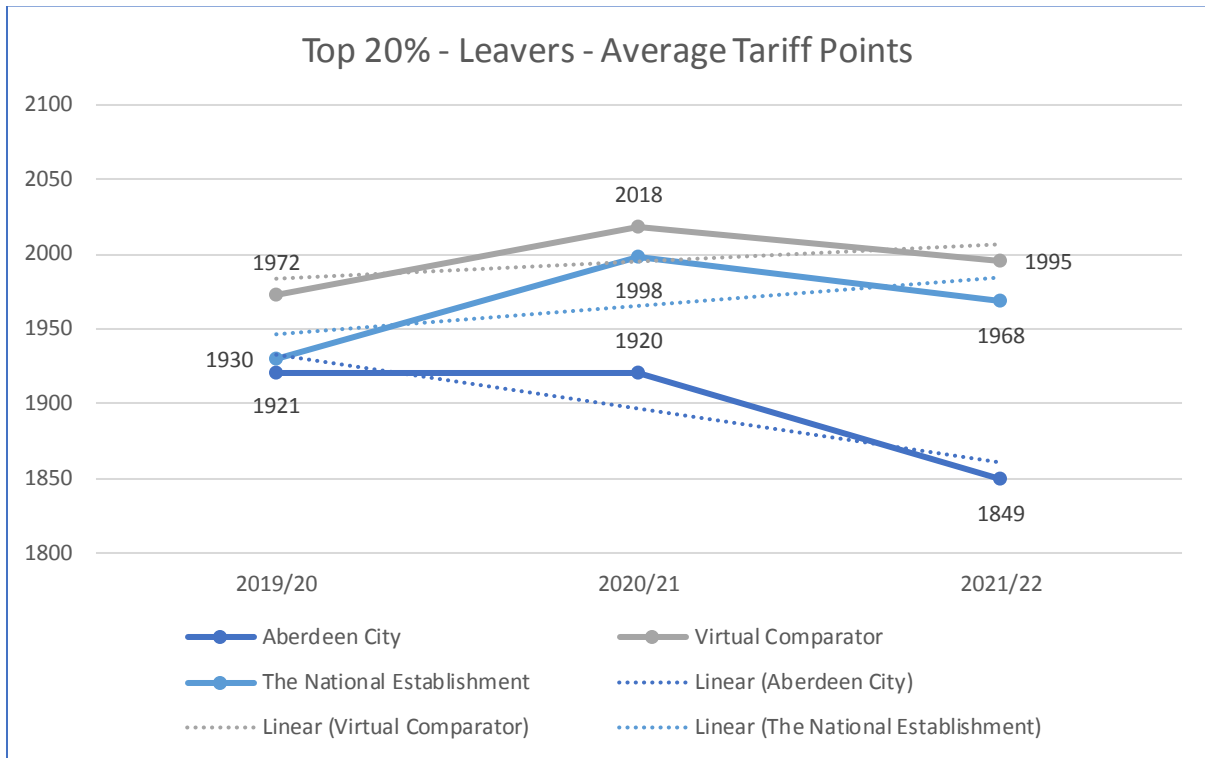
Prior to the pandemic, schools were exploring their curriculum offer at local level. The last two years have seen some curricular changes and improvement in the quality of grades. Care should be taken in making direct comparisons given the changed approaches to certification over the last 2 years. It is clear however, that despite making improvements at pace there is still considerable headroom in attainment.



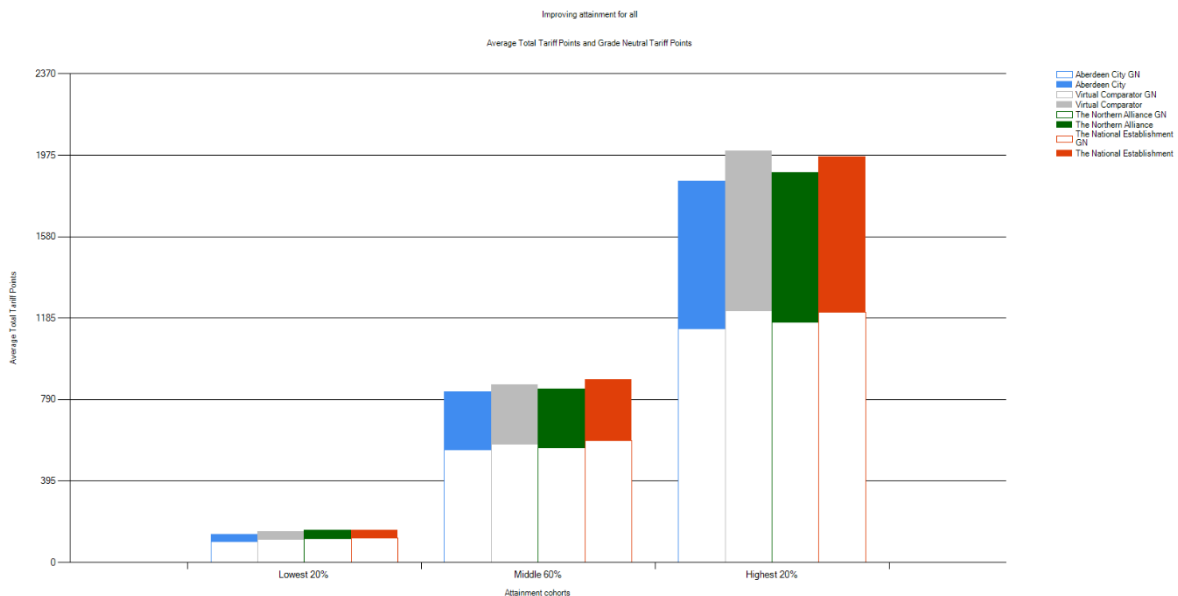
This is further illustrated by a review of average tariff scores. For the lowest 20% quintile cohort, the city has experienced a rising trend in Average Tariff Scores across the four-year period (illustrated by the dotted trendline).

There is a fall in the average tariff points for the middle 60% of learners and this mirrors the decline in average tariff points nationally as assessment processes are adjusted post-pandemic. The data for the top 20% shows a reduction in average tariff points which is similar to our Virtual Comparator and the National Establishment when compared to 2020/21.





A review of national and virtual comparator data shows there is still more to be achieved.



This graphs show that our middle 60% and upper 20% of young people in Aberdeen City secondary schools have performed behind the virtual comparator in 2022 when all attainment data is taken into account. It is believed that one of the key ways in which we can improve this picture is to provide learner pathways (new courses with vocational or clear links to growth industries) that better motivate all of our young people. This is one of the central reasons for the introduction of the new ABZ Campus. We anticipate seeing the impact of Phase 1 of ABZ Campus in attainment data for 2023/24.

The entirety of the work carried out to support young people in Secondary Schools has continued the positive picture in Aberdeen City on the number of young people reaching positive destinations. While there is a slight drop in the figures from 2020/21 there is still a significant increase from the 2019/20 figures. A greater focus on the importance of the pupil pathway planning process in all schools in the BGE will be an area of work this coming school session.

% of School Leavers in a Positive Destination

	Aberdeen	Virtual Comparator	The Northern Alliance	The National Establishment
2021/22	93.87	95.84	95.41	95.74
2020/21	95.38	95.2	95.32	95.48
2019/20	90.29	93.65	92.99	93.36
2018/19	93.74	94.82	94.98	95.05

The Planning for Positive destinations meetings undertaken in all city secondary schools provide an opportunity for proactive planning for young people. The Virtual School Education Support Officer works alongside school staff, the Throughcare and Aftercare and ACC employability teams to support the transition onto independent living and a positive destination. Further training is scheduled to take place in September 2023 where there will a concentrated focus on the importance of targeting care experienced young people during any pathway planning process.

A pathway planning process has helped to clarify roles and responsibilities in supporting young people to secure a positive destination. The Virtual School Education Support Officer works alongside school staff, the Throughcare and Aftercare and ACC employability teams to support the transition onto independent living and a positive destination. Further training is scheduled to take place in September 2023 where there will a concentrated focus on the importance of targeting care experienced young people during any pathway planning process.

Pathways Advocate were introduced in 8 out of the 11 Secondary schools with recruitment to the remaining 3 ongoing. The role of the Pathways Advocate is to provide young people who are care experienced (those currently and previously Looked After) with an opportunity to have an informed advocate based in school to advise and support in the area of choices, vocational pathways and future options. The Advocate is distinct from the Pastoral / Guidance role, and from the expertise offered by SDS, but works alongside these partners.

In schools where advocates are in post, there are early indications of positive relationships being built with young people and school staff, an additional layer of tracking and monitoring being undertaken and information being shared with school staff to help them to better understand the needs of children and young people with experience of care. In some schools the reach of the support has been extended to other young people who have other identified needs or may be at risk of becoming care experienced. The approach will be formally evaluated over school session 2023/4 to determine next steps.

Equity

Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs

Work with partners to roll out training in the Circle Framework to ensure consistent understanding, approaches, and language across all agencies.

Considerable work has been undertaken to support school staff in their use of the CIRCLE framework to help adapt learning environments to support children and young people to re-engage positively with in-school learning. Schools are at different stages of implementation and this initiative will be on-going over 2023/24 and tied closely to our work to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment.

During one of the citywide Head Teacher events, Central Officers updated on progress and shared resources to support the implementation of the framework. 3 schools shared their journey and managers responsible for the implementation of the CIRCLE framework were given the opportunity to share experiences.

Professional learning sessions and surgeries have been led by education support officers as well as educational psychologists and health professionals demonstrating a multi-agency approach ensuring a wealth of expertise and knowledge. To ensure practitioners and leaders are supported in the methodology, an online toolkit is being well utilised with evidence showing it has been accessed over 1000 times by schools.

Relevant and flexible support has been effectively established and is ongoing to provide access as and when practitioners and school leaders require it. A suite of recorded training provides accessible reinforcement that delivers consistency and foundation for ongoing professional learning and attainment .

Develop guidance on how to meet a range of needs, particularly sensory needs

A suite of online training modules has been developed to help us better understand the needs of learners. The suite of materials draws on local resources and signposts to national resources available.

The resource can be accessed through QR codes and posters are on display in all staffrooms. Initial feedback is positive, particularly from new or inexperienced members of staff. Circle framework resources are linked to the materials and all resources are updated regularly to ensure relevance

The nature of the framework enables it to be used to support professional learning as part of a group during in-service days or individually as part of personal professional learning.



Seclusion guidance

Our draft guidance, *Supporting Learners : A relationship and rights focused approach to physical intervention and seclusion*, has been issued to schools. Initial feedback has been positive highlighting the importance of shared definitions and the supportive nature of the debrief guides. We will update our local guidance in line with any changes once the finalised national guidance is available.

Continue to be responsive in the support being offered by the ASN and Outreach service.

The ASN & Outreach Service continues to support learners through a quality, collaborative approach. The Senior Leadership Team ensures robust decision making across the Service through shared and collegiate processes, which are overseen by the Head Teacher. Leadership of Change, across the Core HGIOS? 4 Quality Indicators, has been dispersed across Senior Leaders in session 2022-2023. A single Standards, Qualities, and Improvement Plan (SQulP) and associated quality improvement framework continues to support the development of a consistent, high-quality cross-team ethos. Self-evaluation endorses the progress made since Service realignment in August 2021 and evidences this is increasingly underpinned by the Service's vision, values and aims, which were consulted upon and established in session 2021-2022.

Improvement activity directed towards embedding 'The Five Roles of Support for Learning' across teams is increasing the Service's ability to articulate and self-evaluate the quality of its offer. Staff now have a greater understanding of the role of the service and the importance of commonality of approach to ensure learners needs are being met. The Service's website has been continuously updated since its launch in Spring 2022, which forms part of the Local Authorities 2020-2023 Accessibility Strategy. The website provides a range of content which is easy to access and presented using plain language. The parents, carers and families section provides useful links to support services and also a list of frequently asked questions.

Activity undertaken in 2022-2023 enabled the Service to implement a Quality Improvement Framework designed to better-support self-evaluation across the whole service. The Framework is being used to drive the implementation of a system of collective self-evaluation of Quality Indicator 2.3, Learning, Teaching and Assessment. This is coupled with the Service's involvement in local authority Quality Improvement Visits, which was also new this session. Assimilated data has enabled the Service to evaluate this element of their work as 'good' with gathered evidence now providing an increasingly robust evidence base of collective strengths and next steps. A complimentary internal professional learning pilot was launched in conjunction: participant reflection data evidences sessions are increasing both knowledge and understanding, and confidence.

Consistent approaches to tracking and monitoring have been piloted in 'target teams' to strengthen data-led improvement methodology and further engender Service-wide consistency: these seek to ensure the service can consistently track request for assistance (input) data to improved outcomes for learners, thus robustly evidencing the impact of our interventions. The pilot has enabled the Service to generate an evidence base, which links with learners' progress against their individual targets. Plans are in place to expand the pilot in 2023-2024.

Going forward, we will implement refreshed approaches to quality improvement and keep approaches under review based on insight gleaned from inspection agencies. We will constantly review our new more proportionate model as we will work with the Northern Alliance. Our approach to professional learning will continue to be influenced by the data held on the quality of provision, from the self-reported needs of our workforce and will continue to draw on the expertise across our own system.

Work with partners to develop transition planning, including those with disability

More effective transition planning is helping us increase the number of positive destinations being achieved by young people. The refreshed pathway planning process put in place has added greater rigour and consistency to the process. As a result of the new process, and despite the challenges in the local economy, thanks to the hard work of school staff and partners, positive destinations data for August 2022 increased by 5.1% from last year to 95.1%.

Third sector organisations Barnardo's, Foyer and SHMU continue to support the delivery of a programme of support for both winter and summer leavers. Numbers of winter and summer leavers have decreased significantly as more pupils stay on at school. It is thought that the ABZ Campus model across all city schools will provide a greater variety of choice, especially vocational opportunities, for children and young people who remain at school.

Transition planning for those with disabilities continues. Development of provision through the Request for Assistance process and Fit Like Hubs has enabled personalised pathway planning in partnership with schools. This work will be supported further through our engagement with the GIRFE pathfinder on transitions for those with more complex needs.

Delivery of the Accessibility Plan

We have made significant progress regarding the availability and diversity of professional learning opportunities. There has been a reduction in exclusions of learners with disabilities, improvements to understanding of universal and targeted supports and an increase in the number of learners who are declared as disabled. Consultation responses from parents and carers suggests we need to ensure a greater consistency of understanding including of reasonable adjustments and of the need for Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs).

There have been rapid improvements in our use of accessible technologies and availability across our settings. Quality improvement visits have shown that, where used correctly, these can enable learners to lead their own learning and be as independent as possible. We are committed to building further confidence in our staff through provision of ongoing professional learning opportunities and the sharing of effective practice.

Despite the broad range of training that has been made available, consultation responses from parents and carers suggest that there is still work to be done regarding use of effective planning processes. Work on planning formats will be progressed to ensure that they are accessible.

We are proud of the wider opportunities that our learners are experiencing, however consultation responses from learners, parents and carers suggests that more could be done. Extracurricular activities will continue to be a focus in the new plan.

There is a need to maintain focus on the active participation of our children and young people in decision making as we work to give them the skills and confidence to do so.

Effective transition planning impacts positively on our learners and families. Our evaluation shows an ongoing requirement to ensure that our supports continue to be responsive to changing needs.

Improved data collation is clarifying the needs of learners, this alongside professional learning, has enabled a clearer understanding of how a curriculum can be personalised. We have seen an increase in some of our attainment data but acknowledge that the attendance of learners is essential.

External expertise has been commissioned and a specialist consultant has been appointed to carry out site surveys at a cross section of school buildings to inform next steps around school signage.

Design work on new school buildings has included a range of partners and specialists. The proposed model for school buildings has been validated by a pupil survey across the city. Access to the physical environment has been enhanced through understanding the universal supports that can be put in place. For learners with Autistic Spectrum Condition or sensory needs, this is particularly important as we move to flexible learning areas.

Reshape the Virtual School to ensure that those on the edge of care and those who are care experienced achieve at the highest levels in keeping with The Promise

The Promise is increasingly influencing our work across aspects of the education service. This embedding of The Promise is taking place across all Community Planning Partners and as a result, we are currently in the process of evaluating our shared progress against the 2021-24 Promise Plan and the full evaluation will be presented to Committee in due course.

As a result, only areas most specifically impacting on education and not outlined earlier in this report are detailed below.

Role of the Virtual School

A Virtual School Head Teacher has been in place for many years and actively contributes to the sharing of national best practice. There is clear evidence that having this post established has improved the consistency of data being held in the School Management Information System and improved the quality of provision for many. However, there is also evidence that as relationships between the Virtual School and partners has strengthened, relationships with school based designated managers for cared for young people have been compromised. We will need to address this and are testing alternative approaches to support through our 2 Edge of Care Pilots.

Understanding what it means to be care experienced

A programme to support school communities to have a greater understanding of 'What it means to be Care Experienced' has been developed with the intention of rolling this out in schools in 2023/24. This programme has taken cognisance of The Promise Change Plan, UNCRC and Angela Morgan's Review. The delivery of the programme will be further informed by resources and training developed and piloted by Who Cares? Scotland as well as input from the Each and Every Child initiative who have established positive relationships with Education in Aberdeen City.

Review cases of those who are on the edge of care to inform next steps

The Education Service and Children's Social Work collaborated with partners to develop a shared sense of what is meant by the 'edge of care' in an attempt to ensure that appropriate supports are in place and well targeted in order to restrict the number of children who experience the care system. This guided the establishment of two Edge of Care Pilots to explore new ways of partnership working and early evaluation is positive. Staff within the pilots were empowered to think creatively and consider the needs of children and families more holistically.

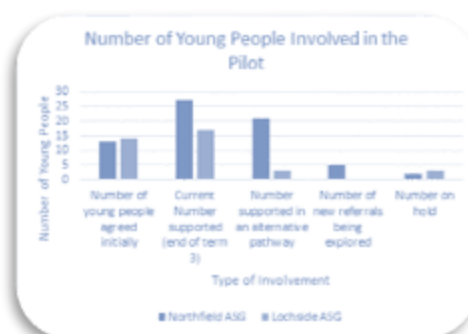
Use Service Design principles to reshape the approach taken by the Virtual School and wider Council with a focus on prevention and early intervention

Following the initial identification of young people by senior leaders in Education and Children's Social Work, the pilot team brought together information to build a more informed understanding of need, this included building relationships with the families to understand their situation more fully. As the pilot has progressed and relationships have been built, plans for young people have become more bespoke in response to the critical insight gleaned from families and the young people.

Establish a pilot in two Associated Schools Group to test and improve the model

From the outset the pilots recognised the criticality of how we engaged with young people and families. Connecting with the learning gained via the Fit Like Service, staff adopted a relational and trauma informed approach. This ensured that the support offer for each young person was based around the barriers they identified to being able to engage in education. Interventions are therefore individualised and have included:

- play-based support and structured work to explore feelings and emotions
- supporting parents to understand the impact of feelings on behaviours, academic input (literacy / numeracy/ASDAN awards/ dynamic youth awards),
- liaising with schools adapting timetables, strategies, and other supports,
- activities including sport, working with others, and managing relationships. families are supported to access weekly community connection sessions, financial support, support to access health



As the pilots progressed, the benefit of a weekly meeting between a key school link and the pilot team became apparent with a notable positive impact on transitions around school where these structures were in place. This practice is evident in both settings.

Young people engaging in the pilots are keen to share they feel listened to and value having an adult they can trust to talk to. Families tell us they value having someone who is seen to be neutral in terms of school and other agencies. As the pilot has progressed positive relationships have been built up allowing families to be more honest about the issues being experienced at home and allowing staff to target support more successfully.

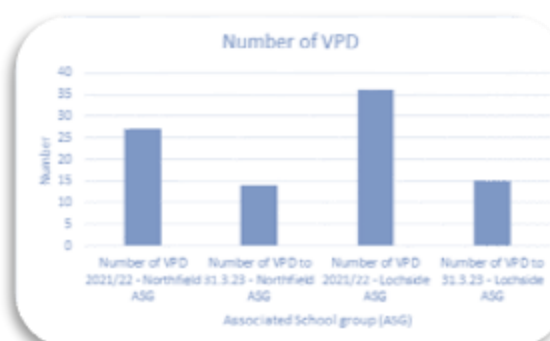
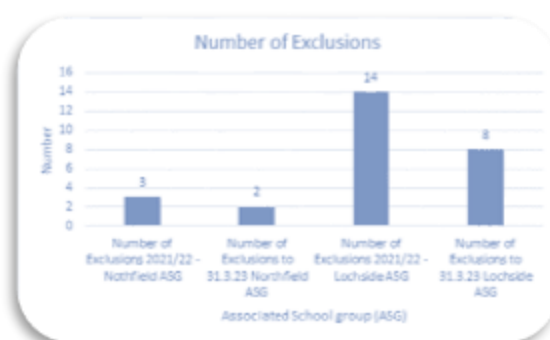
The core measures identified to measure impact were the number of young people involved in the pilot, attendance at pilot sessions, exclusions, and the number of VPD reports (Vulnerable Person Database). Consideration was also given to a number of indicators that would give an indication of progress towards more positive outcomes.

The number of young people engaging with the pilots has varied over time according to assessed need. Since September 2022, 68 young people have been supported across both ASGs. Where it was agreed in consultation with staff, young people, and families that the pilot was not the most appropriate intervention the family have been supported to access an alternative support.

Average attendance for young people engaged in the pilot has improved against levels from the previous session in both schools. In most cases this increase in attendance may be attributable to a key worker being on site and available to the young person should they require support.

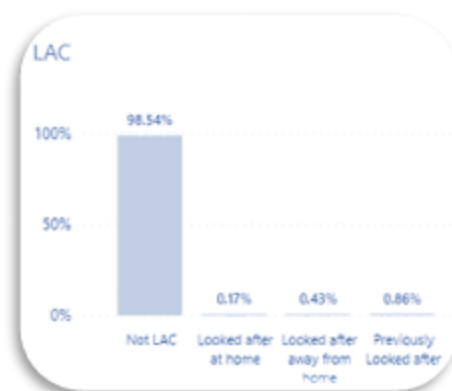
The number of exclusions for young people engaged in the pilot has reduced since the pilot began, again attributed to the positive relationships developed and resultant changes being made to the offer available in schools.

As young people have engaged with the pilot there has been a reduction in the number of VPD reports school has received in connection with their behaviour in the community. This may be related to the increase in attendance at pilot sessions, however it is too soon to draw firm conclusions given that the pilots have only been fully operational since December 2022.



On completion of the evaluation, consideration will be given to how this model may be scaled up as we continue to develop our preventative Family Support model.

Nationally defining 'care experienced' and 'edge of care' in legislation would enable easier identification of those who have experienced care in Management Information Systems and aid the easier extraction of data to monitor trends given the very low numbers of those with a current status of 'Looked After' in our schools.



Continue to work with Further and Higher education to support those who are care experienced into positive destinations

Pathways Advocates

The Virtual School Head Teacher led a sub-group that considered pathways for young people with experience of care in secondary schools. This involved working closely with colleagues in Further and Higher education alongside other key partners, to consider how best to support young people into a positive destination and sustain that destination. Young people in schools were asked what they needed and those in FE / HE were asked what support worked for them in school and what support would have been helpful in overcoming barriers. An output from the group was the development of the job profile for a Learner Pathways Advocate. This role was then implemented in secondary schools from October 2022 and will be fully evaluated in time.

Liaison with Further and Higher Education

There is regular liaison between the Virtual School and FE/HE in relation to supporting individual young people, an example of which is providing a bespoke extended work experience placement for a young person moving into S4, providing information for social work colleagues and also parents / carers. At a more strategic level, the Virtual School Head Teacher has worked alongside NESCol to revise the schools' application form for ABZ travel afternoons to ensure language is changed from Looked After to Care Experienced. This ensures that schools are in a position to share that a child has or continues to have experience of care.

School attendance

Validated data for 2021/22 shows that children and young people who are care experienced have a mean attendance of 86.59%. This is 5% lower than the average attendance of 91.44%. This gap has remained the same as the previous year.

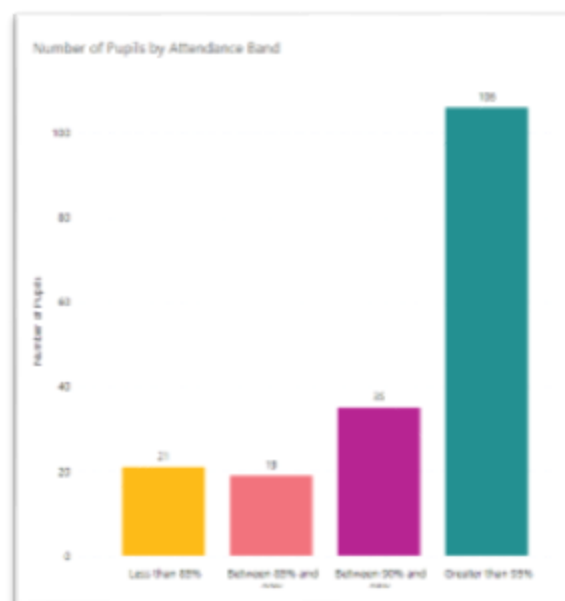
Exploring the data by group, however, highlights a contrasting picture for those who are looked after away from home compared to those who are looked after at home. The attendance of children and young people who are looked after away from home is two percentage points lower than their peers (91.44%). The attendance of those looked after at home is significantly lower at 82.05%, this constitutes a marginal increase from session 2021/22.

Attendance is tracked monthly and there has been an increased focus on supporting accurate recording of attendance of our Looked After Children, some of whom have a personalised curriculum that involves support by 3rd sector partners and commissioned services.

There will be a greater focus in 2023/24 on tracking of attendance for all those who are both currently and previously Looked After (care experienced) both in schools and centrally through the Virtual School.

The majority of cared for young people have attendance greater than 95%.

There is a need to understand and address the issues faced by those with poorer levels of school attendance and use this learning to inform the further development of our Edge of Care Pilots.



Exclusion

Exclusions have reduced steadily over the past 5 years.



Many children and young people found the transition back into a school setting challenging and required a degree of support to adjust. This is especially true for children with experience of care as a result of their lived experiences. Schools were supported to plan for the transitions and gave consideration to the personalised support that would be required. This transition may account for the marginal rise in number of exclusion incidents. There is evidence that the numbers of days lost to exclusion is being carefully considered.

Validated data shows that children who are Looked After at home continue to be more likely to be excluded than those Looked After away from home.

19 Looked After children have been excluded to date this academic year with 9 of those having repeat exclusions and accounting for 22 of the 32 total incidents. 14 of the children are Looked After away from home and 5 are Looked After at home. Secondary pupils account for 89% of these exclusions. There is a need to offer a wider range of courses to engage young people more fully in their education and this will be driven through Phase 2 of ABZ Campus.

It is also noted that the 2 highest points for exclusion are prior to the October and Easter holidays. Schools continue to be alert to the holiday build up for our children with care experience in order to support appropriately. There is early evidence that the year-round model of support being piloted in Northfield and Lochside ASGs is having a positive impact in reducing peaks of dysregulation.

Attainment and destinations data

Curriculum for Excellence data for Looked After Children continues to show a gap in literacy and numeracy attainment between those children who are Looked After and their peers. This remains a key focus despite the small numbers in the cohort (100 across all primary stages and 70 across secondary schools) which can skew data and make it exceptionally difficult to identify long term trends in both CfE and senior phase data

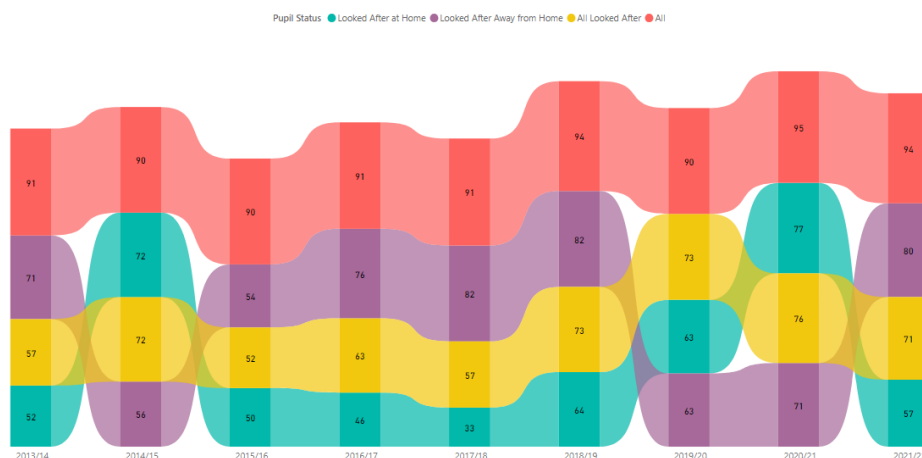
Taking all attainment data into account, the attainment levels for children who are Looked After remains relatively unchanged with little year on year fluctuation. There is a need to think differently around how to address this. There is a need to prioritise the resources available for those who have experienced care to build a wider provision of more flexible pathways.

It is anticipated that continuing to broaden the range of curriculum pathways available to children and young people through the ABZ Campus alongside focussed work from Pathways Advocates will see an increase in the number of subjects being achieved as well as the level at which they are achieved.

Although a lower percentage of young people who are Looked After move into a positive destination when compared to the virtual comparator, the percentage remains constant. Small numbers in the leavers cohort impacts on the percentage change achieved. There is a need to continue to focus on this area with a range of partners including Further and Higher Education in order to ensure that our looked after children consistently achieve a positive destination.

For the 2021/22 cohort, 5 young people did not move into a positive destination (3 are Looked After at home and 2 are Looked After away from home). All 5 had complex needs and were supported through the Virtual School. 3 have since moved on to college, 1 into employment and 1 on to ABZ Works.

% of Aberdeen City Leavers in Positive Destinations



From the cohort of leavers, the INSIGHT data indicates that 2 young people did not achieve any qualifications, however, due to circumstances 1 young person was entered late and did achieve a literacy and numeracy qualification. The other young person was supported to move on to a college course that did not require qualifications from school. This young person had struggled to attend school due to challenges within the home and a high level of anxiety about leaving the house/community. A range of supports continue to be in place to support them to succeed.

Schools are being asked to scrutinise the performance of this group of young people and Quality Improvement visits by Central Officers also have a focus on progress of all children and young people with experience of care. In session 23/24 there will be an increased level of scrutiny through termly visits with the Learner Pathways Advocates and designated managers in secondary schools.

In summary, considerable testing is underway to help deliver on Plan 21-24. There is now a need to drive changes in the senior phase curriculum through Phase 2 of ABZ Campus and evaluate the impact of the pilots underway to help determine the shape of the system in the long term. Data will continue to be a focus with individual schools being asked to monitor groups routinely to help identify and share best practice and address issues timeously.

To fully deliver on Plan 21-24, the education service now needs to:

- Implement the new BGE trackers
- Evaluate our Edge of Care pilots and use this learning to inform the future shape of the Virtual School.
- Evaluate the impact of our Pathways Associates
- Broaden the curriculum further through the second phase of ABZ Campus
- Engage positively with the national education reform programme

Support those least likely to secure a positive destination through a School Leavers fortnight

Initial exploratory work was undertaken with young people. Feedback was that there was no appetite for this development at this time. Consideration of this offer with a particular focus on those with additional support needs will be made again in 2023/24.

Close the poverty related attainment gap

QIOS to work with HTs to monitor the impact of PEF interventions regularly to enable agility.

Quality assuring the extent to which schools are closing the poverty related attainment gap

Schools have continued to use data to inform their use of Pupil Equity Funding with a wider range of interventions available across the city. Quality Improvement Officers continue to monitor the impact of PEF interventions during school visits and during data discussions. Significant consideration and progress has been made to systematically review and develop PEF planning and reporting. The process has included working with the Education Scotland Attainment Advisor and looking beyond the local authority for good practice. Working alongside a group of headteachers and

the attainment advisor, the central leadership team have developed a bespoke equity tracker that aligns with updated school improvement planning. The impact of this development will be evident once the final format is shared and implemented with school leaders in August 2023.

Improving attainment at Quarryhill School through Pupil Equity Funding

What problem were we trying to solve? 72% of our school population is within the first two SIMD quintiles and in P1 a third of the year group are being supported within our PEF plan. Our aim is to improve attainment generally but also for the pupils within the lower quintiles for reading, writing, listening & talking, numeracy.

What did we do? We embarked on a journey to improve our P1 experience moving towards a play-based approach, considering current research with the aim to raise attainment.

Our journey included:

- Professional learning for both teachers, including visits to other settings, collegiate working, professional reading, and online learning to support the development of our vision, as well as improve staff confidence.
- We resourced both classrooms, changed the physical environment in partnership with nursery staff, and experimented with free-flow learning between classes to increase varied play opportunities, share resources and support differentiated learning.
- An EYP transitioned with the children from nursery to P1 and supported the development of the play-based approach. A PSA then took over from November onwards working with both classes, focusing also on small group interventions. (Our plan was to have the EYP stay the full session but she left post)

What happened? Attainment in listening and talking increased by 1%, reading improved by 24%, writing by 17% and numeracy by 14% over the year.

What next? Our approach is to be further embedded in P1 with opportunities for outdoor learning. Staff will continue to engage with professional learning and network with other settings.

In Numeracy P1, 4 and 7 the poverty-related attainment gap, measured by comparing the outcomes of learners in quintile one (Q1) and quintile five (Q5), has reduced from 2020-21. The 2021/22 attainment was equal to both the 2018/19 baseline and the five-year average for this national measure.

In Literacy P1, 4 and 7 the poverty-related attainment gap has reduced from 2020-21. The gap decreased from 31% to 11% in 2021-22.

These figures outline the considerable improvements which have been made when compared to 2020-21 data.

Hanover Street School addressing the attainment gap.

What problem were we trying to solve? Data analysis and ongoing assessment highlighted gaps for the majority of our children in SIMD bands 1 and 2. We focused on core subject areas Literacy, Numeracy and Health and wellbeing. For Health and wellbeing, our aim was to provide further nurture support to give children the platform and supporting strategies to fully access their learning.

What did we do? Invested PEF money into 0.6fte teaching staff and 1.0 PSA to increase our offer of support for learning and nurture to identified groups of learners. SfL focused on Literacy and Numeracy using baseline assessment data to measure against to determine progress.

In Literacy, we have used benchmarking and writing criterion scale data as a tool to establish gaps in children's learning. We then focused support on Reading and aspects of writing (spelling, grammar) using a range of resources such as Nessy (online tool to support reading and writing). Children's progress is assessed on a termly basis for example (Benchmarking for reading, comprehension assessments, individualised teacher made assessments for targeted areas)

What happened? Most targeted learners (including our children attending school due to their families fleeing conflict) showed evidence of improved attainment with a few learners making significant progress.

What next? As we approach June, identified learners will be reassessed to determine the level of progress made across the year. The increase in teacher salary means that it will be challenging to continue with our current approach and our plans for next session are currently under review.

Dyce Academy using Interdisciplinary Learning to close the gap through the use of Pupil Equity Funding

What was the problem we were trying to solve? In-school data (BGE Literacy levels) showed that BGE pupils on FSM showed significantly less achievement in writing in S1 and S2 and reading in S2 and S3.

What did we do? We implemented the use of an IDL (International Dyslexia learning – identify develop learn) literacy programme for a targeted group of pupils from S1 - S3. This programme focused on developing knowledge and confidence in different areas of literacy through consistent use of the programme.

What happened? Overall, 80% of pupils who have engaged with this programme have increased their reading age. This ranges from 1-month to 2-year age. When pupils were asked how much they felt the programme was helping them, almost all pupils agreed or strongly agreed that IDL has helped their literacy skills.

What next? As IDL has been a success with a targeted group we are going to broaden the use of the programme and introduce it into an identified S2 English class with a view to further rolling it out to other English classes. This approach along with the purchase of accessible library books will look to further close the gap and increase literacy skills and confidence levels amongst our BGE cohort.

Engagement with Education Scotland

Following thematic reviews 2 of our schools were asked to participate in national events to share their work on Interdisciplinary Learning.

The Local Authority has led work with the Northern Alliance to develop a shared Quality Improvement Framework across the Northern Alliance. All Quality Improvement teams came together in June 2023 for training from HMle and this work will continue throughout session 23/24 and help the Alliance work together to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment.

We are in early discussions around curriculum development support for one of our secondary schools.

Bucksburn Academy

What was the identified gap? A gap in literacy levels in S1 and S2. Several pupils were starting S1 with a low reading age.

How many pupils were impacted by this intervention? 301 with 34 being in SIMD 1&2 and 36 in receipt of free school meals.

What happened? From growth data taken from Star Reading: 81.25% of S1 pupils in quintile 1+2 have increased their reading age this session. The average increase was 6 months. 77.78% of S2 pupils in quintile 1+2 have increased their reading age so far this session. The average increase was 9 months 63.2% of S1 pupils who receive free school meals have increased their reading age this session. The average increase was 1 month. 76.5% of S2 pupils who receive free school meals have increased their reading age this session. The average increase was 6 months. The increase in reading age for S1 and S2 as a whole was as follows: S1 - 7 months S2 - 4 months.

People's views The reading ages of all pupils is shared and kept updated on a spreadsheet which is shared with staff. A number of staff have said that the data is useful to them for gauging the amount of differentiation that is required for individual pupils. Support for learning also uses this data to decide which pupils require extra help with reading and set up small literacy groups once a session to help them.

Observations Accelerated reader also helps to motivate the pupils to read more which in turn helps to raise their reading ages. There are competitions to see who can read the most words, class word totals and word millionaires and word multi-millionaires.

Monitor impact of the provision of Youth Work, Family Learning to determine an agile response to supporting disadvantaged groups.

Partnership Forums continue to work to identify the issues being faced across a community to determine priorities, agree how to allocate resources, and identify where gaps in provision remain.

Youth Workers, Family Learning Workers and Financial Inclusion workers were first put in place over 2021/22 as part of the Education Recovery Grant, with a clear remit for early intervention and to target children, young people, and families most at risk of disengaging from education. This resource has been maintained through use of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding. There are numerous examples of where this more flexible allocation of resource has successfully improved outcomes for learners and families with examples highlighted throughout this report. Emerging learning from CELCIS guides greater focus on multi-agency locality working to improve outcomes and this will be considered further over 2023/24.

The culture of collaboration across the organisation continues to support our learners and families well. The pooling of expertise and resource continues to deliver policies and programmes in an efficient and more impactful way.

Youth work funded by Scottish Attainment Challenge funding

Scottish Attainment Challenge resource continues to be invested in youth work. 2074 young people (aged 10-18 years) and 689 children (aged 5-9 years) have engaged in youth work this year with 1648 of those young people reporting improved mental health and wellbeing as a result of their engagement with the service.

2,459 young people have engaged with the Saltire Awards in Aberdeen. These awards, which are for volunteers aged 12-25 and co-ordinated by ACVO, continue to contribute positively to employability skills. 56 children and 16 young people were supported to complete nationally recognised awards.

Over 100 young people identified as unlikely to secure a positive destination benefited from targeted and carefully tailored youth work programmes. 617 referrals for youth work have been received from across all secondary schools. Of those referrals:

- 26% sought support with health and wellbeing
- 20% sought support to manage relationships
- 16% sought support to improve communication with others
- 13% sought support to improve self-awareness

178 individual 1-2-1 sessions were delivered along with 421 group sessions.

Two years of data strongly supports the provision of youth work in schools and Scottish Attainment Challenge funding will be used to maintain this provision. The ability to provide some job security through extending the provision will help to improve outcomes as it allows for relationships to be maintained.

Youth Work Making a Difference

Cooking skills as part of the ongoing support offered to young people on Flexible Learning Pathways by the Youth Work Team. The sessions support engagement, contribute to young people's life skills and support positive Health and Wellbeing. Confidence 2 Cook sessions ran from August 2022 and 22 young people have taken part at Deeside Family Centre.

During an initial 4-week Confidence 2 Cook course young people choose what they would like to learn to cook, learn about food/kitchen safety and are encouraged and supported to experiment with foods, recipes, and flavours. Flexible arrangements support participants to overcome anxiety about going out of the house or provide learning activities off site from school that will further support skills and confidence building based on their interests.

One young person recently completed a Dynamic Youth Award based on their Confidence 2 Cook sessions, two young people have applied to NESCOL to do Hospitality and one young person will be starting a cooking course through Barnardos employability after Summer. The sessions are based on healthier eating on a budget and young people can make their favourite foods for a fraction of the cost and know the health benefits of reducing sugars and salt.

The engagement and attendance at these sessions is very good and the sessions remain fully booked until October 2023 with young people requesting further sessions. Guidance Teachers have noted the positive impact these sessions have in engaging young people in further learning opportunities and continue to discuss the learning offer with parents and young people and submit referrals to the Youth Work in Schools Team. The sessions also allow young people and staff to build positive relationships and identify other areas where support is needed e.g safety in the community, offending, relationships or future goals.

Feedback from young people

'I want to do cooking for working with children, I have taken HE next year'

'I have a place at College for cooking'; 'skills for when I am older'

'I know how to make burgers and tacos, my favourite food'

'helping my mum cook the Christmas dinner'

'I want to be a Chef, gaining my confidence to cook certificate will help'

Parent feedback

'he is really enjoying the sessions.. thank you': 'beetroot burgers are tasty' 'he has been cooking up a storm in the house over the holidays'

'he is at school today and is looking forward to his cooking!'

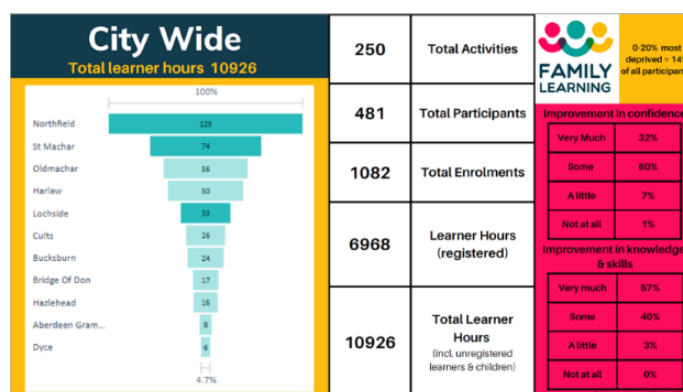
'I've tried all the things and I must say they've tasted pretty good, he's fair chuffed with himself'

During session 22/23 data was gathered more routinely to support more rigorous evaluation and help to inform next steps. We now need to more carefully align this data set with our work to develop a Family Support model and carefully consider the role of Partnership Forums within that model.

Family Learning funded through Scottish Attainment Challenge funding.

The primary reason for most of the referrals to the Family Learning service is for support with behaviour, low attendance at school or support for families with a child who has additional support needs. When work begins with families and a trusted rapport is built, other areas in need of support are often discovered, such as poverty, poor mental health, and the breakdown of family relationships.

Families being referred for 1:1 support generally present with a higher level of need, with 16% of families currently with social work input, on the cusp of social work support or experiencing child protection concerns. Family Learning frequently support the maintenance of de-escalations from social work and is recognised by colleagues as an essential role in the support received by families. The team have developed strong relationships with a wide variety of partner agencies with the goal of ensuring that families access the right support at the right time.



There is now a need to think about how this resource aligns with our model of Family Support.

Family Learning Case Study funded through Scottish Attainment Challenge funding

Working together with home and school

A child displaying aggressive behaviours at home and in school was referred to Family Learning. The child was only attending school for 2 hours each morning at the time of referral and found it difficult to be in class, spending most of the time in school in the nurture room. The referral outlined the parents' need for support to understand the child's emotions and to establish structured routines and boundaries within the family home. Family Learning began building positive relationships with the parents and supported them to attend an 'Understanding Emotions' group. 1:1 support was offered in the family home, establishing positive routines, and encouraging mum and dad to work together to respond appropriately to the distressed behaviours of their child. At the most recent multi-agency meeting for the young person, there has been a marked improvement.

The child is now accessing a full timetable, and most of his timetable is within the classroom with his peers. The child can recognise when he is becoming frustrated, and there is a system in place to allow space for him to deescalate. Mum and dad are noticing that their young person is less heightened at home, and they are seeing a clear reduction in heightened behaviours.

Family Learning at Bramble Brae Primary School funded through Pupil Equity Funding

At Bramble Brae the most impactful intervention has been our Family Learning Worker (0.8) which has been integral to our plans supporting a focus on attendance, engagement, and participation. Our worker has provided focused interventions and workshops for families and has provided 1105 learning hours within our school community.

Over the session there have been 25 courses/1 to 1's. 1 to 1 support priorities the 6 priority family types with 100% of those supported falling within one of these categories. There have been 62 participants over the session with 92% of those in attendance reporting an improvement in confidence and 97% of participants reporting an improvement in knowledge and skills.

Family Learning Case Study - Young Parents Group

Family Learning have been running a support group for Young Parents under the age of 25 in Seaton Community Centre since September 2022. This is a space for young parents to meet other parents their own age and develop a peer support network. Participants have said that they previously struggled to access regular parent and toddler groups due to the difference in age between them and the other parents who attend. Each week they make lunch together and take part in an activity which is decided by the participants themselves. A core group now attend regularly. The group have worked on a variety of creative projects and participants have been able to take part in activities they otherwise wouldn't have enjoyed. The participants have had speakers in from services like St Machar Credit Union, ABZ Works and CFINE and have since signed up to access these in the community regularly. Visits have been undertaken to Aberdeen Art Gallery and SHMU, which group members have enjoyed. Some of the participants are quite vulnerable and have a limited support network.

Through engaging with the Young Parent Group they have been able to access 1-2-1 support from Family Learning workers, Family Learning courses and Grounded Counselling. Two of the group members have children transitioning to primary school after the summer and are now thinking about volunteering opportunities in the community and potentially returning to work. Family Learning staff continue to signpost them to appropriate support and opportunities.

Work with Education Scotland Attainment Adviser to target support to identified schools.

During session 2022/23 our attainment advisor shared support available at a universal level at a head teacher training event. She has offered PEF drop in sessions for all schools which have been well attended and support the management and use of PEF funding in schools.

Writing was identified as an area for improvement and central officers worked closely with the Attainment Advisor and Children and Young People’s Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) National Improving Writing Programme to identify schools to form part of a pilot to improve writing attainment . The team identified 11 schools had access to training and mentor support resulting in improved attainment in the targeted year group of P4 for all schools involved. This pilot will be rolled out further during session 23/24.

**Improvement Project - First Level
Writing Cohorts 1 & 2**

School	Year	Base (%)	Pre (%)	Post (%)	Actual (%)
Bramble Brae School	P4	70	70	83	83
	P5	56	85	86	86
Quarryhill School	P4	36	85	80	80
	P5	55	75	70	70
Killybrewater School	P4	80	80	79	79
	P5	40	40	40	40
Kingsford School	P4	89	91	90	90
	P5	69	67	58	58
Kinnhill School	P4	90	79	70	70
	P5	70	70	70	70
Rainhill School	P4	85	81	81	81
	P5	34	88	88	88

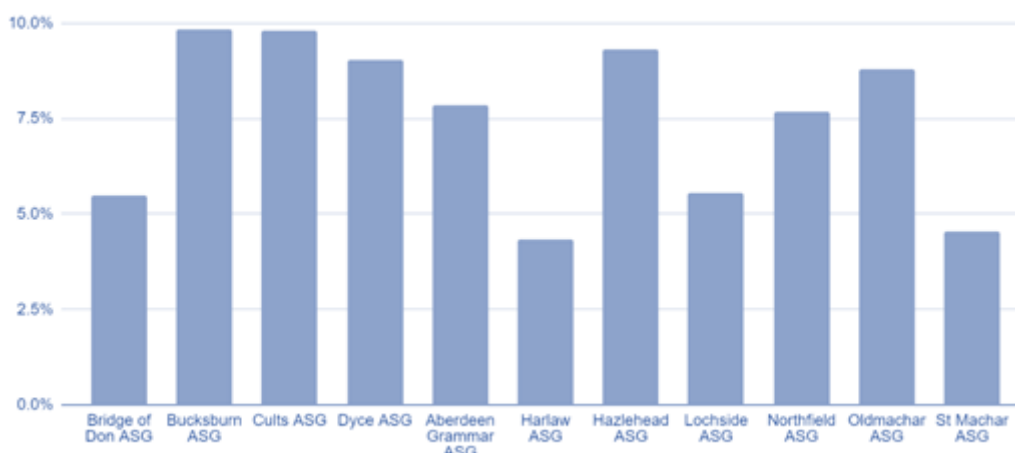
Maximise update of free Musical Instruction

The Music Service has developed pupil uptake strategies for settings where the uptake of music tuition was lower. The strategies are based around whole classes learning instruments together in an ensemble setting. These targeted programmes give children the opportunity to learn an instrument and perform alongside their peers and afford some parents the opportunity to learn an instrument alongside their child so that they can be fully involved in their child’s musical journey.

A significant change can be seen in regards to children in particular areas of the city accessing the service. For example, in April 2021 there were only seven pupils in the Northfield Associated Schools Group (ASG) accessing Music Service provision. This number now sits at 186 pupils. This change is welcomed by the Service.

The chart below shows the percentage of children in each ASG receiving individual and small group music tuition. Through data analysis the service has identified priority

Percentage of ASG roll receiving group and individual tuition



schools for increasing numbers of pupils receiving tuition in the 23-24 academic session.

Audit the cost of the school day to determine next steps

Curriculum costs can restrict the choices that young people make in schools and limit their access to the courses best suited to their aptitudes and interests. Schools have removed all curriculum costs to families. There is clear evidence that this has resulted in children taking decisions on courses which are not influenced by the associated costs.

Further work will be undertaken in session 23/24 to review guidance to schools and look at how other costs impact on learners and families. The financial inclusion team will continue to support families to navigate the on going cost of living crisis through providing timely support and advice to families.

Work with the Scottish Government to increase provision of ELC to those who are 1 and 2 from low income households.

Although this was planned for session 22/23 we are awaiting guidance from Scottish Government as to how this will be implemented.

Universal roll out of PEEP in all ELC settings

Capitalising on the expansion of early learning and childcare

At the heart of the ELC Expansion is increasing family resilience through improved health and wellbeing of children and parents, so as a Local Authority we took the opportunity to put significant resources into the Parents as Early Education Partners (PEEP) 'Learning Together' Programme for ELC staff in both our school nurseries and funded provider settings.

Sessions were delivered online via Microsoft Teams over four half day sessions and are ongoing. The practitioners engaged with a small group during the training in order to develop confidence using the PEEP resources and are then introduced to the PEEP Team Network. 106 practitioners from ELC settings in Aberdeen City have completed the programme and are qualified to deliver PEEP as part of our universal family support offer. A few settings are introducing PEEP sessions as part of their induction process. Feedback from parents has been very positive:

"I enjoyed watching Macy enjoy herself"

In particular parents appreciated the opportunity to get together and support each other.

"It was great to be able to get together with people with similar aged children"

"Getting out to meet other mums"

Despite the investment in training, the number of settings offering PEEP are lower than we had anticipated and plans are in place to increase the support available to enable more consistent delivery of PEEP over school session 2023/24.

Proactive planning and the targeting of families by multi-agency partners has helped realise an increase in the percentage of vulnerable 2–4-year-olds accessing early years provision from 12.3% to 16.5%. This should increase further following the introduction of the Data Sharing / Pipeline Project, which has resulted in 565 flyers going out to names and addresses we have received from Scottish Government.

There have been 3 care experienced parents who have applied for an Eligible 2's place since this became a new eligibility criterion. (an increase from last year) All children are placed and engaging positively. The service will continue to work to identify and place those deemed to be more vulnerable as a priority by working in collaboration with key partners.

Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible

Work in collaboration with others to address the root cause of poverty.

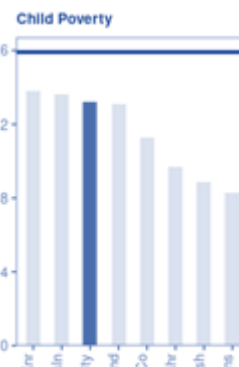
A comprehensive analysis of child poverty was undertaken as the [Children's Services Plan](#) was developed in March 2023 with a further review undertaken as part of our [Child Poverty Report](#). The report highlighted the considerable contribution made by the education service but highlighted the need for a continued focus on child poverty.

Provisional data for 2021/22 shows that 6,818 children in Aberdeen City were living in low income families (up from 5,405 in 2020/21 and 6,139 in 2019/20). Of these, 5,864 were under 16 years old - equivalent to 16.4% of children under 16 years.

Almost two thirds (62.7%) of children in low income families are in working households and over half (55.6%) are in lone parent families. Figures for the number of children in low income families are calibrated to the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) survey. As fieldwork operations for this survey were affected by the pandemic, the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) has advised that additional caution be exercised when making comparisons with previous years.

Levels of child poverty in the city are below the national average. However, levels are relatively high when compared with our comparator authorities. We know that nationally around 90% of those living in poverty identify as being a member of at least one of the 6 groups most likely to be impacted by poverty. It is imperative that we now better understand the unique needs of our citizens in the 6 groups to help shape our policies and practices.

A review of the Improvement Service Community Planning Outcomes Tool, shows that 78% of communities were performing better than expected as of 2020/21. This means however, that 22% were not. There is now a need to establish a mechanism to better



track our progress in addressing the child poverty agenda across our communities and localities in real time to ensure that our collective endeavours realise more equitable levels of improvement. There is also a need to improve the quality of qualitative and quantitative data on the 6 groups most likely to be impacted by poverty to inform our work and this will be an area for development with Community Planning Partners over school session 2023/24.

Schools responding to the needs of their communities

Our schools continue to address child poverty at school level with a range of approaches in place to mitigate the impact of the cost of living crisis on families.

Orchard Brae School

What problem were we trying to solve? Reduce the impact of cost of living on families with children with disabilities living in areas of deprivation. Focus on food, personal care items and clothing to increase pupil focus, engagement, and attendance.

What did we do? Clothing bank set up by a class with information sent out to all parents within this group. Request for donations for reusable school clothing asked from parents/carers/staff Clothing, personal care items and food purchased. A meal of the fortnight launched for families – families could request a pack which included an easy read, easy make recipe card and basic ingredients to make a meal for four. Purchased supermarket vouchers to send to PEF families to support with everyday items and clothing.

What happened? Our evidence is somewhat anecdotal - increased attendance for overall group, slight increase in engagement levels. One of our best outcomes was the engagement from the parents as we had a 100% return/positive acknowledgement after receipt of the vouchers. This has had a positive impact on our ability to further develop the engagement. Some of this group of parents will now be involved in our family engagement leadership group to support all aspects of school life.

What next?

Continue with the clothing bank.

Re-launch meal of the fortnight to make more sustainable and varied

Vouchers to be purchased again to support with everyday items.

Explore possibilities of a family area to support families to charge phones, do washing, get a warm drink and access to support.

The use of the Arts to build confidence and participation

Young people at Northfield Academy shared that they feel branded by postcode. This triggered work with Aberdeen Art Gallery and The Creative Learning Team to help young people explore the uniqueness of their community and themselves. This saw the introduction of Artists in residence funded by Pupil Equity Funding.

Case Study - This is Northfield

Young people at Northfield Academy have told us through a Focus Group that they feel branded by postcode. We want to shift the narrative around Northfield and give young people a sense of achievement. We also know that enjoyment is a key component of learning. An important outcome for this project is to make learning more enjoyable for our young people by using creative interventions. In response, we have partnered with the Creative Learning Team to shape four residencies.

The four residencies aim to use creative arts to develop skills, such as creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. The Northfield Academy learners will participate in a range of creative activities and develop their creative arts skills and their confidence while they are working towards an SQA qualification by achieving units from the National Certificate in Personal and Vocational Skills. The project will also feed the creativity of our staff by offering them the opportunity to engage with the creative arts, through our artists, as well as mindfulness meditation and other activities.

Residency 1 – What’s Your Treasure?

Northfield Academy learners have been invited to offer new perspectives on artworks and objects in the city’s art gallery and museum collection and work towards an exhibition at Aberdeen Treasure Hub. The young people will have an exhibition on the 17th of June 2023 at the Aberdeen Treasure Hub. <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/AAGM/learn/northfield>

Residency 2 – Princes Trust Collaboration

The Awesome Tech project will invite Northfield Academy learners to build robots and interactive sculptures in small teams. Young people will be using the creative arts to develop their team working and leadership skills.

Residency 3 – Supporting Health and Wellbeing

Working across the whole school, this residency will explore creative interventions to improve the health and wellbeing of teachers, support staff and learners within the school.

Residency 4 – Resilient Northfield

This residency will focus on improving the perception of Northfield by inviting learners to create a sensory map and lead a community arts project.

The evaluation framework will measure several outcomes, including:

Young people will have more confidence.

Young people will feel listened to.

Young people will feel valued.

Young people will learn new skills.

Young people will feel more positive about learning.

Partnership with Nuart

The success of this programme led to establishment of a partnership with Nuart for the first time in 2023/24.



Schools were involved in 2 projects to create art work as part of the festival. Working alongside the renowned Scottish based (and Aberdeen born) street artist Katie Guthrie, Primary 5 pupils from six city centre schools and representatives from every Secondary school participated and got the chance to add their mark to a chalk based artwork in the 'Quad' of Marischal College, with outdoor chalk to create graffiti and street art which the theme of the festival 'Rewilding' at its core. The event encouraged young people to express themselves with no limits imposed. The end result was open to the public to visit during the Nuart Festival.

Working alongside Aida Wilde, an Iranian-born, London-based contemporary serigraph artist, educator and social commentator, young people from Northfield, St Machar and Dyce Academy were given the opportunity to explore any avenues that are important to them and create pieces of powerful messaging which have been 'pasted up' and curated into a public gallery outdoor space in the city centre



Emerging evidence is highlighting the benefit of the arts in supporting children and young people to feel more confident and participate more fully. Discussions have also begun to look at how we can link Nuart with other groups including the music service to allow us to link all the arts together. This will be developed further over school session 2023/24.



Artist in Residency at Glashieburn School

What problem were we trying to solve? The impact on attendance, participation and engagement based on emotional resilience, self-confidence, anxiety/fear, general resilience, and ability to cope with change.

What did we do? We worked with Creative Learning to put an Artist in residence in place across 3 terms.

What happened? Children were involved at all stages, including the interview process, this allowed full ownership of the project. The children based those selected for interview on how interesting their art project was, how engaging they thought it would be for their peers- would it have a 'hook and how would it support them in becoming more resilient. The children worked with school staff to create a set of questions for interview and sat in on these across a day. The children selected to interview had been part of the Resilience residency funded by Creative Learning last session as part of the return from Covid, so they had an understanding of what the project outcome needed to be.

Three Artists were selected to work across the 22/23 session- each with a different art approach but all with a focus on improving resilience, confidence, and self-esteem. The children selected to work with each artist were based on data, including attainment, attendance, and SHINE survey data, as well as parental and teacher concerns. We also selected a whole class to work with an artist where we had a high level of need, care experienced children, low engagement with out of school activities, and three children who are finding it difficult to cope with returning to the classroom after periods of school closure.

The work of our first artist allowed children to see the benefits of change and how to put strategies in place to deal with the negative emotions change brought about. As these groups were mixed, they also supported friendship and relationship building. One child benefitted in terms of communication and providing evidence in support of professional judgement of a level in Talking and Listening. The children involved spoke of the artist being calm, approachable and a good listener, and for one particular child the artwork allowed them a space to work anxiety free, with no pressure for their work to be 'correct'.

The second residency was based with a class and used the outdoors with links to mindfulness and nature. The children have commented on how calming these sessions have been, providing a clearer headspace and a level of freedom to explore, supporting confidence. The class teacher involved has commented on how being outdoors in nature has allowed them to see a different side to some of the more introverted children, commenting on a growth in confidence which some have transferred into the classroom.

Our third residency provided opportunity for children with a range of additional support needs to cope with change and work as a team, developing tolerance and respect.

What next? Our plan is to work with Creative learning to analyse the reports from all 3 artists and consider pupil feedback and broader education data sets.

Free school meal registrations have increased but uptake is too low

Schools encouraged families to register for free school meals and the number of registrations has increased. Improvement in registrations has been realised through changes to benefits awarding systems. Claimants of housing benefit and council tax reduction are now automatically awarded the free school meal benefit. The universal roll out of free school meals has made close tracking of uptake for direct comparison challenging.

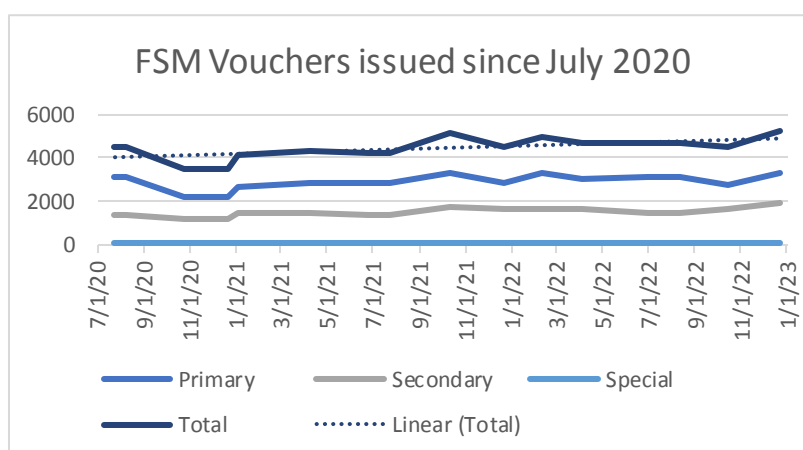
When looking at the number of children (including those who are now automatically entitled in P1-P5), the number of children registered for free school meals has increased from 8277 in 2020 to 12,721 in 2022. While there have been increases at schools in priority neighbourhoods, increases have been seen across schools in the city, including those in areas out with priority neighbourhoods.

Uptake of free school meals varies considerably from school to school and the school catering service are working with local schools to better understand the factors guiding children and young people to not take up their entitlement. According to the most recent data from the Healthy Living Survey, the percentage uptake in Primary schools currently sits at 69.6% and only 47.7% in secondary schools.

Work is in progress to establish a food hub at St Machar Academy to test an alternative approach. The food hub will be out with the main school building and provide 'grab and go' food provision, allowing pupils to be out with school to meet their friends but still uptake their free school meal entitlement. Learning from this trial will be used to determine next steps.

Vouchers have been distributed to families who are eligible due to low income during holiday periods, and these continue to be welcomed by families. In the year to date, vouchers provided were equivalent to the value of £343,964 in school meals .

Free school meal vouchers issued to families on low incomes during holiday periods



Culter Primary Partnership with Aberdeen Football Club Trust

What problem were we trying to solve? Through attendance data, teacher observations and pupil comment we noted that a number of children were arriving at school with factors impacting on their readiness to learn and engage. Some children were complaining of not having breakfast or morning snacks resulting in their first nutrition of the day being school lunch. Additionally, a number of children were continually arriving significantly late or displaying poor attendance. Class teachers also identified a number of children with “high energy” appearing unsettled or restless first thing in the morning. Valuable learning time was being lost and additional staffing resources were being deployed to support the children struggling to engage

What did we do? Through our partnership with Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust (AFCCT) we began two free breakfast clubs from 8-9am offering high energy games and fun football activities followed by a free varied, nutritious breakfast and access to morning snacks supplied by CFine. We opened up bookings to all pupils but prioritised our targeted identified/PEF pupils for places.

What happened? Pupils/Parents welcomed the breakfast club and it has become a regular fixture. This session, we have served over 450 free breakfasts and seen positive feedback/attendance from pupils and parents. Teachers report an improvement in high energy pupils seeming more settled and ready to learn following attendance at breakfast club. Some pupils have seen an improvement in punctuality and attendance on the days they are attending breakfast club. We are reassured that all pupils who attend have received a healthy nutritious breakfast and access to extra fruit/water for morning snack.

What next? We plan to continue running two Breakfast Clubs next session offering priority for our PEF pupils and target families. We will continue to encourage engagement from our pupils displaying poor attendance/punctuality and look at ways to incentivise their attendance. We hope these strategies will ensure greater equity for all and minimise the impact of child poverty on our pupils learning, engagement and achievement.

Maximising uptake of benefits

As of January 2023, over 22,500 young people have applied for and obtained a National Entitlement Card with free bus travel and are benefiting from this service.

In collaboration with the customer function, the service has made 18,998 Scottish Child Payment Bridging Payments. These payments ceased after the Winter payment in 2022 with the wider rollout of the Scottish Child Payment, administered by Social Security Scotland, from mid-November 2022.

The Community Planning Partnership has worked hard to increase the uptake of social security and benefits in kind. There is a need to carefully track uptake so that corrective action can be taken if required. It would now be helpful to align data sets so that partners can better assess the complementary nature of interventions to ensure that we maximise collective impact.

Financial inclusion advisors have been attached to schools as part of our approach to education recovery. Over the period April 2022 to March 2023 the enhanced Financial Inclusion Team’s advisors helped families achieve the following:

- Financial Gains of £1, 077, 325.24
- Assisted/Assisting 194 households with debt issues

- Helping with total debts of £1, 129, 447.58
- 381 household with given full benefit checks only
- Assisted 57 households to claim benefits
- Assisting 12 household to challenge being turned down for benefits

In addition to maximising the uptake of benefits, time is now being committed to address the root causes of poverty through the strengthened development of skills for life, learning and work by looking at the needs of young people and their families more holistically. This is seeing strengthened partnerships with our City Growth and Early Intervention and Community Empowerment functions. It is hoped that increased provision of learning pathways for young people will be made available from August 2023 by establishing curriculum alignment and looking at how to extend provision to local communities in order to break the poverty cycle.

Development of retrieval practice at Aberdeen Grammar School

What problem were we trying to solve? Under the existing examination structure, young people where poverty is a barrier, can find it challenging to prepare for 1 high stakes examination. This is particularly the case for young people with additional support needs (ASN). Our aim was to provide all young people with the skills and resources to support them with preparation for SQA examinations at National 5 and Higher level.

What did we do? We introduced Retrieval Practice sitting alongside staff evaluating their physical learning environment against the CIRCLE framework. The supports we put in place, originally for a targeted group are supporting all young people on a universal level. Resources sitting behind this (flashcards, targeted twilight revision sessions, materials for parents – Planning for Success events, construction of a learning and teaching website) have received positive feedback from staff, pupils, and parents.

What happened? Analysis of S4 SCQF level 5 data points to an uplift within the Working Grade for the current S4 cohort. This is looking like a 5% uplift on a universal level. Young people in focus groups report increased confidence in the use of retrieval practice to support retention of information. Dyslexia can be a real barrier for young people with the chunking and retention of information. This group of young people in S4 and S5 were very positive about the “teaching” of strategies to support retention for SQA examinations. As we began to unpick this issue, we felt that a fuller review of our provision for ASN learners was required. We invited colleagues from across ACC with specialist knowledge to support us with this task. We have now interviewed all young people across S1-S3 to populate the ASN Tab with specific strategies which we will share with teaching staff to aid their planning.

What next? Following study leave, meet with all young people in the new S4-S6 with ASN and review the information held for them and adapt with strategies they feel will support them.

Measurable outcomes within the L&T aspect of the new SIP linked to application of learning and feedback

Embedding retrieval strategies/CIRCLE framework/UDL across every classroom to ensure consistency.

Continue to be responsive to the needs of refugees arriving in the city

In September 2021, given the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, the Home Office airlifted over 7000 individuals from Kabul airport as part of the Locally Engaged Staff (LES) Scheme. To meet the temporary needs of families before they find permanent accommodation the Home Office procured hotels across the UK including 3 hotels in central Aberdeen to provide bridging accommodation to a sizeable community. In 2023 the Afghan families living within hotels were issued with 3 months' notice to quit by the UK government for more settled accommodation. Early indications are that at least 10 families have noted their intention to remain in Aberdeen, with children settled in our city schools.

Over the course of 2022/23 our schools have welcomed and supported over 300 children and young people at any given time who have been displaced by the war in Ukraine. Most of these families have been living within hotel accommodation, ranging from at maximum 8 hotels, now reduced to 3 hotels either within the city centre or at Dyce. One of our primary schools has welcomed over 110 children across all stages and one of the secondaries almost 50 young people. Almost all of these children have settled and remained within the schools they initially enrolled in throughout the session. Some movement is now being seen with families being housed in more settled accommodation across the city. Early indications are that almost all families are choosing to remain in Aberdeen with their feedback on support from our schools and education providers being very positive.

Additional supports for staffing, EAL & ESOL provision, counselling and nurturing provision, IT devices and online provision and transitions have ensured our Ukrainian children and young people have become included, nurtured, and are achieving in our schools across Aberdeen.

National Transfer scheme

The implementation of the National Transfer Scheme has seen an increase in the diversity of our children and young people with care experience. The setting up of a best practice group locally has ensure the specific cultural, language and trauma needs of our unaccompanied children are recognised and met. In addition to this, a Wellbeing worker, funded through the Scottish Attainment Challenge Grant for Care Experienced Children and young people, was appointed in 22/23 to deliver on 4 key outcomes for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People.

- *Supporting Transitions*: into the City, into School, into wider opportunities, and to a positive, sustained destination;
- *Cultural Integration*: organising and facilitating opportunities in the wider community to support immersion and inclusion in Scotland;
- *Language Development*: facilitating input complimentary to ongoing input (by EAL/ESOL and/or school) e.g. fresh start, Skills for LLW; and
- *Supporting Learning*: curricular support in its broadest sense, complimentary to support provided by the school (but the profile gives flexibility in terms of location, focus etc. i.e. this could be targeting wider learning in the context of wellbeing).

Challenges recruiting to post mean that work is still in the early stages with relationships being built alongside resource development and target setting. It is anticipated that early positive indicators will translate into positive outcomes for academic session 2023/24.

Partnership delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with The Promise

Continue to work to shape a model of Family Support with Community Planning Partners

Family Support through our Fit Like Hubs

The Fit Like Hub, a multi-disciplinary rights based and family first service established in 2020, continues to help ensure that families can access early and preventative support. There is clear evidence that engagement with the service realises:

- Parents feeling supported to manage their anxieties and worries
- Parents/carers and children and young people feeling listened to and heard
- Strengthened family relationships
- Improved child mental health and wellbeing.

Those accessing the service tell us that it feels like a bespoke service and that it is the first time support has 'felt right'. As a result we have the confidence in our ability to deliver high quality, rights based integrated services that adapt based on what children and families tell us. Families tell us that they appreciate this and other more integrated services and this feedback is helping to shape our work to establish a Bairns Hoose to support those who experience the care and justice system.

The Children's Services Board identified the need to prioritise those who have experienced multiple trauma and recognise the establishment of a Bairns Hoose will help reform ways of working with and for this group. Our ambition is that our Bairns Hoose maximises the potential to fully incorporate the Justice element. This will include having distinct space for Age of Criminal Responsibility interviews but also a remote court suite that enables children and young people to give evidence to Court. This builds on our strong response to the change in legislation around the age of criminal responsibility and our contributions to the national guidance. The Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaboration is led by the Council and extends across NHS Grampian, University of Aberdeen, and Robert Gordon University. It will work with our commissioned external research contractor to support evaluation activity.

More closely align the universal services of health and education

The Links Hub continues to be successful as a targeted ELC provision delivered in partnership with Health Visitors. The service was graded with 3 Very Goods and an excellent for leadership at their Care Inspectorate visit in May 2023. The co-location of services has helped the universal services plan to meet the needs of some targeted families together and there is clear evidence of risk being reduced without the need for access to specialist service. We will see this approach spread as Health Visitors start to be located in schools. Planning has started to co locate the Bairn's Hoose in the vacant wing of the links building this will further strengthen links across the service.

Links Hub

The partnership between health and (early) education sits at the heart of the work undertaken at Links Nursery and Hub. The setting prides themselves on building trusting, therapeutic relationships, which give families the opportunity to voice their needs and the challenges they face. The focus being to reduce referrals to other services out with the Hub and to increase and improve engagement of families within our service.

There is a weekly children's meeting held within the Links Nursery and Hub to promote information sharing and multiagency working. Speech and Language Therapy, Health Visitor, Centre Manager and Excellence and Equity Practitioners are represented. Robust planning support takes place for children and their families who are facing adversity, with Child A providing an example of how this approach is improving outcomes:

Child A's parent was recently diagnosed with a health condition impacting their capacity to parent. The parent was also struggling with Child A's behaviour, which had deteriorated since the onset of their own ill health. Nursery noted this behaviour change, a change of pattern in attendance, and other family member doing almost all pick-ups and drop-offs. These changes prompted a discussion with health visitor, which resulted in a home visit where parent shared her challenges. This information was conveyed at our meeting, which led to structured support from health and education. Parent was offered one-to-one PEEP (Parents as Early Education Partners) sessions with our Excellence and Equity Practitioner (within the hub) alongside behavioural support within the home. Travel support was also offered to increase the child's attendance. The parent disclosed that they felt a support network now surrounded them.

Outcomes: there has been an increase in engagement with both health visitor and hub centre manager and an improvement in child A's attendance at nursery and at health-related appointments.

It is important to note that families are involved at all levels of future planning support for their children. This new, collaborative way of working at the Links Nursery and Hub involves children at the heart of decisions made to improve their positive future health and education outcomes. The centre opened in 2021 with 40 registered children and now has around 110 children supported on a daily basis evidencing the desire of parents to access joined up services.

Request for Assistance

The request for assistance process, which allows us to amend our response in light of live demand data, is being updated to include access for our multiagency partners. Phase 1 will be ready for launch in August 2023 and will not only gather information on the number of referrals but will also allow referrals to be tracked from allocation to a worker to the point any agency disengages. This will allow all services to be more agile, ensure the needs of families are being met and build a stronger picture of the

journeys taken by our families. Phase 2, to be delivered over 2023/23, will explore how families can self-refer at the point of need.

Aligning support to our Family Support Model

We now need to consider how best to make clear our offer to families given the varied range of provisions available to families through Pupil Equity Funding resource. There is also a need to ensure that supports already available through established Partnership Forums and targeted Family Support Model all work together to support vulnerable groups and this alignment is being driven through the development of a Family Support Model evaluation framework. The Children's Services Plan provides the direction of travel for working with community planning partners to shape a model based on the 10 principles of Family Support outlined in The Promise.

Westpark Primary School working with Barnardo's

What was the problem? Some children finding it hard to settle in the school.

What did we do? 20 children have attended Barnardo's groups with a focus on peer relationships, building self-esteem and target setting. 16 learners and families had 1:1 Barnardo's support from Northern Star worker or student on placement (7% of roll)

What happened? Almost all targeted children now report feeling happy, safe, and normal at school. Almost all now identify people who they trust and safe spaces within school. Almost all now identify supports which make a difference to them.

There has been a decrease in the number of reported near miss incidents as children have identified and can use strategies to regulate heightened emotions.

Almost all target children have very good or improved attendance and engagement as a result of feeling more confident and comfortable within the school environment. Three care experienced learners have had Barnardo's support for more than a year. As well as increasing their engagement with the curriculum, Barnardo's have also acted as a bridge between home and school, supporting families at multi-agency meetings and identifying additional supports (financial, food banks, holiday programs)

Placements offered to social work students this year allowed additional families to benefit from 1:1 support, as well as teachers to request additional targeted group work support.

What next? Barnardo's will continue to work with the school community to develop trauma-informed approaches for meeting the needs of the most vulnerable groups in our community, providing tailored support to individuals and their families, to raise school attendance, engagement, and attainment.

Review the Anti-bullying policy

Refreshed Anti-bullying policy was approved by the Education and Children's Services Committee in July 2023. The policy will now be rolled out across all schools from August 2023.

Strategic Enablers

Workforce

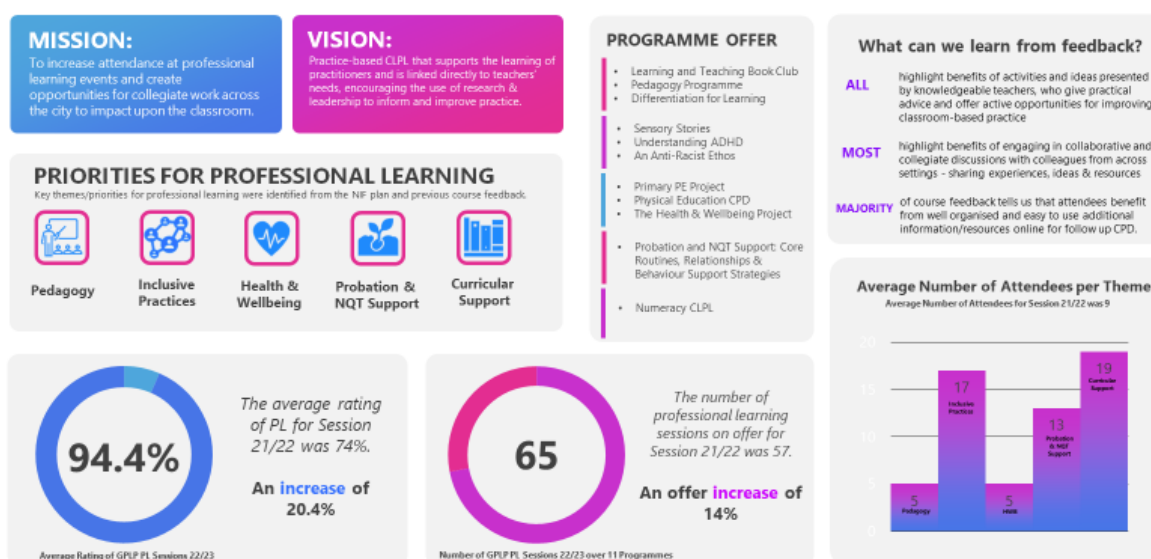
High quality professional learning for all

The Service introduced a grassroots professional learning programme in session 22/23. The programme aimed to offer practice-based professional learning and encouraged the use of research and leadership to inform and improve practice. Content was developed following a review of key themes from quality improvement visits and experienced staff with validated practice were invited to apply to design and run the continuing professional learning sessions.

The approaches to professional learning were varied including workshops, book clubs and hands on experiential learning. This approach has supported an increase in the number of sessions offered and an improvement in the feedback received.

We are still seeing lower numbers of attendees participating in face to face or online professional learning opportunities since pre-pandemic. We will continue to work with colleagues to understand their needs and wants including approaches, timing, and content of sessions to support this to increase.

Grassroots Professional Learning Pilot Programme 22/23



Early Learning Workforce Development and Expansion

We are committed to expanding, developing, and training our workforce and offer funding annually to support workforce development and expansion in the ELC and School Age Childcare sectors.

In 2022/23, 105 applicants were successful in being awarded funding to undertake an accredited qualification. These were from our Local Authority and Funded Provider ELC settings and our School Age Childcare services. Qualifications funded included: BA / PDA in Childhood Practice, SVQs in Social Services (Children and Young People) and Play work at Levels 2, 3 and 4.

Early Years Outdoor Expo

The Early Years Team hosted an Outdoor Expo event in November 2022 with a view to creating a valuable opportunity for practitioners and teachers from across the city to network, combine experiences and move further towards a shared vision of early childhood and outdoor practice. The event invited 60 participants to join a range of practical workshops (i.e. woodwork, creative and natural resourcing and den-building), which had been shaped by attendees' self-identified needs. We also used this event as a platform to engage our educators in local outdoor action research conducted by some of our ELC staff. We empowered our skilled Outdoor ELC team to lead workshops and share their passion for connecting children with the outdoors in order to build confidence in others as we work to address variability.

Participants gave overwhelmingly positive feedback during the event, as well as through formal evaluation, with most stating they had an increase in confidence with outdoor practice after attending and felt inspired and confident to move the provision forward in their setting. Some examples of positive participant feedback included:

'Hazehead Outdoor Nursery is a great example what could be achieved in the setting when everyone supports each other ideas and do things together involving children and carers'.

'I absolutely loved the woodwork session. This is something I don't have any experience of and would probably have been terrified of introducing it before but after experiencing it myself and seeing the simple but clear rules to put in place I am dying to start it with my class!'

'Networking opportunities with early years practitioners. I work in early years on my own at my school as I don't have a stage partner nor a nursery so was lovely to have conversations with like minded professionals'.

Staff identified learning takeaways they plan to put into practice:

'I left feeling excited about woodwork and ready to explore woodwork within my setting.'

'I definitely feel confident in introducing and using real tools at woodwork area. Tips for packing resources necessary for going off site to our nearby local park also really helpful.'

'The tools used for den building, as well as the knots - I learned I will definitely put that into practice and show other staff the knots that can be used to hang the outdoor swings etc. To continuously use my imagination to create and teach new skills.'

Going forward, there will be further opportunities for practitioners to engage with one another, particularly the chance to observe and experience the practice of others.

ELC Modern Apprenticeship Programme

ELC continues to work in partnership with Aberlour and Great Western Training Centre to offer 38 young people a Modern Apprenticeship while working in a local authority setting. The qualification has a timeframe of 22 months to complete and from our October 2021 intake we currently have 11 candidates who have completed their qualification and moved on to ELC positions internally and externally, with the

remaining candidates approaching qualified status in June 2023. This will continue to be a rolling programme.

Early Level Continuing Professional Learning Digital Tools

After the development of the ACC Learn ELC platform which aimed to offer accessible resources that could be accessed flexibly, a programme of tutorial style sessions were planned to allow practitioners to come together for collaborative discussion. Those who attended the sessions reported that they appreciated the opportunity to share practice widely, looking outwards to support their own services self-evaluation.

To streamline the offer of both national and local digital training resources, a single platform collating the wide offer for staff has been developed and hosted on the programme [Thinglink](#). Staff have reported that the Thinglink platform is accessible and helpful in signposting staff to useful and relevant resources.

Continued professional learning is delivered within Localities, developed in response to ELC Locality Lead's quality assurance practices and delivered either individually to ELC settings or across the Locality.

Supporting Pupil Support Assistants

ACC Educational Psychology Service (EPS) have now trained 52 Support Staff in the Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) programme, with cohort 3 just completing their training. ELSA is a programme grounded in Psychology, written by Educational Psychologists and with strong evidence of outcomes from its widespread use in England and Wales. ACC EPS data shows the training was rated very highly and that improved outcomes were seen for individuals in schools with trained ELSAs.

ELSA is an intensive training programme with the equivalent of 6 full days of training. The training builds capacity in staff to deliver targeted individual programmes of education in relation to developing self-esteem, resilience and the overall emotional literacy and regulation of learners. Following completion of the training ELSAs receive career-long psychological group supervision 6 times a year, a total of 12 hours per year. This intensive and in-depth training for ACC's Support Staff maps onto the aims of the Scottish Government's 'Pupil Support Staff - Professional Learning Framework'.

The annual training return for ELSAs is not yet complete for 2022/23, but previous evaluations highlighted the following impact on the ELSAs themselves. Their competence increased in all topics from pre to post training.



Other training offered by ACC EPS has included Emotion Coaching, Seasons for Growth, Positive Psychology and Mindfulness. Training evaluation returns remain positive.

Supporting probationers

Despite the challenges of the last year, schools continue to mentor and support new staff well. 98% of probationers in our schools over 2022/23 made satisfactory progress.

Probationers have accessed a mandatory programme of professional learning addressing themes such as Learning & Teaching, Planning for Assessment, Inclusive Practice, Trauma Informed Practice, Learning for Sustainability and Building Positive Relationships. A partnership with NESCOL and SDS gave the probationers an opportunity to engage in skills based workshops at NESCOL highlighting the importance of skills for life, learning and work. *“I have really enjoyed the development of meta-skills and how they can be incorporated into lessons across the school. I really enjoyed the fact that I could see the different meta-skills in different disciplines and how I could apply them into my own setting.”*

96% of attendees shared that the Learning and Teaching (Primary) session had a high to very-high impact on their practice. 78% of attendees at the Learning & Teaching (Secondary) session stated that they were ‘very likely’ to make changes to their practice as a result of attending. *“Hugely useful and informative session. The session gave me lots of ideas for future questioning strategies and feedback”*

In contrast to 21-22, almost all 22-23 CPD sessions were in-person – improving opportunities for collaboration and networking. *“Working with other probationers is beneficial as it allows you to discuss your experience and develop ideas which you can take into your own practice.”*

All probationers have also successfully worked hard to undertake and document the work of a practitioner enquiry project. These have successfully been completed and shared as a feature of our professional learning for future cohorts and can be accessed by all education staff within our Education Intranet.

Senior and Middle Leadership development

Supporting Cultural Change in ELC

The Supporting Cultural Change in ELC Programme was developed in collaboration with Drummond International and was aimed at middle leaders in ELC settings, including our Funded Partner colleagues. The purpose of the programme was recognising the role and importance of ELC in nurturing people and supporting culture improvement across Aberdeen City. This programme aimed to provide a space for ELC leaders to explore the interaction of knowledge information, your team and themselves in a dialogic and collaborative way, supporting staff to navigate the changed principles in light of the 1140 hours service redesign.

The 30 participants were given the opportunity to connect with other ELC Leaders virtually, developing their understanding of their own leadership story, the principles of effective conflict resolution and the science of collaboration, concluding the programme with a developed individual Leadership Action Plan. The programme was delivered over an academic calendar year and consisted of six sessions delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams.

100% of the participants rated the programme either 'Good' or 'Very Good' overall and 100% reported that the content was relevant and useful to their continued

development as an ELC Leader. All reported an increase in their confidence as a leader and their ability to apply the principles of the programme moving forward. 75% of participants have agreed to be part of a working group in delivering this learning more widely across Aberdeen City.

Development of School Middle Leaders

There has been an increase in the number of Middle Leaders applying for Education Scotland's Into Headship course for 2023-24. Into Headship is a pre-requisite for those seeking a Head Teacher's position and is designed to ensure the building of necessary knowledge, skills, understanding and confidence to lead a dynamic school community. There has been a significant increase in interest from the primary sector which may indicate that some challenges in recruiting primary head teachers will reduce in the years ahead.

A Middle Leadership Teams site continues to build collaboration further and is led by an experienced primary Head Teacher. Two professional learning courses were offered to all Middle Leaders. One course was targeted at 12 of our most experienced Middle Leaders who may consider Headship in the future and involved them undertaking leadership 360 evaluations to help develop and implement a personal leadership action plan. Two of the group are already undertaking HT roles and a further two have been accepted for Into Headship programme next session.

A second group have met regularly to discuss a range of leadership topics to support their personal development. This enthusiastic and motivated group have thrived on the opportunity to meet with other professionals in this safe space. Evaluations highlight the quality of the CLPL sessions and the strong desire for greater opportunities for Middle Leadership professional learning. One ASG is creating their own Middle Leaders support network for next session.

In 2022-23, from the 5 staff registered to undertake the Into Headship programme, 4 will complete, 3 have secured headships, with one choosing to postpone their studies for personal reasons. We have recruited 8 colleagues to participate in this programme from the beginning of session 2023-24. This shows an increased number of applicants considering this stage in their leadership journey showing some evidence of the impact of our middle leaders and readiness for into headship programmes.

Those undertaking the Readiness for into Headship programme are actioning individual leadership plans which were created through coaching with an experienced peer HT to evaluate data from a self-reflection 360 tool. This will support individual leadership improvement in some of our most committed Middle Leaders. They are being guided to lead strategic developments to enhance the impact of their School Improvement Plan. 25% of this group are moving into a promoted role.

Staff have continued to seek out opportunities to undertake Masters level learning this session. Through access to Northern Alliance Partnership funding, we secured access to Masters level courses with the University of Aberdeen for:

- 7 participants for Inclusive Pedagogy
- 3 participants for PGCERT Autism and Learning
- 2 participants for PGCERT Middle Level Leadership

Continue to support staff health and wellbeing

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) have continued to offer confidential 1:1 coaching sessions, to support staff wellbeing, as well as facilitating team support sessions to groups of education staff. Those who have attended coaching with the EPS have continued to rate this very highly. The EPS has a range of content available on its EPS Digital Hub for staff, and there is digital training available, created by the EPS for Education staff, drawing upon mindfulness skills and positive psychology.

There is also recognition of the wellbeing needs of adults within our services. During our In-service days in February and May the University of Aberdeen delivered full day courses to support staff wellbeing. Listening to Support Wellbeing and Self-care introduced effective listening skills, dealing with challenging conversations, the importance of self-care and self-care techniques.

Over 100 staff across the city attended these **sessions** resulting in very positive feedback. Staff fed back that the most helpful parts of this training was “Remembering not to judge - to listen to pupil's without judging behaviour”, “Highlighting the difference between hearing and listening - making me re-evaluate whether I am doing the best I can to listen to children” .

One staff member said - “Really enjoyed the day, makes you feel your role is appreciated to get professional training on an in-service day”.

During March 2023, and in response to data from the Staff Health and Wellbeing Survey, staff across the Education Service and all schools were offered the opportunity to engage in a wide range of free sporting activities as part of the Springboard programme. This included generous provision by Aberdeen Sports Village and Sport Aberdeen as well as several independent providers from across the city. Fifteen different sporting activities were on offer culminating in over **100** in-person sessions to choose from.

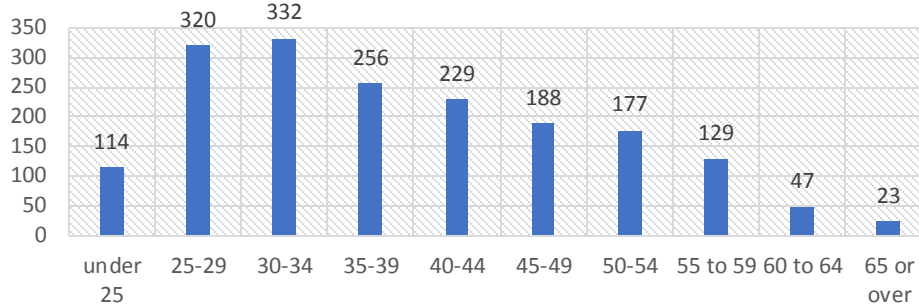
Monitor workforce levels to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families

Staff absence in ELC can result in operational challenges however collaboration across settings and a willingness to support other services with surplus staffing ensures there is minimum impact on service delivery whilst we work with colleagues in People and Organisation to build the resilience of staff

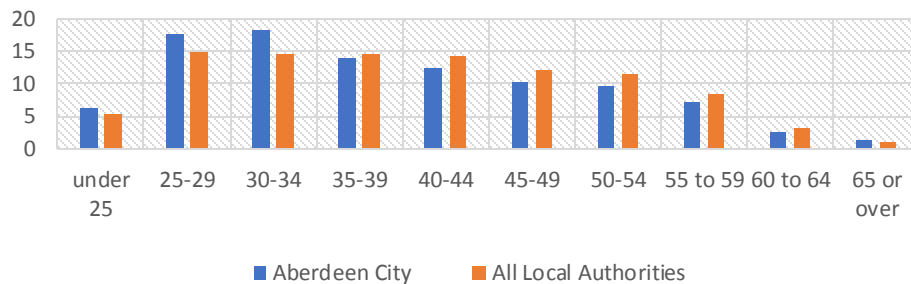
Levels of vacancy are now reduced in schools, leading to schools being for the most part, fully staffed. Some schools, however, continue to face more challenges than others and they will be proactively supported and prioritised through probationer allocations for session 23/24.

We have a relatively young workforce compared to other Local Authorities.

Number of teachers in all sectors by age Aberdeen City Council 2022/23



Teachers in all sectors by age (%) Aberdeen City Council 2022/23



Hard to fill specialisms

The service is working with the University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) to secure subject specialists in Home Economics, Design and Technology and Computer Science as an interim measure to address the issues with under provision which limits our ability to adequately prepare young people for growth areas.

For the current year, 2022/23, we have secured one Computing Science student through the scheme who will be offered a probation year with Aberdeen City. A further student for Computing Science has been recruited for session 2023/24.

We continue to explore how to promote this partnership to attract students to Home Economics, Design and Technology and Computer Science.

Gaelic Medium teachers have been hard to recruit over the last 3 years and this has had a negative impact on the level of service on offer. We are delighted to have secured 2 probationers for the primary unit for session 23/24 and the recruitment of a Principal Teacher 3-18 is being progressed.

Applications for positions

There has been a notable increase in the number of applications being received for middle leadership roles and main grade posts in primary schools thought partially attributable to our middle leadership programme. Primary head teacher posts are attracting fewer applicants with the relevant skills and experience and we are looking into the reasons behind this shift and recognise the need to enhance our middle leadership development to address this gap. Anecdotally, it is believed the

requirement to have achieved the Standard for Headship or to achieve it within 30 months of taking up post may be discouraging candidates due to the perceived additional workload when taking on a new post.

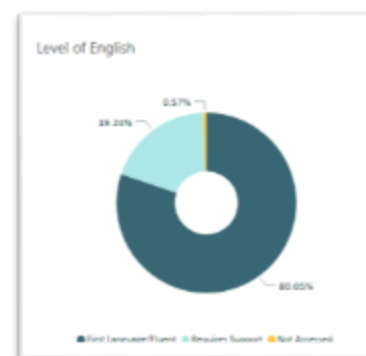
There remain challenges in recruiting to certain specialist subject areas in secondary schools and the service is now working in partnership with UHI to help address these issues. Secondary promoted posts, including head teacher roles, continue to attract a high number of candidates and a number of secondary head teacher appointments have been made recently. The service will continue to be proactive in workforce planning.

Data

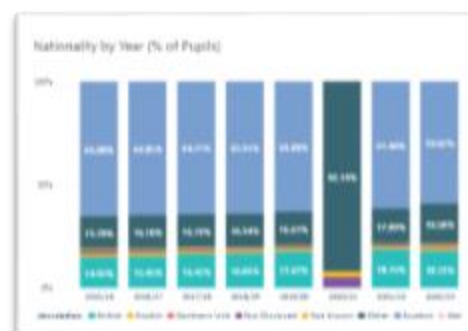
Continue to develop School Profiles

School Profiles put in place in collaboration with colleagues in Data and insights continue to be developed based on feedback from Head Teachers.

Schools now have access to data collected on a termly basis which allows them to be more agile in their allocation of resource and also provides live feedback on the impact of approaches. Having live data allows for more robust data discussions at all levels in the system. Accountability frameworks will be revisited in session 23/24 to ensure all staff are well equipped to play their part in a self-improving system.



As a result of the changes made to data dashboards, school teams can now better understand the unique make up of their school communities and plan for them accordingly. It has been identified that some staff members would benefit from professional learning in how to best utilise the tools for maximum impact and this will be taken forward over school session 2023/24.

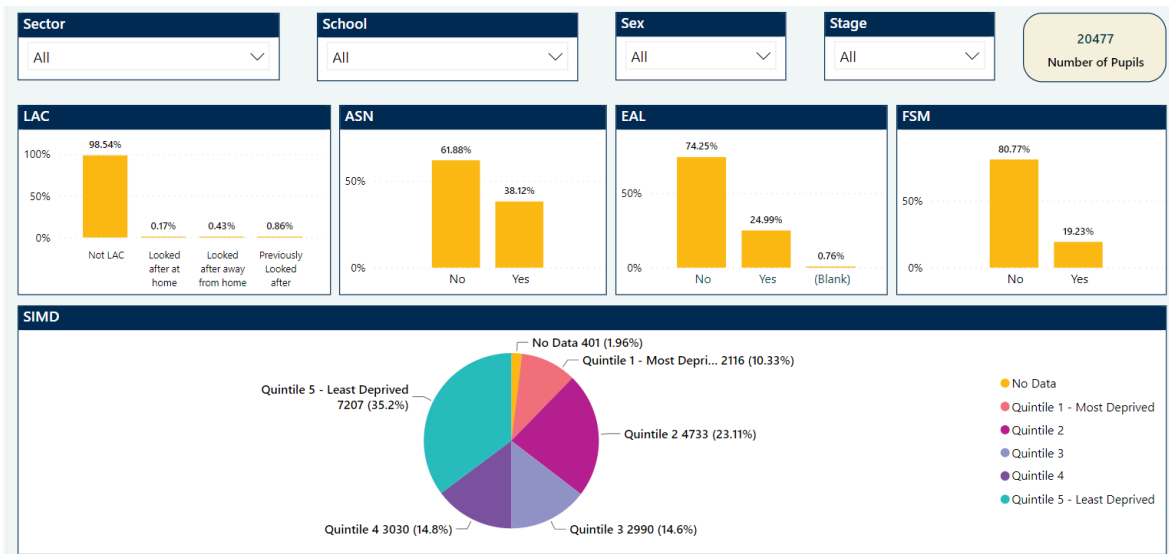


School profiles have been overhauled to allow schools to drill down into data sets based on both SIMD quintiles and also into groups such as those who are Looked After in order to establish the improvements required as part of school improvement planning work.

Implement improved tracking and reporting

During session 22/23 a BGE tracker was developed to allow schools access to live tracking data this will enable school leaders to see the impact of changes in real time. This is critical given that some data sets (such as exclusion) are only validated every two years and will enable us to focus more forensically on understanding the needs of our Looked After children, those on the edge of care in 2023/24 and other groups identified to be at the greatest risk of poverty. This will help schools plan based on more robust data for session 2023/24.

The visuals below show the range of data availability and how it can be drilled down into



Tracking Period: Term 2 | Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels by SIMD | 20477 Number of Pupils

Organiser/Subject Name	No Data	Quintile 1 - Most Deprived	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5 - Least Deprived	Total
Reading (RfL)							
Not Yet Achieved Early Level	67	310	569	412	331	135	2425
Early Level	146	652	1482	960	919	2145	6264
First Level	102	606	1419	856	850	2068	10921
Second Level	52	337	790	482	485	1214	3260
Third Level	13	106	373	202	209	609	1602
Fourth Level	5	16	95	31	102	237	665
Individual Milestones	6	192	482	161	74	39	1164
Total	398	2100	4713	2977	3016	7160	20364

Over time this data will provide a record of a young person's attainment from Early level to Level 4.

Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so

The service has worked hard this session to begin to align data sets with partners to allow us to maximise impact for young people and families. The work on the Data sharing pipeline project undertaken in session 2022/23 will support identification of vulnerable 2 – 4year olds.

During session 23/24 this will continue to develop alongside the development of the Request for Assistance portal to allow us to track interventions and support provided to families over time.

Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures

Significant consideration and progress has been made by the LA's central team to systematically review and develop PEF planning and reporting. The process has included looking beyond the local authority for good practice. Working alongside a group of headteachers and the attainment advisor, the central leadership team have

developed a bespoke equity tracker that aligns with updated school improvement planning. The tracker will begin to be used from August 2023 and will be used by central officers and Head Teachers when quality assuring the impact of the PEF fund.

Walker Road addressing literacy gaps through Pupil Equity Funding.

What problem were we trying to solve? Improve Literacy attainment of selected pupils from across the school.

What did we do? A Principal Teacher (partly funded via PEF) was tasked with coordinating Reading Wise and Talk boost interventions for pupils who were below track for Literacy in line with national expectations. A part-time Pupil Support Assistant (also funded via PEF) worked with class teachers and other PSAs to ensure that targeted pupils accessed these resources consistently throughout the 2022/23 session. More recently, the Principal Teacher has worked in partnership with teacher colleagues to support improved teaching of writing and to coordinate bespoke writing support for targeted Primary 7 pupils.

What happened? Reading Wise and Talk boost data shows improved literacy of pupils who accessed these interventions. Most of these pupils made increased progress towards achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels in Literacy. There is initial evidence of increased pupil progress in Writing.

What next? In the 2023/24 session, we will work towards class teachers and PSAs having more ownership of Reading Wise and Talk boost, so these become sustainable. The recent work on Writing will be enhanced through our participation in a Lochside ASG improvement priority focused on Writing and will be informed by current local and national Writing developments.

Standards

Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators

There is evidence (in both validated self-evaluation and inspection outcomes) that performance in primary schools has improved overall when compared to the pre-pandemic position. Most improvement is evident in QI 1.3 (Leadership of change) and QI 3.1 (Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion). However, given the low pre-pandemic baseline, there are still some schools who require support to achieve gradings of good or better and this has to be prioritised.

Work is underway nationally to develop one combined framework for assessing ELC settings and this development is welcomed and will go some way to addressing uncertainty around expectations.

A programme of mandatory professional learning has been developed to reinforce standards and highlight key responsibilities. Proposed accountability frameworks are also being developed to make expectations against job profiles explicit

Our revised quality improvement frameworks, which were approved by the Education and Children's Services Committee in July 2023, set out clear expectations around the Core QIs for all schools and ELCs.

Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches

In order to address variation in improvement across schools we have moved to a more proportionately way of working to address risk. Our approach to Quality Improvement will be informed by school self-evaluation, identification of support requirements through quality improvement activity and timelines following or prior to inspection. Consideration of all known factors will inform the level of support and challenge being afforded to individual schools. Having explored the need for this approach with school leaders, there is a high level of agreement on the level of support required by each school

Reflective discussion across session 2022-23 has allowed Head Teachers and school leaders to identify an opportunity to improve the way we plan improvements in our school settings. This reflection led to a realisation that our documentation had too heavy a focus on activity and not enough focus on the robust measurable outcomes that demonstrate how and where improvements are having an impact. Secondary schools have agreed to pilot a new Logic Model planning framework for 2023-24. With a view to rolling this out across all schools session 24/25.



Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city

We continue to work towards a self-improving system through working collaboratively with school leaders to take forward priorities. This self-improving system also necessarily includes opportunities for senior leaders in schools to look outward and visit other city schools to build their own experience and contribute to the improvement journey of the destination school. Taking this collaborative approach is helping to increase the capacity available to support improvement.

Analysis of data would indicate that there is a need for moderation at all levels. QAMSOs will work city wide to support moderation at both CFE and senior phase. A city wide moderation event has been planned for November 2023 as part of the improvement calendar.

Partnerships

Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan

Aberdeen Parent Council Forum (APCF) meet on a bi-monthly basis and have representation at the Education and Children's Services Committee and national forums. Through this, parents have had an opportunity to engage in the National Discussion regarding the curriculum as well as through local schools. The partnership with ACC and APCF continues to be strong with regular attendance from the Education Service at bi-monthly meetings to provide updates in relation to service improvement and to glean valuable insights from parents and carers.

Ongoing support for parent councils (PCs) has been provided with the vast majority of schools currently sustaining a Parent Council. Bespoke support continues to be offered where there were challenges to be worked through.

In August 2022 ACC became a Local Authority member of Connect, a charity providing training and development for Parent Councils. All parent councils now have access to a large bank of resources and public indemnity insurance. More specifically 11 Aberdeen City parent groups have attended 8 information sessions since January 2023 with 8 Head Teachers attending the 'Working with your Parent Council' session. Through the online Stronger Family Series, a variety of learning opportunities were offered to parents and carers which focused on a variety of topics from antibullying to online safety. Recordings were made available for those who could not join the live event.

Our partnership with Save the Children provided key supports to parents in some of our pilot settings. Heathryburn and Woodside accepted funded training to embed a Families Connect programme, a facilitated network for parents of pupils aged 3-6 which has been positively evaluated.

In June 2021, the Safer Schools app was launched for pupils, parents/carers and staff and provides relevant and current information on a wide range of safeguarding, wellbeing, and online safety subjects. The app has been well received by our parent forum members and our Child Protection Committee, as proving a useful resource for all. All schools have signed up to the app, which was shared with all parents via a range of communication channels – direct email, text message and social media. A new version of the app, Safer Schools (Scotland), will be launched in August 2023 and

will provide usage data for adults using the app to help us better evaluate the impact of this development.

We continue to work to improve the quality of information made available to parents about their child's progress and achievements. Broad General Education tracking using Progress and Achievement is now effectively used across all our Primary Schools and links to the reporting system, reducing bureaucracy. Work has begun on developing this to include BGE in Secondary. Linking to PowerBI will allow us to have predictions for attainment across all schools at 3 tracking periods November, February, and May. This will feed into the school profiles and allow greater visibility of the progress being made. There are already indications that this is leading to more consistent data collection.

Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway

This is now being addressed within the Children's Services Plan and overseen by the Children's Services Board. The multiagency group meets regularly and has identified 2 pilot schools to work with as a test of change. Members of the team are in contact with 3rd sector agencies with an interest in providing input. This work on this charter will continue to be reviewed through the Children's Services Board

National Improvement Framework Priorities - Summary of Progress & Next Steps

Raising Attainment & Achievement (including closing the gap measures)

Curriculum for Excellence data (ACEL)

Stretch aims and trajectories for individual groups are included in the graphs and tables below.

Our context is very much changed from when we first set stretch aims in August of 2022. The number of international families travelling to Aberdeen to study and our response to the humanitarian crisis has resulted in our school roll increasing by 6.74% since September 2022. This means that we are reporting the progress of many children and young people who were not in our schools in August 2022. To provide a sense of the scale of change, 10.3% of pupils in Primary 1, 9.8% of pupils in Primary 4 and 5.8% of pupils in primary 7 have joined city schools since late September 2022.

Unvalidated tracking data for 22/23 remains broadly in keeping with pre-pandemic levels. The improvement anticipated over the 2022/23 academic session has not been made due to the change in cohort of learners, we would anticipate this being relatively short term.

As a result of the rise in attainment anticipated from September 2022 not being realised, the service has taken the decision to maintain the stretch aims set in September 2022 but to amend the trajectories to take account of the changed context.

Previous gives the validated percentage level achieved for session 2021/22 for Aberdeen City and *National* the mean value across Scotland. These values are from the published data: [Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\) Levels \(ACEL\)](#).

Trajectory values provide a “direction of travel” for improvement as we move towards overall stretch aims. Education Scotland has asked that this be shown as a range with upper and lower values.

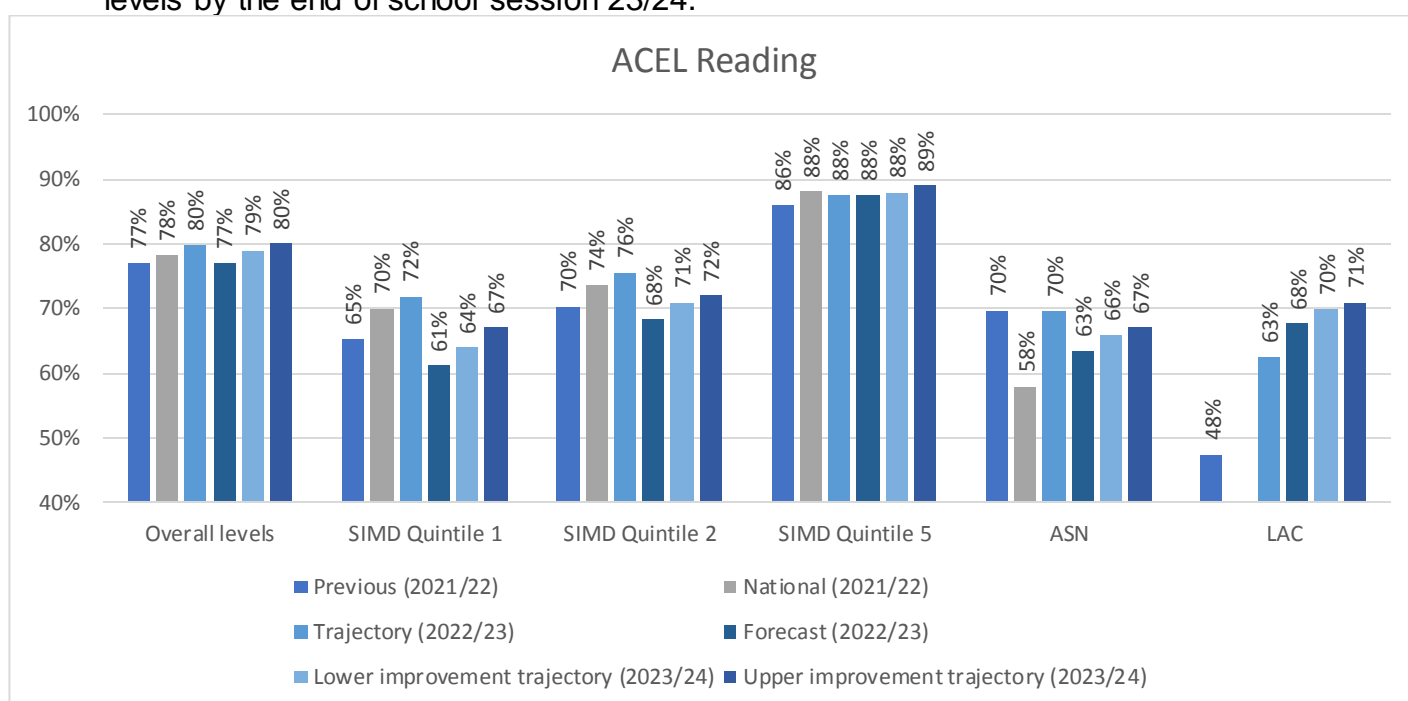
Forecast provides indicative 2022/23 performance based on pre-validation data and this is subject to change as final quality assurance checks are undertaken.

ACEL Reading

Stretch Aim - 85% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026.

The number of young people enrolled in our schools has impacted on progress in this area and we have maintained 21/22 levels of 77%. As a result of this we have altered our trajectory for session 23/24. The forecast for Q1 (Quintile 1) indicates that the gap has increased and this was not predicted throughout the year and will be further investigated. It is thought that school staff may have been over cautious in their judgements and require further support with moderation. During session 23/24 the QAMSO team will work with the central team to support moderation in targeted schools with a particular focus on schools serving those in Q1 and Q 2.

Trajectory for 2023/24 – Between 79% and 80% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 23/24.



ACEL P1, P4, P7 Reading Combined*

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
Previous (2021/22)	77%	65%	70%	86%	-21pp	70%	48%
National (2021/22)	78%	70%	74%	88%	-18pp	58%	
Trajectory (2022/23)	80%	72%	76%	88%	-16pp	70%	63%
Forecast (2022/23)	77%	61%	68%	88%	-27pp	63%	68%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(79% - 80%)	(64% - 67%)	(71% - 72%)	(88% - 89%)	(-23pp to - 21pp)	(66% - 67%)	(70% - 71%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 23/24	(2pp - 3pp)	(3pp - 6pp)	(3pp - 4pp)	(0pp - 1pp)		(3pp - 4pp)	(2pp - 3pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	85%	78%	80%	91%	-13pp	76%	74%

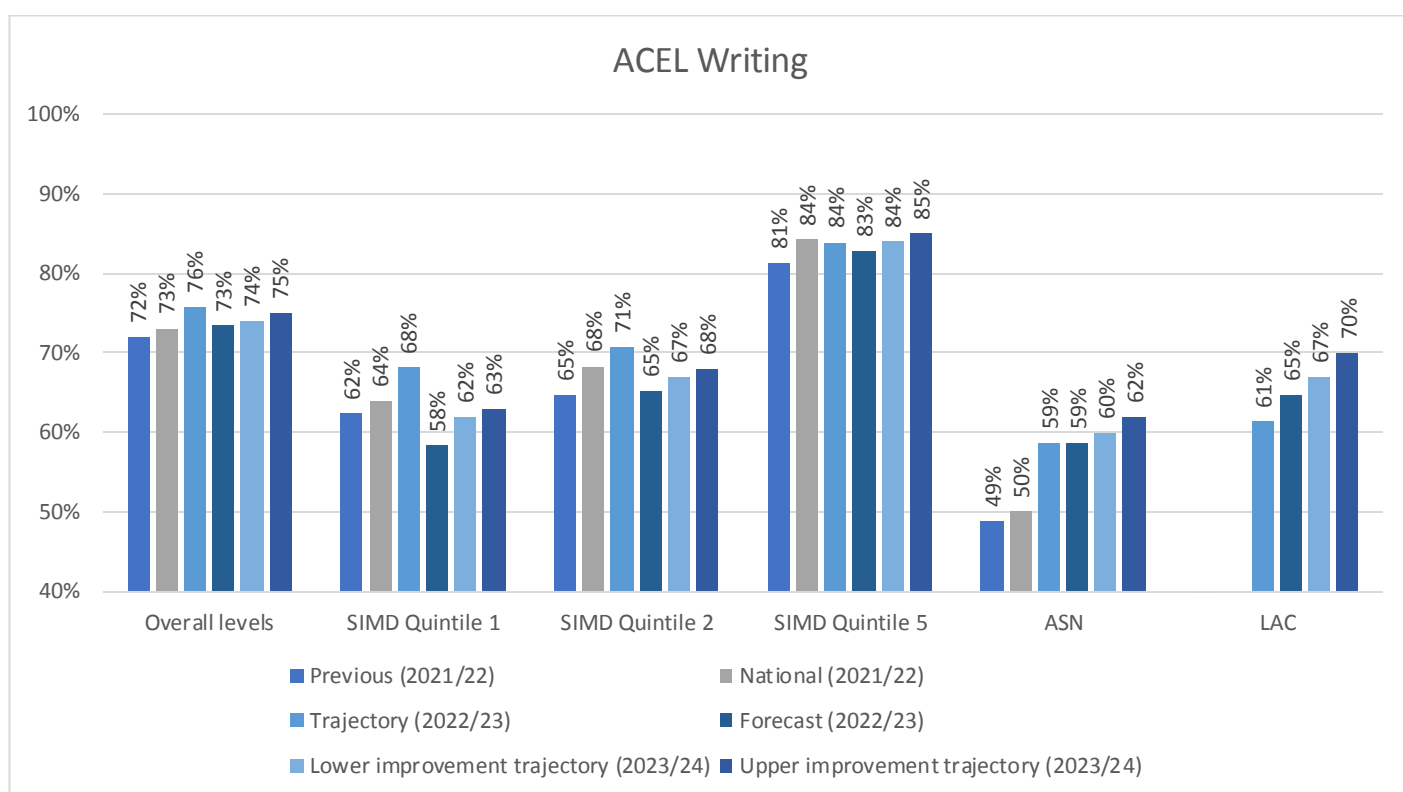
*values rounded to nearest whole number

ACEL Writing

Stretch Aim - 82% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026.

Although we have not met our trajectory for this session attainment has increased from 72% to 73%. This increase is partially due to the targeted writing project undertaken with P4 pupils in the pilot schools. This project will now be extended to another 10 primary schools across the city and in addition we are working alongside the Northern Alliance to develop a writing skills progression pathway. In addition the QAMSO team will support moderation activities in schools with the highest levels of Q1 and Q2 to support improvement in attainment session 23/24.

Trajectory for 2023/24 – Between 74% and 75% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 23/24.



ACEL P1, P4, P7 Writing Combined*

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
Previous (2021/22)	72%	62%	65%	81%	-19pp	49%	33%
National (2021/22)	73%	64%	68%	84%	-20pp	50%	
Trajectory (2022/23)	76%	68%	71%	84%	-16pp	59%	61%
Forecast (2022/23)	73%	58%	65%	83%	-12pp	-25pp	59%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(74% - 75%)	(62% - 63%)	(67% - 68%)	(84% - 85%)	(-22pp to -22pp)	(60% - 62%)	(67% - 70%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 23/24	(1pp - 2pp)	(4pp - 5pp)	(2pp - 3pp)	(1pp - 2pp)		(1pp - 3pp)	(2pp - 5pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	82%	76%	76%	88%	-13pp	63%	70%

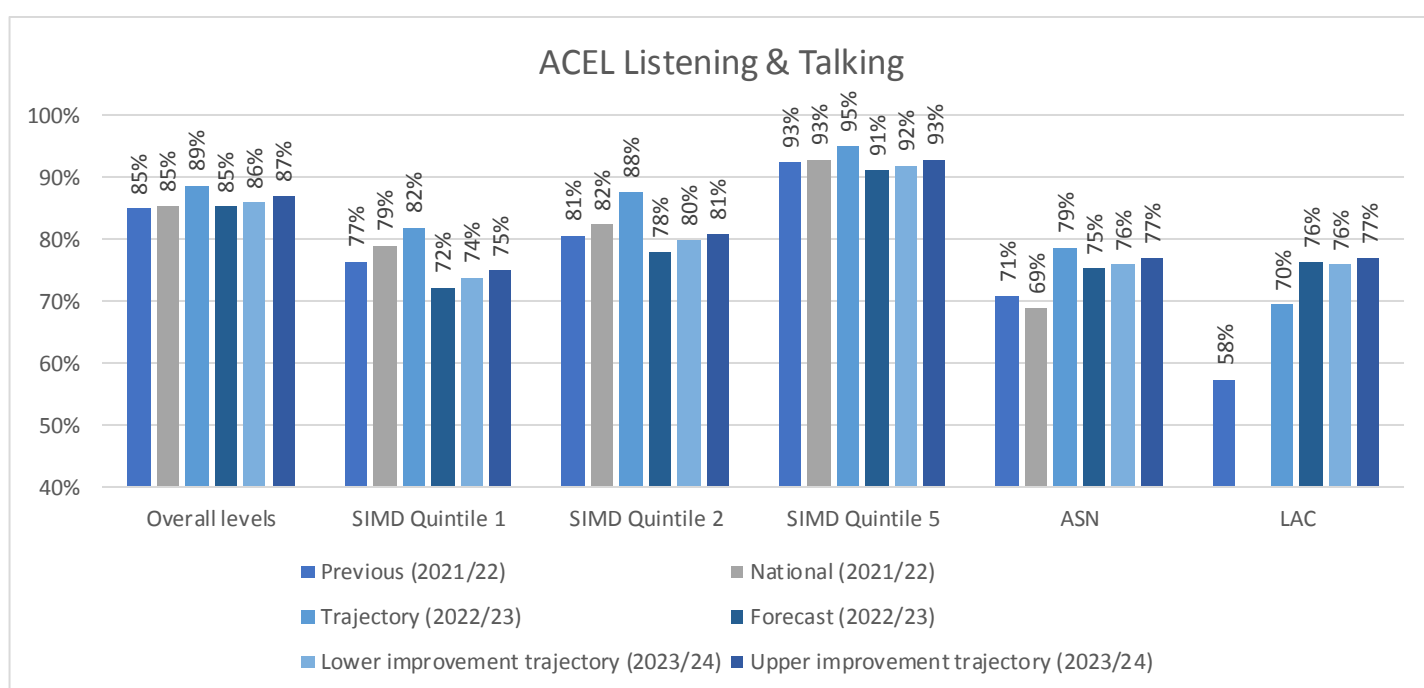
*values rounded to nearest whole number

ACEL Listening and Talking

Stretch Aim - 90% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026

The increase in school population, increase in the number of those with English as a second language and prevalence of speech and language difficulties has impacted on progress resulting in us maintaining 21/22 levels. This is thought to be a temporary issue as there is already evidence of young people enrolled this session becoming more confident in this area. As a result of this we have altered our trajectory for session 23/24 however we are confident we will be able to attain our 2026 stretch aim.

Trajectory for 2023/24 – Between 86% and 87% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 23/24.



ACEL P1, P4, P7 Listening and Talking Combined*

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
Previous (2021/22)	85%	77%	81%	93%	-16pp	71%	58%
National (2021/22)	85%	79%	82%	93%	-14pp	69%	
Trajectory (2022/23)	89%	82%	88%	95%	-13pp	79%	70%
Forecast (2022/23)	85%	72%	78%	91%	-19pp	75%	76%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(86% - 87%)	(74% - 75%)	(80% - 81%)	(92% - 93%)	(-18pp to -18pp)	(76% - 77%)	(76% - 77%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 23/24	(1pp - 2pp)	(2pp - 3pp)	(2pp - 3pp)	(1pp - 2pp)		(1pp - 2pp)	(0pp - 1pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	90%	82%	89%	95%	-13pp	79%	73%

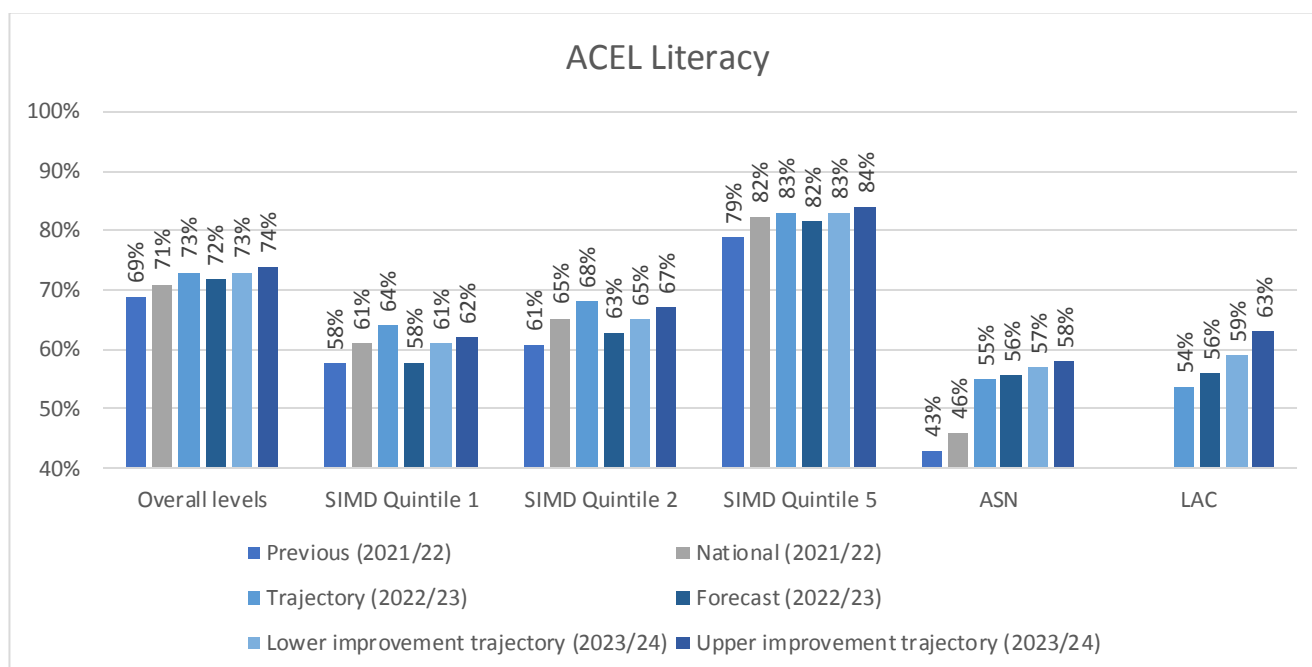
*values rounded to nearest whole number

ACEL Literacy Combined

Stretch Aim - 78% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026

Attainment in Literacy has risen from 69% in 21/22 to 72% in 22/23. Although we have made progress we have not reached our target of 73%. The combined attainment is impacted by the issues described for each element above and trajectories have been amended to reflect our current context. The Gap between Q1 and Q5 has widened. There is a need for considerable focus to be given to the moderation practices of those schools supporting the highest proportion of children living in Q1 and Q2. Although progress is slower than we predicted we remain confident that we will achieve our stretch aim for 2026.

Trajectory for 2023/24 – Between 73% and 74% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 23/24.



ACEL P1, P4, P7 Literacy*

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
Current level (2021/22)	69%	58%	61%	79%	-21pp	43%	21%
National (2021/22)	71%	61%	65%	82%	-21pp	46%	
Trajectory (2022/23)	73%	64%	68%	83%	-19pp	55%	54%
Forecast (2022/23)	72%	58%	63%	82%	-24pp	56%	56%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(73% - 74%)	(61% - 62%)	(65% - 67%)	(83% - 84%)	(-22pp to -22pp)	(57% - 58%)	(59% - 63%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 23/24	(1pp - 2pp)	(3pp - 4pp)	(2pp - 4pp)	(1pp - 2pp)		(1pp - 2pp)	(3pp - 7pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	78%	71%	76%	87%	-17pp	60%	73%

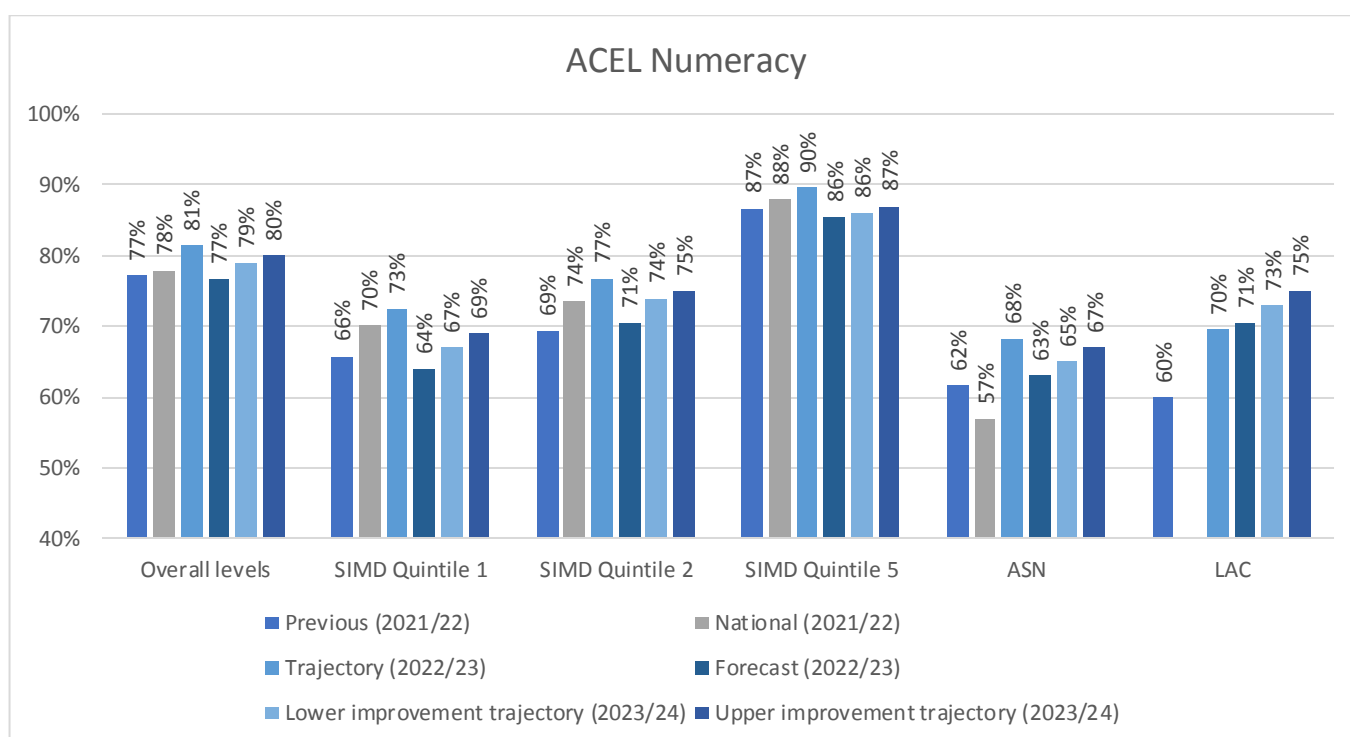
*values rounded to nearest whole number

ACEL Numeracy

Stretch Aim - 84% of learners will achieve predicted levels by 2026

The forecast for 22/23 shows we have maintained 21/22 levels in numeracy. The lack of progress toward our targets mirrors results in maths in the senior phase and highlights the need for a strategic plan to address the quality of learning and teaching in numeracy and maths across all sectors. This will be taken forward as part of our plans to improve learning and teaching. The gap between Q1 and Q5 remains at the same level as last year. There is a need to focus on those learners in Q1 and interventions will be targeted at this group in order to close the gap.

Trajectory for 2023/24 – Between 79% and 80% of learners will achieve predicted levels by the end of school session 23/24.



ACEL P1, P4, P7 Numeracy Combined*

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
Current level (2021/22)	77%	66%	69%	87%	-21pp	62%	60%
National (2021/22)	78%	70%	74%	88%	-18pp	57%	
Trajectory (2022/23)	81%	73%	77%	90%	-17pp	68%	70%
Forecast (2022/23)	77%	64%	71%	86%	-21pp	63%	71%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(79% - 80%)	(67% - 69%)	(74% - 75%)	(86% - 87%)	(-18pp to -17pp)	(65% - 67%)	(73% - 75%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 23/24	(2pp - 3pp)	(3pp - 5pp)	(3pp - 4pp)	(0pp - 1pp)		(2pp - 4pp)	(2pp - 4pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	84%	78%	81%	89%	-11pp	73%	79%

*values rounded to nearest whole number

Looking at long term data, there is evidence of sustained improvement. The improvement continues to improve our position against national data but there is still more to do. The service will continue to focus on improving attainment through an ongoing focus on high quality learning, teaching and assessment, accountability at all levels and broadening the curriculum offer by making effective and improved use of data. There is also a need to ensure that staff at all levels are able to make effective use of the data tools available to them to ensure that we develop a self-improving system.

Improvements for 2023/24 associated with raising attainment include:

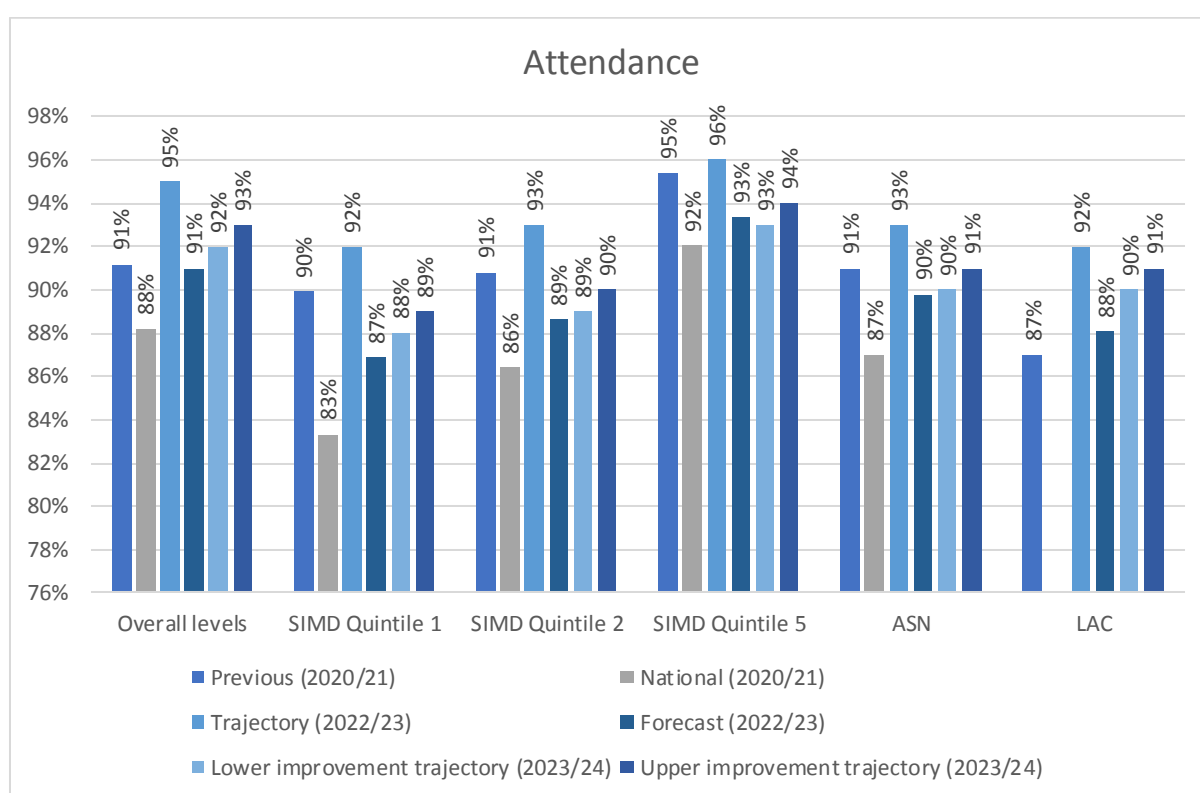
- implementation of the revised anti bullying Policy
- review and implement a revised Minimising Exclusion Policy
- improve understanding and accountability of data at all levels
- implementation of the refreshed Quality Improvement Framework to help improve standards against the core Quality Indicators
- continue to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment including the provision of appropriate levels of differentiation, pace, and challenge in collaboration with HMle and the Regional Improvement Collaborative
- increased scrutiny of the progress of our pupils on the edge of care and on-going roll out of our Edge of Care pilots to help shape our model of Family Support
- continue to respond positively to the education reforms and strengthening locality working
- work with Microsoft to pilot an increase in the use of Microsoft tools to support learning and teaching
- work with the parent forum to improve communication between schools and parents and increase parental engagement
- prioritise QAMSO support to improve planning and moderation in schools with high levels of learners in Q1 and Q2.

Attendance

Stretch Aim - 95% of all children and young people will attend school regularly by 2026

Effective risk assessments have helped maintain pupil levels of attendance at school but have not enabled an improvement in school attendance, unvalidated data suggests a slight dip in keeping with the national position. Officers will apply greater scrutiny to the reasons associated with absence in order to identify any patterns to help inform a review of attendance guidance to improve levels further.

Target for 2023/24 – Between 92% and 93% of all children and young people will attend school regularly by the end of school session 23/24.



%Attendance All Schools

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
Previous (2020/21)	91%	90%	91%	95%	-5pp	91%	87%
National (2020/21)	88%	83%	86%	92%	-9pp	87%	
Trajectory (2022/23)	95%	92%	93%	96%	-4pp	93%	92%
Forecast (2022/23)	91%	87%	89%	93%	-6pp	90%	88%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(92% - 93%)	(88% - 89%)	(89% - 90%)	(93% - 94%)	(-4pp to -5pp)	(90% - 91%)	(90% - 91%)
Improvement (percentage point) for 23/24	(1pp - 2pp)	(1pp - 2pp)	(0pp - 1pp)	(0pp - 1pp)		(0pp - 1pp)	(2pp - 3pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	95%	92%	93%	96%	-4pp	93%	95%

*values rounded to nearest whole number
National data for Attendance is published bi-annually, last update 20/21.
*values rounded to nearest whole number

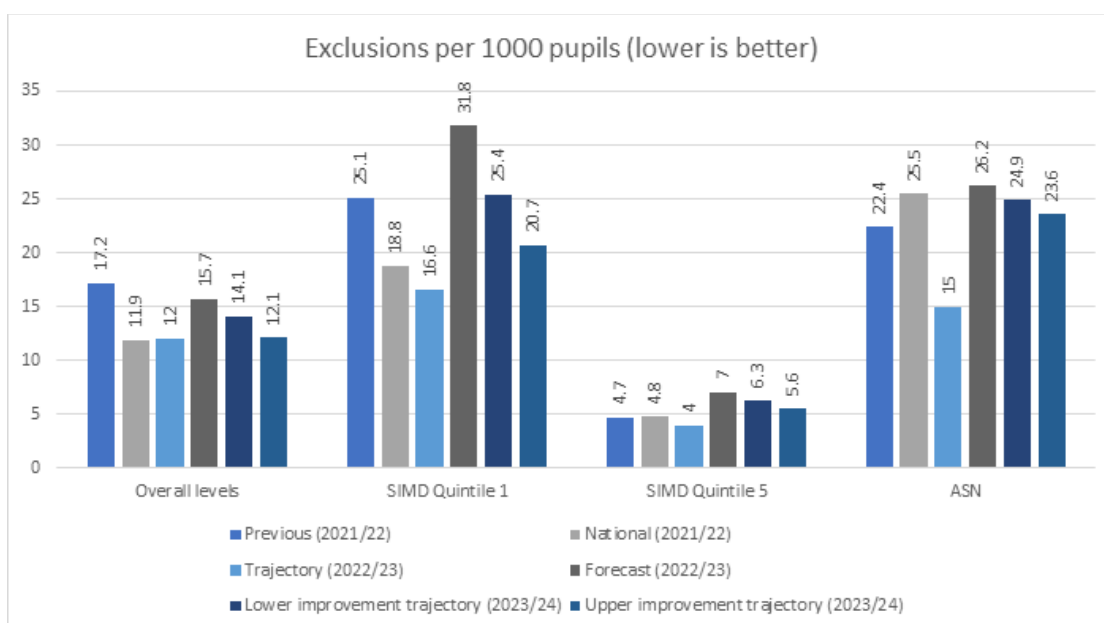
Exclusion

Stretch Aim - 95% of all children and young people will attend school regularly by 2026

Exclusion data shows that we are forecast to be 15.7 per 1000 which remains lower than the 20/21 levels of 17.2 per 1000. The length of any exclusion continues to be short. Our minimising exclusion policy will be reviewed session 23/24 to take account of a slightly different post pandemic context being experienced nationally.

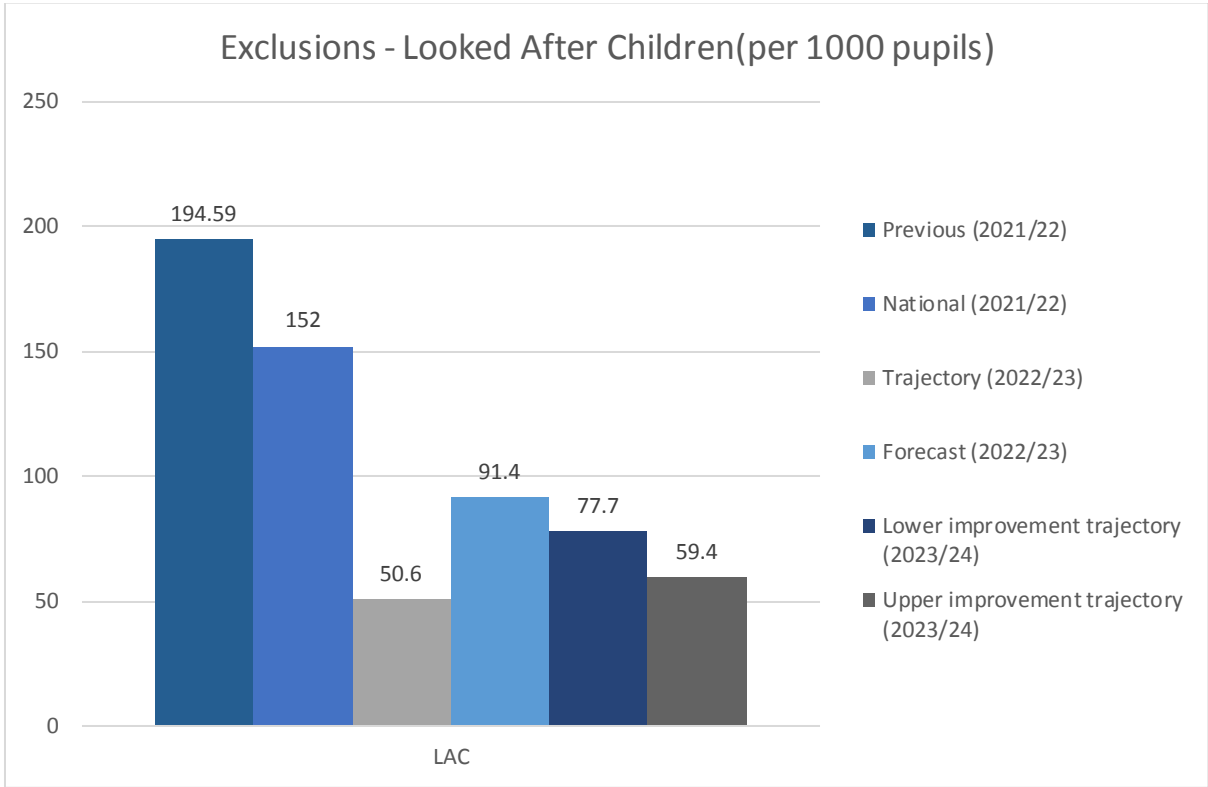
Exclusion levels for Looked After Children continue to reduce. Q1 and ASN will be a priority for improvement whilst reviewing the policy.

Target for 2023/24 – Between 92% and 93% of all children and young people will attend school regularly by the end of school session 23/24.



Number of pupils excluded per 1000 pupils (all schools)

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
Previous (2020/21)	17.2	25.1	4.7	20.4	22.4	194.59
National (2020/21)	11.9	18.8	4.8	14.0	25.5	152.0
Trajectory (2022/23)	12.0	16.6	4.0	12.6	15.0	50.6
Forecast (2022/23)	15.7	31.8	7.0	24.8	26.2	91.4
Trajectory (2023/24)	(14.1 - 12.1)	(25.4 - 20.7)	(6.3 - 5.6)		(24.9 - 23.6)	(77.7 - 59.4)
Improvement for 23/24	(10% - 23%)	(20%-35%)	(10pp - 20pp)		(5pp - 10pp)	(15pp - 35pp)
Stretch aim to be achieved by 2025/26	9.0	11.0	3.0	8.0	10.0	30.0



Core Quality Indicators

Stretch Aim - 85% of all schools will self-evaluate QI1.3 Leadership of Change at good or better by 2026.

As we continue to see changes in our leadership teams with nearly 10% of our Headteachers new in post this session, Quality Indicator 1.3, Leadership of Change has dipped slightly from 65% of evaluations rated Good or above in 21/22 to 60% in 22/23. This is 15% less than our target but reflects the changing landscape in schools at this time and the work required in this area to refocus on strategic delivery, following years of operational focus during the pandemic to support increased confidence levels.

Target for 2023/24 – 70% of schools will self-evaluate QI1.3 Leadership of Change at good or better by the end of school session 23/24.

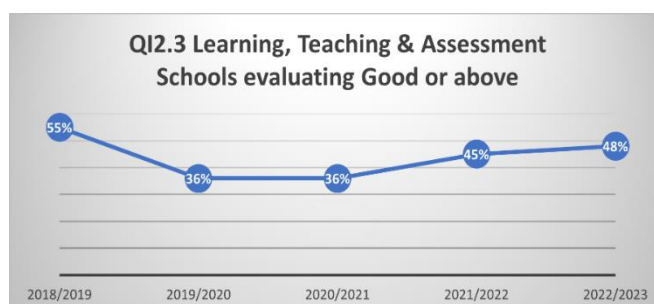


Stretch Aim - 80% of our schools will self-evaluate QI2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment at good or better by 2026.

The quality of learning, teaching and assessment continues to be an area of focus given the inextricable links between the quality of provision and attainment and participation data. On-going work will help us improve evaluations of QI 2.3, Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

Although we have not reached the target of 55% for 2022/23, we have seen an increase in the number of schools delivering higher quality learning and teaching this year by 3%. There remains, however a need for us to continue building on this progress to reach our aspirational stretch aim and our work with the Northern Alliance will support progress in this area.

Target for 2023/24 – 55% of our schools will self-evaluate QI2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment at good or better by the end of school session 23/24.

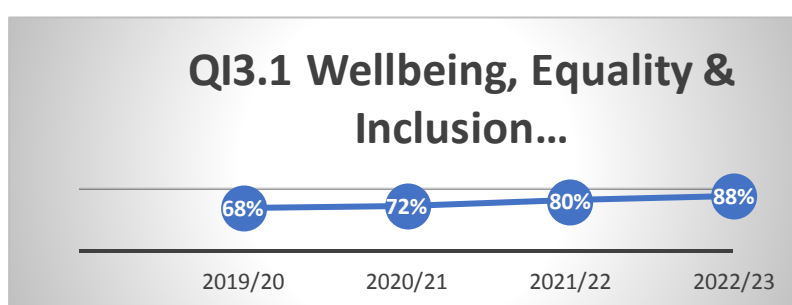


Stretch Aim - 100% of schools will evaluate QI 3.1 at good or better by 2026.

Evaluations of QI 3.1, Wellbeing, Equality, and Inclusion have been improving over the last 4 years.

We continue to see a positive trend within health and wellbeing and are confident that this will continue to rise. We have exceeded our annual target of 85% by 3% which evidences the impact of the work being undertaken in this area by schools and central officers.

Target for 2023/24 – 90% of schools will evaluate QI 3.1 at good or better by the end of school session 23/24.



Health & Wellbeing (inclusive of closing the gap measures)

Through the LOIP and associated Children's Services Plan we will continue to link with the Mental Health Collaborative and Physical Education, Physical Activity & Sport (PEPAS) Group to review any identified trends and consider how to address these.

There will be an increased focus on poverty and how this impacts health and educational outcomes. Continued work is also required around the area of physical appearance. We will need to consider carefully our support for girls in particular, and those who did not disclose their gender identity, who have shown greater challenges with regards to mental health. We will continue to promote healthy choices and build confidence in our young people and parents and carers, to support good decisions in areas such as sleep, use of technology and substance misuse.

We will continue to monitor trends to ensure that we are targeting the right supports in the right areas.

With increased scrutiny around attendance there will be a need to focus resource on identifying the correct interventions to improve the attendance of individual young people where mental health may be a factor.

Priorities for improvement in 2023/24 to support positive health and wellbeing, based on the findings of this evaluation include:

- Undertake a rapid review of our readiness for the incorporation of the UNCRC following publication of the statutory guidance to make sure that we meaningfully involve children and young people in decision-making and respond to what children and young people tell us they want and need

- Continue to monitor wellbeing data and the impact of interventions in place including the provision of counselling
- Review and implement our accessibility plan
- Maintain our focus on encouraging children and young people to be more physically active including those with sensory and other identified needs
- Continue to support all secondary schools to establish effective systems to support LGBTQIA+ community in school
- Continue to develop our approaches to supporting those with a range of additional support needs including on-going roll out of the Circle Framework and on-going delivery of trauma training through Compassionate and Connected Communities
- Design support materials to increase knowledge and understanding of teenage brain development and the impact of this
- Continue to build a responsive Educational Psychology Service delivery plan to meet the changing needs of the school population
- Maintain an agile programme of high quality professional learning for all ELC and school staff

Our target for 2022/23 reflected the progress made and potential for improvement as we continued to focus on health and wellbeing following the pandemic.

Closing the Gap

Working in collaboration with school leaders and through the LOIP and associated children's service plan we will continue to improve approaches to tackling the poverty gap.

The refreshed Pupil Equity Fund plan and tracker being rolled out from August will allow us to have greater scrutiny of interventions in place to raise attainment. The data collected will be used as part of Quality Improvement visits to schools in session 23/24.

Our request for assistance system has served us well and allowed use to ensure learners are able to access support matched to their need. This system now requires to be expanded to include other services to enable the family to access support timeously.

The National improvement writing programme increased attainment at P4 for the schools involved. During session 23/24 the programme will be rolled out further to schools where attainment at P4 is lower than expected.

Priorities for improvement in 2023/24 to support closing the gap are:

- Improved tracking and scrutiny of impact data related to the 6 groups identified in the Child Poverty Action Plan and those with protected characteristics
- Continue to work in collaboration with others to address the root cause of poverty.
- Maintain our focus on supporting families to access information and support around eligibility in order to maximising the uptake of benefits
- Implement actions associated with the Armed Forces Covenant
- Improve access to wider child poverty data at community level

- Review Partnership Forums to maximise their impact
- Roll out the Pupil Equity Fund tracker and share best practice
- Use request for assistance data to align Scottish Attainment Challenge resource to our emerging model of Family Support
- Maintain work on the national improvement in writing programme
- Review and implementation of a refreshed Minimising Exclusion Policy
- Increased scrutiny of attendance at all stages
- Review our attendance guidance

Positive Destinations (including closing the gap measures)

Considerable work has been and continues to be undertaken in this area as schools work to respond to the changing economic landscape. Secondary School Head Teachers are currently responding to the need to;

- review the City Campus model that has been in place for the past ten years
- build in capacity to create new learner pathways, and
- create a more effective way to work with curriculum partners such as NESCol

It is believed that this work could play a critical part in maximising offers being made to young people across Aberdeen City from August 2023 and improve our ability both to meet the needs of all learners and respond to changing economic conditions.

The work involved in gaining such alignment is considerable and this will be the key focus in this area for 23/24 as we continue to work with partners to ensure that young people have the skills they need to move onto education, employment, or training in a changing local economy.

Priorities for improvement, based on the findings of this evaluation include:

- continued curriculum alignment and expansion of learning pathways through delivery of Phase 2 of ABZ Campus
- Focus on developing pathways to support those with a range of additional support needs
- continue to improve computer science skills through on-going delivery of Aberdeen Computing Collaborative
- improve learning transitions from primary to secondary including a focus on numeracy
- continue to support engagement with Excelerate to increase innovative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in Secondary Schools
- review the impact of mentoring programmes to determine our long term approach
- Review current tracking systems for BGE and beyond to ensure accurate tracking of attainment for all children and young people including those on the edge of care
- Continue to work in collaboration with the Youth Climate Group to work towards Net Zero

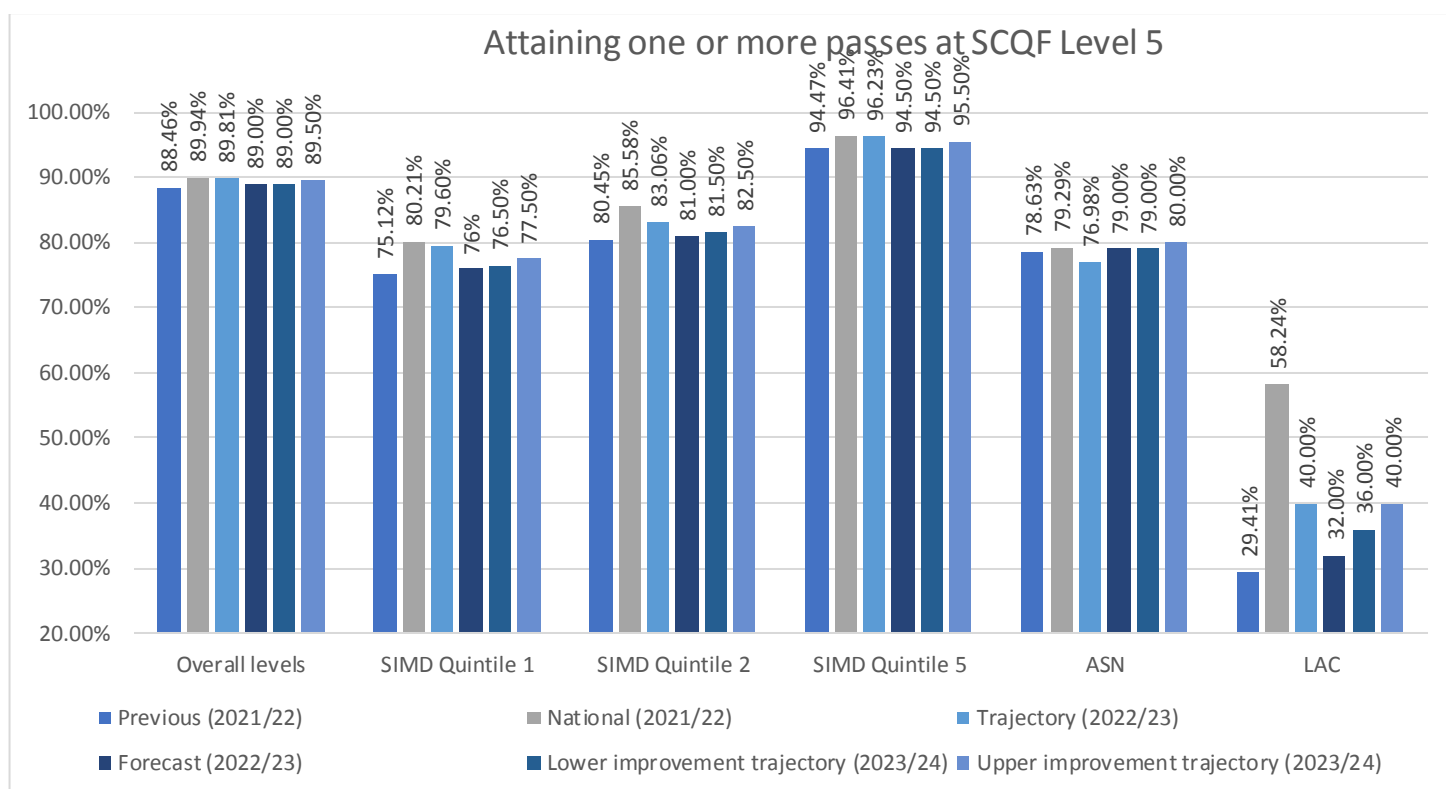
Our trajectories for 2022/23 reflect the progress made and potential for improvement as we continue recovery from the pandemic and have not taken into account an increase in roll at this stage to ensure that we remain aspirational. Trajectories will be reviewed on an annual basis.

School Leaver data

SCQF Level 5

Stretch Aim – 90.5% of all young people will attain 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 5 by 2026. As a key benchmark of success, 1 or more at SCQF Level 5 remains a key indicator for attainment in our schools. As the distance grows from the end of the pandemic, a more settled picture will emerge demonstrating that schools are progressing against this measure, with a projection of narrowing the gap between Q1 to Q5 from 19.35 to 18 percentage points by 2023/24.

Target for 2023/24 – Between 89% and 89.5% of young people will attain 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 5 by the end of 23/24.



Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more pass at SCQF level 5 based on the Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations publication

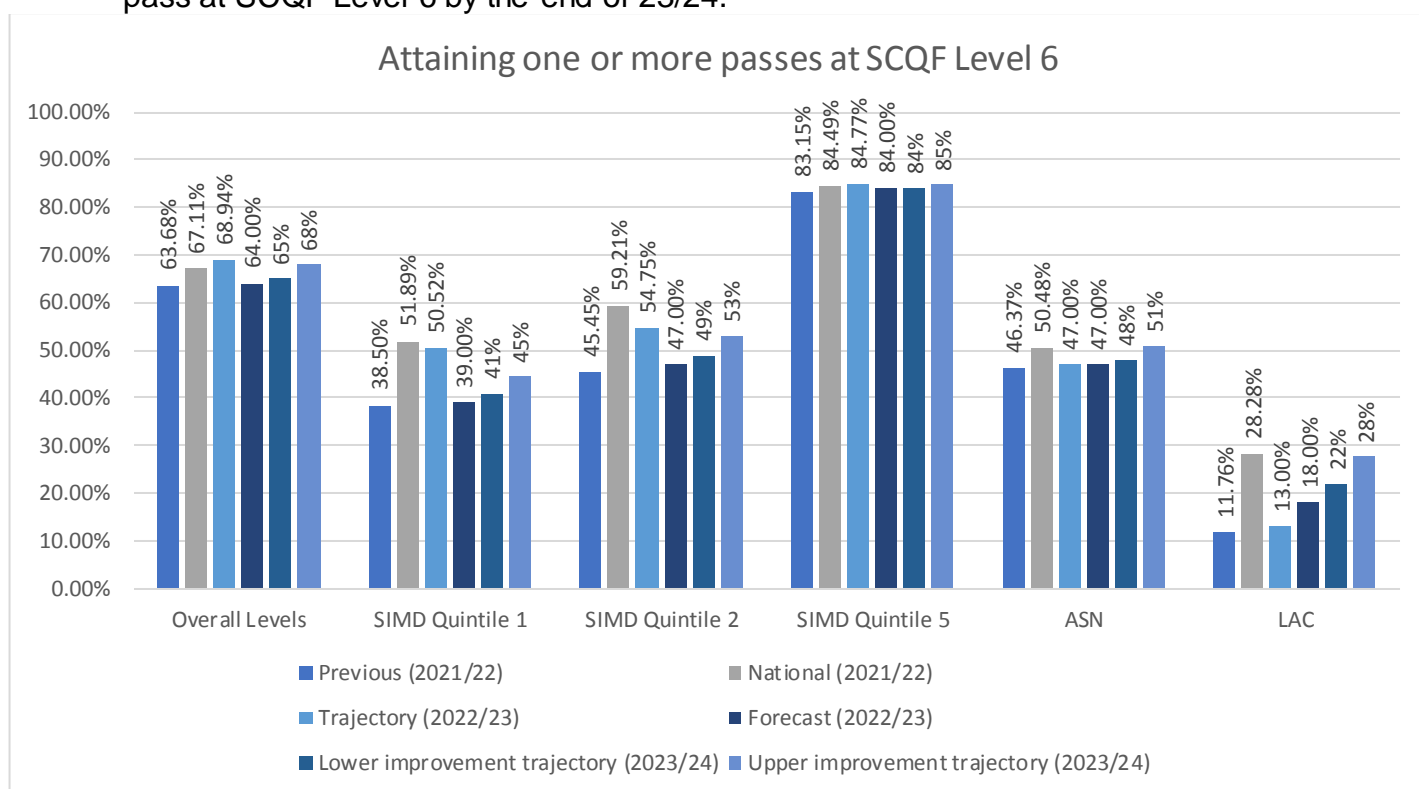
	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC ¹
Previous (2021/22)	88.46%	75.12%	80.45%	94.47%	19.35pp	78.63%	29.41%
National (2021/22)	89.94%	80.21%	85.58%	96.41%	16.20pp	79.29%	58.24%
Trajectory (2022/23)	89.81%	79.60%	83.06%	96.23%	16.63pp	76.98%	40.0%
Forecast (2022/23)	89.00%	76.00%	81.00%	94.50%	18.5pp	79.0%	32.0%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(89.0%-89.5%)	(76.5% - 77.5%)	(81.5% - 82.5%)	(94.5%-95.5%)	18pp	(79.0% - 80.0%)	(36.0%-40.0%)
Improvement (percentage points)	(0pp - 0.5pp)	(0.5pp - 1.5pp)	(0.5pp - 1.5pp)	(0.0pp - 1.0pp)		(0.00pp - 1.0pp)	(4pp - 8pp)
Stretch Aim to be achieved by 25/26	90.50%	80.70%	84.50%	97.00%	16.30pp	80.00%	55.00%

¹ 3 looked after children achieved SCQF level 5 in a cohort of 15 leavers.

SCQF Level 6

Stretch Aim - 74% of all young people will attain 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 6 by 2026. 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 6 is a key attainment indicator, and can serve to demonstrate breadth of course offer across schools. During 2022-23 and for the coming year, schools are developing a broader curriculum offer and this, combined with the introduction of ABZ Campus in June 2023, should see progress made against stretch aims in this measure. The forecast is to reduce the gap between Q1 and Q5 from 44.65 percentage points to 43 by 2023/24.

Target for 2023/24 – Between 67% and 69% of young people will attain 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 6 by the end of 23/24.



Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more pass at SCQF level 6 based on the Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations publication

	Overall Levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1-Q5	ASN	LAC ²
Previous (2021/22)	63.68%	38.5%	45.45%	83.15%	44.65pp	46.37%	11.76%
National (2021/22)	67.11%	51.89%	59.21%	84.49%	32.60pp	50.48%	28.28%
Trajectory 2022/23	68.94%	50.52%	54.75%	84.77%	-34.25pp	47.00%	13.00%
Forecast 2022/23	64.0%	39.0%	47.0%	84.0%	45.0pp	47.0%	18.0%
Trajectory 2023/24	(67.0% - 69.0%)	(42.0% - 44.0%)	(49.0% - 51.0%)	(85.0% - 87.0%)	(43pp to 43pp)	(48.0% - 51.0%)	(26.0% - 29.0%)
Improvement 23/24 (percentage points)	(1.00pp - 4.00pp)	(2.00pp - 5.50pp)	(2.00pp - 6.00pp)	(0.00pp - 0.75pp)		(1.00pp - 4.00pp)	(4.00pp - 9.67pp)
Stretch Aim to be achieved by 25/26	74.0%	56.00%	62.75%	87.27%	31.27pp	58.66%	46.67%

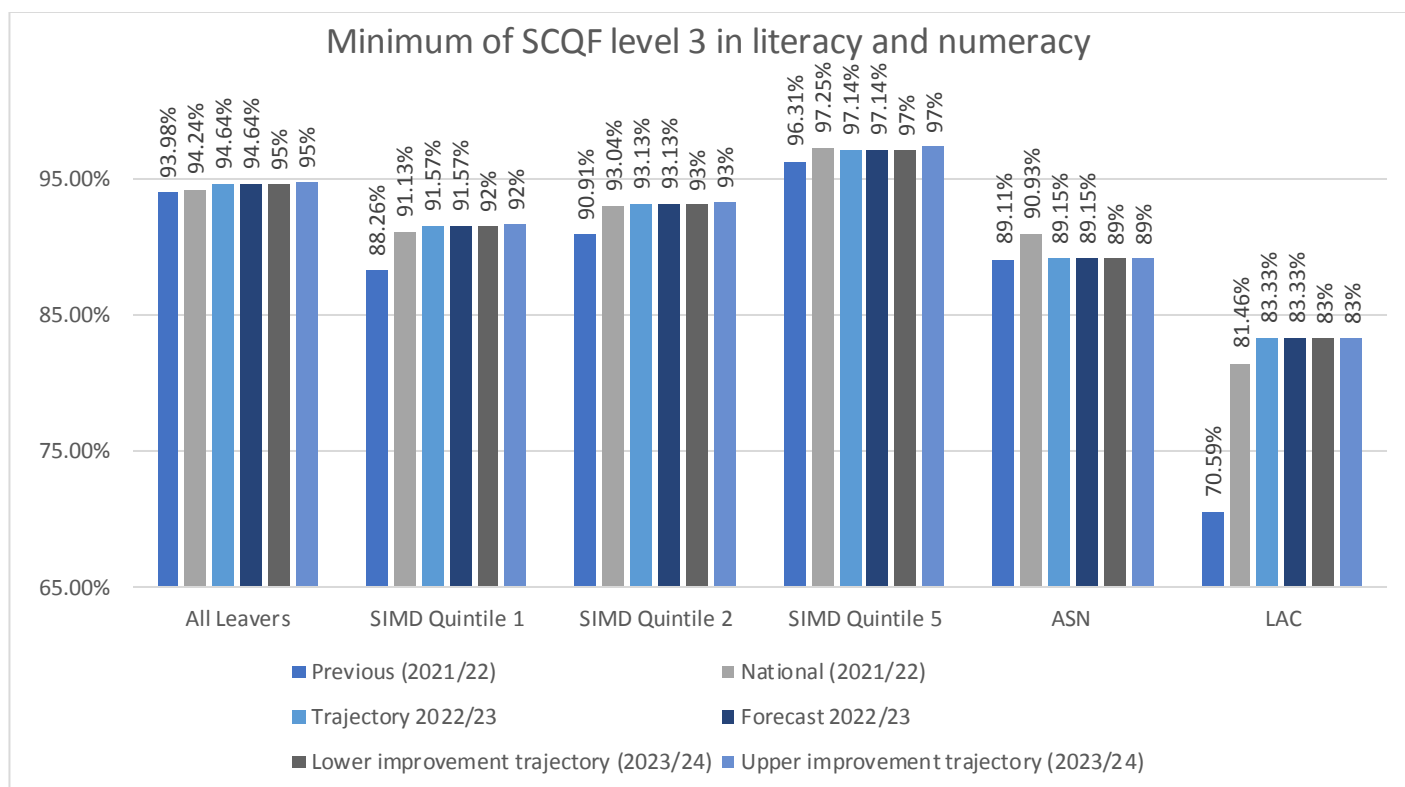
² 1 looked after child achieved SCQF level 6 in cohort of 15 leavers.

SCQF Level 3 in Literacy & numeracy

Stretch Aim – 95.14% of all young people will attain a minimum of SCQF Level 3 in literacy and numeracy by 2026.

Positive attainment in Literacy and Numeracy is an important feature of success in the Senior Phase in schools. There is confidence that attainment in this area will improve towards the stated targets and reduce the gap between Q1 and Q5 in the coming years.

Target for 2023/24 – 94% of young people will attain a minimum of SCQF Level 3 in literacy and numeracy by the end of school session 22/23.



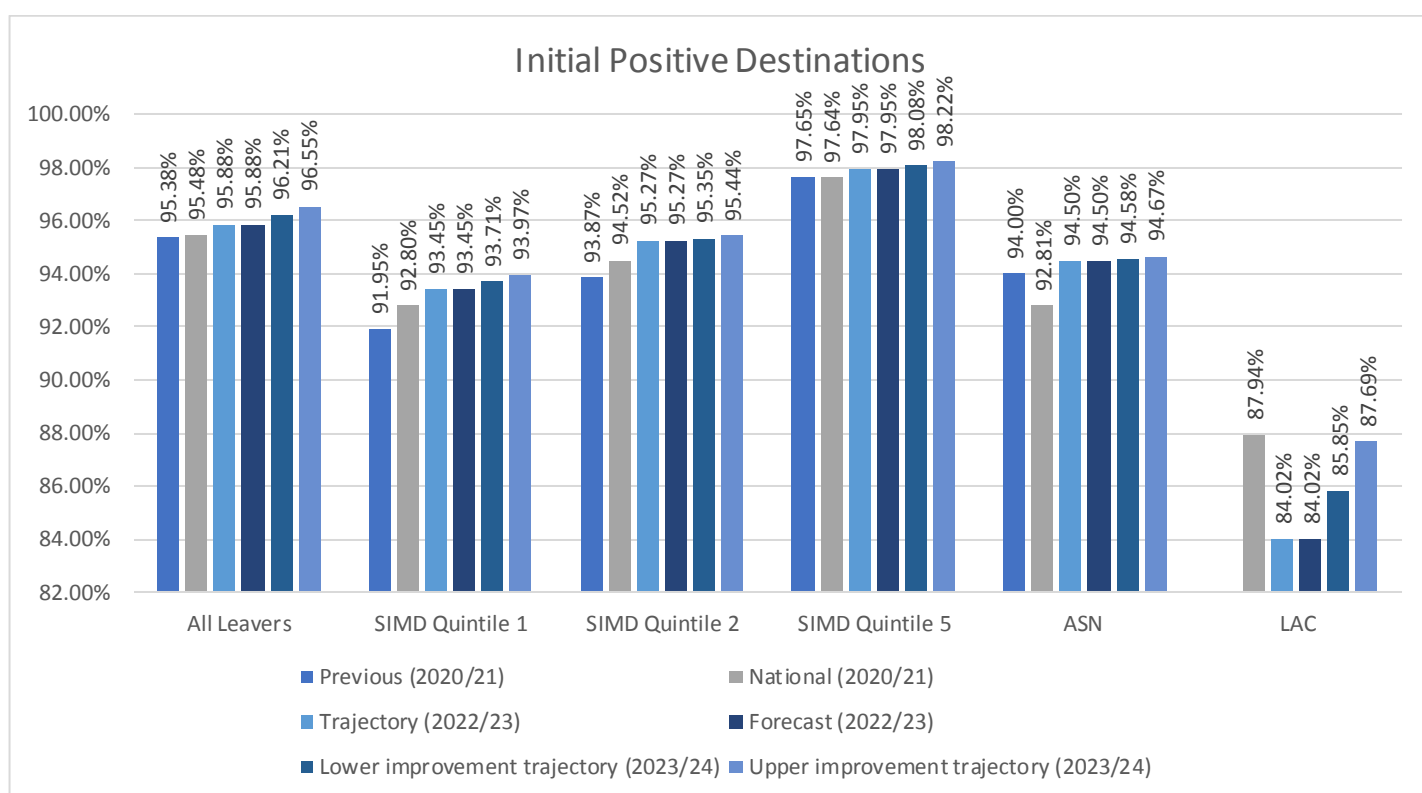
Proportion of school leavers attaining a minimum of SCQF level 3 in literacy and numeracy

	All Leavers	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
Previous (2021/22)	93.98%	88.26%	90.91%	96.31%	8.05pp	89.11%	70.59%
National (2021/22)	94.24%	91.13%	93.04%	97.25%	6.12pp	90.93%	81.46%
Trajectory 2022/23	94.64%	91.57%	93.13%	97.14%	5.57pp	89.15%	83.33%
Forecast 2022/23	94.64%	91.57%	93.13%	97.14%	5.57pp	89.15%	83.33%
Trajectory 2023/24	(94.64% - 94.76%)	(91.57% - 91.67%)	(93.13% - 93.35%)	(97.14% - 97.36%)	(-5.57pp to -5.57pp)	(89.15% - 89.15%)	(83.33% - 83.33%)
Improvement 23/24 (percentage points)	(0.00% - 0.12%)	(0.00% - 0.10%)	(0.00% - 0.22%)	(0.00% - 0.22%)		(0.00% - 0.50%)	(0.00% - 3.00%)
Stretch Aim to be achieved by 25/26	95.14%	92.00%	93.63%	97.80%	5.80pp	90.15%	88.33%

Proportion of leavers entering Positive Destinations

Stretch Aim – 97.88% of young people will be achieving a positive destination by 2026. This is an important yet challenging stretch aim as we look to support all of our young people into a positive and sustained destination on leaving school. Emerging evidence suggests that the immediate post-pandemic period saw a slight reduction in the positive destination figures (2022 – 93.87), however, as distance grows from the pandemic and work with schools to improve pathway planning progresses, there is confidence that the target of 96% by the end of session 2023/24 is within reach.

Target for 2023/24 – 96% of young people will enter an initial positive destination by the end of school session 23/24.



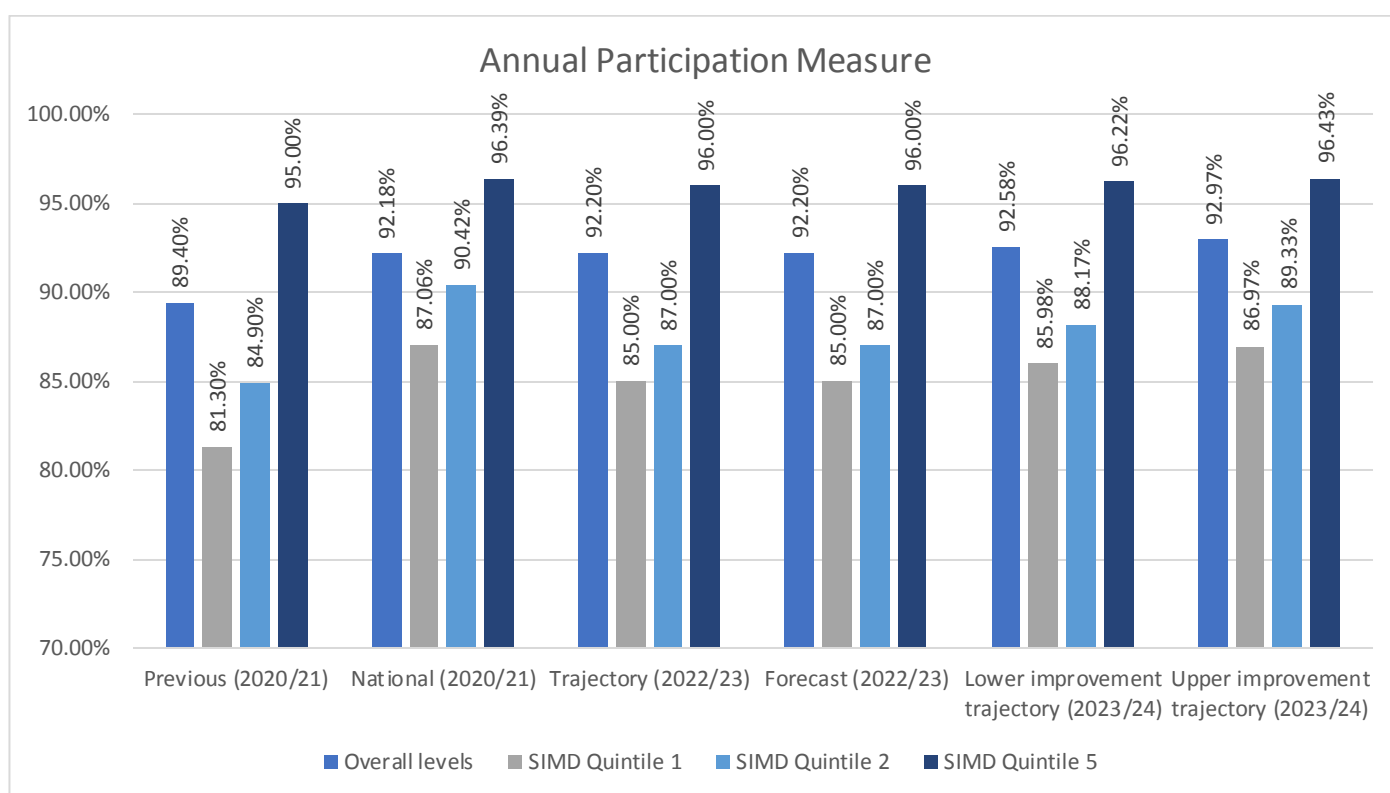
Proportion of school leavers leaving to a positive destination

	All Leavers	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5	ASN	LAC
Previous (2020/21)	95.38%	91.95%	93.87%	97.65%	5.70pp	94.00%	76.47%
National (2020/2021)	95.48%	92.80%	94.52%	97.64%	4.84pp	92.81%	87.94%
Trajectory (2022/23)	95.88%	93.45%	95.27%	97.95%	-4.50pp	94.50%	84.02%
Forecast (2022/23)	95.88%	93.45%	95.27%	97.95%	4.50pp	94.50%	84.02%
Trajectory (2023/24)	(96.21% - 96.55%)	(93.71% - 93.97%)	(95.35% - 95.44%)	(98.08% - 98.22%)	(-4.38pp to -4.25pp)	(94.58% - 94.67%)	(85.85% - 87.69%)
Improvement 23/24 (percentage points)	(0.33% - 0.67%)	(0.26% - 0.52%)	(0.08% - 0.17%)	(0.13% - 0.27%)		(0.08% - 0.17%)	(1.83% - 3.67%)
Stretch Aim 2025/26	97.88%	95.00%	95.77%	98.75%	3.75%	95.00%	95.02%

Participation

Stretch Aim – 94.5% of all young people will be participating in education, employment, or training by 2026. This measure takes a slightly different perspective to the Positive Destination figure (see above) and early signs are that 2022 saw some progress made (2022 – 91.22%), providing confidence that the target for 2023/24 is achievable. Continued work to support schools in pathway planning will further spread good practice across schools.

Target for 2023/24 – Between 92.5% and 93.5% of young people will be participating in education, employment, or training by the end of school session 23/24.



Percentage participation of 16-19 olds participating in education, employment or training based on the Annual Participation Measure produced by Skills Development Scotland by 2026

	Overall levels	SIMD Quintile 1	SIMD Quintile 2	SIMD Quintile 5	GAP Q1 - Q5
Previous (2020/21)	89.4%	81.3%	84.9%	95.0%	13.7pp
National (2020/21)	92.18%	87.06%	90.42%	96.39%	9.33pp
Trajectory (2022/23)	92.20%	85.00%	87.00%	96.00%	11.00pp
Forecast (2022/23)	92.20%	85.00%	87.00%	96.00%	11.00pp
Trajectory (2023/24)	(92.58% - 92.97%)	(85.98% - 86.97%)	(88.17% - 89.33%)	(96.22% - 96.43%)	(-10.23pp to - 9.47pp)
Improvement (percentage points)	(0.3pp - 1.3pp)	(1pp - 3pp)	(1pp - 3pp)	(0pp - 0.75pp)	
Stretch Aim to be achieved by 25/26	94.50%	90.90%	94.00%	97.30%	6.40%

Conclusion

The education service continues to help drive the improvements outlined in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), the associated Children's Service Plan, the Child Poverty Action Plan as well as reflecting on the improvements detailed in the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan. We continue to focus on a small number of priorities for improvement in order to address some of the issues emerging from the data and accelerate work in these areas in closer collaboration with colleagues in school.

In addition to the priorities identified in the above National Improvement Priority Areas, we will also endeavour to:

- Work with HTs to monitor the impact of PEF interventions as part of our Quality Improvement Activity
- Work with the Scottish Government to increase provision of ELC to those who are 1 and 2 from low income households
- Continue to work with community planning partners to shape a model of family support
- Maintain an agile programme of professional learning for all ELC and school staff
- Re-establish subject networks
- Where possible, support staff to gain qualifications in order to realise career progression and promotion
- Continue to deliver a programme for Middle Leaders to enhance leadership skills
- Build on the network for Middle Leaders
- Undertake regular staff wellbeing surveys to understand the needs of staff across the system and support a timely response to this.
- Monitor recruitment to ensure swift identification of any issues to be addressed.
- Continue to evaluate the use of school profiles and ensure access for all
- Develop a quality improvement calendar which provides well planned, focused quality improvement activity
- Evaluate the impact of each programme of quality improvement to determine next steps
- Review and update the Parental involvement & Engagement Plan
- Design and capitalise on opportunities for co-location and co-delivery of services for children and families

High Level Plan 2022-26

Excellence

Equity

Strategic Priorities

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the leadership of change in schools • Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools • Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports in response to changes in need • Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services that directly and indirectly affect them • Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas • Improve the delivery of Computer Science from 3-18 and beyond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs • Reshape the Virtual School to ensure that those on the edge of care and those who are care experienced achieve at the highest levels in keeping with The Promise • Close the poverty related attainment gap • Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible • Partnership delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with The Promise • Review the Anti-bullying policy |
|---|---|

Strategic Enablers

Workforce	Data	Standards	Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality professional learning for all • Senior and Middle Leadership development • Continue to support staff health and wellbeing • Monitor workforce levels to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop School Profiles • Implement improved tracking and reporting • Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so • Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators • Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches • Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan • Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway • More closely align the universal services of health and education

Strategic Delivery Plan

Excellence

Stretch Aims and targets for 25/26

- ❖ 85% of all schools will self- evaluate QI1.3 at good or better by 2026 (current baseline 60% and target for 23/24 75%)
- ❖ 80% of all school will self-evaluate QI 2.3 at good or better by 2026 (current baseline 48% and target for 23/24 55%)
- ❖ 84% of pupils will achieve ACEL reading (P1,4 and 7 combined) by 2026 (forecast baseline 76% and target for 23/24 78% - 79%)
- ❖ 81% of pupils will achieve ACEL writing (P1, 4 and 7 combined) by 2026 (forecast baseline 72% and target for 23/24 74% – 75%)
- ❖ 89% of pupils will achieve ACEL Listening and Talking (P1, 4 and 7 combined) by 2026.(forecast baseline 84% and target for 23/24 85%-86%)
- ❖ 84% of pupils will achieve ACEL Numeracy (P1, 4 and 7 combined) by 2026. (forecast baseline 76% and target for 23/24 78% - 79%)
- ❖ 78% of pupils will achieve ACEL Literacy (P1, P4 and P7 combined) by 2026 (forecast baseline 72% and target for 23/24 73% -74%)
- ❖ Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more at SCQF level 5 to 90.5% by 2026. Current baseline 87.8% and target for 22/23 set at 89.9%
- ❖ Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more at SCQF Level 6 to 74% by 2026. Current baseline 66.9% and target for 22/23 set at 68.9%
- ❖ Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining a minimum of SCQF L3 in literacy and numeracy to 95% by 2026. Current baseline 92.8% and target for 22/23 94.6%
- ❖ Increase the proportion of school leavers entering an initial positive destination to 97.8% by 2026. Current baseline 95.3% and target for 22/23 set at 95.8%
- ❖ Increase the participation of 16-19 year olds in education, employment or training based on Annual Participation Measure to 94.5% by 2026. Current baseline 90.97% and target for 22/23 set at 92.2%

Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Improve the leadership of change in schools			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to respond positively to the education reforms and strengthening locality working Increase opportunities for leadership collaboration with particular focus on Secondary settings 	CEO, QIMs	Ongoing	Positive engagement, response and implementation of changes identified
	QIM (PD), AM	August	Improvement in QI 1.3 in Secondary schools
Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment including the provision of appropriate levels of differentiation, pace, and challenge in collaboration with HMLe and the Regional Improvement Collaborative Work with Microsoft to pilot an increase in the use of Microsoft tools to support learning and teaching Maintain work on the national improvement in writing programme – new cohort Improve learning transitions from primary to secondary including a focus on numeracy Continue to support engagement with Excelerate to increase innovative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in Secondary Schools 	QIM (RA), NIF Group	Ongoing	Improvement of core QI 2.3
	QIO (Digital)	August 2023	Improvement in QI 2.3 use of digital
	QIM (CtG) ESO	August 2023	Improvement in writing data
	QIM (PD)	Jan 2024	Improvement in numeracy data, particularly at transition points
	QIM (PD)	Ongoing	Increased creative learning opportunities afforded to children and young people in Secondary Schools
Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports in response to changes in need			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor wellbeing data and the impact of interventions in place including the provision of counselling 	QIM (HWB), ESOs, NIF Group	Annual survey – Sept 2023	Improved QI 3.1 and Health & wellbeing survey data
	QIM (HWB), PEPAS	Ongoing	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain our focus on encouraging children and young people to be more physically active including those with sensory and other identified needs 			Increased number of opportunities for children and young people to be more physically active
Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services that directly and indirectly affect them			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a rapid review of our readiness for the incorporation of the UNCRC following publication of the statutory guidance 	QIO (UNCRC)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure that we meaningfully involve children and young people in decision-making and respond to what children and young people tell us they want and need 	QIO (UNCRC)	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the impact of mentoring programmes for children and young people to determine our long term approach 	QIM (PD)		Improvement in engagement within the senior phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work in collaboration with the Youth Climate Group to work towards Net Zero 	QIO (Net Zero)	Ongoing	Increased opportunities to inform strategic decision making across the organisation
Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued curriculum alignment and expansion of learning pathways through delivery of Phase 2 of ABZ Campus 	QIM (PD), DO		Improvement in senior phase data range of courses available June 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on developing pathways to support those with a range of additional support needs 	QIM (PD), DO		Improvement in destinations and participation data
Improve the delivery of Computer Science from 3-18 and beyond			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve computer science skills through on-going delivery of Aberdeen Computing Collaborative 	QIO (Digital)	Ongoing	Improvement in senior phase attainment data

Equity
Stretch Aims
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 100% of schools will evaluate QI3.1 at good or better by 2026. (current baseline 88% and target for 23/24 90%) ❖ 95% of all children will attend school regularly by 2026. Current baseline 91% and target for session 2023/24 (92%-93%) ❖ Reduce levels of exclusion to 9 per 1000 pupils by 2026. Current baseline 15.7 per 1000 and target for 23/24 (14.1 -12.1 per 1000)

Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and implement our accessibility plan 	QIO (ASN), ESO	August 2023	Successful delivery of the accessibility plan, improvement in QI 3.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop our approaches to supporting those with a range of additional support needs including on-going roll out of the Circle Framework and on-going delivery of trauma training through Compassionate and Connected Communities 	QIM (HWB), (RA) ESOs	Ongoing	Improvement in all data sets linked to QI 3.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build a responsive Educational Psychology Service delivery plan to meet the changing needs of the school population 	QIM (HWB), PEP	Ongoing	Improvement in QI 2.3, 3.1 and 3.2
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			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase scrutiny of the progress of our pupils on the edge of care 	QIM (RA), (HWB),	August 2023	Agreed data sets to ensure individual needs are being met and progress is being made
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going roll out of our Edge of Care pilots to help shape our model of Family Support 	Virtual HT	Ongoing	Increased engagement with school and improvement in destinations data
	QIM (CtG)	Jan 2024	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and implementation of a refreshed Minimising Exclusion Policy 			Refreshed Minimising Exclusion Policy – longterm consistency of approach
Close the poverty related attainment gap			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to wider child poverty data at community level 	QIM (CtG)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with HTs to monitor the impact of PEF interventions as part of our Quality Improvement Activity 	QIMs/QIOs	Ongoing	Improvement in closing the gap measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Scottish Government to increase provision of ELC to those who are 1 and 2 from low income households 	EY Service Managers		Plan in place for expansion to 1 and 2 year olds once guidance is available from Scottish Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Head Teachers to review attendance levels and guidance. 	QIM(CtG)		Increased attendance
Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work in collaboration with others to address the root cause of poverty. This will see targeted promotions of support available through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money advisors Partnership with Cfine 	QIM (CtG)	Ongoing	Increased number of benefits claimed through Money Advisors etc
Partnership Delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with the Promise			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use request for assistance data to align Scottish Attainment Challenge resource to our emerging model of Family Support 	QIMs	Ongoing	Reduce the number of young people on the edge of care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with community planning partners to shape a model of family support 	QIMs		
Review the Anti-bullying policy (suggest alter to review approaches to equality)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the revised anti bullying policy 	QIO (ASN)	August 2023	Reduction in incidents in the longer term

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support all secondary schools to establish effective systems to support LGBTQIA+ community in school 	QIO (Equality)		Reduction in number of children and young people reporting low confidence, self esteem
--	----------------	--	--

Strategic Enablers

Workforce - Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
High quality professional learning for all			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain an agile programme for all ELC and school staff to include opportunities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probationers, Early stage teachers, Middle leaders, Senior leaders Supply staff, ELC Staff at all levels Explore increasing opportunities for collaboration at subject level Where possible, support staff to gain qualifications in order to realise career progression and promotion 	QIM (HWB) Building Capacity Team / EY Team	July 2023-ongoing	Improvement in core Quality Indicators and Care Inspectorate Gradings and HMle Inspections
	Lead Teacher	October 2023	Improved collaboration and confidence of staff
		Ongoing	Staff with more highly skilled expertise
Senior and Middle Leadership development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver a programme for Middle Leaders to enhance leadership skills Build on the network for Middle Leaders to continue to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share practice, Learn from and with each other Engage with professional learning opportunities to improve leadership capacity 	QIM (HWB), Building capacity Team	August 2023 August 2023	Improvement in QI1.3 evaluations Improved overall quality assurance in schools with strong leadership teams, which directly impacts on all aspects of delivery.
Continue to support staff health and wellbeing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake regular staff wellbeing surveys to understand the needs of staff across the system and support a timely response to this. 	QIM (HWB) ESOs	August 2023 – bi-annual survey	Improvement in staff wellbeing and related responses

Monitor workforce to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor recruitment to ensure swift identification of any issues to be addressed. 	QIM (CtG) / EY Service Managers	Ongoing	Maintain high levels of staffing
Data - Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Continue to develop School Profiles			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to evaluate the use of school profiles and ensure access for all 	QIMs/QIOs/	Ongoing	All data sets used to measure school improvement available in the school profiles
Implement improved tracking and reporting			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve understanding and accountability of data at all levels Improved tracking and scrutiny of impact data related to the 6 groups identified in the Child Poverty Action Plan and those with protected characteristics Review current tracking systems for BGE and beyond to ensure accurate tracking of attainment for all children and young people including those on the edge of care 	QIM (RA) QIM (CtG) QIM (PD)	Jan 2024 Jan 2024 Ongoing	Improvement in QI 1.3 Improvement in closing the gap measures Improvement in QI 1.3 and confidence in the data to ensure early intervention
Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve data sharing processes to ensure that all relevant data can be shared to support planning and implementation of interventions e.g. PEPAS, Health 	QIMs		Improvement in all core QIs
Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out the Pupil Equity Fund tracker and share best practice 	QIM (CtG)	August 2023	Consistent tracking of PEF data and improvement in closing the gap measures

Standards - Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the refreshed Quality Improvement Framework to help improve standards against the core Quality Indicators 	QIMs	August 2023	Improvement in all core QIs
Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a quality improvement calendar which provides well planned, focused quality improvement activity 	QIMs/QIOs	Ongoing	Robust quality improvement processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the impact of each programme of quality improvement to determine next steps 	QIMs/QIOs	Ongoing	Improvement in all core QIs
Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement actions associated with the Armed Forces Covenant 	QIM (CtG)		Consistent approach to supporting families of the Armed Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Partnership Forums to maximise their impact 	QIM (CtG)		Improvement in closing the gap measures

Partnership - Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the parent forum to improve communication between schools and parents and increase parental engagement Review and update the Parental involvement & Engagement Plan 	QIM (HWB), ESO ESO	Ongoing August 2023	Consistent communication with parents and carers Refreshed Parental Involvement & Engagement plan from 2024
Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway			
This is now being addressed within the Children's Services plan and led by the Children's Services Board			
More closely align the universal services of health and education			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and capitalise on opportunities for co-location and co-delivery of services for children and families 	QIM (HWB), (RA)	October 2023	On-going Reduction in number of requests for

This page is intentionally left blank

High Level Plan 2022-26

Excellence

Equity

Strategic Priorities

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the leadership of change in schools • Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools • Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports in response to changes in need • Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services that directly and indirectly affect them • Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas • Improve the delivery of Computer Science from 3-18 and beyond | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs • Reshape the Virtual School to ensure that those on the edge of care and those who are care experienced achieve at the highest levels in keeping with The Promise • Close the poverty related attainment gap • Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible • Partnership delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with The Promise • Review the Anti-bullying policy |
|---|---|

Strategic Enablers

Workforce	Data	Standards	Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality professional learning for all • Senior and Middle Leadership development • Continue to support staff health and wellbeing • Monitor workforce levels to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop School Profiles • Implement improved tracking and reporting • Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so • Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators • Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches • Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan • Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway • More closely align the universal services of health and education

Strategic Delivery Plan

Excellence

Stretch Aims and targets for 25/26

- ❖ 85% of all schools will self- evaluate QI1.3 at good or better by 2026 (current baseline 60% and target for 23/24 75%)
- ❖ 80% of all school will self-evaluate QI 2.3 at good or better by 2026 (current baseline 48% and target for 23/24 55%)
- ❖ 84% of pupils will achieve ACEL reading (P1,4 and 7 combined) by 2026 (forecast baseline 76% and target for 23/24 78% - 79%)
- ❖ 81% of pupils will achieve ACEL writing (P1, 4 and 7 combined) by 2026 (forecast baseline 72% and target for 23/24 74% – 75%)
- ❖ 89% of pupils will achieve ACEL Listening and Talking (P1, 4 and 7 combined) by 2026.(forecast baseline 84% and target for 23/24 85%-86%)
- ❖ 84% of pupils will achieve ACEL Numeracy (P1, 4 and 7 combined) by 2026. (forecast baseline 76% and target for 23/24 78% - 79%)
- ❖ 78% of pupils will achieve ACEL Literacy (P1, P4 and P7 combined) by 2026 (forecast baseline 72% and target for 23/24 73% -74%)
- ❖ Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more at SCQF level 5 to 90.5% by 2026. Current baseline 87.8% and target for 22/23 set at 89.9%
- ❖ Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more at SCQF Level 6 to 74% by 2026. Current baseline 66.9% and target for 22/23 set at 68.9%
- ❖ Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining a minimum of SCQF L3 in literacy and numeracy to 95% by 2026. Current baseline 92.8% and target for 22/23 94.6%
- ❖ Increase the proportion of school leavers entering an initial positive destination to 97.8% by 2026. Current baseline 95.3% and target for 22/23 set at 95.8%
- ❖ Increase the participation of 16-19 year olds in education, employment or training based on Annual Participation Measure to 94.5% by 2026. Current baseline 90.97% and target for 22/23 set at 92.2%

Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Improve the leadership of change in schools			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to respond positively to the education reforms and strengthening locality working Increase opportunities for leadership collaboration with particular focus on Secondary settings 	CEO, QIMs	Ongoing	Positive engagement, response and implementation of changes identified
	QIM (PD), AM	August	Improvement in QI 1.3 in Secondary schools
Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment including the provision of appropriate levels of differentiation, pace, and challenge in collaboration with HMIE and the Regional Improvement Collaborative Work with Microsoft to pilot an increase in the use of Microsoft tools to support learning and teaching Maintain work on the national improvement in writing programme – new cohort Improve learning transitions from primary to secondary including a focus on numeracy Continue to support engagement with Excelerate to increase innovative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in Secondary Schools 	QIM (RA), NIF Group	Ongoing	Improvement of core QI 2.3
	QIO (Digital)	August 2023	Improvement in QI 2.3 use of digital
	QIM (CtG) ESO	August 2023	Improvement in writing data
	QIM (PD)	Jan 2024	Improvement in numeracy data, particularly at transition points
	QIM (PD)	Ongoing	Increased creative learning opportunities afforded to children and young people in Secondary Schools
Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports in response to changes in need			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor wellbeing data and the impact of interventions in place including the provision of counselling Maintain our focus on encouraging children and young people to be more physically active including those with sensory and other identified needs 	QIM (HWB), ESOs, NIF Group	Annual survey – Sept 2023	Improved QI 3.1 and Health & wellbeing survey data
	QIM (HWB), PEPAS	Ongoing	Increased number of opportunities for children and young people to be more physically active

Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services that directly and indirectly affect them			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a rapid review of our readiness for the incorporation of the UNCRC following publication of the statutory guidance 	QIO (UNCRC)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure that we meaningfully involve children and young people in decision-making and respond to what children and young people tell us they want and need 	QIO (UNCRC)	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the impact of mentoring programmes for children and young people to determine our long term approach 	QIM (PD)		Improvement in engagement within the senior phase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work in collaboration with the Youth Climate Group to work towards Net Zero 	QIO (Net Zero)	Ongoing	Increased opportunities to inform strategic decision making across the organisation
Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued curriculum alignment and expansion of learning pathways through delivery of Phase 2 of ABZ Campus 	QIM (PD), DO		Improvement in senior phase data range of courses available June 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on developing pathways to support those with a range of additional support needs 	QIM (PD), DO		Improvement in destinations and participation data
Improve the delivery of Computer Science from 3-18 and beyond			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve computer science skills through on-going delivery of Aberdeen Computing Collaborative 	QIO (Digital)	Ongoing	Improvement in senior phase attainment data

Equity
<p>Stretch Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 100% of schools will evaluate QI3.1 at good or better by 2026. (current baseline 88% and target for 23/24 90%) ❖ 95% of all children will attend school regularly by 2026. Current baseline 91% and target for session 2023/24 (92% -93%) ❖ Reduce levels of exclusion to 9 per 1000 pupils by 2026. Current baseline 15.7 per 1000 and target for 23/24 (14.1 -12.1 per 1000)

Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and implement our accessibility plan 	QIO (ASN), ESO	August 2023	Successful delivery of the accessibility plan, improvement in QI 3.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop our approaches to supporting those with a range of additional support needs including on-going roll out of the Circle Framework and on-going delivery of trauma training through Compassionate and Connected Communities 	QIM (HWB), (RA) ESOs	Ongoing	Improvement in all data sets linked to QI 3.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build a responsive Educational Psychology Service delivery plan to meet the changing needs of the school population 	QIM (HWB), PEP	Ongoing	Improvement in QI 2.3, 3.1 and 3.2
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			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase scrutiny of the progress of our pupils on the edge of care 	QIM (RA), (HWB),	August 2023	Agreed data sets to ensure individual needs are being met and progress is being made
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going roll out of our Edge of Care pilots to help shape our model of Family Support 	Virtual HT	Ongoing	Increased engagement with school and improvement in destinations data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and implementation of a refreshed Minimising Exclusion Policy 	QIM (CtG)	Jan 2024	Refreshed Minimising Exclusion Policy – longterm consistency of approach
Close the poverty related attainment gap			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to wider child poverty data at community level 	QIM (CtG)		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with HTs to monitor the impact of PEF interventions as part of our Quality Improvement Activity • Work with the Scottish Government to increase provision of ELC to those who are 1 and 2 from low income households • Work with Head Teachers to review attendance levels and guidance. 	<p>QIMs/QIOs</p> <p>EY Service Managers</p> <p>QIM(CtG)</p>	Ongoing	<p>Improvement in closing the gap measures</p> <p>Plan in place for expansion to 1 and 2 year olds once guidance is available from Scottish Government</p> <p>Increased attendance</p>
Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work in collaboration with others to address the root cause of poverty. This will see targeted promotions of support available through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money advisors • Partnership with Cfine 	QIM (CtG)	Ongoing	Increased number of benefits claimed through Money Advisors etc
Partnership Delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with the Promise			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use request for assistance data to align Scottish Attainment Challenge resource to our emerging model of Family Support • Continue to work with community planning partners to shape a model of family support 	<p>QIMs</p> <p>QIMs</p>	Ongoing	Reduce the number of young people on the edge of care
Review the Anti-bullying policy (suggest alter to review approaches to equality)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the revised anti bullying policy • Continue to support all secondary schools to establish effective systems to support LGBTQIA+ community in school 	<p>QIO (ASN)</p> <p>QIO (Equality)</p>	August 2023	<p>Reduction in incidents in the longer term</p> <p>Reduction in number of children and young people reporting low confidence, self esteem</p>
Strategic Enablers			
Workforce - Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures

High quality professional learning for all			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain an agile programme for all ELC and school staff to include opportunities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probationers, Early stage teachers, Middle leaders, Senior leaders Supply staff, ELC Staff at all levels 	QIM (HWB) Building Capacity Team / EY Team	July 2023-ongoing	Improvement in core Quality Indicators and Care Inspectorate Gradings and HMIE Inspections
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore increasing opportunities for collaboration at subject level 	Lead Teacher	October 2023	Improved collaboration and confidence of staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where possible, support staff to gain qualifications in order to realise career progression and promotion 		Ongoing	Staff with more highly skilled expertise
Senior and Middle Leadership development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver a programme for Middle Leaders to enhance leadership skills Build on the network for Middle Leaders to continue to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share practice, Learn from and with each other Engage with professional learning opportunities to improve leadership capacity 	QIM (HWB), Building capacity Team	August 2023 August 2023	Improvement in QI1.3 evaluations Improved overall quality assurance in schools with strong leadership teams, which directly impacts on all aspects of delivery.
Continue to support staff health and wellbeing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake regular staff wellbeing surveys to understand the needs of staff across the system and support a timely response to this. 	QIM (HWB) ESOs	August 2023 – bi-annual survey	Improvement in staff wellbeing and related responses
Monitor workforce to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor recruitment to ensure swift identification of any issues to be addressed. 	QIM (CtG) / EY Service Managers	Ongoing	Maintain high levels of staffing
Data - Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Continue to develop School Profiles			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to evaluate the use of school profiles and ensure access for all 	QIMs/QIOs/	Ongoing	All data sets used to measure school improvement available in the school profiles
Implement improved tracking and reporting			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve understanding and accountability of data at all levels Improved tracking and scrutiny of impact data related to the 6 groups identified in the Child Poverty Action Plan and those with protected characteristics Review current tracking systems for BGE and beyond to ensure accurate tracking of attainment for all children and young people including those on the edge of care 	QIM (RA)	Jan 2024	Improvement in QI 1.3
	QIM (CtG)	Jan 2024	Improvement in closing the gap measures
	QIM (PD)	Ongoing	Improvement in QI 1.3 and confidence in the data to ensure early intervention
Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve data sharing processes to ensure that all relevant data can be shared to support planning and implementation of interventions e.g. PEPAS, Health 	QIMs		Improvement in all core QIs
Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out the Pupil Equity Fund tracker and share best practice 	QIM (CtG)	August 2023	Consistent tracking of PEF data and improvement in closing the gap measures

Standards - Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the refreshed Quality Improvement Framework to help improve standards against the core Quality Indicators 	QIMs	August 2023	Improvement in all core QIs
Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a quality improvement calendar which provides well planned, focused quality improvement activity 	QIMs/QIOs	Ongoing	Robust quality improvement processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the impact of each programme of quality improvement to determine next steps 	QIMs/QIOs	Ongoing	Improvement in all core QIs
Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement actions associated with the Armed Forces Covenant 	QIM (CtG)		Consistent approach to supporting families of the Armed Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Partnership Forums to maximise their impact 	QIM (CtG)		Improvement in closing the gap measures

Partnership - Programme/projects	Lead	From when	Measures
Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the parent forum to improve communication between schools and parents and increase parental engagement • Review and update the Parental involvement & Engagement Plan 	QIM (HWB), ESO ESO	Ongoing August 2023	Consistent communication with parents and carers Refreshed Parental Involvement & Engagement plan from 2024
Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway			
This is now being addressed within the Children’s Services plan and led by the Children’s Services Board			
More closely align the universal services of health and education			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and capitalise on opportunities for co-location and co-delivery of services for children and families 	QIM (HWB), (RA)	October 2023	On-going Reduction in number of requests for



MCR Pathways
Aberdeen City

Draft -
**1st Stage Evaluation of Impact
2021 - 2023**



Content

Introduction	3
Executive Summary	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Young People in scope & focus of support ● Progression & Impact ● Challenges being overcome ● Next 2 Years of Impact 	4 5 6 7
Young People Engaged	9
Mentoring & Relationship Building Sessions	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● S3 to S6 Mentoring Sessions ● S1 & S2 Group Work ● Partnerships & Mentor Profiles 	11 11 12
Impact - Young Person Feedback	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aberdeen Young People views in contrast to National Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having a mentor impact ○ The Mentor relationship itself ○ Best thing about having a mentor 	15 15 16 17
Impact - Education & Education Outcomes	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aberdeen Young People in contrast with LA Comparator Group & National Datasets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attainment measures ○ MCR positive destinations definition ○ Staying on rates ● Views from the Schools ● Views from the Young People & Mentors 	20 20 20 20 22 28
ACC & MCR Staff Overview 2021 - 2023	33
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ACC Pathways Coordinator Cover by school ● Summary of PC Cover 2021 - 2023 	33 34

Introduction

The following report sets out the progression and impact to date of the partnership between the Council (ACC), 6 participating academies and MCR Pathways.

Agreement was reached to launch MCR for both care experienced and other vulnerable groups of young people, immediately after which the pandemic hit. Understandably given the relationship based practice at the heart of the programme it has taken longer to be established. There have been significant challenges, notably maintaining the school staff on which the programme and partnership is based. Recruitment and retention of staff has been a well documented issue across the country.

Despite the challenges, progress and impact was evident in the academic year 2021/22. The number of young people supported will almost double in the current year. MCR had also been working with the Scottish Government on a plan to expand the MCR model across the country. The charity was successful in securing funding to reach 10,000 young people and effectively deliver the programme for no cost to each Council on the basis of the Council employing or redeploying staff in each school. MCR now has an effective process to facilitate successful transitions of council staff from varying backgrounds to become Pathways Coordinators.

We have been able to secure a significant cost reduction for Aberdeen in the last 12 months through the Scottish Government Funding. Were the council and schools able to invest at the same level as 2021/22 we would be able to expand into all 11 academies and provide relationships based support for over 750 of the city's most vulnerable young people. Each school has 3 years of funding.

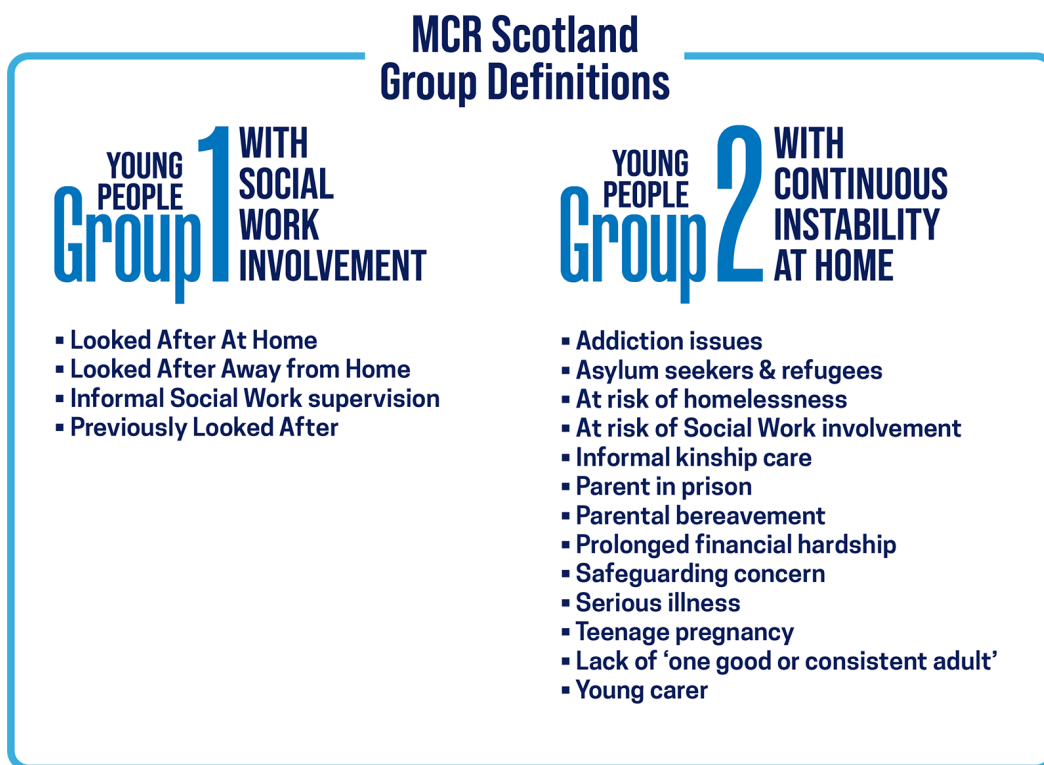
Given the impact of Covid, we have effectively had one full year of operation and would normally expect an evaluation in year three. We understand evaluation can occur at any time and are delighted to share the report in the spirit of a long term partnership as originally envisaged.

We have operated for 15 years and are confident in the impact of the MCR model, all of which have been independently assessed and verified. In this report we have shared both national data as well as data from the comparator group of local authorities. We recognise the challenge in the city is significant and fully recognise the budget constraints that all partners are working under. We hope to have the opportunity for our partnership to impact the young people in Aberdeen to the full extent possible. We are sure that the relationships now established with 251 of the city's most vulnerable young people will be central to all decisions.

We remain very committed to fully integrating the MCR model within the schools, and for the Council to be more self-sufficient after this three-year period. Our goal remains for the 'one good adult' relational approach, delivered at scale, through carefully matched 1:1 volunteers mentors to become a permanent part of the education system. An unpaid volunteer provides a unique and powerful bond for a young person, particularly those in the care system who have multiple professional adults and lack relationships without vested or professional interests. Trust based relationships deliver transformational education outcomes, job choices and life chances.

Executive Summary

We understand that the ACC funding is from Scottish Attainment Challenge resources designed for Care Experienced young people. MCR Pathways was referenced in the Scottish Government guidance documents as an example of how this funding could be used. The contract between ACC and MCR sets out the standard target group of young people being those care experienced or others who would benefit from the programme. MCR Pathways is focused on supporting young people in, previously in or on the edges of care. The common denominator is young people who are experiencing significant and sustained instability at home, which in turn affects their ability to engage in school and education.



Young People in scope & focus of support

To help ensure all groups of MCR young people are being considered in the evaluation, we have noted some key issues, with reference to The Promise and ACC's long term commitment to align with it. The scope is also based on the ACC and MCR commissioning contract.

- **Care Experienced (CE) Vs focussing on only those currently in care:**
The Promise is designed for care experienced young people, a term which takes account of those previously looked after and not just those in the care system at the census date. As a general rule, previously looked after will account for between 40% to 50% of care experienced. Data from across our 6 ACC schools indicates this to 50%.
- **Recognising the Schools' knowledge and expertise - MCR Group 2 Referrals:**
In addition to a full definition of care experienced young people, MCR supports those on the edges of care and who share the high levels of vulnerability and risks. MCR has always operated in response to need and not labels and has multiple experiences of helping prevent young people entering care. Importantly, schools choose the young people who they believe will benefit from their knowledge and needs against the criteria published by MCR. ACC also recognised that 'By offering

the programme to a wider range of young people within the school, it also ensures that it is non stigmatising'. Inclusion of these vulnerable groups was the basis of the commissioning contract.

- **Engagement of CE young people in programme:**
MCR Pathways data indicates engagement in the programme, across S1 to S6, to be at **45% across all year groups**. Nationally, the engagement level is **60%+** and at maturity, we would anticipate this to be closer to **80%**. As a result of the pandemic, the programme has not had the anticipated length of time to build relationships and embed in the schools to deliver the full impact. This will change over time.
- **Significant number of CE young people out of scope at the moment**
At present, **37%** of care experienced young people are currently out of scope. For 21 young people, schools are not recommending the introduction of a mentor yet. On occasions there are multiple complexities which have to settle. This is not unusual in the earlier stages of the model and we expect this to significantly reduce over time.
- **Young person's perceptions of employed staff mentoring vs 1:1 matched volunteer Relationships** are key to supporting a young person to feel safe and loved and ultimately achieve. The Promise Scotland makes reference to 'relationships' **153** times in the foundation report and states that "schools must also be supported to encourage and develop mentoring relationships for those who would benefit" .

From the young person's perspective, the impact of a mentor who is there **just** for them and crucially, for no other reason than they **care**, is transformational. Contrasting employed staff vs volunteers; caseloads and time can be major issues and potential barriers for professional staff. By comparison, the time and leverage of trained and supported external volunteer mentors makes a significant difference.

- **The Role of Pathways Advocates**
We understand the role of the Pathways Advocates is being considered. The role and the potential of these school staff going from part time to full-time could enhance the strength and depth of support. MCR is not aware of the detail or plans but believe the combination could be a powerful support with Advocates covering a more focused case load whilst the Pathways Coordinators and external volunteers support all care experienced and those on the edges of care and otherwise vulnerable. We would be delighted to contribute to discussion on the outcomes sought, approach, time allocated and any budget issues.

Progression and Impact

- **Exceptional feedback from young people on power of relationships**
The current survey illustrates that our young people highly value the impact of their mentors. The survey forms part of the MCR Progress & Impact reviews and is open until the end of term. 55 responses have been analysed and reported on in the report. The full range of responses are included later in the report. The headlines are:
 - **83%** of young people surveyed **agree or strongly agree** that a mentor has helped with **confidence**.
 - **94.3%** **agree or strongly agree** that a mentor has helped them **identify goals** (87% nationally) up from 87.5% in the previous year.
 - **92%** of care experienced young people on the programme in 22/23 **agree or strongly agree** that a mentor has helped them *believe in themselves more*.
 - **84.9%** **agree or strongly agree** that a mentor encourages them to be *the best version of themselves*.

- **94.3%** agree or strongly agree that their mentor is a *good role model*.
- **98.1%** agree or strongly agree with “*Over time, we have built up a lot of trust*”. **100% of care experienced young people agreed with that statement.**

Having dedicated one-on-one time with a carefully matched relationships focused mentor has a profound positive effect on a young person’s self-belief, confidence and goal orientation. It is these unique qualities of the MCR mentoring relationship that lead to a positive impact in the post-school outcomes for the young people.

- **Initial attainment & positive destinations impact evidenced despite challenges**
Mentored young people in Aberdeen City are showing greater attainment and positive destination outcomes than the wider ACC care-experienced cohort. Given the challenges noted the numbers are smaller. However we have also included the MCR national data and from Aberdeen’s LA comparator group in which MCR operates. We hope that gives the confidence of the impact which is possible.
 - **83.3%** of mentored S5 young people (those who have had 10 meetings or more with a volunteer mentor) have achieved their National 4 Literacy & Numeracy units compared to **40.5%** of the ACC CE cohort. The MCR national impact is **74.1%** and **93.1%** in the LA comparator group.
 - **66%** of mentored S5 young people achieved 3+ qualifications at National 5+ compared to **16.2%** of the care experienced cohort. The MCR national impact is **62.3%** and **57.3%** in the LA comparator group.
 - **57.1%** of mentored CE young people in Aberdeen City went on to a more sustained MCR positive destination of Further Education, Higher Education or Employment compared to **46.9%** of the ACC care experienced cohort. For the LA comparator group, **88.9%** achieved one of those destinations. The MCR national impact is **79.8%**. As the MCR programme embeds we expect Aberdeen to see significant improvement.
 - Similarly, **61.5%** of mentored young people stayed on the school roll after the January of S5 compared to **46.9%** of the ACC CE cohort. The MCR national impact is **74.8%** and **67.4%** in the LA comparator group.
- **Numbers of Young People being supported:**
Data shows a **76%** YoY increase this academic year in young people being mentored and over **2,000** individual mentoring meetings recorded. The meetings are double those recorded last year and MCR would again forecast these to double in the next academic year. 1:1 relationship based contact on a carefully matched pairing is now a proven foundation for education outcomes, job choices and life chances. The expected impact is starting to be reflected in the education stats and qualitative assessments.

Challenges being overcome

- **ACC and MCR Contract - changes to the Target group**
As per the contractual agreement, MCR Pathways was established to support care experienced or other Young People who would benefit from participating in the Programme. We now understand MCR Pathways was included as a partner in the delivery of the LOIP, Project aim 6.1: Increase the number of care experienced young people accessing a positive and sustained destination by 25% by 2022. We assume that any evaluation is based on the programme, agreement and the MCR impact as a whole.
- **Recruitment & retention of Pathways Coordinators :**
There have been gaps in recruiting school staff which has restricted the programme. In 2021/22, the

days MCR was able to operate with school staff in post was just **57.2%**. This has improved now and if we analyse the days worked across the 6 schools from Feb 22 to May this year it is **80.4%**. We are very committed to our partnership and to continue to invest in the city and add additional resources to support more young people with what we know is transformational. The end of school year uncertainty is understandably limiting both ACC and related MCR staff to match new young people with a mentor and progress to the full extent possible.

- **Coordinating partners to the City's Corporate Parent Plans :**

To inform next steps, we understand that evaluation of the Edge of Care Pilots will be presented to the Education and Children's Services Committee, whilst the draft **Corporate Parenting Action Plan for 23-26** indicates that an evaluation on the impact of Pathways Associates on care experienced young people's attainment, achievement and positive destinations is due by **2024**. ACC and MCR have concerns that 4 of the Pathways Coordinators employed by ACC currently have fixed term contracts which now expire in September. We hope that a continuation of the programme would allow for staff to be made permanent and continuity for the young people as well as integration within other ACC plans.

- **Funding needed per school:**

The service from MCR was initially commissioned, but for the last 12 months has effectively been reduced to a utilisation of ACC staff who were recruited for each school and the Scottish Government funding. There is no financial relationship between ACC and MCR now. The cost per school has been reduced in the last year which could in theory allow ACC to implement the MCR model in all 11 academies.

Next 2 Years of Impact

On the basis that ACC wants to build on the impact from the 244 young people currently supported, we would expect to unlock the benefits for all participants in relationship based practice at scale.

- **Maturing MCR Model:**

At maturity of the MCR model, MCR Pathways Coordinators will support up to **50** young people and their mentors. Furthermore, Pathways Coordinators also deliver group work sessions for up to **30** young people across S1 and S2 This is a significant volume with a proven and independently verified model, impact assessed in staying on rates, attainment and positive destinations. Additionally in wellbeing, self esteem and confidence. We expect over 400 of the city's most vulnerable young people could benefit from the partnership in a powerful combination of a 1:1 matched mentor and the support and continuity of a Pathways Coordinator.

The MCR matching algorithm has been developed over 15 years of practice and the basis of successful matches. The use of the charitable status is essential to engage and retain the numbers required to ensure each individual is emotionally engaged and invested throughout.

- **Benefits to mentors including council staff**

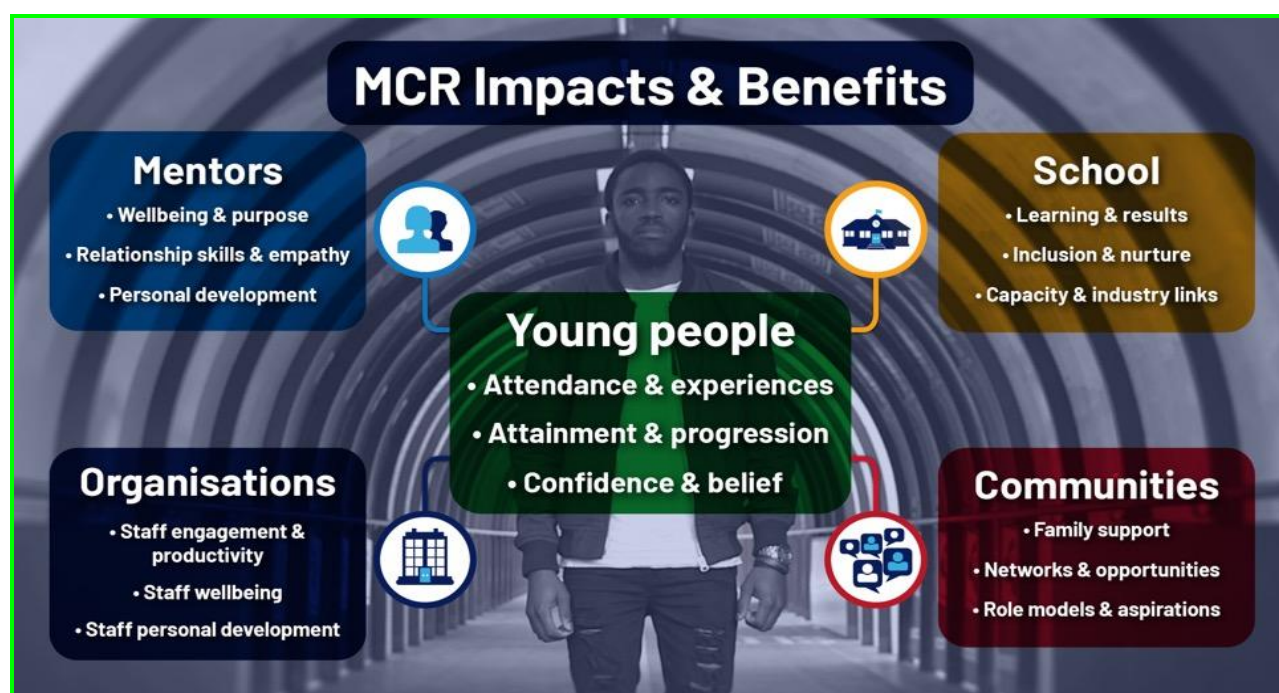
Mentoring gives a verified overwhelming sense of purpose and satisfaction in playing a part in helping young people identify and fulfil their goals and potential. Mentors and mentees develop a unique relationship, built on trust. Mentoring develops a diverse and broad range of leadership skills (coaching, active listening, empathy, motivation, goal setting, resilience) that enhance both professional relationships and effectiveness at work. Research also indicates that mentoring has a significant positive impact on employee engagement and wellbeing, both increasing corporate

priorities. There is now a University Course **Leadership through MCR Mentoring** and other accredited modules being launched for corporates in the new academic year.

We are conscious that ACC staff have yet to fully engage and benefit to the same extent as other council staff and corporate parents have. Our partnership could unlock many other benefits in community building and additional support of schools as well as opportunities for the young people.

- **Partnerships & Creating additional connections & opportunities:**

The MCR Model is both profound in its impact on the young people as it is proving to be on mentors, their employers, schools and local communities. The relationships and connections being made create a ripple effect and directly benefits all participants and stakeholders. Locally, over 40 partnerships have been established with Aberdeen based companies and organisations as sources of mentors. As the programme matures, these relationships and connections will create a substantial amount of opportunities for the young people and additional employability links with schools.



Young People Engaged

As the ACC staff become more established in school, the numbers of young people increase and with the relationships formed comes the transformational impact. The numbers of young people engaged in the MCR programme has grown significantly despite the challenges. Understandably the current uncertainty with employment contracts ending has impacted the progress being made.

S1 - S6 in Mentoring Relationships & Group work Relationship Building Sessions				
School	March 21	March 22	March 23	May 23
Dyce Academy	22	24 ↑9%	47 ↑96%	45¹ (2 ML)
Harlaw Academy	21	19 ↓9%	42 ↑121%	42 (2 ML)
Hazlehead Academy	18	15 ↓17%	47 ↑213%	54² (4 ML)
Lochside Academy	33	49 ↑48%	56 ↑14%	56 (10 ML)
Northfield Academy	16	16 ↔0%	20 ↑25%	23 (1 ML)
St Machar Academy	28	27 ↓4%	31 ↑15%	33 (1 ML)
Totals	138	150 ↑9%	243 ↑62%	251 (20 ML)

ML - Mentored Leaver (is a young person with 10+ mentor meetings and is anticipated to leave school in Summer)

Mentor Relationships

Care Experienced S3 - S6 in Mentoring Relationships				
	March 21	March 22	March 23	May 23
Currently Looked After	9	8	9	10 (3 ML)
Previously Looked After	6	12	16	16 (4 ML)
Total	15	20	25	26 (7 ML)

¹ Including 1 pupil from S2, who did not participate in Groupwork and who is meeting weekly with a mentor since April 2023

² Including 1 pupil from S2, who did not participate in Groupwork and who is meeting weekly with a mentor since April 2023

S3 - S6 Care Experienced Participation May 23	
Weekly Meeting with a Mentor	26 (31%)
PC - Supported	2 (2%)
Warmed Up	1 (1%)
School Not Recommended	21 (25%)
Alternative Provision	10 (12%)
External Transfer	7 (8%)
Young Person Declined	3 (4%)
Not Eligible Due To Attendance	5 (6%)
Disengaged Young Person	7 (8%)
Parent/Carer Declined	1 (1%)

37% of care experienced young people across the 6 MCR schools in Aberdeen City are not yet in a position to participate. This is at the judgement of the school (School not recommended and alternative provision, 31 of 54 non-participating young people). As relationships develop, this will change. Lower attendance of care experienced young people post-COVID is also a national trend that both MCR Pathways and Aberdeen City Council will need to address to fulfil The Promise.

S3 - S6 Young People in Mentoring Relationships				
School	March 21	March 22	March 23	May 23
Dyce Academy	3	9	23	23
Harlaw Academy	7	12	28	28
Hazlehead Academy	10	10	34	36
Lochside Academy	10	27	35	36
Northfield Academy	6	7	11	14
St Machar Academy	10	17	13	14
Totals	46	82	144	149*

*12 S2s are currently matched and are a major matching cohort at this stage in the school year.

S1 & S2 Young People in Group work				
School	March 21	March 22	March 23	May 23
Dyce Academy	19	15	24	22
Harlaw Academy	14	7	14	14
Hazlehead Academy	8	5	13	18
Lochside Academy	23	22	21	20
Northfield Academy	12	9	9	9
St Machar Academy	18	10	18	19

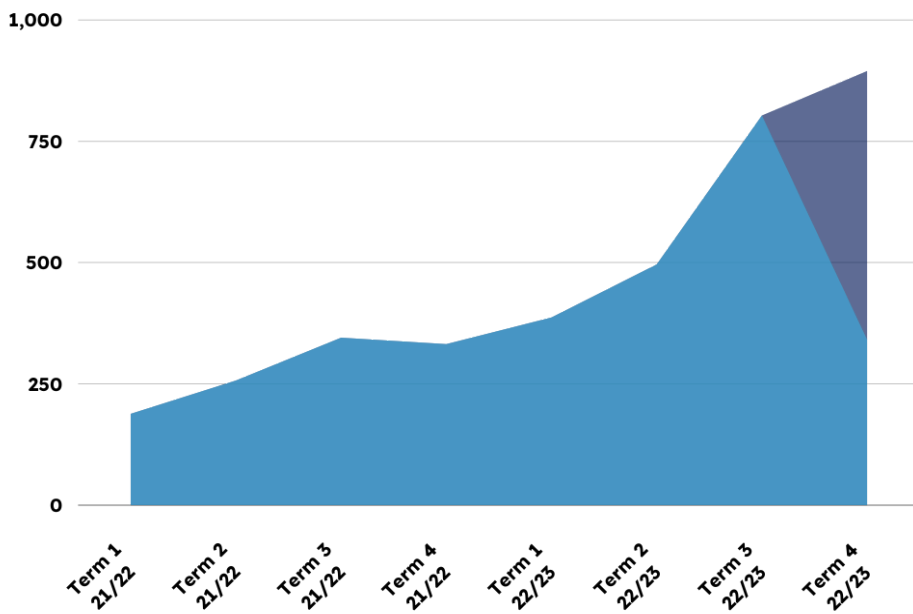
Totals	92	68	99	102
--------	----	----	----	-----

Mentoring & Relationship Building Sessions

Since August 2021, young people and their mentors have attended **3,149** mentoring sessions. In the school year 2021/2022, **1,122** meetings took place. So far in 2022/23, **2,027** have taken place with a further **554** scheduled for the rest of the school year. These are hugely significant numbers which are providing the essential relationships on which outcomes, wellbeing and confidence are based.

It is important to note that these are just the recorded sessions and that many more informal contacts with Pathways Coordinators and additional mentoring sessions occur as a matter of course. Some drop-off generally occurs in Term 4 due to study leave and school leavers leaving post-April.

S3 - S6 Mentoring Sessions



S1 - S2 Group Work Sessions

In **2021/22**, there were **129** relationship building group work sessions across the 6 MCR schools in Aberdeen City. These sessions averaged 3 participants meaning **472** hours of relationship building took place.

In **2022/23 so far**, there were **311** relationship building group work sessions across the 6 MCR schools in Aberdeen City. These sessions averaged 3 participants meaning **949** hours of relationship building took place. This is over **double** the previous year's tally.

Since August 2021
4570+ hours
 Of Mentoring & Relationship Building Sessions.

Partnerships & Mentor Profiles

MCR Pathways understands the importance of local relationships and partnerships and as such, has invested significantly in this area. Across Scotland, we are members in a number of chambers including locally, Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce. This membership allows us to grow our network, seek out new partners and stay well connected in the North-East.

We also work very closely with our local third sector interface, ACVO, tapping into opportunities such as volunteering fayres, networking events and the local ACVO monthly newsletter. As recent examples, MCR is scheduled to have a spotlight article feature published in the July Edition of the newsletter and have recently been invited to speak about the MCR programme on the local community station, shmuFM.

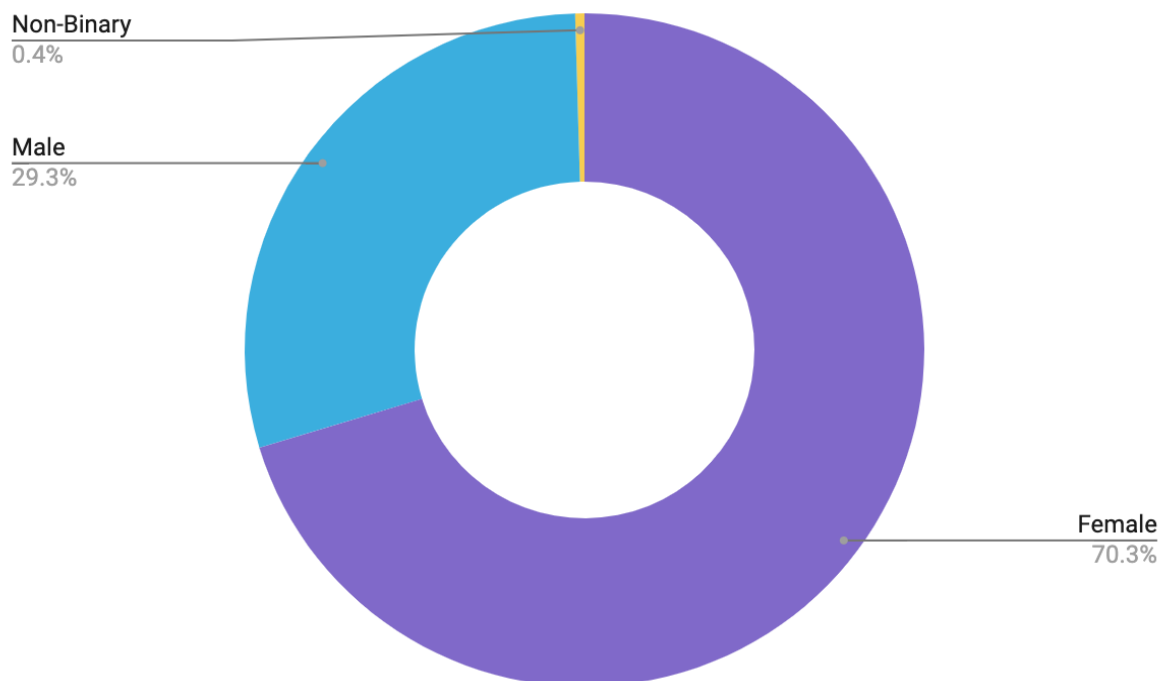
Across the city we have delivered engaging information sessions to the Local Authority, public sector organisations, local businesses, other third sector organisations and community groups, developing multiple partnerships and support networks.

A localised approach has allowed MCR Pathways to recruit mentors from a diversity of industry sectors, with 301 volunteer mentors fully recruited and trained in Aberdeen City since 2020. Local organisations are equally keen to play their part in positively impacting the lives of young people in the local community.

Recruiting committed volunteers who are asked to mentor in school for an hour a week for a year, ideally 2 years is a specialist and skilled process throughout. The MCR matching algorithm has been developed over 15 years of practice and the basis of successful matches. The use of the charitable status is essential to engage and retain the numbers required to ensure each individual is emotionally engaged and invested throughout.

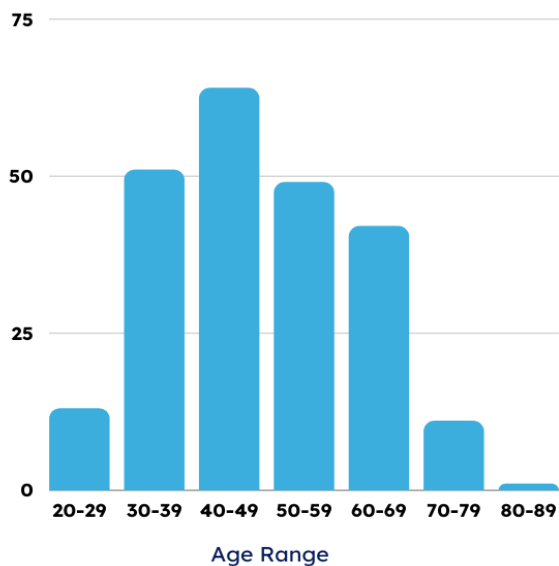
Mentors by Gender

The gender split in Aberdeen City is in line with other areas across the country.



Mentors By Age

The average age of a mentor in Aberdeen City is **48 years old**.



Mentors By Industry



Mentors By Corporate Parent Employer

Currently 43 (14.3%) Mentors who volunteer in Aberdeen City come from Corporate Parent employers. This includes Council staff; Cabinet Office; Civil Service; DYW; NHS; Police Scotland; Scottish Fire & Rescue; and Scottish Government. This number is lower than the average across the country and given the increasing national arrangements between MCR and many corporate parents we expect this to increase. We are also setting precedents with various Health Boards and Health & Social Care Partnerships.

Mentors and Partners creating opportunities for the young people

MCR Mentoring is now research proven as a potent professional development, providing mentors with highly sought after leadership and management skills. MCR's relationship focused mentoring builds effective active listening and communication skills with deep empathy and establishing trust as a precursor to influential and values based coaching. The experience is empowering and motivating employees across all industries, levels and roles. Alongside Personal development, seeing a young person grow through their weekly mentoring meeting generates a lasting sense of accomplishment, impacting on employee engagement, satisfaction and wellbeing.

Given the relationships based focus of MCR mentoring, mentors come from every walk of life and experience. From front line staff to CEO including a number of Council and corporate CEOs and key influencers. Relationships are built through a tried and tested process to maximise the match and subsequent impact. Both young people and prospective mentors can step through at a pace comfortable to them and are fully supported by MCR staff at every point.

Seonaid McIntosh, Chief Operating Officer and Donna Liddle, Vice President of Business Development at OPEX Group, a technology company based in Aberdeen have shared their thoughts:

Seonaid, the driving force behind OPEX's involvement, expressed her enthusiasm for the initiative. *"I am delighted to have introduced the programme to our employees. Mentoring offers a unique opportunity to share our experiences, knowledge, and guidance, empowering these young people to achieve their potential, regardless of their background or circumstances."*

Donna said, *"Engaging with my mentee from Hazlehead Academy, one of our local schools, has been an incredibly rewarding experience. Witnessing the power of one-on-one mentoring has been truly inspiring. Through the programme, young people are able to confide in a trusted adult, supporting them to overcome challenges, improve their education outcomes, and reach their full potential."*

As the programme matures mentors are encouraged to provide further opportunities for their young person. We are pleased to see this happening in Aberdeen and this exchange of both social capital and practical post school experiences has a significant impact. Given the impact of the pandemic the arrangement of Talent Tasters has been limited and focused on mentors creating opportunities. A number of talent tasters were organised last year locally, which included a Police Station, visit to the Subsea Expo, Army recruitment office, Grays School of Art, a Fashion show, NESCOL and CMS a lawyers office. As noted with relationships established there is a variety of Talent Taster options which we will build on.

MCR Pathways mentor Colin Bell kindly arranged a bespoke opportunity for pupils from Harlaw Academy, Hazlehead Academy and Lochside Academy to visit Gray's School of Art at Robert Gordons University. Colin also provided 5 tickets to the Student Fashion Show at Aberdeen Art Gallery where young people had the privilege of front row seats to see the amazing creations from the students of the art school. Pupils were then invited to browse through the students' work books and sketches before having the opportunity to

chat with the students about their work and their time at Grays.

These opportunities allow our young people to explore job roles and industries they might otherwise never have encountered, encouraging them to pursue and achieve their goals. They also shine a light on the different routes to careers, helping young people understand how to get there.

Impact - Young Person Feedback

Having a mentor impact

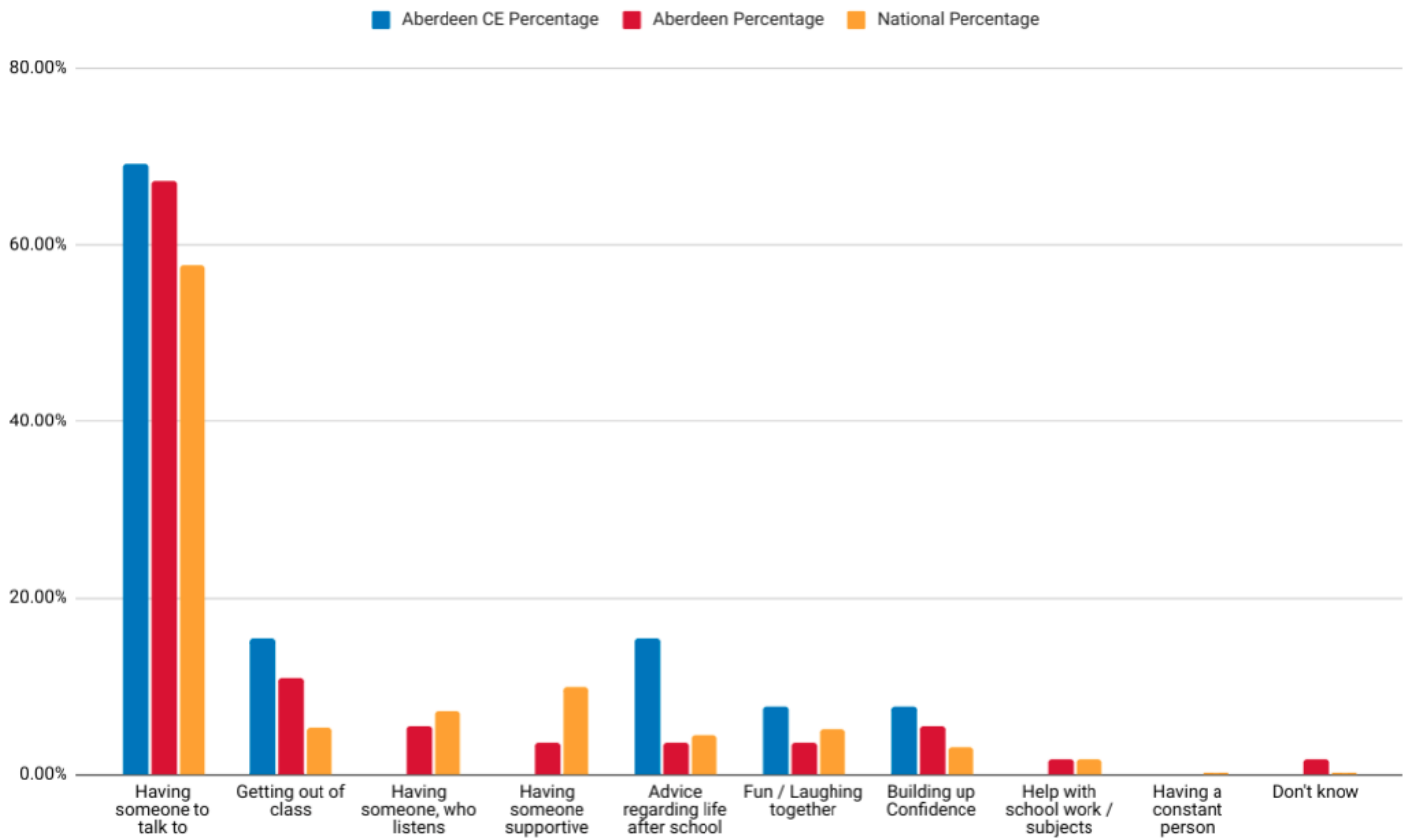
Question - Having a mentor	Aberdeen Care Experienced (CE) Agree / Strongly Agree	Aberdeen Agree / Strongly Agree	National Agree / Strongly Agree	Difference Aberdeen to National
Has improved my confidence.	76.92%	81.82%	83.52%	-1.70%
Has supported me to identify goals.	100.00%	94.55%	87.49%	7.06%
Has helped me to understand my individual talents & strengths.	76.92%	76.36%	84.19%	-7.83%
Has helped me believe in myself more.	92.31%	80.00%	85.55%	-5.55%
Has helped me feel good about myself.	84.62%	85.45%	85.88%	-0.43%
Has improved my relationships with other young people.	69.23%	54.55%	50.89%	3.66%
Has improved my relationships with family.	38.46%	38.18%	40.57%	-2.39%
Has helped me understand who I am and what my needs are.	92.31%	74.55%	76.25%	-1.70%
Has helped me become more motivated within school.	76.92%	74.55%	74.05%	0.50%
Has improved my attendance at school.	53.85%	43.64%	47.84%	-4.21%
Has helped me decide to stay on in school.	38.46%	38.18%	49.28%	-11.10%

The mentor relationship itself

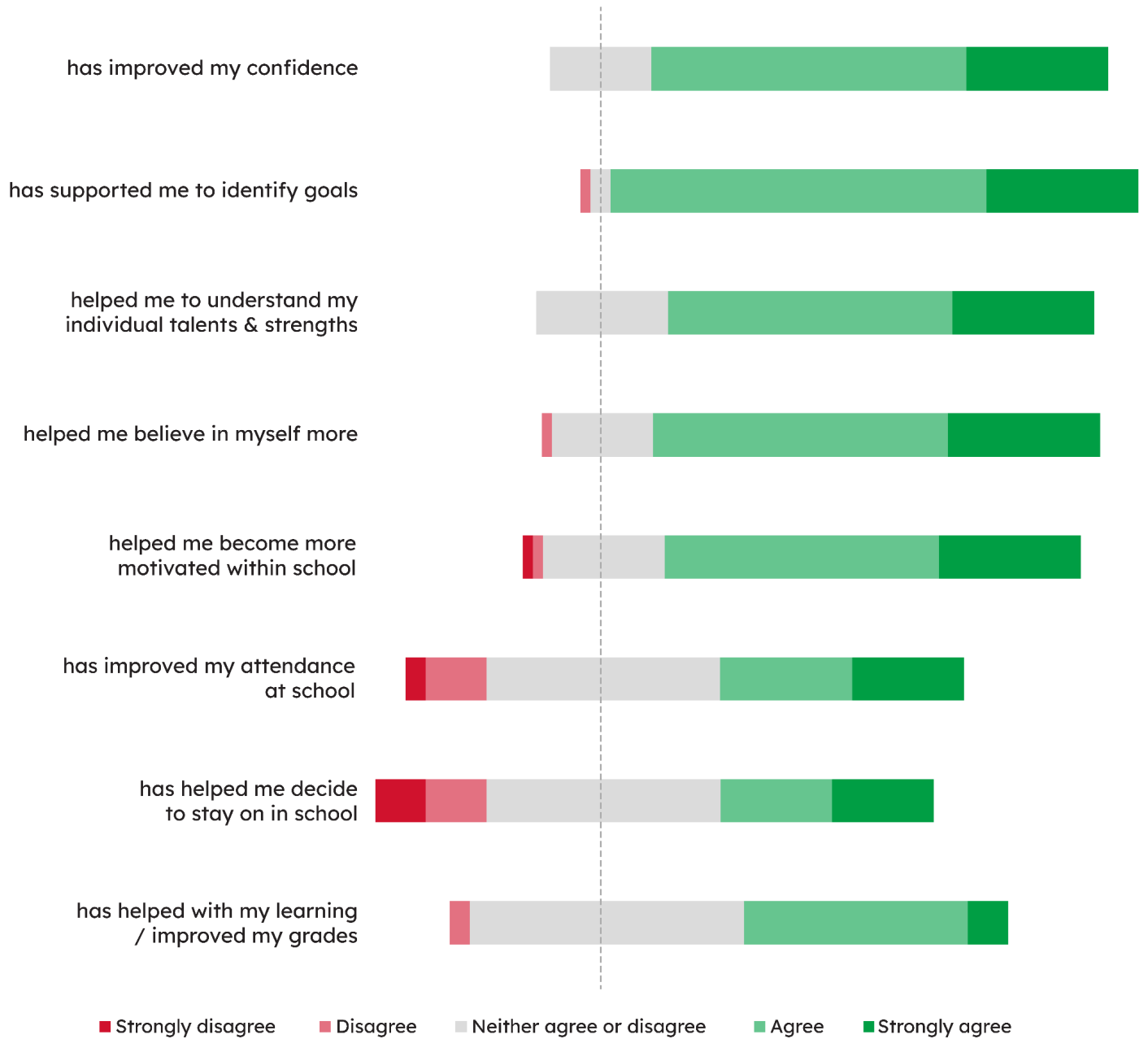
Question - How you feel about your mentor relationship	Aberdeen Care Experienced (CE) Agree / Strongly Agree	Aberdeen Agree / Strongly Agree	National Agree / Strongly Agree	Difference Aberdeen to National
Over time, we have built up a lot of trust.	100.00%	98.18%	93.58%	4.61%
They understand me.	100.00%	90.91%	94.34%	-3.43%
Still not made a connection.	0.00%	5.45%	5.33%	0.13%
We can talk about anything.	84.62%	87.27%	86.39%	0.88%
They encourage me to be the best version of myself.	92.31%	85.45%	91.38%	-5.92%
We laugh a lot together.	92.31%	89.09%	89.94%	-0.85%
Up and down.	15.38%	12.73%	8.37%	4.36%
We discuss how I can achieve my goals.	84.62%	87.27%	90.96%	-3.68%
My mentor is a good role model.	84.62%	92.73%	95.60%	-2.88%
At first, it was a bit awkward, but we get on well now.	61.54%	70.91%	63.06%	7.85%

Question - How much influence did your Pathways Coordinator & the MCR programme	Aberdeen Care Experienced (CE) Agree / Strongly Agree	Aberdeen Agree / Strongly Agree	National Agree / Strongly Agree	Difference Aberdeen to National
have on your engagement with school? (10 = strong influence; 1 = very little influence)	7.77	7.82	8.33	-0.51

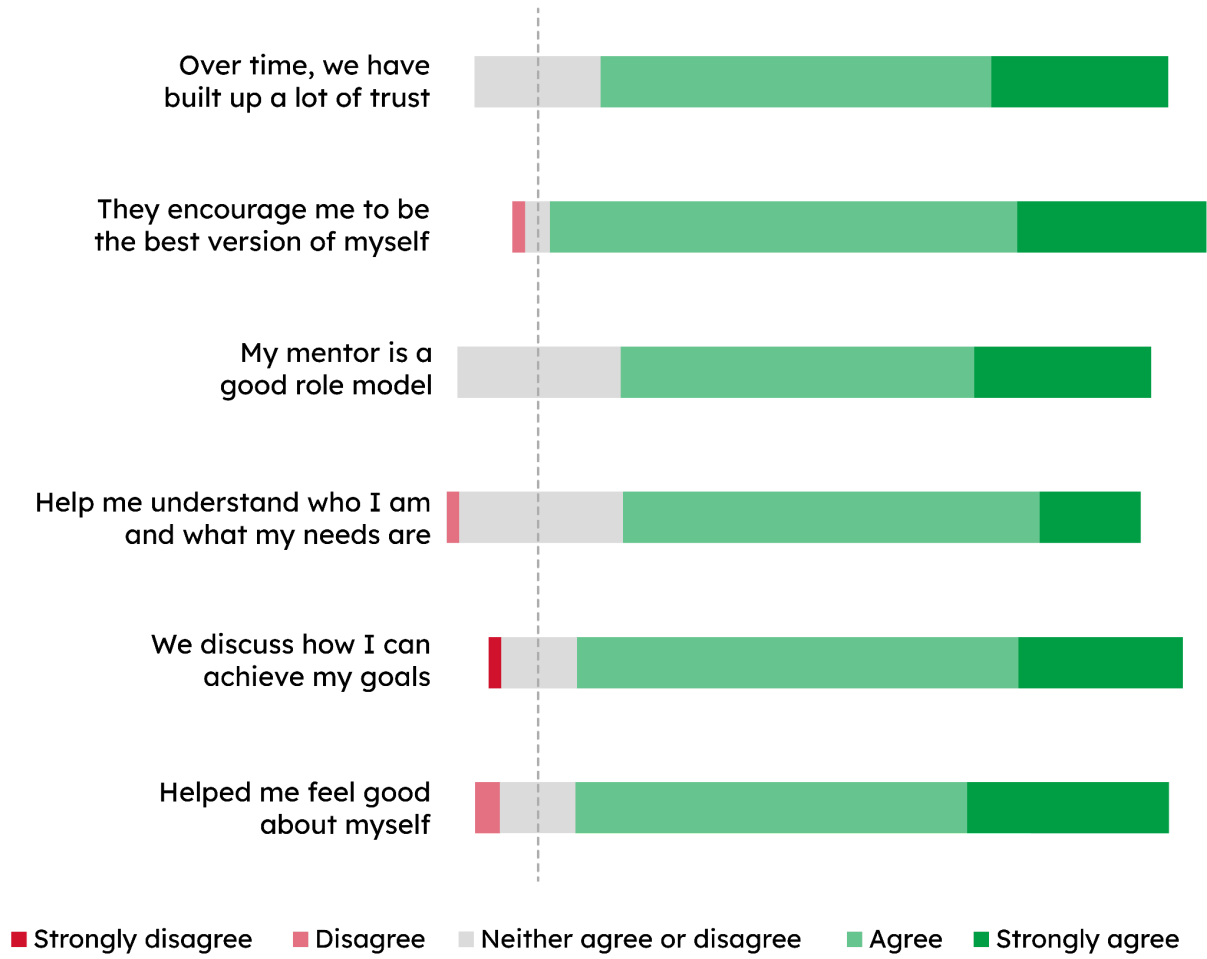
What is the best thing about having a mentor?



My mentor...



What best describes your relationship with your mentor?



Impact - Education & Education Outcomes

We have analysed the last 2 academic years (2020/2021 and 2021/22). These have been combined in the first table. We have calculated impact in the comparator group of local authorities in which Aberdeen sits but focused on those that adopted the MCR programme at a similar time to Aberdeen City (including a COVID start). This group includes Shetland, Aberdeenshire, Edinburgh and Perth & Kinross.

Mentored young people have had 10+ meetings with a volunteer mentor.

Attainment 2020 - 2022						
Key Performance Indicators	MCR Mentored ACC Care Experienced Young People	ACC Care Experienced Young People (All)	MCR Mentored Comparator LA Care Experienced Young People	MCR Mentored Care Experienced National Data	Comparator LA Care Experienced Young People (All)	National Care Experienced Young People (All)
Literacy & Numeracy Nat 4	83.3% (5/6)	40.5% (15/37)	93.1% (27/29)	74.12% (126/170)	75.1% (171/227)	66.8% (1584/2371)
5+ qualifications at Nat 4+	66.7% (4/6)	16.2% (6/37)	84.7% (50/59)	84.71% (144/170)	59% (137/227)	58.2% (1379/2371)
1+ qualifications at Level 5+	66.7% (4/6)	16.2% (6/37)	79.7% (47/59)	83.53% (142/170)	62% (141/227)	61.3% (1454/2371)
3+ qualifications at Level 5+	66.7% (4/6)	16.2% (6/37)	57.3% (34/59)	62.35% (106/170)	41% (94/227)	42.8% (1015/2371)

MCR Positive Destinations Definition 2020 - 2022 (SDS Confirmed)						
Further Education, Higher Education & Employment	57.1% (4/7)	46.9% (23/49)	88.9% (72/81)	79.82% (174/218)	71.6% (207/289)	69.8% (2181/3124)

Staying on Rates 2020 - 2022						
On school roll after January of S5	61.5% (8/13)	53.7% (29/54)	67.4% (60/89)	74.79% (175/234)	48.0% (145/302)	

We hope the numbers in the MCR national stats and in the comparator group give the confidence of the impact which is possible when the staff are in place and supported and the MCR programme fully matured.

Data for the last academic year

Attainment 2021/22						
Key Performance Indicators	MCR Mentored ACC Care Experienced Young People	ACC Care Experienced Young People (All)	MCR Mentored Comparator LA Care Experienced Young People	MCR Mentored Care Experienced National Data	Comparator LA Care Experienced Young People (All)	National Care Experienced Young People (All)
Literacy & Numeracy Nat 4	80% (4/5)	53% (8/15)	84.2% (16/19)	87.4% (160/183)	75.9% (63/83)	66.3% (561/846)
5+ qualifications at Nat 4+	60% (3/5)	N/A* / 11 (N/A)	83.3% (15/18)	86.3% (160/183)	62.3% (52/83)	62.4% (492/789)
1+ qualifications at Level 5+	60% (3/5)	N/A* / 11 (N/A)	77.8% (14/18)	87.4% (160/183)	65.1% (54/83)	63.8% (503/789)
3+ qualifications at Level 5+	60% (3/5)	N/A* / 11 (N/A)	55.6% (10/18)	67.8% (124/183)	45.8% (38/83)	43.5% (343/789)

*Sample size too small to report on actual number - suppressed

Positive Destinations 2021/22 - MCR definition & Scottish Govt						
Further Education, Higher Education & Employment	50% (2/4)	64.71% (11/17)	89.6% (43/48)	81.5% (212/260)	77.3% (99/128)	70.9% (741/1045)
Scottish Government	75% (3/4)	70.5% (12/17)	95.8% (46/48)	93.8% (244/260)	82.8% (106/128)	87.9% (919/1045)

Staying On Rates 2021/22						
On school roll after January of S5	50% (3/6)	55% (11/20)	60.9% 28/46%	73.3% (151/206)	42.5% (51/120)	85.96% (918/1068)

Again give the strength of the MCR national stats and in the comparator group we hope that gives the confidence of the impact which is possible. The foundations to this are the strength and depth of relationships and in particular when the Pathways Coordinators are in place and supported.

Impact - Recent Views From Our Schools

Alongside the positive impact on attendance, engagement and achievement, school colleagues report a positive impact on their capacity, since young people benefit from the support of two additional trusted adults (Mentor and Pathways Coordinator). Mentoring also increases general awareness and wider understanding of the challenges that young people might be experiencing.

*Names of young people have been anonymised to protect their privacy in the case that this becomes a public document.

Lochside Academy

'The support and guidance that has been given to Alex* has been amazing. Alex is very proud to have a mentor from Gray's school of art, this has increased his confidence in his abilities and the routes available to him. His mentor's advice, support and kindness has had a significant impact and allowed Reese to flourish. No words can describe how significant your support is for our young people.'

Samantha Batsford
Teacher at Lochside Academy

'I feel this is an amazing programme. The offer of group work and taking a strengths-based approach is so valuable, as well as the introduction of a Mentor. This is a great example of why relationships are key - how important it is for children to feel valued, to feel as though they can relate to someone, and to have that person to have time with, without the pressure of the agenda that often comes within professional relationships. Children need a champion and I think Mentors can be this person.'

Two pupils, known to my service, have accessed MCR Pathways and their relationship with the Pathways Coordinator has been one of trust, respect and inclusion. The relationships with their mentors have offered positive role modelling, hope and connections. No matter their academic progress, success and achievement is promoted by MCR Pathways. Both children have been excited to see their Mentor, adding to their motivation and sense of inclusion. For one pupil in particular, I have observed his confidence grow as well as his ability to look forward and plan for a positive destination.'

Caroline McEwan
Social Worker

'We have a number of pupils who are not engaging with school very well, yet they turn up to school on the days their mentor is due to come in and see them. Some of our mentors have created a pathway to help sow the seeds of reengagement. They have been seen as a highlight to some of our young people in what could otherwise be perceived as a really negative period of time in their schooling.

Our Pathways coordinator has also managed to stay connected with young people and their families when there has been a lack of engagement with a number of professionals. She has been seen as unbiased, positive support that is 100% looking towards positive outcomes for the young people she has been working with. She has assisted in pupil reengagement and at times has been the only point of contact for some of our pupils and families. Her ability to develop relationships with some of our young people have given us more insight to the challenges and barriers they are facing.'

Trisha Walker
Family Liaison Officer at Lochside Academy

'I think the programme has had a huge impact with Cora*. Yourself and her mentor have really supported her and her Grandma. There has been a lot going on in Cora's life but she always knew she had your support. You worked with Grandma and myself to get her into school, take her to College interviews, and help build up that much needed confidence. Cora showed me her CV she wrote with her mentor also - It's brilliant and will really help her going forward. It is very clear she has a great relationship with her mentor, and it was great to see her so genuinely happy to meet her just before she gave birth. Cora finished S4 with 5 qualifications - N4 English, N3 Maths, N4 History, N4 Geography and N4 Modern Studies. You have played a huge part in her achieving this as you have worked tirelessly to get her into school, to the Hub, and letting me work with her from her home. I am very grateful for that help and support. I don't think we would have achieved this if it was not for your help.'

Gemma Smith
Teacher Operations - Integrated Children's And Family SVS

'I have been working with Derek* over the past 3.5 years. During this time I have seen him blossom from an angry, aggressive and confrontational young boy into a caring , compassionate and funny young person. Encounters with Derek in earlier days often resulted in staff being greeted with angry outbursts, damage to property and expletives being directed towards them at the top of his voice.

Recently during a breaktime I saw a gentleman, with a dog walking through the school grounds with a pupil. They were deep in an animated conversation and were also taking time out to play with the dog. They looked as though they were related or had known each other for years. Only when I got closer did I realise it was Derek and his mentor. I had a little chat with both and plenty of cuddles from the dog. This to me was the real turning point for Derek. The mentor was seeing Derek for the person he is and was taking the time to listen and advise.

The Derek I now see (yes, like us all he can still have his moments lol), however, he engages in chat, does not receive referrals on behaviour and is never flagged up to me regarding any outbursts. He is sustaining meaningful relationships and now has a girlfriend. In addition he has now got career aspirations and has been accepted on to a college construction course.

Thank you to all involved in this programme as it has given not only this pupil but others also a new lease of life and a second chance that they so very, very deserve.'

Joanne Campbell

Depute Head Teacher / Year 4 Head at Lochside Academy

'MCR Pathways and particularly Gail, has had such a positive impact on our school community. Gail has built amazing relationships with both staff and pupils alike and has become a safe, nurturing place for some of our most vulnerable pupils. Her room is a place where pupils can go for lunch and relax if they are feeling overwhelmed. She has a real knack for matching our young people with positive mentors and I have given details of some of these positive relationships below. She really has had such a positive impact on Hazlehead Academy.

Kieran* - built an engine with his mentor. Now building a robot. Project manager so project plan and strategic planning. Blair struggled with what to do after school, so this mentor has given him lots to think about.

Sarah* - Young female mentor on purpose as Sarah struggles to build relationships. Sarah has low self-esteem, and her mentor has started to build up her confidence. She no longer skives class and comes to see Gail if she is overwhelmed. Mentor helped write the college application for - accepted.

Claire* - Claire has a passion to travel. Mentor sets up travel projects for teachers, so this relationship is supporting Claire with future choices.

Jenna* - attendance poor but since meeting mentor her attendance has improved, and she is coming to school to meet her mentor. Focusing on art and using those skills.

Kirsteen* - Loves art and being creative. Mentor fosters this in her. Kirsteen thrives on 121 and mentor is helping build her confidence .

David* - Wants nurture and responds well to adult conversation. Never misses a session. She helped him do his college application and he was delighted that she took extra time to complete it. Accepted to college. Brings out the best in him.

Beth* - Coat of arms, identifying strengths.

Fraser* - oldest mentor in the bunch. Takes in newspaper cuttings. Fraser was very volatile but responded SO well to mentor and always turned up, even if not attending school that day. Positive safe space to support and nurture Fraser.

Group Work sessions for younger pupils: concentrate on nurture and building relationships. Focus on health and wellbeing, resilience and team building activities. Focus on skills for the future, including for work and social skills. A safe space.'

Victoria Fleming
Principal Teacher of Guidance

'In my short time in this role, the MCR programme has been an essential resource for the most vulnerable children in my House group. The programme has helped to build a bridge to help pupils return to education when they have not been engaging. It has been crucial in allowing pupils with multiple aces to build a positive relationship with a trusted adult who can support them. It has allowed pupils who are struggling in school to build confidence and resilience. This has led to tangible improvements in attendance and attainment which we can evidence through our tracking and monitoring system, including helping pupils with the transition to positive destinations after school. For pupils who are struggling to access support for mental health conditions related to their aces, it has been a comfort and a support. A significant number of the pupils who have benefitted from MCR also have additional learning needs, and MCR helps them to feel a positive connection to school and to begin to feel more included when they have been struggling with various challenges.'

The relationships that each of these pupils have built with Gail and their Mentor are central to everything - anything which unexpectedly took these relationships away from these pupils, many of whom already have attachment conditions due to important figures in their life withdrawing support or breaking their trust, would be catastrophic for their wellbeing and education.'

Paul Docherty
Guidance Teacher

Dyce Academy

'Since MCR came to Dyce Academy we have seen positive outcomes for all pupils that have been involved with the school PCs for 1:1 and groupwork and we are now reaping the rewards of the mentor programme. Although Dyce is not a traditional MCR school in that we have low numbers of Care Experienced pupils we have been able to make full use of the resource to support a number of pupils in both Categories. This has been evident since our return to school post COVID as our PC was able to assist with mental wellbeing input and support the pupils coming back to school following home learning.'

Our PCs work in close partnership with PTGs, PEF PT, SfL and SLT as well as our feeder primary schools to identify pupils who would benefit from MCR input. The mentor programme has been hugely positive and has helped our young people with their confidence, resilience and with future planning. Mentors have organised trips to potential employers and beyond. For Dyce Academy, MCR is an integral part of our support packages for our young people and the PC in school is well known and trusted amongst pupils, staff and mentors. Losing MCR at Dyce Academy would leave a large gap in the support provision we are able to provide for our young people.'

Lynda Strachan
Depute Head Teacher

'I have been working with MCR on an occasional basis over the years, however, since June 2022, this working relationship has become more robust and regular. The MCR mentors and the pupil mentees are meeting in the school library; a calm and relaxed area where both can sit, relax and spend time communicating. As a school librarian I have known a high proportion of the pupils involved in the scheme for a number of years. I am able to see first-hand the positive relationships built between mentor and mentee and the improvement in the young people's positive behaviour and outlook on life.'

Karen Shaw
Librarian

Impact - Views From Our Young People & Mentors

Dyce Academy:

"Mentoring has made a big difference in my life and has given me ideas for after school. It has opened my eyes to all the options out there for me. I've gotten a huge confidence boost and I don't feel so worried about leaving school."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"My mentor is making me feel more confident and less worried about college and work. They are easy to speak to and make me feel more confident in myself."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"I'm getting on really well with my mentor and she arranged for me to go to the police to see what that job entails and is also trying to get some time with a chef to see what happens in that job."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"I find mentoring helpful. I am learning more about what career opportunities there are for me. My mentor has helped me work on my CV and college applications."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"Speaking with my mentor has helped me decide to try and stay in school longer. He has also increased my confidence."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

"I feel that she has helped with my confidence and in coping with school life. She is easy to talk to and listens and encourages me. I can talk to her about anything."

Young Person, Dyce Academy

Harlaw Academy:

"MCR is supportive, happy and I really like it because I get to talk with people and I can be myself and I get support."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"MCR is a very supportive and safe programme and they're good at matching people with their mentors."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"I think group work is fun. I made friends in group work."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"MCR is a really great programme as it matches young people to great mentors and it's a safe place to talk about people's feelings."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"MCR is an amazing programme because they match the mentors perfectly and it feels safe to talk to that person with a lot of interests together."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

"Really good programme, I don't have to go to class. I like a break away from school even if it's only one period. Can talk about pretty much anything and you won't be judged."

Young Person, Harlaw Academy

Hazelhead Academy:

“MCR Pathways is a really helpful thing to have in schools, they can help with a whole range of things from: mental health, building confidence, meeting new people, helping with applications for college, giving advice, having someone to speak to and so much more.

My coordinator Gail Officer is excellent and very supportive. I feel as though she just ‘gets it’ and understands me. I have autism so she helps me when I am struggling with school by just being there and having someone to go and talk to about how I am feeling and what is going on in school and life out with school.

My mentor is also amazing, I look forward to meeting with her every two weeks and we chat about a huge range of different things such as: hobbies, school, future plans, friends, family, pets, etc.

They both make school life easier and knowing they are there, helps me feel a bit more confident with what I face on a daily basis.”

Young Person, Hazelhead Academy

“I enjoy meeting with my mentor, he is really easy to talk to, he is very kind and thoughtful and I have enjoyed building the projects he has brought in for us to do.”

Young Person, Hazelhead Academy

Lochside Academy:

“I couldn’t smile the rest of the day after meeting my mentor for the first time, my face was sore with laughing so much with her.”

Young Person, Lochside Academy

Cross Section of Mentor Views:

"I moved cities in the summer but have been able to manage a virtual relationship with my mentee over the last school year. Having offered her an option of an in-person mentor, she was keen to stay paired with me. Even though virtual meetings can be awkward, we built a good relationship in person prior to me moving and it's been great to keep our relationship going.

When we first met, my mentee had a lot of anxiety about how behind she was in school. In a few sessions I was able to bring her around to the idea that adults in school are all trying to help her do her best. What previously would have been her ignoring poor grades and attendance turned into her developing relationships with teachers, asking for help, and seeking advice on material. She also used to be much more focused on what other people need and want, and through our time together I've tried to focus on her meeting her own needs. I see this in her confidence and the friendships she is holding on to."

Mentor, Harlaw Academy

"It's been such a joy getting to know my young person - being there for them, having a laugh, realising we all have shared interests and experiences regardless of our age or background. It's heartening and encouraging to realise and have it further emphasised that we can all find commonality with each other. It's improved my relationships with others, built my confidence and I hope the same has happened for my mentee. I feel a real sense of pride for her hard work, how she is applying herself and becoming more confident."

Mentor, Northfield Academy

"My young person has started a small business related to their hobby and he is now trying to change his diet and do some exercise."

Mentor, Dyce Academy

"My young person began to appear without hood up, and looking more cheerful! They would willingly describe how the week had gone, and could sometimes admit that staff, parents and peers were not the ones at fault. They got pleasure out of describing interests, e.g showing me a snao of a favourite game on phone, trying to teach me how to play chess and beating me at games. They appear to be looking forward to the future."

Mentor, Hazelhead Academy

“What is the best thing about being a mentor? Seeing the joy in her face when we meet and chat. Watching her confidence grow. Gaining her trust and listening to her talk freely. Feeling like you’ve done something good every meeting.”

Mentor, Dyce Academy

“The school lunch system changed in school, from a card to buy lunch to a pin number. A mentor had been chatting to his young person when he discovered that he wasn’t having lunch that day as he had no money, the same conversation was had the week after so the mentor let me know. The young person is entitled to free school meals but did not realise it as his grandparents had never mentioned it. All he needed to do was put in the pin number and he could get his lunch. He has not had school lunch for 2 weeks and if it hadn’t been picked up by his mentor it could have been longer.”

Pathways Coordinator, Lochside Academy

“I love the mentoring programme; it is one of the most meaningful things I have done. I think it makes a difference with my young person and there is a lot of good evidence to suggest this - attendance, eye contact, jokes and smiles, planning sessions, future scoping, etc.”

Mentor, Northfield Academy

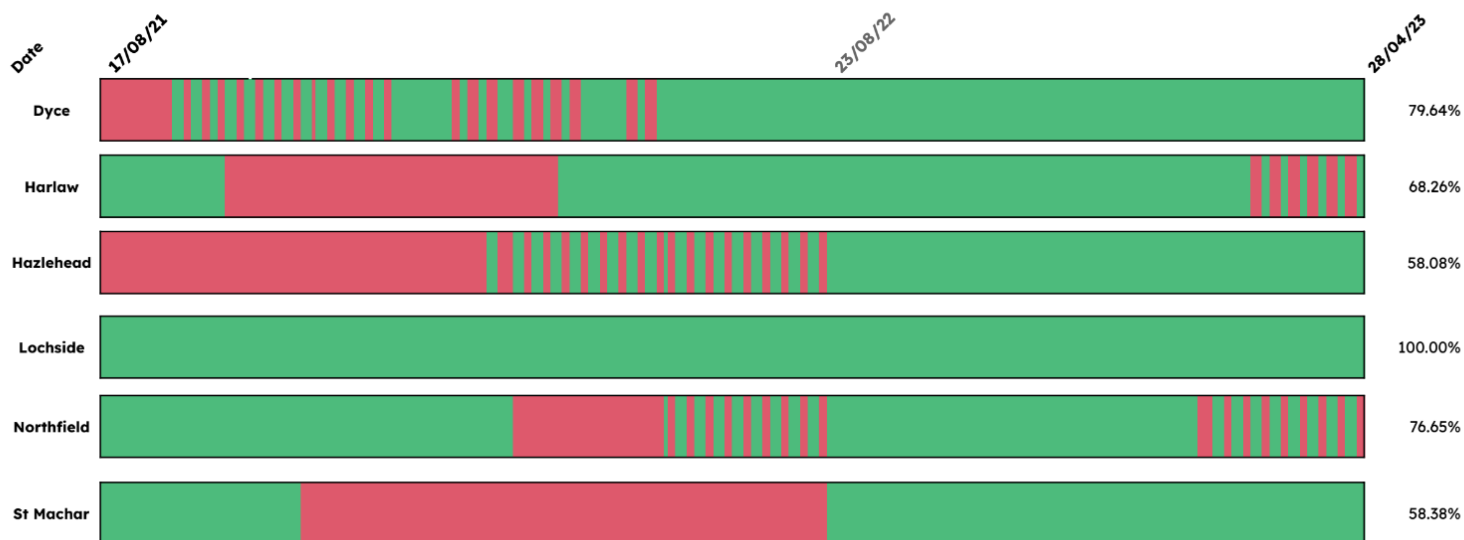
Staffing Overview 2021 - 2023

For the academic year between August 2021 - July 2022 there was significant PC instability in five of the six schools. In summary only **57.2%** of the academic year was covered by ACC employed PCs. At a school level this has a major impact on our ability to deliver the programme given the essential relationship building focus. This is best illustrated in the number of young people supported in Lochside with 100% PC coverage was 48, in comparison with St Machar who with 27.2% PC coverage was only 20. During this academic year of PC instability the number of young people involved in St Machar decreased by 8 young people. During the academic year of 2022-2023 when a PC was in place in St Machar the number of young people participating increased by 80% to 36.

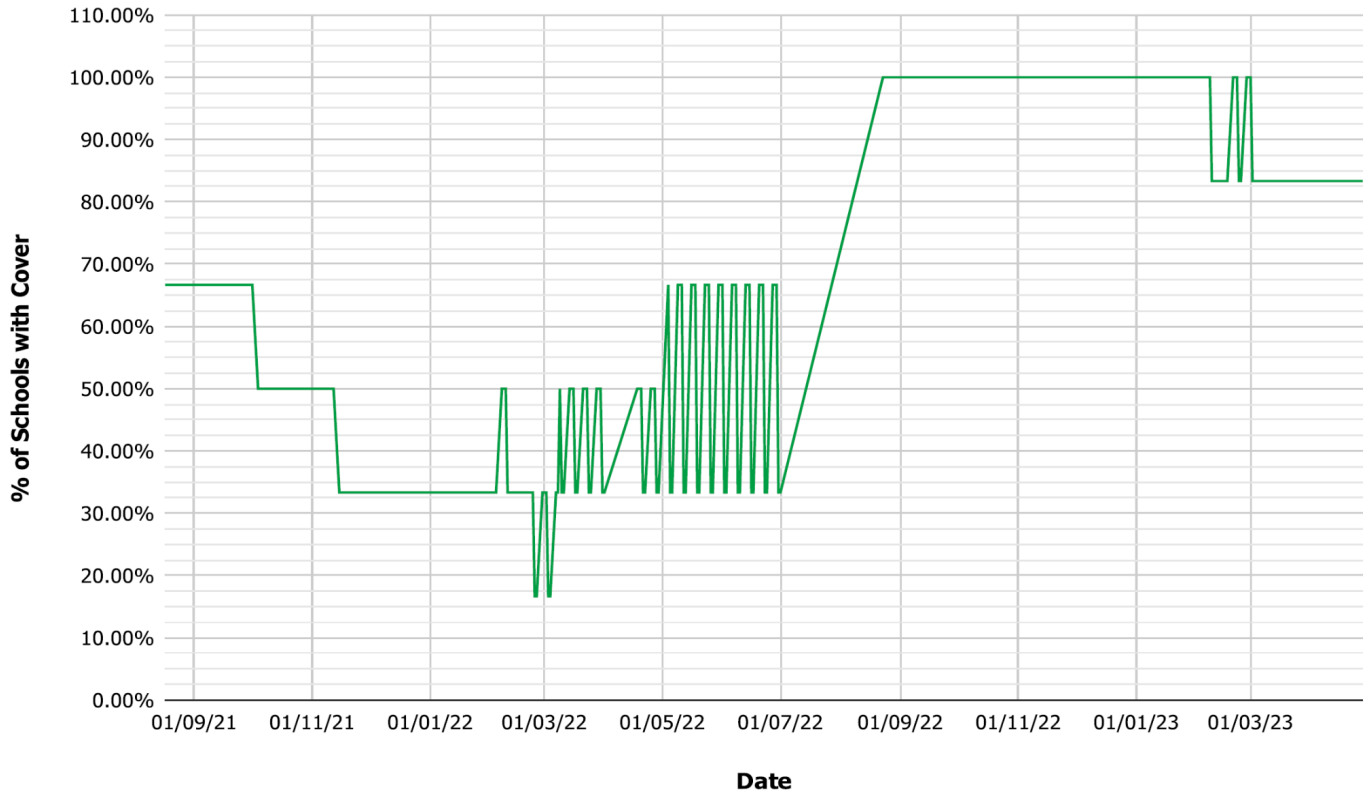
During the current academic year (from August 2022) there has been a significant improvement in PC coverage across the schools with **95.5%** of the academic days covered up until the end of April 2023. The impact of this has been more young people getting involved in the programme. In the period from March '22 to March '23, 95 young people joined the programme, an increase of 67% and until present that number is 129 more young people. The PC role is a vital part of our programme design, young people engage with the programme when they build a relationship with the PC and with the unreliability of the PC cover during 2021-2022 it is little surprise that the number of young people involved was lower.

Another important role within the programme is the role of Programme Manager (PM). From 2021-2023 there has only been a period of two months in which Aberdeen City Council has not had a dedicated PM, during this period it was supported by the Aberdeenshire PM to ensure consistency of cover. The PM role provides oversight, support and guidance to the PCs. During 2021-2022 the PM was stretched to support schools without a PC but thankfully during 2022-2023 they have been able to add greater value to the programme in their designed capacity.

PC Cover by School 2021 - 2023



Summary of PC Cover 2021-2023



MCR Pathways Evaluation – May 2023

Executive Summary

In total 278 young people have actively engaged with the MCR Pathways programme. As of May 2023, of those young people who are active or have previously been active with MCR Pathways, 12.23% are currently care experienced, 16.18% previously care experienced with the remaining 71.58% being identified as vulnerable. From April 2021 to May 2023 there have been 80 Group 1 pupils who are active and engaged with MCR Pathways. During those academic years, there were 217 care experienced pupils in MCR schools (100 currently care experienced and 117 previously care experienced) of which 37% were active and engaged with MCR Pathways. This balance is impacting on the extent to which the programme impacts on our aim to increase the number of care experienced young people achieving a sustained destination. However, the programme may be helping to reduce the likelihood of needs escalating. More consistent staffing (Pathways Coordinators and MCR Managers) may help shift the balance to include a higher proportion of those in Group 1. Staffing will need to be addressed should the programme continue.

The high number of volunteers (144 trained volunteer mentors and 66 progressing through training) committed to delivering one to one mentoring is exceptionally positive and helping us discharge our Corporate Parenting responsibilities. Our young people who choose to engage with the programme tell us that they value and benefit from time with their one to one mentor and qualitative evidence is strong.

Research continues to highlight the positive impact of mentoring programmes, but the pandemic and data quality issues have impacted our ability to gather strong quantitative evidence of impact against key measures. Many of the data sets shared by MCR, when matched with ACC data, have contained significant errors which has made data matching extremely challenging and labour intensive, the split of responsibilities across ACC and MCR may be contributing to this challenge. If the programme continues there is a need to address these data issues to enable more effective on-going monitoring.

The pandemic appears to have impacted on MCRs ability to deliver Talent Tasters. It is hard to quantify what the impact of these may have been if delivered. Given that the Talent Tasters are a key tenant of the programme, the lack of Talent Tasters may be contributing to the limited quantitative evidence base. This will need to be addressed should the programme continue.

The Aberdeen City contribution to the programme (£242,318) is being met from funding designed to help to address the gap in educational outcomes between those who experience care and their peers. Given the targeted and limited funding, and concerns around outcomes for those who are and have experienced care, any future MCR programme may be better funded from alternative means. Data suggests that Scottish Attainment Challenge – Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding should now be utilised to address identified vulnerabilities in the provision of appropriate learning pathways and provision of Family Support.

The Scottish Government has committed to funding programme costs of £168,000 for the next two years. Given the strong research base in support of mentoring, there is a need to determine the approach to be taken to mentoring across Aberdeen City in the longer term.

Background

In June 2018, the National Operational Guidance (2018-19) on Scottish Attainment Challenge – Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding was first published. The funding is distributed to local authorities as Corporate Parents, and utilised by the Community Planning Partnership to address the gap in educational outcomes between those who experience care and their peers. Plans to utilise the funding require to have a clear focus on delivering equity, improving educational outcomes and supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people who are care experienced, for those aged between 0-26. The Guidance references a range of organisations who might be considered for funding, including MCR Pathways, due to the strong research base available on the positive impact of mentoring.

MCR Pathways is a school-based mentoring programme supporting care experienced young people and other vulnerable groups who have faced additional challenges which may impact their educational experience and outcomes. MCR Pathways was highlighted in the guidance for having made a significant positive impact on the educational outcomes for care experienced young people in Glasgow.

Corporate Parenting is a key priority for Aberdeen City and, as a multi-agency partnership, we must evidence that we are fulfilling our Corporate Parent duties. The Aberdeen City Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2021 highlighted the importance of providing opportunities for employees across the partnership to fulfil those responsibilities to our care experienced young people. One of the ways this could be done was by recruiting volunteers from across the partnership to undertake a mentoring role in schools.

Improvement Aims - What were we trying to improve?

MCR Pathways was commissioned to support Aberdeen City in meeting its Corporate Parent duties and to provide support to care experienced and other identified young people.

The commissioning intentions, in line with the guidance for the Scottish Attainment Challenge – Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding, outlined that the programmes should be able to evidence improvements in the following:

- increase post-school positive destinations for care experienced young people
- increase staying on rates from S4 to S5 for care experience young people
- increase educational attainment in Literacy & Numeracy for care experienced young people
- increase the number of subject awards at National 4 and National 5 for care experienced young people

These educational outcomes also align with Stretch Outcome 6, in the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2016-26:

‘By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026’.

Following an early positive test of change at St Machar Academy which realised improvement in attendance, reduced exclusions and increased engagement during 2018/2019, the programme was further tested as a LOIP Improvement Project to determine if wider implementation of the programme would help increase the number of care experienced young people accessing a positive and sustained destination.

What was put in place?

Aberdeen City commissioned MCR Pathways to commence in February 2020 across six secondary schools in order to increase the number of care experienced young people accessing a positive and sustained destination:

- Dyce Academy
- Harlaw Academy
- Hazlehead Academy
- Lochside Academy
- Northfield Academy
- St Machar Academy

In 2018/19, there were 113 secondary pupils who had or continued to experience care. The 6 pilot schools supported 74% of all secondary care experienced young people in 2018/19. The proportion of care experienced young people across the 6 schools has remained fairly static (71% in 22/23).

School based MCR Pathways Co-ordinators have access to a subset of data held within the SEEMIS database to generate lists of pupils who could benefit from participating in the programme. Pathways Coordinators, alongside Guidance teaching staff in the pilot schools, identify and agree which young people will be referred to take part in the programme. Participation in the MCR Pathways programme is optional and is the choice of the young person and their parent or carer.

To be eligible for the MCR Pathways programme, the young people need to fall into the following referral group categories:

Table 1: MCR Pathways Referral Group Criteria as of May 2023

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked After At Home • Looked After Away from Home • Previously Looked After 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addiction Issues • Asylum Seeker or Refugee • At Risk of Homelessness • At Risk of Social Work Involvement • Bereavement/Family Member Serious Illness • Family member in prison • Informal Kinship Care • Lack of One Good or Consistent Adult • Prolonged Financial Hardship • Safeguarding Concern • Young Carer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional Circumstances

The referral group criteria for Group 2 has expanded over the 3 years since the programme's adoption in Aberdeen City due to emerging national policy, to reflect the increase in vulnerability evident as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the cost of living crisis. As a result, a wider cohort of young people with identified vulnerabilities can now access the programme. Additional categories are marked in blue. Expanding the reach of the programme makes easy comparison of the 'added value' of the programme more challenging given that the cohort has changed considerably.

MCR Pathways outlines its service delivery in the following areas:

Group Work

Pathways co-ordinators support transitioning from P7 to S1 and deliver a 28-week groupwork programme for S1 and S2 pupils across the academic year. Groupwork sessions are delivered to groups of 10-15 pupils per year group and focus on building confidence, engagement and improving Literacy and Numeracy levels. Each session is supported by a detailed lesson plan complete with clearly identified objectives and outcomes. Health and wellbeing principles and practice, independent thinking and

positive attitudes and actions are included in the syllabus. This allows the Pathways Coordinator to build trust and an individual relationship with each young person, preparing them for mentoring. Data on Group1 and Group 2/3 participation is included later in this report.

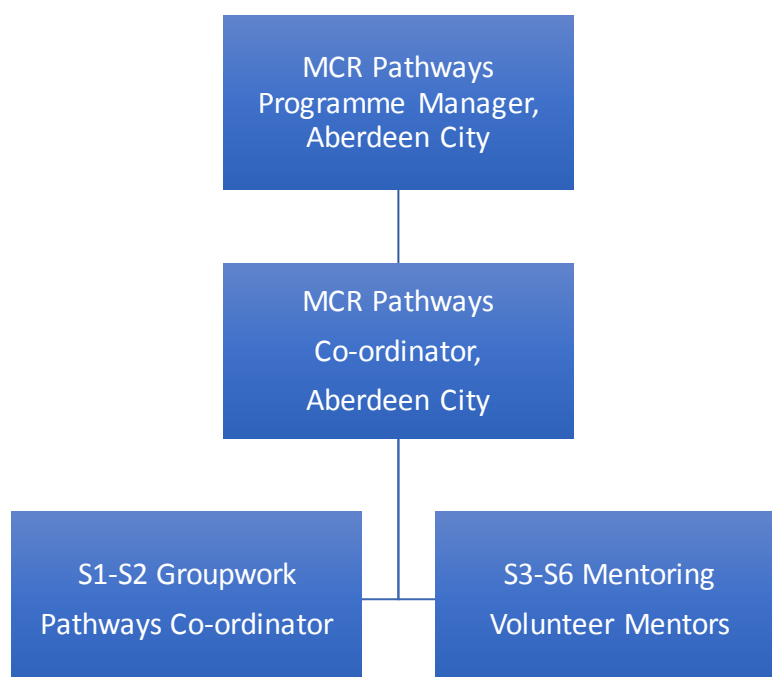
Talent Taster

Talent Tasters are a chance for young people to try out work, further and higher education and cultural experiences through manageable, bite-sized sessions. They are designed to engage and inspire S3-S6 pupils with hands-on learning opportunities. They provide more options for young people to find their talents and focus on the pathways to achieve their ambition. We have been unable to gather this data from MCR.

One to One Mentoring

Young persons are matched with their own mentor from S3 stage onwards. Pupils meet with their mentor once a week for 50 minutes and receive guidance and support. Mentors build a relationship, helping their young person to develop confidence and self-esteem. Data on Group1 and Group 2/3 participation is included later in this report.

Figure 1: MCR Pathways Structure for Aberdeen City



MCR Pathways Co-ordinators are employed by ACC. Their day-to-day line management is through MCR Pathways (Programme Manager) who support the progression of the programme in the schools. HR processes including CR&D, absence management and annual leave are supported by ACC through the Virtual School Head Teacher. 4 of the Pathways Coordinators were also provided with weekly supervision to support wellbeing for an extended period of time.

Volunteer mentors undertake a comprehensive training and careful selection process to ensure the best match with young people and mentoring relationship success. Ongoing training and support with the respective school Pathways Co-ordinator is also delivered throughout the academic year to volunteer mentors. The programme operates a planned transference model to the Local Authority to ensure sustainability of pupil support. The MCR programme aims to transfer skills, networks and knowledge to the Council in order that it becomes self-sufficient within 5 years of running the programme. Once staff and resources are transferred, MCR will be available at a National level to provide support and programme development where required. MCR provides a full documentation suite including Programme Overview, Programme Manuals, Functional Operating Manuals and impact reports.

What metrics (outputs, indicators and outcomes) were used to measure success?

Outputs

From April 2021, monthly pupil data extracts were requested from MCR Pathways to enable more regular tracking and monitoring of pupil engagement with the programme in addition to the annual report from MCR Pathways. This included school attendance, temporary exclusions, staying on rates, attainment and positive destination measures. In addition, qualitative feedback from young people, mentors and school staff was gathered from participating schools by MCR Pathways. Data is presented for both Group 1 (those who currently or have experienced care) and for Groups 2 and 3 to help determine the impact of the programme on those for whom we have Corporate Parent responsibility and those identified as vulnerable due to a range of factors. The most current information available to Aberdeen City Council has been used to support this evaluation.

*Due to staffing changes and data system changes in MCR there was not a consistent monthly sharing of raw data until November 2021. All data referencing 'over time' is clarified with a time period in the table.

Table 2: MCR Pathways Outputs

Outputs:	Position as of May 2023¹
Active engagement for care experienced young people and young people who have faced additional challenges which may impact their educational experience and outcomes	There have been 278 actively engaged S1-S6 pupils in MCR Pathways over time. Group 1 pupils make up 29% (80 pupils) of the cohort while Groups 2 and 3 pupils make up 73% (203 pupils).
Group 1 and Groups 2 & 3 who have a mentored relationship in school – using the MCR definition (young person is mentored if they have had 10+ meetings with a volunteer mentor) – over time	From November 2021-May 2023 (period of time data has been made available from MCR using the MCR pathways definition of a mentored relationship for S3-6), 36 Group 1 (27%) and 96 Group 2 (73%). A total of 132 young people have had 10+ meetings with a volunteer mentor.
Group 1 and Groups 2 & 3 who have a mentored relationship in school – using the ACC definition (young person is mentored if they have had 1+ meetings with a volunteer mentor) – over time	From the period of April 2021-May 2023 (period of time data has been made available from MCR using the ACC definition of a mentored relationship for S3-6), 66 Group 1 (28%) and 179 Group2 (75%). A total of 245 young people have had at least one meeting with a volunteer mentor.
Current mentored relationships (using MCR Pathways definition) - Group 1	26
Current mentored relationships (using MCR Pathways definition) – Group 2 and 3	76
Group 1 and Groups 2 and 3 pupils who have access to regular Talent Tasters	Currently no data provided on this and anecdotal evidence from schools suggests that the Talent Tasters have not been delivered.

Young people can be matched with a mentor from S3 and meet with their mentor on a weekly basis. MCR pathways class a young person as being mentored only when 10 mentor meetings have taken place. The following graphs show the number of pupils in Groups 1, 2 and 3 who have also completed 1-9 mentor meetings.

¹ N.B. – Five pupils are double counted in the referral group calculations where they have been re-referred to MCR Pathways in a different referral criteria group.

Figure 2: Total Mentor Meetings Completed for Active MCR Pupils, May 2023

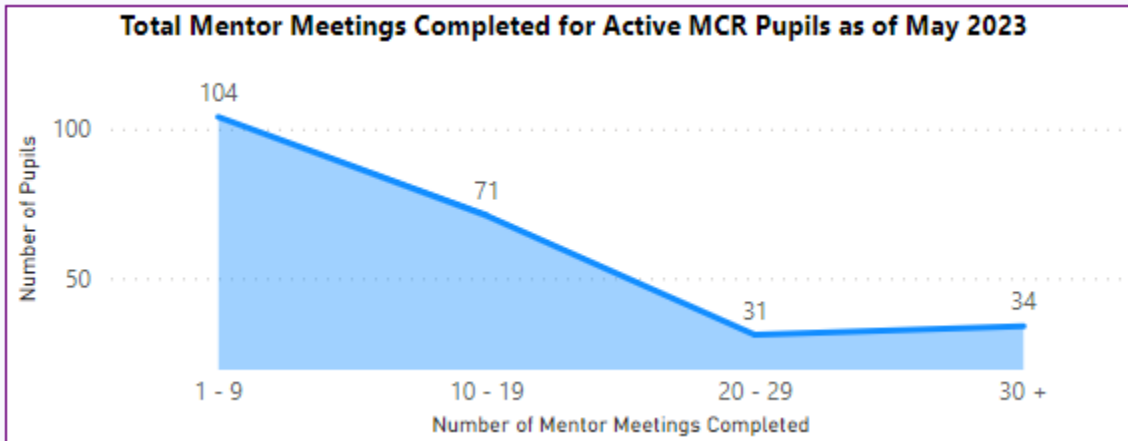
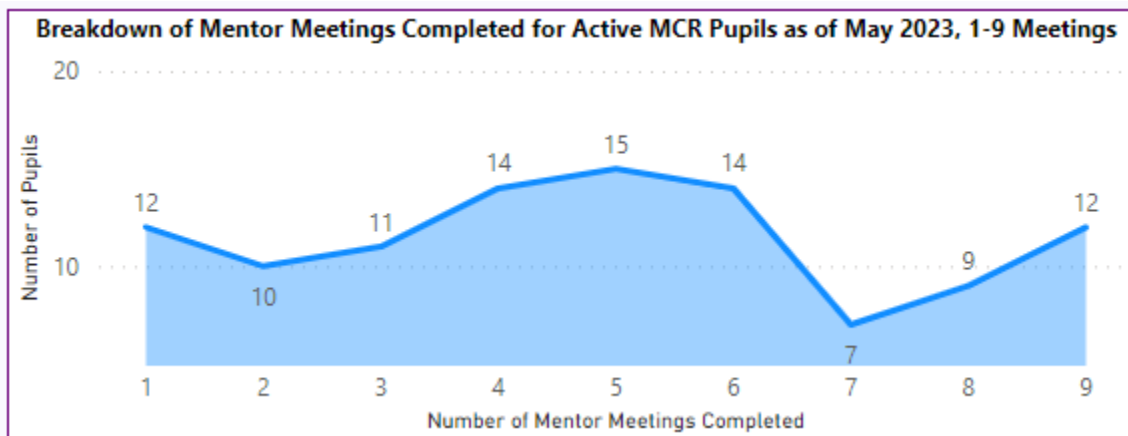


Figure 3: Breakdown of Mentor Meetings Completed for Active MCR Pupils, May 2023, 1 – 9 Meetings



It can be seen that by May 2023, 34 pupils have completed more than 30 meetings with their mentors. Of these 34, 14 pupils were in Group 1.

There has been considerable challenge in data matching the information supplied by MCR with pupil personal records held by Aberdeen City Council. This makes it hard to monitor the impact of the programme easily. As a result of this, further data collection was put in place to capture the outputs for school session 22/23.

Figure 4: MCR Pupil and Mentor Attendance, February 2023

School Name	MCR Pupils - School Attendance Rate	MCR Pupils - Mentor Meeting Attendance Rate (%)	MCR Mentors - Mentor Meeting Attendance Rate (%)
Dyce Academy	88%	85	92
Harlaw Academy	87%	85	96
Hazlehead Academy	86%	83	90
Lochside Academy	74%	79	91
Northfield Academy	84%	91	93
St Machar Academy	81%	72	90
Total	83%	82	92

With consideration being given to the restrictions of the pandemic on an in-school mentoring programme, there has been a challenge in embedding the programme in the 6 schools. Over time, numbers have slowly increased. Engagement has increased of late, however, it is noted

that <30% of the young people who have had a mentored relationship over time are care experienced and 25% of those young people currently being mentored are care experienced. Currently, the Talent Taster programme has not been established and so no data is available.

There is a need to look carefully at how data is collected and shared. Currently data is extracted from a school system, amended by the Pathways Coordinator, shared with MCR Pathways and then returned to the Local Authority. Attempts to match end data back to pupil records continues to highlight a high number of data input errors. If the programme continues, there is a need to address how data is collected and shared to ensure that Aberdeen City Council can have confidence in the data and use it to maximise the impact of the programme.

Indicators

A range of educational outcome indicators were used to measure progress over time for MCR Pathways pupils. It is recognised that the small number of care experienced young people in each senior phase cohort, both in the whole city and the MCR Pathways data, results in a single young person having a significant effect on the percentages calculated. Different Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) assessment methodologies before, during and after COVID-19 measures also makes direct year on year comparison more complex.

Due to the challenges in data matching and changes in Group2 and 3 cohort, it has not been possible to provide the breadth of data from 2019 for the separate groups (Group 1 /2/3). Therefore, school performance for those defined as Looked After at the point of the census has been included along with Insight data on those in the 6 schools who are care experienced.

Table 2: Aberdeen City Secondary School Performance Indicators, 2019/2020 to 2022/2023

Indicators: *For clarity the term CEYP used here is in reference to young people who have the legal status of being Looked After at point of census	2019/2020 (baseline)	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
CEYP's post school initial positive destinations	73.33%	76.47%	70.59%	Available February 2024
CEYP's staying on rates to S5	Not available	Not available	55%	
CEYP Leavers educational attainment in Literacy and Numeracy @Level 3	73.33%	64.71%	70.59%	Available February 2024
CEYP Leavers educational attainment in Literacy and Numeracy @Level 4	46.67%	47.06%	47.06%	Available February 2024
CEYP's Leavers 1 or more subject awards at National 3	93.33%	64.71%	88.24%	Available February 2024
CEYP's Leavers 1 or more subject awards at National 4	80%	47.06%	70.59%	Available February 2024
CEYP attendance (All city secondary schools) – Validated data	84.89%	84.09%	82.85%	83.16% *live data
CEYP number of temporary exclusions (All city secondary schools) – Validated data	65	29	47	49 *live data

Initial Positive Destinations

Insight data has been gathered for those young people who were previously or currently Looked After at the point of census.

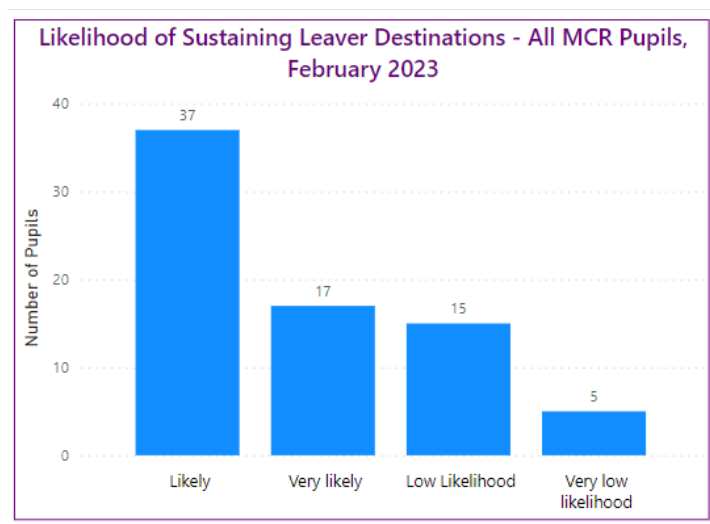
Table 4: Insight data extract for those recorded as currently or previously Looked After at the point of census

	2020/21	2021/22
Number of Leavers from MCR Schools	816	982
Number of Care Experienced Leavers, All MCR Schools	15	31
Number of Care Experienced Leavers (Group 1) referred to MCR Pathways	5	10
Number of Leavers referred to MCR Groups 2 and 3	**	22
Number of the Group 1 MCR Pathways pupils in initial positive destination	**	8
Number of the Groups 2 and 3 MCR Pathways pupils in initial positive destination	**	21

** Number less than 5 which could lead to identification of pupils

In order to consider those who will leave school in summer 2023, the 6 schools with the MCR Pathways programme were asked to complete an additional data set providing their professional judgment on the likelihood of leavers sustaining their future destination (this will include the 70% of those engaged who are not care experienced). Those young people who left during the 2022/23 academic year (winter leavers) are not included in the data set as data can no longer be accessed in SEEMIS for them.

Figure 5: Staff professional judgement around likelihood of sustaining positive leaver destinations, February 2023



Based on the professional judgement of school staff 73% of this year's cohort of young people in the MCR Pathways programme are likely to sustain a positive destination. The validated data for this cohort of leavers will not be available until June 2024.

MCR Pathways compares the staying on rates of young people engaged with the MCR programme with all young people ('Universal') in the 6 schools participating in the programme. The February snapshot also looks at Care Experienced (Looked After At Home, Looked After Away from Home and Previously Looked After) pupils. The S4 cohort is based on the Pupil Census for the previous academic year. The lack of baseline data impacts the ability to draw any firm conclusions from this data.

Figure 6: MCR Staying on Rates, February 2023

	2021/22 S4 cohort	S5 cohort at Feb 2023	% Returned
Universal (all young people, including Care Experienced)	992	749	75.5%
Care Experienced (At Home, Away from Home and Previously Looked After)	20	11	55.0%

Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy for all Looked After Leavers

*The data represented here is for those pupils who are Looked After at home and Looked After Away from Home. INSIGHT does not provide comparator data for the care experienced cohort as a whole which includes pupils who have been previously Looked After at Home or Away from Home.

Figure 7: SCQF Level 3 for all Looked After leavers

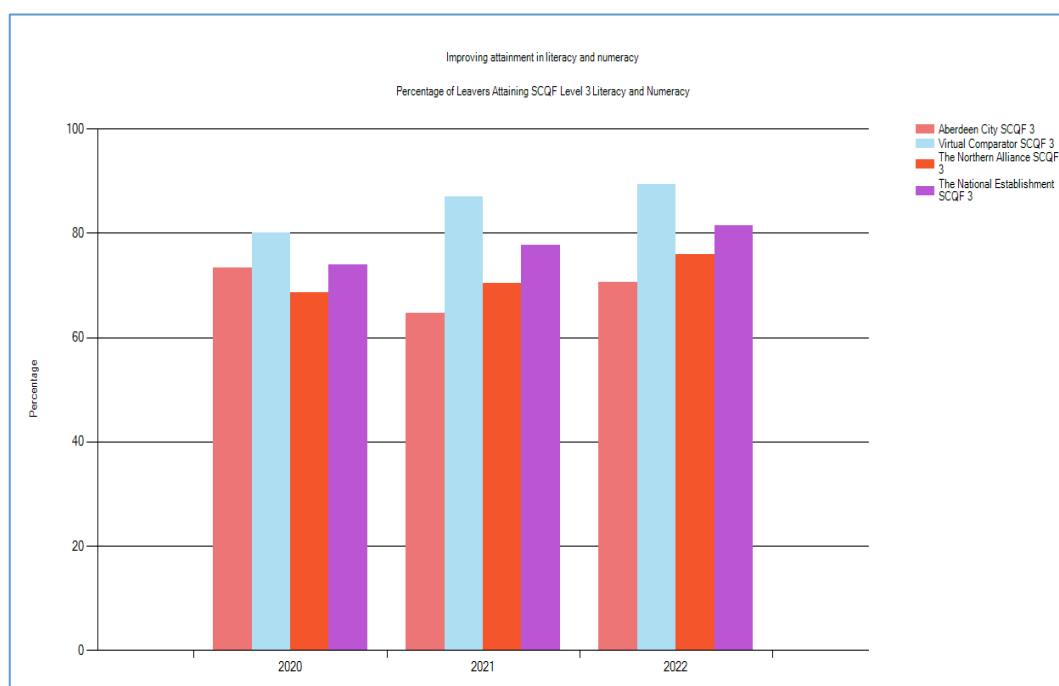


Figure 8: SCQF Level 4 for all Looked After leavers

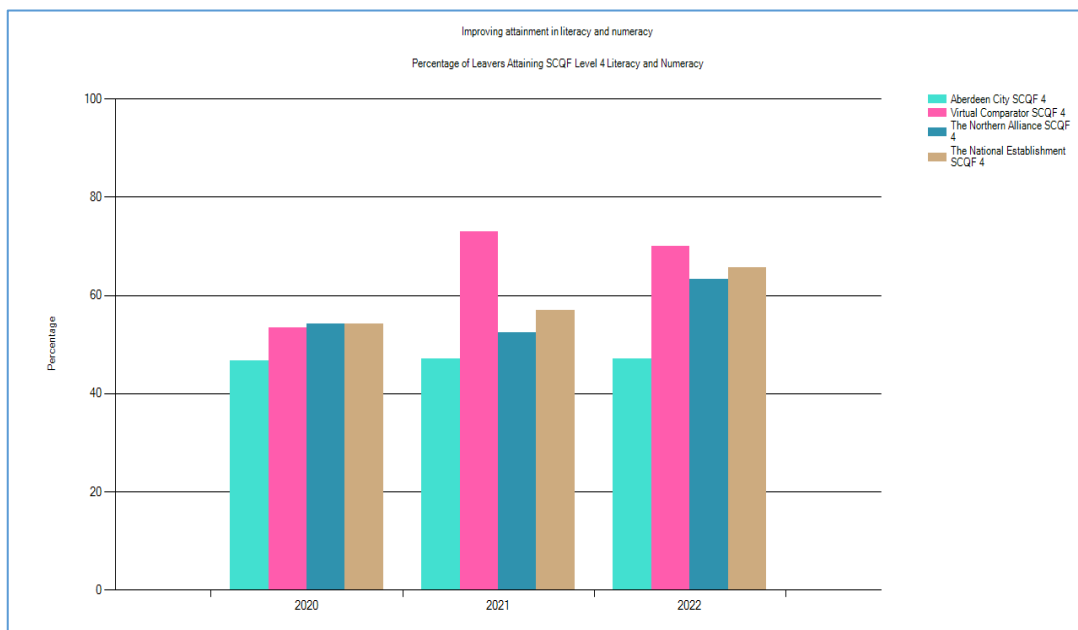
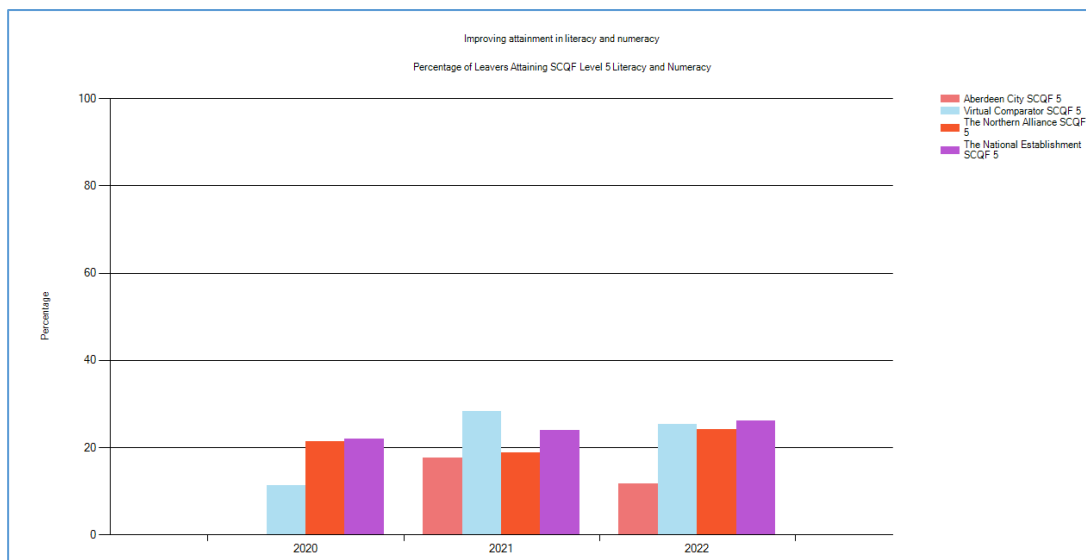


Figure 9: SCQF Level 5 for all Looked After leavers



For each level, it can be seen that the virtual comparator continues to outperform Aberdeen City for Looked After leavers for SCQF level 3, 4 and 5. At levels 3 and 4, performance has been relatively consistent each year.

In 2021 and 2022, young people have also achieved at level 5, with no Looked After leavers achieving National 5 in 2020. There is a need to broaden the range of curriculum pathways to address this.

*The data represented here is for those pupils who are Looked After at home and Looked After Away from Home. INSIGHT does not provide comparator data for the care experienced cohort as a whole which includes pupils who have been previously Looked After at Home or Away from Home.

Figure 10: % Looked After leavers achieving awards at SCQF Level 3

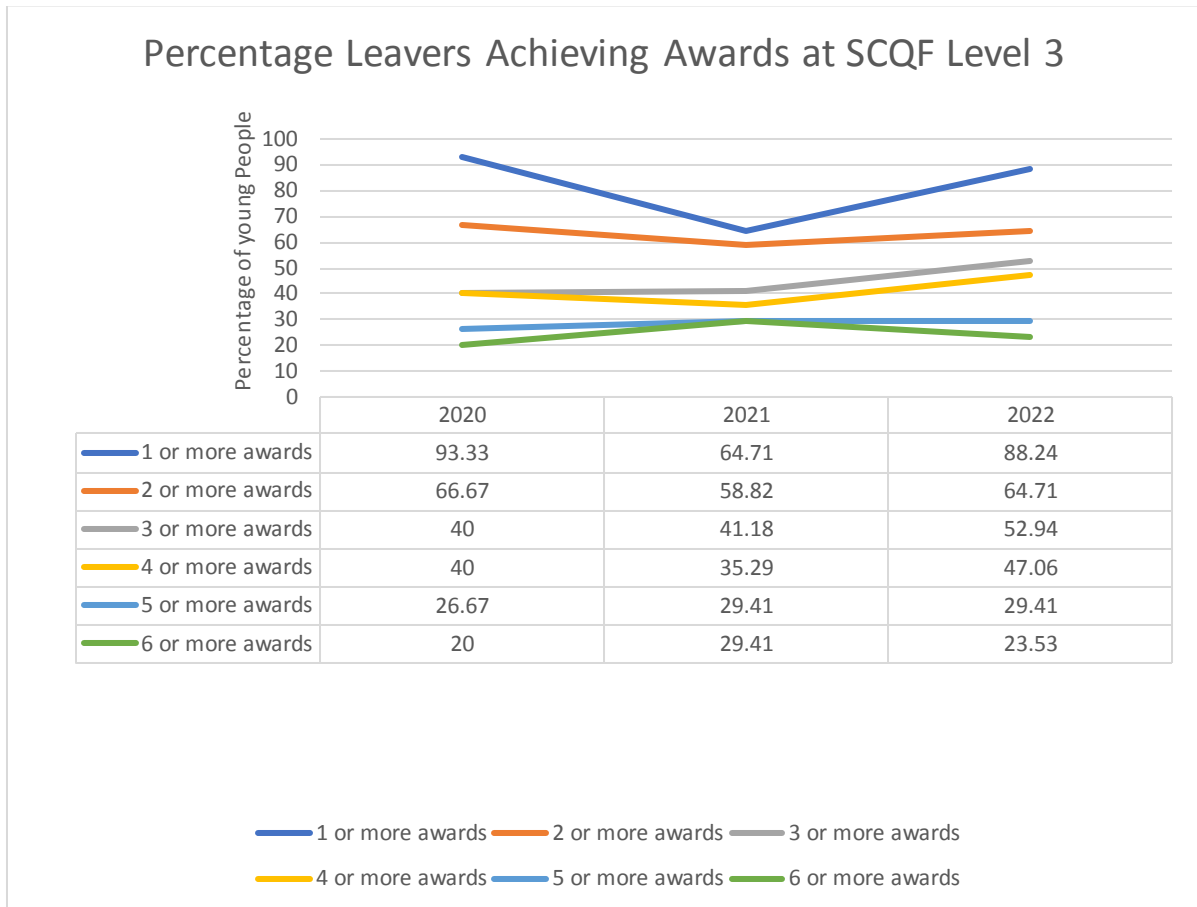
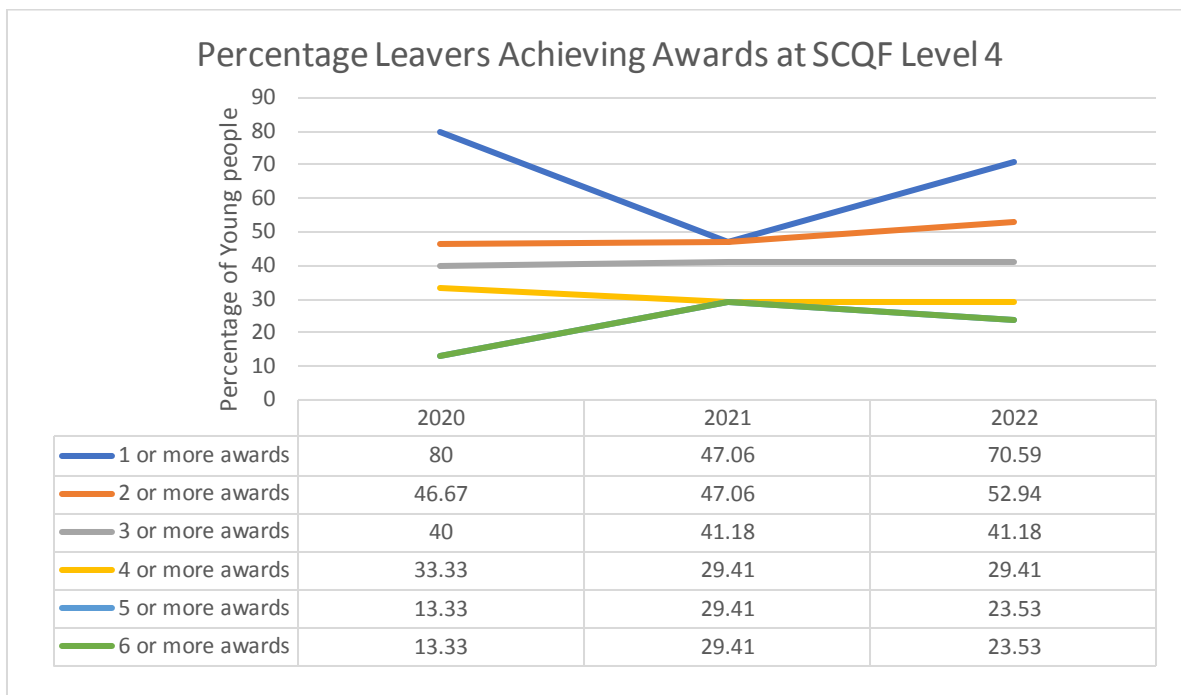


Figure 11: % Looked After leavers achieving awards at SCQF Level 5



The limited number of young people at each secondary stage impacts on the strength of evaluation evidence. There were 15 leavers in 2020 compared to 17 in both 2021 and 2022.

At SCQF level 3, the percentage of young people achieving 1-6 or more awards has risen in 2022 or remained the same as in 2021. At SCQF level 4, overall over the past 3 years, those young people achieving 2 or more awards has increased, with little fluctuation for percentage of young people achieving 3 – 6 or more awards. There is a need to think carefully about the range of courses available and how they are delivered to increase the number of awards being achieved.

Attendance

Validated attendance data for Aberdeen City secondary schools in 2021/22 shows that children and young people who are care experienced have an average attendance of 82.85%. This is 7.87% lower than the average attendance of 90.72%.

The attendance rates for both the general school population in the 6 MCR Pathways academies and those young people who are active in the MCR Pathways programme for S1-6 has been compared. It should be noted that 2018 and 2019 provide a baseline comparison of the attendance rate prior to the start of the programme in 2020.

Figure 12: Attendance rates for all pupils in the 6 schools

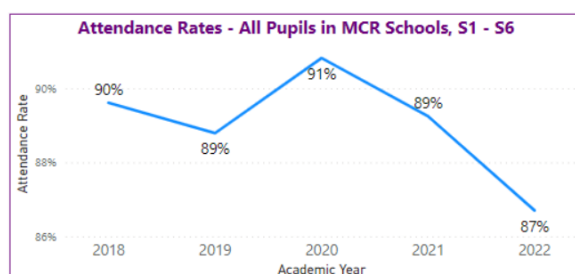
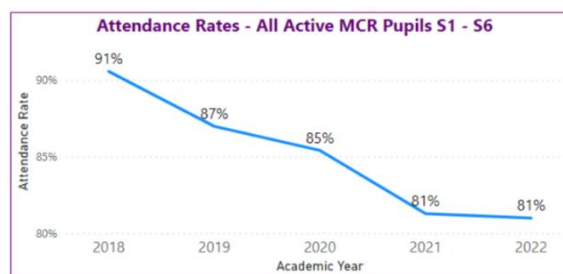


Figure 13: Attendance rates for all MCR pupils



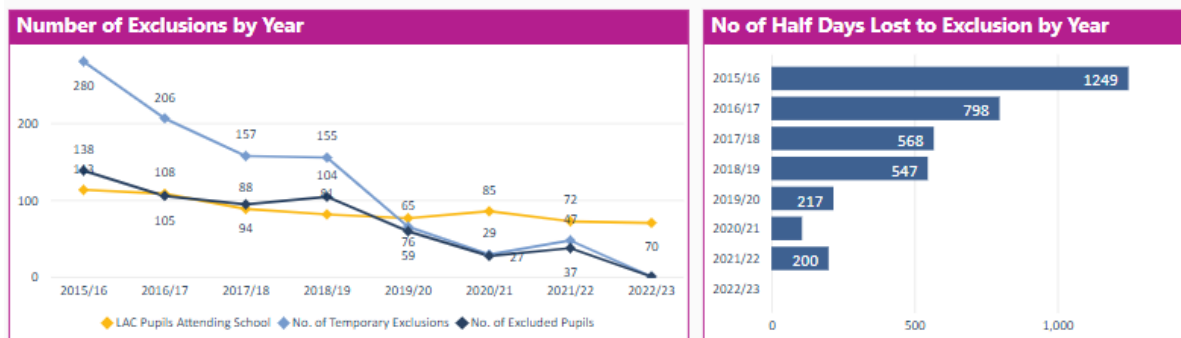
Those young people who are being supported through the MCR pathways programme and have experience of care, although they have an attendance rate of 81% compared to their peers which is 87%, the fall in overall attendance has slowed and appears to have stabilised

to date for session 2022/23. This could be partially attributed to engagement with the programme.

Temporary Exclusions

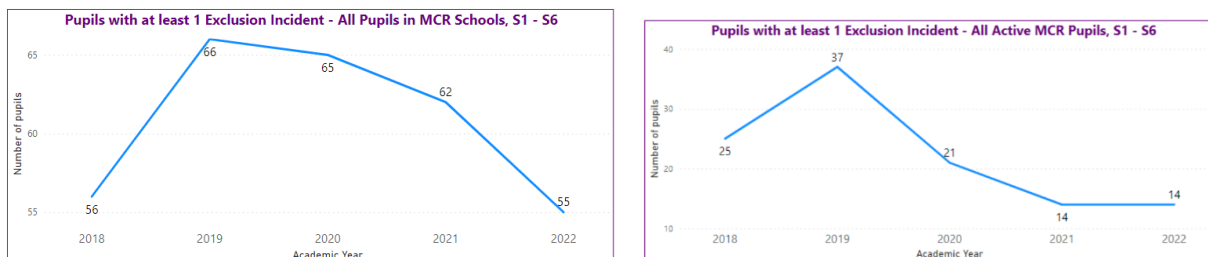
The graphs show that in 2021/22 there were 47 **exclusions** for care experienced young people across all city secondary schools which is a 70% reduction from 155 from the 2018/19 pre pandemic baseline. This trend is mirrored across the general population.

Figure 14: No of exclusions of Looked After Children



The whole school cohort across the 6 MCR Pathways Schools (S1-6) with 1 or more exclusion incident has been compared with those who engaged with the programme. It can be seen that there is a fall in the number of incidents is consistent with the city wide fall in exclusion incidents.

Figure 15: Exclusions for all young people in the 6 schools. Figure 16: Exclusions for MCR young people



The number of pupils with at least 1 exclusion incident has fallen since the introduction of the MCR Pathways Programme in 2020 and this mirrors the city trend. This may be due in part to engagement with the programme and be partially attributed to an increased focus on health and wellbeing across the city.

A number of indicators have been used to try to determine impact, however, due to difficulties matching the data shared it has been very difficult for the local authority to compare data sets. Looking at the city wide data, there has been no compelling evidence of improvements to date. This could indicate that a better way of working with the data will need to be found if we continue with the programme.

Outcomes

As noted above, Aberdeen City implemented a test of change project, governed by Community Planning Aberdeen, to measure the improvement of care experienced young people in positive and sustained destinations.

Table 3: LOIP Improvement Project 6.1, Percentage of care experienced young people accessing a positive and sustained destination

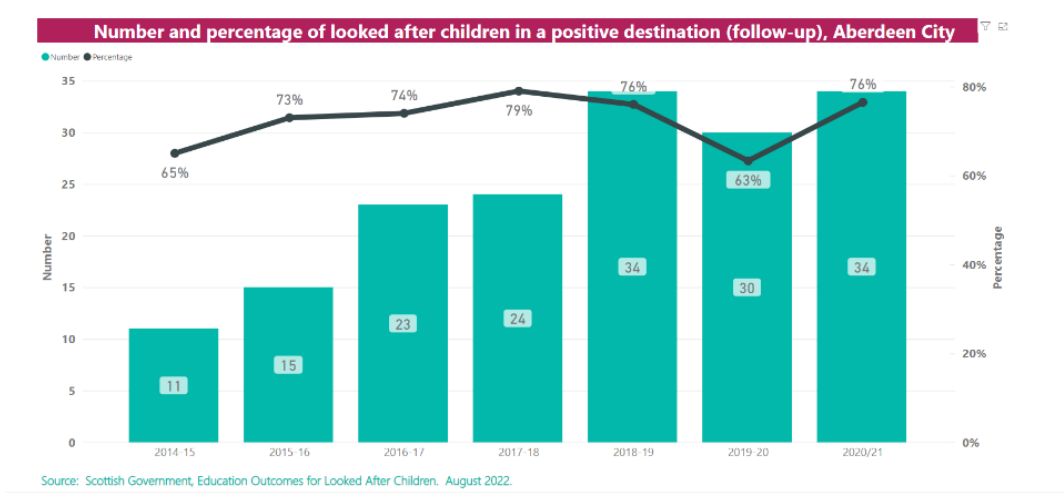
Outcomes:	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------	-----------

25% increase in the number of care experienced young people (CEYP) accessing a positive and sustained destination				
*For clarity the term CEYP used here is in reference to young people who have the legal status of being Looked After at point of census	76%	63%	76%	Available August 2023

There has been an increase in the sustained positive destination of those young people who are Looked After of 13% although the dip to 63% in the baseline year was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and potentially a misleading baseline.

Significance testing has been applied and due to the small numbers, even if the percentage had increased to 100%, the change would not be statistically significant. This is often a challenge with setting appropriate targets when working with small numbers.

Figure 17: Number and % of Looked After Children in positive and sustained destination.



Qualitative Feedback

Central to evaluating the ongoing impact of the MCR Programme is the feedback from young people and how they have benefitted from having a mentor in S3-6 to provide input and support. The following quotes are from young people who have benefitted from the programme. They have been provided by MCR pathways and so we are unable to split by group. From the quotes shared, the young people are telling us that it is impacting positively on their wellbeing most notably confidence:

“Speaking with my mentor has helped me decide to try and stay in school longer. He has also increased my confidence.”

“Making a big difference and has given ideas for after school. Opened my eyes to all the options out there for me. Huge confidence boost to me and I don't feel so worried about leaving school.”

Getting on well, they really help me to feel more confident and more support with subjects and making

MCR Pathways is a really helpful thing to have in schools, they can help with a whole range of things from: mental health, building confidence, meeting new people, helping with applications for college, giving advice, having someone to

Staff in school also provided feedback on the experience of having MCR pathways in place, sharing what they believe has been the impact on the young people that they support.

Since MCR came into Dyce Academy we have seen positive outcomes for all pupils that have been involved with the school PCs for 1:1 and groupwork and we are now reaping the rewards of the mentor programme. Although Dyce is not a traditional MCR school in that we have low numbers of Care Experienced pupils we have been able to make full use of the resource to support a number of pupils in both categories. This has been evident since our return to school post COVID as our PC was able to assist with mental wellbeing input and support the pupils coming back to school following home learning. Our PCs work in close partnership with PTG's, PEF PT, SfL and SLT as well as our feeder primary schools to identify pupils who would benefit from MCR input. The mentor programme has been hugely positive and has helped our young people with their confidence, resilience and with future planning. Mentors have organised trips to potential employers and beyond. For Dyce Academy, MCR is an integral part of our support packages for our young people and the PC in school is well known and trusted amongst pupils, staff and mentors. Losing MCR at Dyce Academy would leave a large gap in the support provision we are able to provide for our young people. *DHT and school link, Dyce Academy*

In my short time in this role, the MCR programme has been an essential resource for the most vulnerable children in my House group. The programme has helped to build a bridge to help pupils return to education when they have not been engaging. It has been crucial in allowing pupils with multiple aces to build a positive relationship with a trusted adult who can support them. It has allowed pupils who are struggling in school to build confidence and resilience. This has led to tangible improvements in attendance and attainment which we can evidence through our tracking and monitoring system, including helping pupils with the transition to positive destinations after school. For pupils who are struggling to access support for mental health conditions related to their ACES, it has been a comfort and support. A significant number of the pupils who have benefitted from MCR also have additional support needs, and MCR helps them to feel a positive connection to school and to begin to feel more included when they have been struggling with various challenges.

The relationship that each of these pupils have built with the PC and their mentor are central to everything – anything which unexpectedly took these relationships away from these pupils, many of whom already have attachment conditions due to important figures in their life withdrawing support or breaking their trust, would be catastrophic for their wellbeing and education. *Guidance teacher, Hazlehead Academy*

We have a number of pupils who are not engaging with school very well, yet they turn up to school on the days their mentor is due to come in and see them. Some of our mentors have created a pathway to help sow the seeds of reengagement. They have been seen as highlight to some of our young people in what could otherwise be perceived as really negative period of time in their schooling.

Our Pathways coordinator has also managed to stay connected with young people and their families when there has been a lack of engagement with a number of professionals. She has been seen as unbiased, positive support that is 100% looking towards positive outcomes for the young people she has been working with.

Our Pathways Coordinator has also assisted in pupil reengagement and at times has been the only point of contact for some of our pupils and families. Her ability to develop relationships with some of our young people have given us more insight to the challenges and barriers they are facing. She has gotten to know some pupils really well and they feel comfortable in approaching her for support and advice.

Our Pathways coordinator is seen a valued member of our Multi-Disciplinary team within school. She works with Skills Development Scotland, Home School Liaison officer, Youth Worker, Educational Social Worker as well as in school team Guidance Staff, Target Support and Family Liaison. *Family Liaison Officer, Lochside Academy*

'I feel this is an amazing programme. The offer of group work and taking a strengths-based approach is so valuable, as well as the introduction of a Mentor. This is a great example of why relationships are key - how important it is for children to feel valued, to feel as though they can relate to someone, and to have that person to have time with, without the pressure of the agenda that often comes within professional relationships. Children need a champion and I think Mentors can be this person.

Two pupils, known to my service, have accessed MCR Pathways and their relationship with the Pathways Coordinator has been one of trust, respect and inclusion. The relationships with their mentors have offered positive role modelling, hope and connections. No matter their academic progress, success and achievement is promoted by MCR Pathways. Both children have been excited to see their Mentor, adding to their motivation and sense of inclusion. For one pupil in particular, I have observed his confidence grow as well as his ability to look forward and plan for a positive destination.'

**Caroline McEwan
Social Worker**

'I have been working with MCR on an occasional basis over the years, however, since June 2022, this working relationship has become more robust and regular. The MCR mentors and the pupil mentees are meeting in the school library; a calm and relaxed area where both can sit, relax and spend time communicating. As a school librarian I have known a high proportion of the pupils involved in the scheme for a number of years. I am able to see first-hand the positive relationships built between mentor and mentee and the improvement in the young people's positive behaviour and outlook on life.'

**Karen Shaw
Librarian**

Challenges

There have been a number of challenges that have impacted on the delivery and embedding of the MCR Pathways programme within the 6 Aberdeen City schools.

Recruitment - There were challenges in recruiting Pathways Co-ordinators initially and this remained a challenge throughout the 3 year period. Initial appointments were made between February and August 2020 and there has been considerable churn thereafter and this has impacted on the quality of relationships with young people at school level resulting in relatively low numbers of young people being supported in some schools. 7 Pathways co-ordinators have moved on within the 3 year period with exit interviews suggesting this was due to the temporary nature of the Pathways Coordinator contracts and to relationship challenges with the MCR Manager. ACC has continued to work to address the issues in recruiting Pathways Coordinators and MCR took action when issues with relationships were raised with them.

As a result of the level of vacancy, the MCR Pathways manager rightly prioritised maintaining mentoring relationships with young people from S3 resulting in the S1 and S2 groupwork reducing and no evidence of Talent Tasters evident over the lifetime of the programme. There have been 3 changes in MCR manager within the 3 year period of the contract with Aberdeen City. Again, this change is thought to have partially impacted on the progress made and added pressure on MCR Pathways.

Staffing uncertainty has also impacted on the time commitment required by the contract manager in ACC who had to provide supervision to some Pathways Coordinators for an extended period of time in order to support them to remain in role. This has therefore increased the real term cost of the programme to Aberdeen City Council

The Pandemic - During the two periods of national lockdown, MCR Pathways continued to provide mentoring (and in some schools Group Work) through virtual platforms. Pathways Coordinators followed a scheduled programme of regular contact with young people on the programme (through video call, email, text or phone call; dependent on young person choice) to check-in and provide wellbeing support where needed.

MCR Pathways provided 5 young people across Aberdeen City with Google Chromebooks, portable WiFi with unlimited data in order to help maintain connection with the Pathways Co-ordinator/ Mentors. Pathways Co-ordinators maintained over 85% cohort participation rate in interactions with young people meeting with mentors online (36 interactions over the first comparable period of national lockdown rising to 120 during the second). This supported and maintained connections and relationships for the young people which then supported the transition back into school.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted on face to face delivery of the programme, particularly during periods of school closure. It should be noted however, that the number of young people engaged with increased significantly from 36 interactions from the first period of lockdown to 120 interactions in the second. It is also appreciated that establishing a new intervention amid a pandemic was exceptionally challenging for both the schools and MCR pathways. This undoubtedly impacted the smooth running of the programme.

Data quality and data matching - Considerable time had to be invested in matching data provided by MCR to central data sets to improve accuracy and confidence. This has again increased the real term costs of the programme to the Council and highlighted almost consistent data quality issues. Time has been invested in working with MCR pathways to improve data quality. Despite on-going work, the indicator and outcome data each organisation holds (MCR and ACC) is at odds. If the programme is to continue, there is a pressing need to revise the approach being used to ensure that both organisations can see accurate real time data to enable accurate on-going evaluation of impact.

Young people not being selected, or not choosing not to engage - Not all young people who were eligible were part of the MCR programme. Reasons are wide ranging and include:

- The young person being disengaged from school or having poor attendance (MCR criteria to be involved in the programme includes a need for the young person to have a current school attendance of 70% which a reduction in the last year)
- The young person moving to another local authority or school without the MCR programme
- The school not recommending the young person for mentoring. Reasons for this can include the fact that a young person already has a high number of professionals involved in their lives, they may struggle to build new relationships and so adding to existing relationships would need to be carefully considered and it may be that a young person is not in a place to engage in programme and what is involved
- The young person declining to be involved in the programme following a discussion with the pathways co-ordinator

In some schools, the school link worked alongside the PC where an eligible person may not have been referred by the PT Guidance. Those young people who did not want to engage were kept on the list and offered support at a later time. The recruitment challenges will have impacted here, inconsistent staff on temporary contracts are less likely to build relationships with young people in school and be at the heart of pupil support structures.

What was the level of investment?

The annual financial commitment is broken down as follows:

Annual Programme cost for 6 schools	£168,000 (£28,000 per school)
6 Pathways Co-ordinators recruited by Aberdeen City Council on temporary contracts	£228,312 (£38,052 per school)
Time invested in managing the MCR contract	c. £7,000 per year from existing resources
Time invested by Data and Insights for data management, data cleansing and data analysis	c. £7,000 per year from existing resources

All costs (£410,318) were met by Aberdeen City Council for the first two academic years (2020/2021 and 2021/2022) by making almost full use of the Scottish Attainment Challenge – Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding.

The Scottish Government have directly funded the programme costs (£168,000) in the 2022/23 academic year, with an additional two years of Scottish Government funding for the annual programme costs agreed. As a result, the cost of the programme for session 2022/23 was £242,318.

Was the intervention cost effective?

The intervention costs in excess of £400,000 per annum. There is currently insufficient strong quantitative evidence to conclude that this intervention is improving outcomes for our care experienced young people. There is however emerging evidence that a higher number of vulnerable young people are being supported. Qualitative evidence from those who choose to participate is strong. It is hard to draw a firm conclusion on if the intervention is cost effective as the programme will be transformational for some of those who participate but it is not yet possible to triangulate evidence and draw firm conclusions.

We can however, reasonably conclude that funding the programme from the Scottish Attainment Challenge – Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding may be

inappropriate as doing so restricts the resource available to invest in this most vulnerable group.

Conclusion

In total 278 young people have actively engaged with the MCR Pathways programme. As of May 2023, of those young people who are active or have previously been active with MCR Pathways, 12.23% are care experienced, 16.18% previously care experienced with the remaining 71.58% being identified as vulnerable. This balance is impacting on the extent to which the programme impacts on our aim to increase the number of care experienced young people achieving a sustained destination. However, the programme may be helping to reduce the likelihood of needs escalating. More consistent staffing (Pathways Coordinators and MCR Managers) may help shift the balance to include a higher proportion of those in Group 1. Staffing will need to be addressed should the programme continue.

The high number of volunteers (144 trained volunteer mentors and 66 progressing through training) committed to delivering one to one mentoring is exceptionally positive and helping us discharge our Corporate Parenting responsibilities. Our young people who choose to engage with the programme tell us that they value and benefit from time with their one to one mentor and qualitative evidence is strong.

Research continues to highlight the positive impact of mentoring programmes, but the pandemic and data quality issues have impacted our ability to gather strong quantitative evidence of impact against key measures. Many of the data sets shared by MCR, when matched with ACC data, have contained significant errors which has made data matching extremely challenging and labour intensive, the split of responsibilities across ACC and MCR may be contributing to this challenge. If the programme continues there is a need to address these data issues to enable more effective on-going monitoring.

The pandemic appears to have impacted on MCRs ability to deliver Talent Tasters. It is hard to quantify what the impact of these may have been if delivered. Given that the Talent Tasters are a key tenant of the programme, the lack of Talent Tasters may be contributing to the limited quantitative evidence base. This will need to be addressed should the programme continue.

The Aberdeen City contribution to the programme (£242,318) is being met from funding designed to help to address the gap in educational outcomes between those who experience care and their peers. Given the targeted and limited funding, and concerns around outcomes for those who are and have experienced care, any future MCR programme may be better funded from alternative means. Data suggests that Scottish Attainment Challenge – Care Experienced Children and Young People Funding should now be utilised to address identified vulnerabilities in the provision of appropriate learning pathways and provision of Family Support.

The Scottish Government has committed to funding programme costs of £168,000 for the next two years. Given the strong research base in support of mentoring, there is a need to determine the approach to be taken to mentoring in the longer term.

Recommendations

It is recommended that ACC engage with MCR to ascertain if the data issues can be addressed. If they can be addressed to enable more effective monitoring it is proposed that:

- Schools be asked if they are prepared to use Pupil Equity Funding to cover the cost of the Pathways Coordinator over school session 2023/24
- That Pathways Coordinators be given permanent contracts in schools who are happy to invest in the programme through Pupil Equity Funding
- That our relationship with MCR continue for those schools prepared to invest for one further year with a shared commitment to work to resolve the issues outlined in this evaluation

- To review data in March 2024 to help determine if we work to spread MCR Pathways mentoring further or design an alternative model given that Scottish Government funding will cease in 2025.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Education and Children's Services reforms
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/228
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne and Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report aims to ensure Members are fully sighted on the progress being made on education and wider children's services reforms.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the update on education and wider children's services reforms:
- 2.2 instruct the Interim Director Children and Family Services to continue to consider the implications of each published report to ensure we remain ready to respond positively to any national policy changes; and
- 2.2 instruct the Interim Director Children and Family Services to update Committee following publication of the final Daniel's report in October 2023.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 On 24th January 2023, the Education and Children's Services Committee instructed the Chief Education Officer to update Committee on the on-going education reform programme. In addition, Committee continues to await clarification on the shape of a National Care Service to inform next steps for children's social work. This report provides an update on what is known about the various reforms that could impact on how services are delivered for children and young people.

EDUCATION REFORMS

- 3.2 Report CFS/23/009, presented to Committee in January 2023, provided an update on progress against the recommendations first made by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Organisation (OECD) and subsequently considered by Professor Ken Muir in [Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education](#) in September 2021.

- 3.3 The January report outlined a number of national education reform programmes underway at that time including:
- the National Discussion; Let's Talk Education to help shape a consensual vision for education in Scotland led by Professor Carol Campbell and Professor Alma Harris
 - the Hayward Review to help reform qualifications and approaches to assessment
 - a review of the skills delivery landscape led by James Withers
 - the establishment of new inspection agencies.

NATIONAL DISCUSSION

- 3.4 The National Discussion on Education (the National Discussion) was conducted by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) and was co-facilitated by Professor Carol Campbell and Professor Alma Harris. Learners, parents, teaching staff and many other stakeholders with detailed knowledge shared their views about Scotland's future education system as part of the National Discussion.
- 3.5 A number of overarching priorities emerged through the National Discussion with comments about curriculum structure most common. Participants expressed clear support for a broad curriculum focusing on literacy and numeracy, but many felt Curriculum for Excellence should be streamlined and decluttered. There were repeated calls to recruit and retain more teachers and pupil support staff, and for better teacher training. Many felt these improvements would drive greater capacity, stability and quality in education and underpin better learner experiences and outcomes.
- 3.6 Participants advocated for the focus on health and wellbeing in schools to continue as a core feature. It was widely felt that schools should provide a safe and secure environment, have a positive and supportive ethos, build positive relationships between teachers and pupils, and deliver support through pastoral care teams, counsellors, mentors and youth work. The most prevalent theme in comments on mental health was for funding and better access to specialist or professional mental health support in schools.
- 3.7 Multiple participants highlighted the value of alternative teaching and learning approaches, advocating for outdoor learning, out-of-classroom learning and extracurricular activities, play-based learning, fun and more creative and innovative approaches.
- 3.8 Comments on inclusion and supporting children and young people with Additional Support Needs in mainstream schools centred on three areas. Several participants called for training and improved knowledge and understanding of a range of support needs. Several others recommended adaptations to teaching styles or environments for pupils with disabilities or long-term conditions and for neurodiverse young people. Some, however, raised concerns about inclusion, stating it does not meet the requirements of young people with additional support needs or the rest of their class. Calls to adequately fund these and other priorities was another prevalent theme.

- 3.9 The value of engaging with parents and families was raised in response to most questions, with participants calling for better communication with parents and assistance for families who need more support. Other recurring themes included the importance of collaborating with external stakeholders to safeguard young people and the potential for a mutually beneficial relationship between schools and local communities.
- 3.10 Participants often advocated for the education system to offer young people clear, flexible and practical learning pathways depending on their needs, abilities and interests. They argued a one-size-fits-all approach and focus on academic success is no longer appropriate. Instead, participants suggested that children should be provided with a range of academic, practical and vocational routes, including workbased learning, with parity of esteem for all learning options. Participants often argued that the education system should teach life skills; financial education, household management, digital literacy and skills for work were frequently mentioned.
- 3.11 Another recurring theme was for education to meet each young person's needs by responding to learners' passions and interests, offering tailored choices, letting young people develop at their own pace, and adapting teaching and learning to their abilities. Some highlighted the value of positive pupil/teacher relationships, and some advocated for a rights-based education which embeds and prioritises young peoples' rights and needs. Some participants commented on equity, inclusion and diversity, stressing the need for the education system to have sufficient funding and staff to support all young people to learn and succeed, including those from different backgrounds and marginalised groups.
- 3.12 Other themes included calls for the education system to reflect and promote the diversity of Scotland's population in the workforce and curriculum, to accept and celebrate different perspectives, to remove financial barriers, and to deliver equitable funding and opportunities regardless of geography. There was little consensus on the future role of exams, testing and assessment. While some expressed support for exams and assessment, several participants want Scotland to reduce or end exams and standardised testing. They described other types of assessment they believed would produce a fairer and more effective qualification system.
- 3.13 As well as a recurring call to listen to teaching staff, participants argued that teaching staff should feel empowered in their job, have a more manageable workload and be rewarded at a level that reflects the profession's value. A Summary of findings is available. [National discussion on education: consultation analysis - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-discussion-on-education-consultation-analysis-2022/pages/10-to-14.aspx)

THE HAYWARD REVIEW

- 3.14 The Hayward Review focussed on qualifications and assessment and the final report was published in June 2023.
- 3.15 There were three phases to the Review and three points at which comments and views from stakeholders were sought:
- phase one: summer 2022 - consultation on vision and principles

- phase two: October 2022 - public consultation on options for change and subsequent publication of the [Interim Report](#) in March 2023 setting out the future direction of travel
 - phase three: March 2023 - engagement on a preferred model, consideration of the findings of the National Discussion and subsequent submission of the final report to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills in June 2023.
- 3.16 Recommendations in the final report focus on the introduction of a Scottish Diploma of Achievement (SDA) with three elements: Personal Pathway, Programmes of Learning and Project Learning. The Review recommends that the Diploma should be the graduation certificate offered in all settings where Senior Phase education is provided. All learners should be offered the chance to experience learning in all elements (Personal Pathway, Programmes of Learning and Project Learning) of the Diploma and that these should be entitlements.
- 3.17 **Programmes of Learning**
The final report states that learners would continue to study in-depth individual areas of the curriculum, general subjects and vocational, technical and professional qualifications. These would remain a fundamental part of qualifications. Where currently qualifications are graded, e.g., Highers, Advanced Highers, they would continue to be graded.
- 3.18 Courses would be designed in modules. As learners complete modules, they would build credit. Where a qualification has an examination, the credit learners have built through the course would be combined with the result from the final examination to obtain the final grade. This would reduce the risk of a single high stakes exam. A wider range of methods of assessment would be used and methods would be appropriate to the individual programme. The number of examinations in the Senior Phase would be reduced.
- 3.19 **Personal Pathway**
The central focus of the Personal Pathway is reflection on learning, whether that be learning in school, in college or in the community. The purpose of the Personal Pathway is to give learners the opportunity to personalise their qualification profile by selecting aspects of their experiences that reflect their interests, the contributions they make to society and their career aspirations in employment and to discuss these in a reflective way.
- 3.20 The focus of the Personal Pathway is not on the number of experiences but on what an individual has learnt through an experience. The Personal Pathway would not be graded but would be subject to an authentication process. The Personal Pathway would be owned by the learner.
- 2.21 **Project Learning**
In Project Learning, learners would have the opportunity to use the knowledge and skills they have developed in their Programmes of Learning to tackle a significant question or problem that is important to them by undertaking a Project. For some learners, the focus could be on a global challenge, for

example, climate change, migration or social justice. Projects could be undertaken individually or in groups, but assessment would be individual. Project Learning would not be graded but will be linked to SCQF levels each with a different number of credit points.

3.22 **What else does the Review Recommend?**

The Review recommends that there should be a digital profile for all learners which allows them to record personal achievements, identify and plan future learning.

3.22 Different types of qualifications should be described using the 'SCQF level' as the key descriptor followed by type of qualification. E.g. SCQF Level 6 – Higher.

3.23 The report notes that one of the most important lessons from the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence is how important it is to have a clear plan to put ideas into practice. The plan for the introduction and development of the SDA will require major cultural change throughout the educational system. In addition, investment would be required for professional learning, time for collaboration and for moderation (including avoiding bias) to ensure fairness for every learner and public confidence in the system.

3.24 The [full report](#) is available on the Scottish Government website.

3.25 **WITHERS REVIEW**

The independent review of the skills delivery landscape was initiated to ensure the public body landscape for skills remains fit to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future. It is part of work to deliver an agile, people-centred skills system, built around collaboration, which meets the ambitions of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation and the Scottish Government's response to the Scottish Funding Council's Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability.

3.26 The review focussed on the skills functions of Scotland's national public bodies including Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), including the design and delivery of apprenticeship programmes, regional and sectoral skills planning, and employer engagement.

3.27 It was led by an independent advisor and took evidence from a wide range of stakeholders to inform its recommendations which were published on 7th June 2023. The [report](#) sets out the case for transformational change.

3.28 Key recommendations made by Withers include:

- the creation of a new single funding and delivery body, bringing together functions from Skills Development Scotland (SDS), the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and, possibly, the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS)
- giving the enterprise agencies a clear remit for supporting businesses, with workforce planning as an embedded and integrated part of business development and planning

- ensuring there is a clear remit for the new qualifications body – the successor to the SQA - in overseeing development and accreditation of all publicly funded post-school qualifications
- moving responsibility for national skills planning to the Scottish Government
- reform of SDS to create a new body with a singular focus on careers advice and education

3.29 Reports relating to education reform are being considered in the round by Scottish Government and a single response/action plan will be developed and published in due course.

3.30 **NEW EDUCATION AGENCIES**

Proposals to legislate for new education agencies have been postponed by a year. Consideration of the functions/responsibilities of each agency progresses with recruitment to the Chief Inspector post on-going.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES REFORM

3.31 In 2021, the Scottish Government published the findings of an Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland (Feeley, 2021) and recommended the creation of a National Care Service for adult social care. Later that year when Scottish Government launched its consultation on the National Care Service, it included a proposal that children's social work and social care services should be included within it. Consultation responses identified significant debate on whether integration of systems, processes, services, or agencies would help realise improved outcomes for children and young people.

3.32 **DANIELS REVIEW**

Scottish Government commissioned The Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS) to undertake research to help inform decision making about how best to deliver children's services in Scotland in light of the proposed introduction of the National Care Service, and its commitment to Keep the Promise of the Independent Care Review (2020). An Independent Steering Group chaired by Professor Brigid Daniel, Professor Emerita at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, has supported the design, implementation and delivery of the research study.

3.33 The commissioned research study aims to answer the question, ***“What is needed to ensure that children, young people and families get the help they need, when they need it?”*** and has four separate strands of work, which together aim to provide a comprehensive and holistic approach to answering this question.

3.34 Each strand of work was published between June and August 2023 with a final report drawing together and synthesising all four strands of the findings to address the research question due to be published in October 2023.

STRAND 1

3.35 In June 2023, The Centre for Excellence for children's Care and Protection (CELCIS) published a report on the first strand of work titled, [Children's Services Reform Research: Rapid evidence Review](#).

3.36 CELCIS gathered, analysed and synthesised evidence primarily from peer-reviewed research papers nationally and internationally to explore different models of integration in high income countries. Consideration was given to the strength of evidence on their effectiveness in improving services, experiences and outcomes for children, young people and their families. CELCIS have determined that the quality of the studies reviewed was high, but that due to the predominance of small-scale qualitative studies and few longitudinal studies that provided data over a significant time period, caution must be taken in assessing the strength of the evidence presented and in generalising these findings to other populations, systems and processes.

3.37 **Finding 1 – there is a lack of evidence of models of systems-level integration**

The studies reviewed were based to a large extent on service and team integrations, rather than macro-level system integrations. This means that whilst the evidence may be strong in relation to what works at service-level integration, it gives little information as to the impacts, benefits, and challenges, that may be encountered in system-level integration, thus it does not allow CELCIS to draw any firm conclusions or recommendations in relation to large-scale systems integration.

3.38 **Finding 2 - Integration should be viewed as an outcome of a range of components**

‘Integration’ as a concept is difficult to define and articulate. The studies’ authors often spoke of ‘integration’ without defining what they meant, what the objectives of integration were or what it aimed to achieve, or how this would be done.

3.39 Through the process of the review, CELCIS developed a ‘components of integration model’ which combines the different perspectives of what integration ‘is’ across the papers. The value of this model lies in allowing a more nuanced understanding of integration, not as a singular process activity, but as an outcome of a broad range of components, the importance or impact of which will vary within different contexts. It thus allows both the ‘features’ of integration and the ‘activities’ of integration to be incorporated.



Figure 1: Components model of integration

3.40 **Finding 3 - The place of shared culture, with committed leadership at all levels**

A shared culture with committed leadership at all levels appears to be a significant facilitator for integration. Strategically, leaders need to drive change and connect with those implementing change. Operationally, the workforce

needs time to build new relationships across different professional peer groups and have the support from and confidence of leaders, including managers, to develop new shared ways of working. Commitment is needed from the early stages of driving change to when integrated structures are more embedded, which take years, not months.

- 3.41 CELCs found that Governments need to support transformational reform programmes involving integration through clear direction, aligning legislative and policy agendas, properly resourcing integrated efforts and providing the necessary context for integration.

3.42 **Finding 4 - Professionals need appropriate support, resources and time during the process of integration**

Implementation of an integrated service or system requires significant, long-term, commitment and resourcing from the highest levels of political and policy leadership if it is to be successful. Where integrated services worked well together, there were benefits of improved levels of professional skills and knowledge, greater sharing of knowledge and expertise, and changes to practice including more time working directly with children, young people, and their families. There were also a range of lessons and challenges which are applicable to workforces across different areas, services, and interventions, which included increased workloads, particularly an increase in 'unseen' work such as the time it takes to build and sustain relationships with colleagues from different disciplines and the importance of clear roles and responsibilities for all team members.

3.43 **Finding 5 - Supporting and supportive relationships are vital to integration**

Relationships are vital in providing support to children and their families. The importance of relationships also extends to how integration is experienced and facilitated by and for professionals. Significant emphasis must be placed on the importance of relationships to the success of service or system integration. It is important to allow time for trusting relationships to develop. Time spent together with a consistent professional allows understanding, and the trust that comes with that, to develop. Young people, parents and carers alike reflected on the importance of a strong relationship with a relevant professional and highlighted the challenges of developing such relationships with multiple professionals from multiple services. For professionals, there are links to being co-located, but the evidence indicates that co-location without the additional time needed to meet, discuss, and build and maintain those relationships, is not sufficient. If integrated services and systems can be delivered through a professional who has the time to spend building and maintaining a trusting relationship with an individual or family, then integration could contribute to a more effective response and outcome for children and families

3.44 **Finding 6 - The central importance of holistic practice with children, young people and families**

The importance of holistic practice was a consistent theme throughout this strand 1 review. Whilst only a few services may have explicitly set out to provide holistic support, the importance of seeing the child, young person,

parent, carer, and family in the round, appeared in many papers. This is especially apparent in the limited information available from the studies on what children, young people, parents and carers value in services.

3.45 Finding 7 - More evidence is needed about the impact of integration on rights.

Across the evidence reviewed, there was a lack of discussion or consideration of the rights implications of integrative efforts. Many papers at some point referred to the 'empowerment' of individuals, as well as the importance of people needing and using services being central in identifying and shaping the provision of appropriate services, but there was no discussion of these ideas from a rights-based perspective. It is critical that efforts are made to understand the impacts that the integration of public services might have on the realisation of rights.

3.46 Finding 8 - The importance of involving children and families needing the support of services in the design and implementation of integration.

There was limited evidence that those who use the support of services helped shape them through the review. Understanding the experiences of children, young people, parents and carers is vitally important. The Promise of the Independent Care Review in Scotland (2020) noted the tendency of services and systems to measure predominantly process based indicators, which are often easier to measure, rather than the things which are meaningful to children and families. CELCIS found from the research reviewed: those who are easiest to involve in research, the professionals, were included in great numbers, while children, young people, parents and carers were only meaningfully represented in a small number of studies. While it is important to use existing information already gathered before seeking out new information, the evaluation of future integration efforts should prioritise the consistent and systematic gathering of feedback from those who use services on their experiences, before and after any change, and how these could be improved.

3.47 Finding 9 - There's a complex relationship between integration and outcomes.

There were very few longitudinal studies available for review, and even fewer which looked beyond a two-year timescale in their assessment of the integration efforts. This current lack of research studies completed over a long time period means that the strength of evidence focused on the impact of integration is currently limited.

3.48 Many of the outcomes which are hoped to be achieved as a result of integrating services are also inherently long-term, often seeking changes to behaviours or experiences for large portions of the population, and are unlikely to be observed within a timescale of months or even two to three years. Given the limited strength of the evidence reviewed in the study, the study concluded that there is little evidence of a causal link between integration and outcomes.

3.48 **STRAND 2**

In late June 2023, The Centre for Excellence for children's Care and Protection (CELCIS) published a report on the second strand of work titled, [Case-studies-transformational-reform-programmes](#)

3.49 5 countries (Finland, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland) were considered as 'case studies' to understand each country's children's social care models and the connections to health, education and adult social care structures. CELCIS looked for approaches taken to the national, regional and local organisational delivery and governance of these children's and adults' social care services that could inform Scotland's approach and also considered what could be learned from Scotland's experiences of national service reorganisation through the development of Police Scotland.

3.50 **Common rationales for and aspirations of transformational reform**

Common reasons for embarking on a transformational reform programme included systems being:

- Fragmented across national, regional and local structures;
- Marginalised within a larger health and social care system for all ages.
- Practice being risk-oriented, deficit-based and centred on crisis management.
- Limited participation of children, young people and families in decisions and planning that affect their lives.
- An imbalance in service funding and provision towards specialist and reactive services rather than early help and preventative services.

3.51 Each of the 5 countries identified a positive and ambitious 'vision' of what the reforms would achieve including:

- Closer integration of national, regional and local organisations to enable more joined up planning, funding and delivery of children's health and social care services.
- Re-balancing service funding and provision towards early help and preventative services which, in turn, aim to improve children's outcomes.
- Improved access to services for children and families, including enhanced or seamless transitions between different services.
- Embedding of children's rights and building a new relationship between services and children and families – one characterised by professionals practicing in a positive, strengths-based, and empowering manner.
- Enhanced working between practitioners from different services. • Improved workforce supports through professionalising the children's social care workforce and opening up career development and progression opportunities.

3.52 **Finding 1 - Implementation is a prolonged, complex and challenging process**

Across all six case studies, there was a recognition that transformational change is not a single event but a prolonged process, taking many years to: create a new structure or agency and its associated governance arrangements, data and IT infrastructure; build a shared organisational or multi-agency culture; establish national practice models and implement new

ways of working, and/or build constructive relationships with children, families and partner organisations.

3.53 Transformational reform programmes are also complex. The success of structural reforms is dependent on changes in organisational and professional cultures and practice, public expenditure levels, attention being paid to addressing wider structural inequalities, and workforce recruitment and retention levels. Without attention to these, the 'push factors' that were the catalyst for the reform programmes will continue.

3.54 Implementation of the transformational reform programmes has been challenging, and there was limited evidence to date of the impact of these reforms on children, families and practitioners. Despite some indicative areas of progress, such as more collaborative working at the locality level, many of the 'push factors' remained as persistent challenges. This highlights the need for reforms to engage with wider systems and factors if the wide-ranging aspirational 'pull factors' are to be achieved.

3.55 **Finding 2 - Transformational reform programmes require transformational leadership**

From the case studies, CELCIS identified the key characteristics of such leadership as including:

- An understanding of complex, multi-disciplinary systems and how to bring about changes in such systems
- Recognition of the need to have a theory of change that sets out the structural, process and/or practice change(s) involved and the expected outcomes and impacts of these, and
- Effective and inclusive communication of the reforms to internal and external stakeholders and audiences, explaining clearly what the change is, how it will be brought about, and why it is needed. Of these, explaining the 'bigger picture' or the 'why' for the change was found to be particularly important.

3.56 **Finding 3 - A conducive and settled domestic environment is required**

Given their long-term nature, any transformational reform programme will be subject to external, unanticipated events. Notwithstanding these, at a domestic political level, this study found that a conducive and settled domestic environment should be sought when introducing and implementing major transformational reform programmes, including:

- Cross-party political support for the transformational reform programme, thus enabling continuity of support should there be electoral change.
- Creating 'buy-in' and support for the reforms from the public.
- Providing long-term budgetary stability that can ensure the required investment levels are available over the reform programme's multiyear timeframe.
- Keeping the number of transformational change programmes progressed at any one time to a minimum.

3.57 **Finding 4 - Successful implementation needs strong foundations**

The study found that a series of inter-related foundations need to be in place for the successful implementation of transformational reform programmes.

Driven by transformational leadership, the foundations encompass the need for thorough planning and appraisal of the reform programme at its inception stage and the development of a clearly articulate theory of change through to the importance of having long-term political and implementation support for the reform.

3.58 Finding 5 - There were commonalities in the structures and functions present at the national, regional, local and locality levels

The transformational reform programmes each took a different form but, despite their differences, CELCIS found there were commonalities to the structures and functions:

- At the national level, there was a lead government department and/or national children and family agency that set national policy and legislation, and was responsible for implementing the transformational reform programmes, working in partnership with multiple stakeholder organisations. Also at the national level were the children's services inspectorate and children's rights commissioner functions.
- At the regional level, health services for children and adults were widely planned and delivered.
- At the local (authority) level, children and families' social care services were jointly planned for, managed and increasingly commissioned.
- At the locality level, branded, multi-agency teams and hubs operated (often in co-located sites) to provide prevention and early intervention support. Services and joint working at this level were found to be most impactful on the lives of children and families.

3.59 Finding 6 - Strong national leadership and investment is required for the design and implementation of transformational reform

Across the case studies, stakeholders had asked for stronger national leadership and investment in the following areas:

- National leadership in delivering on children's health and social care needs.
- National practice guidance, standards, models and tools that provide clarity to multi-agency practitioners and can support inter-agency working.
- Integrated IT systems that can support information sharing and recording.
- National measures or indicators of children's outcomes and a national data information system that supports consistent recording and reporting of these.
- National workforce planning.
- Standardisation of procurement processes and requirements.

3.60 Finding 7 - The locality level is the main setting for integrated working

The crucial level of service delivery was at the locality level. It is characterised by co-located, multi-agency staff working flexibly together to listen to and meet the needs of children, young people and families before they require more specialist and statutory support. The learning from the case studies is that these structures benefit from having a consistent public recognition across the country and operate at a level where they each serve an average catchment size of 40,000-60,000 people.

3.61 **Finding 8 - Continued attention needs to be paid to the interfaces between services**

Across the health and social care case studies, persistent challenges were evident in how children, young people and families can access more specialist services, such as disability and mental health services, and how to support young people's transitions to adult services. The dynamic nature of the interfaces between different services, for example, due to changing waiting list sizes, mean that continued attention is needed into how services work together so that these are seamless for children, young people and families.

3.62 **Finding 9 - Continued attention needs to be paid to workforce recruitment and retention**

The impact of worsening workforce recruitment and retention challenges must also be understood. These have a direct impact on staffing and resource levels, waiting lists for services, and impede opportunities for more strategic planning and developments.

3.63 **Finding 10 - Wider policy agendas influence - and must be influenced by the experiences of children and families**

Across the case studies, services were reporting increasing and more complex needs among children and families, with rising poverty levels and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic contributing to this. The children's health and social care system and services alone cannot tackle these wider economic and societal challenges. Other government departments, such as housing and social security departments, need to listen to the circumstances that children and families are experiencing and actively consider how their policy and funding decisions can play their part in responding to their needs.

3.64 **Finding 11 - Integrated children's health and social care systems require a range of features to be in place**

Figure 3 uses our learning from the case studies to put forward the features that support the integration.



Figure 3: Features of Integrated Children's Health and Social Care Systems

- 3.65 The conclusion from these case studies is that there is no one approach that can be recommended for implementation in Scotland. However, there is learning to be taken from the case studies, not least the consensus around the functions that require national leadership, investment and development; the critical importance of facilitating multi-agency working at the most local level to children and families; and the need to attend to the factors that support effective implementation of reforms.
- 3.66 Findings 5 and 7 strongly steer the focus on locality working to improve outcomes for children and families and these findings will be considered by the Children's Services Board.
- 3.67 Finding 8 recognises the criticality of the interface between children and adult services. Work is on-going through our GIRFEC pathfinders, but it will be important to make this explicit link during the upcoming refresh of the LOIP.
- 3.68 The case studies of transformational reform programmes are the second strand in a series of four, collectively known as the Children's Services Reform Research study. The findings from the case studies will be considered alongside the findings from the other three strands of the study and all will be brought together for the final research report, due to be published in October 2023.
- 3.69 **CHILDREN'S HEARING REDESIGN**
 The [Hearings for children redesign report](#) (June 2023) calls for historic reform to the Children's Hearings System in Scotland following extensive engagement with children and young people. The report calls for the creation

of a Hearings System that puts children and families at the centre to ensure that the Children's Hearings System truly listens to and upholds the legal rights of children and their families.

3.70 The Hearings System Working Group (HSWG) was a partnership between The Promise Scotland, Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), with the Scottish Government performing an observatory role. The recommendations are based on what the Group heard from children, families, and adults with experience of the Children's Hearings System and those working alongside them. The development of the report was overseen by Sheriff Mackie and the resulting recommendations were agreed by all members of the HSWG. Together, they represent the transformational change that children and families, care experienced adults and those working alongside them have called for.

3.71 The report recommendations have the potential to have significant impact for all parts of the children's system in order to transform how children and families experience the Children's Hearings System and in the way that more robust, timely and consistent decision-making and more bespoke, high-quality support will help to keep the promise and uphold the rights of children and their families.

3.72 key recommendations include:

- Ensuring equitable availability of, and access to, early and ongoing help and support for children and for their families. In particular, ensuring all children and families are able to access the help and support that they need, when they need it, in the way that they need it, for as long as they need it.
- Actioning the Scottish Government's commitment to spending at least 5% of all community based health and social care on preventative whole family support measures by 2030.
- Urgently addressing the challenges relating to the recruitment, retention and resourcing of child and family social work teams.
- Paying serious and sustained attention to maintaining and supporting the children and families' workforce so that they are best placed to undertake the complex work required of them in a way that is characterised by a rights-respecting, trauma informed approach. This includes the third sector workforce.
- Ensuring consistent, high-quality provision of Family Group Decision Making and Restorative Justice services across Scotland.
- Addressing the pervasive impact of child poverty, the links between poverty and the Children's Hearings System and ensuring these recommendations are linked to the national work to reduce poverty and meet the child poverty targets.

3.73 The report calls for help and support, including whole family support, mental health and other important wellbeing services, to be available for all children and families who need it, regardless of whether they are engaged with the Children's Hearings System or not and this will be considered as we continue to develop our model of Family Support.

3.74 The full list of recommendations are contained in Appendix A.

3.75 Children and Family Services will continue to consider the implications of the published reform alongside multi-agency partners through the Children's Services Board to ensure that we remain ready to respond positively to any national policy changes. Committee will be further updated when the final Daniels's report has been published in October 2023.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations 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 changing our local system to reflect changes in national policy.	Regular reporting to Committee.	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Education Service and Children's Social Work keeping abreast of developments associated with the Reforms.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that staff feel disconnected from national Reforms	Information shared timeously with colleagues and engagement promoted.	L	Yes
Financial	No significant risks identified			

Reputational	No risks identified			Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement Delivery of progressive educational policies</p>	<p>The proposals in this report do not directly impact operational practice but do signal some of the changes that may be made to the future shape of the education and wider children’s services system.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
<p>Prosperous Economy - 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026</p> <p>Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty.</p> <p>Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.</p>	<p>The review of the national approach to assessment and qualifications is likely to have a positive impact on those who do less well in a traditional exam situation.</p> <p>The children’s services reforms will support our move to the provision of more upstream support.</p>
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026</p> <p>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>The review of the national approach to assessment and qualifications is likely to have a positive impact on those who do less well in a traditional exam situation.</p> <p>The review of the vision for Scottish Education is likely to drive more flexible and inclusive approaches to the delivery of education.</p>

Regional and City Strategies	
Regional Cultural Strategy	The recommendations in this report do not directly impact any of Regional or City Strategies at this point but are likely to heavily influence longer term planning.
Prevention Strategy	
Children's Services Plan	
National Improvement Framework Plan	

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No integrated Impact Assessment is required as the recommendations are currently being considered by the Scottish Government and next steps have not been proposed to consider.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	No

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

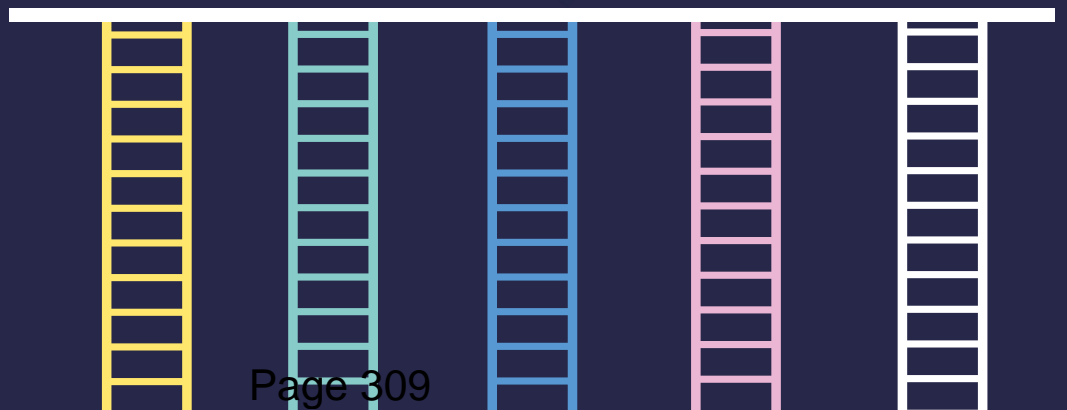
Appendix A – Hearings for Children redesign report recommendations

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Eleanor Sheppard
Title	Interim Director Children and Families
Email Address	esheppard@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 522707

What will recommended changes to the Children's Hearings System look like for children and families?

Hearings for Children: The Redesign Report
Summary of recommendations



One

The success of the redesign of the Children's Hearings System

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- Where children are safe and loved, the right support will be in place to enable them to stay at home with their families and communities.
 - When children and families need help and support at any point in their life, it will be available when they need it, for as long as they need it, regardless of whether they are engaged with the Children's Hearings System or not. It will feel coordinated and consistent, with clear, sustainable ways to access holistic whole family support, mental health, and other important wellbeing services.
 - Restorative Justice and Family Group Decision Making will be consistently available across Scotland and routinely offered, where appropriate.
 - The people working alongside children and families, including social workers, will be happy, healthy, skilled and supported with enough time to get to know them well.
 - There will be enough happy, healthy, and skilled social workers to work closely alongside children and families so that they know them well, and are able to share relevant and important information with the Children's Hearing.
 - Scotland's decision makers will work closely together to understand more about the relationship between poverty and families who have experience with the Children's Hearings System.
-

Two

The scaffolding of the Children's Hearings System

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- Everyone in the Children's Hearings System, from the Reporter to the Chair, will work closely alongside children and their families, will listen to their voices and will make decisions alongside them wherever possible.
 - The entire Children's Hearings System will understand children and their needs in the context of their entire family and the complexity of family circumstances.
 - The language used in Hearings will be non-judgmental. The way that people speak about children and families will feel supportive, easy to understand, and consistent across Scotland.
 - Sheriffs will be specially trained to work alongside children and families. Experiences in the Sheriff Court will feel similar to a Hearing.
 - Everyone in the Children's Hearings System will be trained in working alongside children and their families, understanding what their rights are and how the things that have happened to them in their lives have an impact on who they are and what they do.
 - Children and families will understand their rights and how to access them.
-

-
- When possible, every child attending a Hearing will have a Child's Plan which will be at the heart of the Children's Hearings System. Every Child's Plan will be created the same way and children and families help with this.
 - The Child's Plan will set out the support needed for children and also for their families.
 - Change will feel coordinated across the Children's Hearings System and the people and organisations working together to operate the system will meet with the Scottish Government to decide how they should work together.
-



Three

The pathway to the Reporter

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- The Children's Hearings System will be engaged in the lives of children and their families at the right time.
 - People referring children to the Reporter will keep in mind the importance of the developmental milestones of little children.
 - The Reporter and the workforce will work closely together alongside children and families and listen to their views about the help and support that would make the most difference in their lives.
 - The people who work alongside children and their families will work together and have a clear understanding of the referral process. The Reporter will be more involved to help with this.
 - Intensive family support services will be available before the birth of a child. The Reporter will be able to work with expectant parents earlier to avoid rushed and emergency decisions.
 - The Criminal Justice System and the Children's Hearings System will feel coordinated and provide reassurance on rights and access to them.
-

Four

The introduction of advocacy, legal advice and the Reporter

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- The way that the Reporter works will change. Reporters will work closely with children and their families and listen to their views.
- Advocacy support will be immediately offered at the point of referral to the Reporter, and will eventually be extended to the family, in addition to the child. This offer will be repeated at different stages of the process.
- Children will be fully informed of their right to legal representation. There will be a review to ensure the current ways to access legal aid and their right to legal support is upheld.

Five

The reasons the Children's Hearings System has become involved in a child and family's life

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- Children and families will understand the reasons they have been referred to the Children's Hearings System. These will be written in a rights-based way and the process will feel more supportive. The good and happy things in children and family's lives will be talked about as well as the things that are difficult.
- Grounds will be agreed in a separate process before children and families attend a Hearing.
- Where possible children and families will meet the same Sheriff if they are in Court and their experiences in Court will be similar to their experiences in their Hearings.
- There will not be long waits while grounds are being established.

Six

The decision-making model

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- A Children's Hearing will not feel confrontational. The main objective will be to think about what is best for the child and the way this happens will feel calm, coordinated and safe.
 - There will be a consistent, highly-qualified Chair of the Panel and two Panel Members.
 - To ensure the best decisions are made by the Hearing, the process of how decisions are made by the Panel will change:
 1. The Panel, children, and families will feel better prepared for the Hearing and involved in the decisions about how it should happen.
 2. The Hearing will take place and then there will be a break for everyone to have a rest and reflect.
 3. The Chair will share a verbal decision in a way that will be understood. A larger written decision, also understood by children and families, will be shared shortly after the Hearing.
-

Seven

The people making decisions

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- All Panel Members will be able to work closely alongside children and families and they will be kind, empathetic and respectful.
 - The Chair will become a familiar face for the child as they follow them through their journey in the Hearings System. The Chair will know the child's background so they will not need to retell their story at every Hearing. Having a better understanding of the child's story will also support the Chair and the Panel make the best decisions.
 - Upholding the family's right to a fair Hearing and right to family life will be an important part of the Chair's role.
 - Children and families will feel safe, listened to and respected that their Hearing is being managed as the Chair will have the skills needed to 'hold the room'.
 - The Chair will know how to follow up on the big decisions made in a Hearing and have a responsibility to hold others accountable for actions they agreed to.
-

-
- During a Hearing, everyone in the room will be supported to share their view and the discussion will not be overwhelmed by the strongest voice.
 - Children and families will not feel overwhelmed by the number of people in a Hearing as everyone in the room will be a clear role. This means that Reporters will only attend a Hearing when they have a meaningful contribution to make, and it is in the best interests of children and their families.
 - When possible, the Reporter attending the Hearing will be familiar to the child and their families as it will be the same Reporter they engaged with as part of the referral processes and establishment of grounds.
 - The other meetings and processes that children and families may be part of relating to their protection, care and support will feel part of the same system and children and families won't be confused about the purpose of them.
-



Eight

The participation and preparation before a Children's Hearing

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- The preparation phase before a Hearing will feel more detailed and inclusive, ensuring children and families are involved and children feel ownership over their Hearing.
- Communication about the Hearing will be sent in the name of the Chair, making interactions with the Hearing feel more streamlined and less confusing to children and families.
- Before a Hearing, children and their families will be given an opportunity to meet the Chair in a 'get to know me' meeting so they are a familiar face at the Hearing, and to learn more about the process.
- When possible, Hearings will take place at a time and place which causes the least disruption in the lives of children and families. They will be able to share their preferences and feel the system is being flexible to meet their needs.
- The Chair will be able to make decisions about how the Hearings will look and feel without needing to get the whole Panel together.
- All communication from the Hearings System will be easy to understand. Children and families will be supported when papers are received.
- Children will be encouraged to attend their Hearings and supported to make sure their voices are heard. If children do not come to their Hearing there must be ways to include them in the processes anyway and to listen to their views, even if they are very little.

-
- All children will be supported to understand what was discussed and what decisions were made.
 - The Panel will have access to the Child's Plan and information about children and families that is shared with the Panel will reflect their voices and make sense to them. The important people in a child's life will be involved in the discussions where appropriate.
 - Children, families, and the workforce will be given the time needed to read the information they receive before a Hearing takes place.
-

Nine

The voices and involvement of children and their families

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- Children and families will feel empowered to be involved in their Hearings and recognised by those working alongside them, including Panel Members, as the expert of their lives and their stories.
 - The decision-making process will be inclusive and give children and families the feeling of working alongside the Panel to make the best decisions possible. Their rights and the choices about how they want to share their views and participate will be clear.
 - Children and families will be actively encouraged to participate and share their views in Hearings.
 - There will be special ways to listen to younger children.
 - The use of recording and written transcriptions in a Hearing will be considered. Improvement work will continue to explore other uses of technology to support children and family to share their views.
-

Ten

The people working alongside children and their families

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- Everyone in the room at a Children's Hearing will have clear roles and responsibilities which will be explained to children and families. They will use clear language and will be respectful to each other.

Eleven

The decisions available to the Children's Hearing and the support for children and their families

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- Children and families will receive the help and support outlined in the Child's Plan, which will be linked to the child's order.
- Orders will be more specific about the help and support children and families need and will protect safe, loving, and supportive relationships.
- Children will not live in Secure Care for longer than need and their rights will be upheld.
- Wherever possible, the same Chair should be present at Hearings for brothers and sisters too.
- Wherever possible, children must remain with consistent caregivers when it is not possible for them to remain safely at home.
- Panels will think carefully and take into consideration what it means for a child to be away from their family.
- Children will be able to see the important people in their lives when it is safe for them to do so.



-
- Children and families will be provided with help and support after a Hearing takes place.
 - The specific needs of 16 and 17 years olds will be met by organisations working together within the Children's Hearings System.
 - Children will not be in the Children's Hearings System for longer than needed.
 - Children, families, and those working alongside them will understand what needs to happen to 'exit' the Children's Hearings System.
 - Children and families will feel the appeal process is understandable, accessible, and timely.
 - When possible, the Sheriff in the appeals process will be familiar to the child and their family.
-

Twelve

The oversight, enforcement, accountability and review of a child's order

What will these changes look like for children and families?

- Although the decisions of the Hearing will continue to be focused on the child, the Hearing will consider the importance of support for the whole family.
- The people responsible for making sure an order is implemented with have more power to make sure children and families are receiving the support that was promised to them.
- Children, families, the important people in their lives, and those working alongside them will be able to keep in touch with the Hearing about how things are going.
- Review Hearings will be a supportive place for open and honest conversations about progress, strengths, and challenges.

Thirteen

The accountability of the Children's Hearings System

What would these changes look like for children and families?

- Children and families will feel the improvements organisations will continue to make.
 - The right organisations will share the right information at the right time to make sure they understand if the lives of children have improved.
 - There will be one place to go to make a complaint about the Children's Hearings System.
-

Fourteen

The implementation of the recommendations

What would these changes look like for children and families?

- The redesign of the Children's Hearings System will truly transform the lives of children and their families.
 - Change will happen. And everyone will work together to make sure it does, alongside children, families and adults with experience of the Children's Hearing System.
 - A plan for change will be led by the Scottish Government.
 - What children and families say is working well in different areas across Scotland would be implemented nationally.
 - There will be clear communication about these changes for children, families, and those who work in and around the Children's Hearings System.
-

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Inspection Reporting
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/234
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne/ Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne / Graeme Simpson
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 and had a report published since July 2023.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 notes the content of this report; and
- 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 Framework agreed at Committee in July 2023.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 Care Inspectorate Inspections

The Care Inspectorate continue to inspect on a risk basis, leading to a higher proportion of settings being inspected where complaints or issues have been raised with them.

3.2 **Flexible Childcare Services Cummings Park** was inspected in May 2023. Inspectors noted improvements had been made and the service had met the majority of requirements from the previous inspection. The manager and staff were observed to be committed to supporting the continuous improvement of the service, this was reflected in their self-evaluation and ongoing improvement plan. Inspectors noted that staff were kind and had developed positive relationships with the children and their families in their care. This led to an improved ethos.

Children were cared for in a bright and welcoming environment. Improvements to the sleeping arrangements meant children were able to relax, rest, and sleep

in a comfortable and safe space. Although children were offered nutritious and healthy lunches improvements could be made to ensure children experience consistent high quality mealtimes.

Inspectors felt that the deployment of staffing could be improved further to ensure children were provided with the care and support needed to help them reach their full potential.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)

The team were disappointed with the grades but acknowledged that there are still improvements to be made. The setting will remain in the intensive support category of the Quality Improvement Framework. The service will remain on a Service Improvement Period (SIP) until their next inspection. The updated plan to address recommendations can be found at Appendix A.

A link to the full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.3 **Glashieburn ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in May 2023. Inspectors noted that children were cared for by nurturing, patient, kind staff who knew children well, showing respect for their individuality, needs and wishes. Children were cared for in pleasant, comfortable surroundings. Requirements in respect to the safety of the environment, made at the previous inspection, had been met. Opportunities for children to learn and develop new skills were embedded throughout the setting, where a culture of continuous improvement supported positive experiences and outcomes for children. Staff were well supported by management to work as a team in delivering high quality provision.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)
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)

The team were delighted with the report which highlights their hard work and achievements. The team agreed to review the lunchtime routine as part of their ongoing evaluation to ensure consistency for all children. Glashieburn will sit within the universal support category of the Quality Improvement Framework.

A link to the full inspection report can be found [here](#)

- 3.4 **Kittybrewster ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision was inspected in May 2023. Inspectors noted that some children had fun during their play, and many

enjoyed forming friendships. The setting was comfortable with good quality furnishings for children. Transitions, including mealtimes, were not well planned for and were often task oriented. Staff were not always aware of important information held within children's personal plans. Quality assurance was not yet leading to significant improvements in outcomes for children.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Weak (2)

Although some areas of strength were identified, there were areas for improvement identified. The setting will now work on robust self-evaluation and quality assurance processes to ensure improved outcomes for children and their families. The service will be placed in the intensive support category of the Quality Improvement Framework. The action plan is available at Appendix B.

A link to the full inspection report can be found [here](#)

- 3.5 **Milltimber ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in June 2023. Inspectors noted that staff were kind, supportive and knew the children very well. Children were confident, happy, independent and had fun playing with their friends. Children benefitted from playing and learning in a stimulating, purpose-built nursery where staff worked together to create a welcoming environment for children and families.

Robust quality assurance processes were in place for the continual improvement of the service, this included self-evaluation and staff monitoring. Managers will continue to support staff in developing their observation skills to help plan next steps for children to ensure progression in learning.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)
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)

The team were delighted with the report which highlights their hard work and achievements. The team will continue to work on their observation skills and planning for progression in learning. Milltimber will sit within the universal support category of the Quality Improvement Framework.

The link to the full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.6 **Walker Road ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in June 2023. Inspectors noted that quality assurance processes were starting to make a positive impact on the service and there had been improvements since the last inspection however these need to continue. They found most children were

cared for by nurturing staff who responded quickly and thoughtfully to children's changing needs.

Inspectors commented on the organisation of lunchtime which supported children to have a positive experience and increase their independence skills. Although children engaged positively in learning opportunities, they would benefit from a more personalised approach which includes greater challenge and differentiation to reflect their age and stage of development.

Inspectors noted that the garden area had been significantly improved and children enjoyed playing there. To ensure all children are supervised and kept safe, staff require to more consistently communicate with each other. Areas accessible from the setting require to be made secure to avoid children accessing them without adult supervision.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)

Since the inspection all areas adjacent to the playroom are now inaccessible to children unless accompanied by an adult. Staff will continue to drive improvements forward and continue to address the requirements. Staff are looking forward to the move to the purpose built ELC within the new Greyhope School building. Walker Road will remain in the intensive support category within the Quality Improvement Framework and the updated action plan is available at Appendix C.

The full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.7 Kirkhill ELC**, an Aberdeen City run provision, was inspected in July 2023. This was the second full inspection in 6 weeks. Care Inspectorate would normally offer a support visit due to the poor grades however, due to timings, this had not been possible. Inspectors noted that improvements had been made to standards of cleanliness and staff were more confident in infection, prevention and control measures.

Inspectors commented on the enthusiasm and kind and caring nature of staff however they felt there was a need for quality assurance processes to be further embedded to ensure continuous improvement and good outcomes for children.

Inspectors noted that the indoor and outdoor environments required further improvement.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)

Since the inspection the recommendations around the environment have been addressed by corporate landlord. Inspectors could see progress was being made. Staff will continue to drive forward improvements and work to address unmet requirements. The updated Action Plan is available in Appendix D.

The full report can be found [here](#)

3.7 The education service continues to support ELC and School Age Childcare settings to improve quality and have action plans in place to drive improvement where appropriate.

3.8 The variation in inspection outcomes is being addressed through a revision of approaches to quality improvement and an alignment of professional learning opportunities to the core Quality Indicators. The proposed approach was endorsed at the July meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

3.9 **Children's Social Work**

In June 2023 the Care Inspectorate intimated their intention on behalf of the Scottish Government to undertake a Disabled Children and Young People Thematic Review. The thematic review will involve all 32 local authorities. The reporting on the inspection findings will be on a national basis and the Care Inspectorate intend to publish their report in the summer of 2024.

3.10 As part of the thematic inspection the Care Inspectorate will undertake a 'deeper dive' across four partnership areas. Aberdeen City have agreed to be one of these areas and this will involve a range of inspection activities predominantly over November 2023 – February 2024. It will include a level of file reading; meeting with children, young people, and families in receipt of support/services as well as meeting with relevant staff.

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	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Positive engagement with Inspection agencies and sharing learning across the system where appropriate.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that schools/ELC settings do not accurately identify the areas for improvement that will make the greatest difference to learners	Quality assurance arrangements in place to validate self-evaluation gradings	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 Quality Improvement and Inspection visits	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	External scrutiny provides helpful assurance that there is sufficient focus on helping young people

<p>Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices.</p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>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>
<p><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></p>	
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p>	<p>Engagement with inspectors provides an opportunity to learn from national best practice and 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	A stage 1 integrated impact assessment has been completed and submitted as part of this report.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No DPIA is required.
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – FCCS Cummings Park Improvement Plan

Appendix B – Kittybrewster CI Action Plan
Appendix C – Walker Road CI Improvement Plan
Appendix D – Kirkhill CI Action Plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Shona Milne/Graeme Simpson
Title	Chief Education Officer
Email Address	shmilne@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 522000

Appendix A



Cummings Park Improvement Plan

Date:

Improvements Required	Action to be taken	Who is responsible	Time Scale	Impact on children	Progress Updates
<p>Safety in the garden to ensure no potential risk of children leaving the facility unsupervised</p> <p>Broken resources and foreign objects in garden area</p>	<p>All Pallets and resources that children are able to climb removed from the fence area.</p> <p>Thorough risk assessments to be in place and garden checklists to be carried out before children enter the garden area and throughout the day to ensure all broken resources and foreign objects are removed</p>	<p>Management</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>10th July 2023 to rectify</p> <p>Ongoing afterwards</p>	<p>Children will have a safe and secure garden area to explore.</p>	<p>4th July all pallets and resources removed from fence area.</p> <p>Staff undertaking thorough garden checks before children go into garden space and throughout the day.</p>
<p>Children's Personal plans to hold all relevant information and staff to use this</p>	<p>Ensuring that all personal plans are up to date and include information from</p>	<p>Management</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Children will be cared for and practitioners will use all up to date</p>	<p>Personal plans reviewed and all relevant information included</p>

<p>information to effectively support them.</p>	<p>registration and all about me forms.</p> <p>Update additional information when required, personal plans reviewed with parents to ensure all information is accurate. Supporting families when needed for example getting to know there background, any trauma experiences etc, and ensure that we are here to help and give advice when needed.</p>			<p>information to understand their needs.</p>	
<p>Staff to be knowledgeable in GIRFEC (Getting it right for every child) and to use this knowledge to provide individualised and responsive care relevant to children’s needs</p>	<p>All staff and management to undertake the GIRFEC training on Azilo</p>	<p>Management Staff</p>		<p>Children will be cared for by practitioners who have the relevant knowledge and training.</p>	

<p>Effective staffing at mealtimes</p> <p>Self-Serving meals</p>	<p>Enough staff to be present over mealtimes to effectively support the children.</p> <p>Staff to be aware of the age stage and development of children when self-serving. All runny consistency food to be served by staff members.</p>	<p>Management</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Children will have better mealtime experiences and be kept safe.</p>	
<p>Medication to be accurately recorded.</p>	<p>Audit all medication forms to ensure that accurate information is recorded.</p> <p>All staff to read the Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services from the Care Inspectorate</p>	<p>Management</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Medication forms audited monthly.</p> <p>All staff to read Management of medication in daycare of children and childminding services by</p>	<p>Children's health needs will be effectively met and children will be kept safe.</p>	
<p>To support children's learning and development,</p>	<p>Staff to ensure that they are providing high quality play experiences that meet the children's</p>	<p>Management</p> <p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The children will have better learning experiences through play.</p>	

	age, needs and stage of development.				
--	--------------------------------------	--	--	--	--

Support positive and improved outcomes for children and families,	Chronologies to be audited to ensure all relevant information is recorded,	Management Staff	Chronologies reviewed by 7 th July	Children's needs will be effectively met.	06.07.2023 Chronologies reviewed to ensure that all relevant information is up to date.
Monitoring of staff practice	Management and staff within the rooms to monitor staff practice.	Management Staff	Ongoing	Children will have better play and interaction experiences.	

Appendix B – Kittybrewster CI Action Plan

Areas for improvement	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion
How good is our care play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support & 1.3 Play and learning				
Staff need to know the information in the personal plans to use them to support the children and ensure their needs are being met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key workers will be responsible for producing and updating their child's Personal Plans • All staff will be given time off the floor to familiarise themselves with the Personal Plans. • Morning staff meetings will include any updates to personal plans, these meetings are minuted and accessible to all staff in Teams. • Relief staff coming into setting will get an overview of important information from Personal Plans DHT and Acting SEYP will create a summary document to be shared with relief staff. 	All Staff – 29 th May and ongoing. All staff by Friday 16 th June All Staff – 31 st May and ongoing. DHT by Friday 9 th June	All children are getting their needs met by all members of staff in the setting. Children feel valued, respected, and cared for.	
Transitions need planned around the children's needs to support all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the drop off and collection procedures to lessen transition times. A new barrier will be used to prevent the Wild Garden being used. • Lunch and substantial snack to also have a table in setting for some children. 	All staff Tuesday 23 rd May All staff Tuesday 23 rd May	Children's transitions are reduced and children are supported during the necessary transitions. They will be happier and more regulated.	

Areas for improvement	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion
How good is our care play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support & 1.3 Play and learning				
Ensure children are treated with respect and have loving, caring interactions that ensure they are getting their needs met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT to observe staff interactions and give feedback and next steps to staff. Staff to observe staff in other settings to develop practice. EEP to model positive interactions. Staff to have a good understanding of children's personal plans and supporting information to know how to support children. 	<p>Ongoing from 29/5/23</p> <p>Starting June 13th – ongoing</p> <p>Starting June 13th – ongoing</p> <p>All staff by Friday 16th June</p>	Children feel loved and respected and receive consistent, high-quality personalised care. Interactions will support their development and emotional well being.	
Staff can deal with behaviour in a positive and restorative way, so all children are clear of the expectations and also why they are to behave certain ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT and EEP to role model using restorative approaches to dealing with behaviour. Staff to observe staff in other settings to develop practice. Staff to have training on Emotion Works. 	<p>Starting May 29th – ongoing</p> <p>Starting June 13th – ongoing</p> <p>Starting August 23</p>	Children's behaviour is dealt with in a positive way and they have an understanding of the consequence of their actions and how to make this right. Children feel cared for and respected.	
How good is our setting? 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities				
Staff need to enhance the learning environment on offer through their positive interactions with children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT to observe staff interactions and give feedback and next steps to staff. Staff to observe staff in other settings to develop practice. EEP to model positive interactions. 	<p>May 29th - ongoing</p> <p>Starting June 13th – ongoing</p> <p>Starting June 13th – ongoing</p>	Children will benefit from play experiences which are well planned around their individual needs and extended in a way which is personal to them.	
Use of Wild Garden at drop off and pick up to be considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers ordered and to be used as a protective factor, so the wild garden is not required. Risk assessment to be updated. 	<p>Immediately, started 23rd May</p> <p>23rd May</p>	Children will benefit from relaxed, uninterrupted play experiences	
Ensure staff are communicating and following all safety procedures that are in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff spoken to about the importance of this and the policies and procedures in place to be accessed by staff if required. Relief Staff will have an overview of this during their induction 	DHT 22 nd May or 24 th May	All children will feel and be safe at all times.	

Nappy changing areas to be made more attractive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff observing in other settings to look at nappy changing areas. Nappy changing areas to be developed. 	Starting June 13 th – ongoing	Children accessing this area will enjoy the experience more	
Ensure children are hand washing properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all staff know the correct procedure for hand washing. During hand washing times such as before lunch ensure there is a member of staff assigned to be near sinks supervising and encouraging good handwashing procedures. 	DHT Friday 2 nd June All staff by Friday 9 th June	Children will not be exposed to germs that may cause them to be unwell.	
How good is our leadership? - 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well				
Staff know and understand the Quality Improvement Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email all staff a copy of the 'Quality Framework for daycare of children, child minding and school-aged children.' Staff to become familiar with this document and how it is used. DHT to ensure when we are using this for our self-evaluation that the document is referenced and on display. 	DHT – by 31 st May All staff by June 30 th Ongoing	Children should have improved experiences in ELC.	
Staff need to be using the visions, values and aims in their practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all staff are aware of our vision, values and aims. Reintroduce our termly focus on these vision, values and aims and the ACC Guiding principles. Ensure observations related to these. 	DHT – by 1 st June DHT 7 th June - ongoing	Children will be accessing an environment that is child centred and everyone is working towards the same goal. Interactions with staff will be improved.	
Self Evaluation needs to improve the quality of interactions and staff to focus on the children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT to observe staff interactions and give feedback and next steps to staff. Staff to observe staff in other settings to develop practice. EEP to model positive interactions. 	Ongoing from 29/5/23 Starting June 13 th – ongoing Starting June 13 th – ongoing	Children will be accessing an environment that is child centred and everyone is working towards the same goal. Interactions with staff will be improved and ensure that children feel care and nurture.	
How good is our staff team? – 4.3 Staff deployment				
Staff are competent in and knowledgeable about national, local, and the service's own	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give all staff a summary of the Child Protection Training they have received and ensure they all understand the process and in particular when there is no DHT or HT in setting. 	DHT – by Friday 2 nd June	Children will be well protected from harm and any information required to support	

child protection procedures and GIRFEC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to ensure yearly Child Protection Training. Ensure up to date guidance is displayed on the wall and ELC Locality Lead numbers are on this. 	HT/DHT every August. DHT By Friday 9 th June	them to do so will be shared appropriately to ensure that their welfare is paramount at all times.	
Staff have the skills necessary to support all children and meet their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT to observe staff interactions and give feedback and next steps to staff. Staff to observe staff in other settings to develop practice. EEP to model positive interactions. Staff to have a good understanding of children's personal plans and supporting information to know how to support children. 	Ongoing from 29/5/23 Starting June 13 th – ongoing Starting June 13 th – ongoing All staff by Friday 16 th June	Children will be supported by staff who are knowledgeable and fully aware of their care and learning needs and are able to communicate effectively in order to promote these, improving outcomes for children and families.	
There are appropriate staff on at times to ensure staff can meet children's needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEYP post to be filled both 37 and 30 hours Staff rota changed to add an additional staff member 8-9 and till 5.30pm. 	DHT & LLO – by August 23 Immediately, started 23 rd May	Children will feel supported as there will be staff working that know them and can support their needs.	
Supply staff in settings are mentored and supported to allow them to fulfil their role effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supply staff to continue with induction process. Supply staff to be given a summary of personal plans to ensure they have the information required to keep children safe and meet their needs. Document with a summary to be created and shared as part of the induction process. DHT to report any supply staff not meeting minimum requirements. LLO to look at the mentoring and training of relief staff. 	EYP's DHT by Fri 9 th June Immediately LLO – ongoing	All children will be kept safe and supported by all staff. Children will be getting their needs met at all times.	

Key

DHT – Depute Head Teacher & Registered Manager

LLO – Locality Lead Officer



**Walker Road School ELC Setting
Care Inspectorate Action Plan – August 2023**

How good is our care, play and learning?

1.1 Nurturing care and support

Area for Improvement	Action Required	Date for Completion	Desired Outcomes for Children	Evidence and Confirmed Completion
To provide high quality care and wellbeing of children, the provider should ensure staff:				
Develop their knowledge and understanding of positive behaviour strategies in supporting children.	1) Staff will engage in professional learning/dialogue to support them to understand and use positive behaviour strategies.	By end Sept 23 then ongoing	All children receive the support they require to reach their full potential.	In house training calendar to run alongside weekly staff meetings.
	2) Staff engagement with partners will enhance understanding of strategies to support positive behaviour. Partners will include Health Visitors, SALT, Autism Outreach, Educational and Psychologists.	By end Sept 23 then ongoing	Greater partnership with other professionals will support a more holistic view of children.	Meeting with Health Visitors to discuss individual children's needs 24/08/23. Agreed to reconvene before the end of term once children have settled and we have informative observations to share, and we can agree next steps.
			Agreed support strategies will be included in Personal Plans and use to support.	
3) There will be regular staff meetings with a focus on children's wellbeing and support strategies.	By end Aug 23 then ongoing	Children experience warm, caring and nurturing approaches which support their wellbeing.	Staff minutes recorded by SEPYP's.	
Have full and detailed information about strategies in place for individual children.	4) Ensure that children's personal plans include strategies to support their individual needs.	By end Sept 23 the ongoing	Personal Plans reflect the individual child and their support needs.	New Personal Plans document in place for start of school year. All staff have access to personal

				plans through shared digital drive. Key workers are responsible for updating children's plans using the SHANNARI indicators and sharing support strategies with whole team. SEYP will audit personal plans as part of the QA calendar.
	5) Written guidance on support strategies and how to record these in children's plans will be available to staff members.	By end Sept 23	Effective information sharing will support consistency and continuity of care for every child.	
Use them consistently to provide continuity of support.	6) Strategies for individual children are known by all staff members as result of daily huddles and weekly staff meetings.	By end Sept 23 then ongoing	Children's individual needs and next steps are identified. Support strategies are then established.	Recording of huddles and meetings are available for staff to view on shared digital drive.

How good is our care, play and learning?

1.3 Play and learning

Area for Improvement	Action Required	Date for Completion	Desired Outcomes for Children	Evidence and Confirmed Completion
<p>To enable children to receive high quality care, play, learning and development opportunities, the provider, manager, and staff should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to:</p>				
<p>Provide more challenge to children in their learning</p> <p>Extend and deepen children's learning further.</p>	<p>1) Staff will follow newly introduced learning and observation guidance when completing the planning cycle for learning contexts. This will provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An improved learning environment is stimulating and promotes curiosity. • An increased focus on health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy. • Opportunities for children to extend and deepen learning. <p>SEYPs and DHT to support staff and quality assure on an ongoing basis.</p>	<p>By end Sept 23 then ongoing</p>	<p>Children have opportunities to lead their play and learning through a balance of spontaneous and planned experiences.</p>	<p>Ongoing display within setting to be updated as a working document followed by digital recording of planning in action.</p>
	<p>2) Yearly overview for adult-initiated planning will be introduced to support practitioners to develop their understanding of the Early Level curriculum and Realising the Ambition.</p>	<p>By end Aug 23</p>	<p>Children gain strong connections to their own and wider communities through their play and learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Yearly plan introduced to team for new school year. Ongoing digital recording of planning in action.</p>

	<p>3) Colleagues will engage in professional dialogue and learning to support quality interaction with children. This will be a focus of staff monitoring which will inform the identification of training needs.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Effective use of questioning will extend children's thinking and their development of skills.</p>	
	<p>4) Daily small group session including 'Teddy Talk' will take place to increase the quality of interactions and to provide additional opportunities for challenge.</p>	<p>By end Sept 23 then ongoing</p>	<p>Children's learning experiences are enhanced and promote creativity and curiosity.</p>	<p>Children have been placed in to key groups with a designated keyworker. Planned teddy talks to be responsive to children's interests and yearly overview. Staff will use the time for responsive planning to deepen lifelong learning.</p>

How Good is Our Setting

2.2 Children experience high quality facilities

Area for Improvement	Action Required	Date for Completion	Desired Outcomes for Children	Evidence and Confirmed Completion
By Friday 21 July 2023, the provider must ensure that children are safe and protected from harm. To do this, the provider must at a minimum:				
Ensure that staff are knowledgeable and competent in assessing risks and take proactive approach to keep children safe from harm.	1) Throughout summer, morning only sessions allows for staff meetings every afternoon, one of the main focuses will be around the safety of children.	10/7/23	Children to be supported and kept safe from knowledgeable staff who are working collaboratively to ensure effective communication at all times.	Complete. Evidence of a focus on safety during staff meetings.
	2) Daily huddles will take place before and after sessions for staff discussion.	10/7/23		Complete. Huddles held daily throughout the summer period.
	3) Enhanced rota for staff will be implemented giving staff members areas of the room to oversee.	10/7/23		Complete. Fortnightly duties rota improved staff deployment.
	4) Senior staff will be on the floor observing and discussing with staff in the moment any issues around deployment.	10/7/23		Complete. Staff deployment improved as a result of guidance and support.
	5) SIMOA campaign will be revisited with staff individually and as a group reviewing practice notes around transition and exploration.	WB 31/7/23		Staff reflection on SIMOA in CI evidence folder.

	6) Team to undertake "role of the practitioner" and "personal plan" training.	WB 7/8/23		Group discussion notes in CI evidence folder.
	7) Thorough check undertaken of whole nursery for any hazardous items.	WB 19/6/23		Safety check list completed by staff and overseen by SEYP.

Ensure that children do not have access to potentially hazardous items.	8) Kitchen cabinets magnetic locked lock lowered and kitchen door and shelf built-in to prevent climbing.	WB 12/6/23	Children will be able to access an environment safe from any hazards.	Magnetic locks fitted to kitchen area cupboards by janitorial team. Magnetic keys stored on wall in kitchen area.
	9) Locks placed on doors leading off the nursery room.	WB 26/6/23		Locks are checked as part of daily safety check list. Staff team and visitors are reminded to use locks when entering or leaving room attached to nursery area.
	10) Room layout reviewed to make it clearer which areas are accessible to children and to make boundaries clear.	WB 10/7/23		Staff allocated learning bays which they are responsible to maintaining.
	11) Daily checklists implemented to have a written record that checks are completed – to be checked daily by seniors initially.	WB 31/7/23		Daily check list template in CI evidence folder
Ensure effective communication takes place between staff at all times to ensure that	12) Huddles at the beginning and end of the day to discuss plans for the day and any additional transitions.	WB 10/7/23	Children will be safe, in a more easily managed and secure space. This will allow for more direct	SEYP will lead huddle to encourage information sharing between team members.

children are never left unsupervised.	13) Morning only sessions utilising staff time in the afternoons for improved communication, team building and training.	WB 10/7/23	support to be available to children from the staff team and decrease the number of interruptions to play and learning.	Ongoing plan for summer – See evidence folder
	14) Room size / layout reduced so that staff are more suitably deployed, and it is easier for them to communicate.	WB 10/7/23		Children have responded to the reduced room layout with enthusiasm. Staff are allocated based areas and body positioning has been discussed.
Implement a system for management to monitor staff practice and deployment to ensure effective supervision of children at all times.	15) Additional layer of management support will be in place with DHT returning from maternity leave supporting with interaction and environment. HT will lead on QA systems with support from EY Team.	WB 26/6/23	Effective quality assurance systems and support to staff will allow for all round improvements to safety, staff practice and environments leading to better outcomes for children.	
	16) Regular time sample observation will be undertaken around staff deployment and more intensive staff practice observations following the return to work of the whole team.	WB 24/7/23		Time sample observations saved on CI teams drive.

How good is our leadership?

3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

Area for Improvement	Action Required	Date for Completion	Desired Outcomes for Children	Evidence and Confirmed Completion
1. To improve positive outcomes for children and ensure their safety, wellbeing and learning, the provider, manager, and staff should:				
Ensure there is appropriate and effective leadership of the setting.	1) ELC management team is now established with the HT as Nursery Manager, two full-time SEYPs and with a DHT who will support the development of the environment to support children's learning.	By Aug 23	Children will experience a safe, supportive and stimulating ELC setting with the pace of improvement increasing.	
	2) All members of the Management Team will attend ACC ELC Leadership Training sessions.	Sept and Oct 23		
	3) Continue to work in effective partnership with the ACC Early Years Team.	Ongoing		
	4) SEYPs to engage in leadership and management coaching and mentoring sessions led by the HT.	By end Sept 23 then ongoing	Appropriate and effective leadership will improve the overall quality of the setting and children's experience.	
Implement effective plans for maintaining and improving the service,	5) Quality Assurance Calendar to be further developed and followed consistently throughout the session.	By end Aug 23 then ongoing	The service children and families experience will increase in consistency.	

including the use of effective self-evaluation processes, and quality assurance systems.	6) Staff deployment to be monitored fortnightly through time tracking observation.	By end Sept 23 then ongoing	The overall quality of children's learning and experience will improve.	
	7) Staff monitoring schedule to be implemented with regular 1-1 meetings to discuss feedback.	By end Sept 23 then ongoing		
Implement effective action planning to address areas of improvements addressed in this report within identified timescales.	8) Improvement plan to be very clear in terms of actions and timescales. The staff team will have ongoing engagement with self-evaluation and improvement activity. ELC Management Team and Locality Lead to regularly revisit the plan to review and ensure progress.	By end Aug 23 then ongoing	There is clear evidence of improvement in relation to all improvement priorities.	
2. In the interest of genuine partnership working the provider, manager and staff:				
Area for Improvement	Action Required	Date for Completion	Desired Outcomes for Children	Evidence and Confirmed Completion
Continue to build on the how they effectively involve children and families in the evaluation	1. Children and parents will contribute to the development of the vision, values and aims of the new Greyhope School and the relocation experience.	By end Oct 23	Children and their families will have a sense of involvement in the move to the new school and ELC setting.	

and improvement of the service.	2. The improvement plan will be displayed in a location where parents can view it. They will be encouraged to provide feedback on improvement activity and progress.	By end Sept 23	Parents will have a stronger understanding of improvement priorities which will support improved partnership and outcomes for children.	
	3. Staff will seek children's views about the nursery and their experience in the setting during keyworker and small group time.	Ongoing	Children's feedback will influence the day-to-date life and work of the setting.	
	4. Parents and other family members will spend time in the setting learning with children through scheduled opportunities such as 'stay and play'.	By end Aug 23 then ongoing	Children will benefit from their family members having a greater understanding of their learning and being more involved in this.	

Appendix D – Kirkhill Action Plan

Areas for improvement	Action required	Timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion
How good is our care play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support & 1.3 Play and learning				
Children's personal plans to ensure that children's strategies are used. For example, children's communication strategies were not used consistently by staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to revisit all children's individual care plan's and discuss strategies as a team to ensure a consistent approach. 	21 st August ongoing	Children will have consistency of approaches and shared expectations from all staff. This will underpin confidence and self-esteem and facilitate progression of learning and development	Appointments set up to review personal plans for continers - all staff to read and sign. QA calendar for monitoring Personal plans and supports being used.
Observations did not yet impact on children's experiences and were inconsistent to support and inform planning and next steps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear expectations to be given around the number of entries to ILD to ensure that parents are informed of their children learning more regularly. Further development of observation and planning systems to support staff's understanding of children's next steps to promote and record progression. Staff will review the progression pathways as a team to provide enhanced level of challenge to children. Develop links with Primary 1 in order to share learning and development across the early level. 	21 st Aug 21 st Aug 27 th Oct 27 th Oct	Children's observations will be relevant and meaningful. Next steps will positively affect progression of learning as staff's knowledge and understanding of experiences and outcomes increases. Children will benefit from more challenge within their learning to enable progression.	Clear expectations of entries communicated with staff at INSET day and displayed in staffroom as completed. QA calendar monitors this. QA calendar dates when planning and observations will be monitored. Discussed at INSET day how to record next steps on ILD.

<p>It should be ensured that effective supervision, support and encouragement is in place for all children and families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to ensure that they are sitting with children supporting lunch at all times. • Ensure that staff place focus on increased communication with parents, particularly at pick up time to ensure that all parents are aware of how their child's day has been. • Snack and mealtimes procedure to be developed to ensure consistent approach and support independence. • Look at ways to develop systems to share information between to allow more individual feedback to parents. • Additional communication methods to be increased with families such as "you said we did", questionnaires, family play days etc. 	<p>Immediately</p> <p>21st Aug</p> <p>1st Sept</p> <p>1st Sept</p> <p>27th Oct</p>	<p>Children and families will benefit from enhanced communication with staff. Clear expectations of staff will support a shared approach. Parents will feel welcome within the setting and part of their child's learning.</p>	<p>Communicated at INSET day and to be monitored by SEYP daily. Discussed how to manage this with variation in staff hours at inservice-SLT to discuss and action</p> <p>Began self service during holidays, select own cutlery and empty plate into waste, get own fruit. SEYPs to monitor consistent approach.</p>
<p>Some medication forms had not been signed by parents when medication had been administered and specified review dates had not been followed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All medication forms reviewed to ensure that these are complete. • Medication audit to be carried out to ensure that dates are maintained for reviews. • Ongoing QA systems should pick up any further inaccuracies and be addressed immediately. 	<p>All immediately and ongoing</p>	<p>Children's medication forms will be fully completed and effective for the individual needs. QA systems will be effective.</p>	<p>All current medication forms reviewed. SLT will spot check medication forms have been completed effectively and staff note on daily register if medication is to be given. SEYP carry out weekly audit QA Calendar in place and to be followed.</p>
<p>The manager and staff must be knowledgeable about child protection procedures and (GIRFEC). Staff must follow the service's procedures when reporting to ensure appropriate action is taken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior staff to undertake training with ACC Lead Child Protection officer specific to ELC. • Additional child protection training for all staff with discussion around procedures and reporting. • Child protection will form part of the city-wide managers sessions for further discussion. 	<p>10th Aug</p> <p>21st Aug</p> <p>29th Aug</p>	<p>Children's safety will be supported by knowledgeable staff who are confident in Child Protection procedures.</p>	<p>ELC Leads carried out training in holidays with SEYP. Child Protection training carried out at INSET day for all staff and staff confidence level audited to identify any further training required.</p>

How good is our setting? 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities.				
The environment needed further maintenance issues to be responded to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to talk to children about hand washing and ensure that this is effectively monitored. Hand washing station has been set up outside. Washing machine to be fixed. Fence to be lowered in the garden. Holes in the wall to be filled. Daily checks to be carried out with the children and all staff to be accountable for reporting. More permanent alarms to be fitted to kitchen doors (already temp in place). 	14 th July and ongoing 14 th July 24 th July 24 th July 24 th July and ongoing 16 th Aug	Children are safe in the Nursery environment both indoors and outdoors, with appropriate safeguarding procedures in place.	Washing Machine fixed Fence alterations complete Holes in wall filled Permanent alarms fitted All staff shown at INSET day procedure for logging broken items.
To support play and learning the manager and staff should ensure the environment is well resourced and inviting for children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to be given specific areas of the room to develop, support and maintain, including replenishing and adding resources to extend learning. 	3 rd July	Children can explore, play and learn in an environment that meets their needs with a wider range of resources and more well-resourced areas.	Staff have been assigned areas, and QA calendar shows dates for monitoring Floor Books and developing area. Manager to look into extra funding for additional resources.
How good is our leadership? - 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well				
To keep children safe and promote their wellbeing, the provider and manager should ensure effective quality assurance processes are in place, including robust audits and monitoring of staff practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time to be taken to embed quality assurance systems to ensure positive outcomes for children. Continue to follow quality assurance calendar, ensuring that audits are thorough. VV&A to be discussed and reviewed as a team, including children and families. Roles and responsibilities of the SEYPs and manager to be discussed and revisited with changes to team. 	Ongoing Ongoing 21 st Aug and ongoing 21 st Aug and ongoing	-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.	QA calendar on display and Manager review at weekly meetings with SEYPs Staff at INSET day revisited vision value and aims discussing how could be more relevant to ELC

How good is our staff team? – 4.3 Staff deployment

<p>Staff to continue to embed their knowledge and skills being developed from training and support systems to ensure good practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nappy changing procedure to be developed and shared with all staff with demonstrations at team meet. • Staff 1-2-1 meetings to be continued to ensure that individual support is offered, and that staff practice is developing. • Observations of staff practice will be undertaken with clear focus and detailed feedback, next steps and support provided by SEYPs and manager. 	<p>21st Aug</p> <p>10th July and ongoing</p> <p>27th October</p>	<p>Children and families will benefit from being supported by knowledgeable and confident staff who are able to support their learning and development fully.</p>	<p>Nappy changing procedures been discussed with all staff on INSET day and demonstrated to staff. This will be monitored by SEYP to identify further training needs. Quality assurance calendar shows dates for termly 1-2-1 meetings and observation of staff practice, clear focus at these still to be discussed.</p>
---	--	---	---	---

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education & Children's Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Northfield Advisory Group
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/229
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Education and Children's Services Committee of 23rd May 2023 instructed the Interim Director Children and Family Services to establish an Advisory Group, to help drive improvements at Northfield Academy in the longer term and routinely report the outputs of each meeting at the next scheduled meeting of the Education and Children Services Committee. This report updates the Committee on the output of the first meeting of the group held on 23rd June 2023.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the output of the first meeting of the Advisory Group.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Education Operational Delivery Committee and Children's Services Committee of 30th March 2023 instructed the Interim Director Children and Family Services to implement a governance framework, including the establishment of an Advisory Group, to help drive improvements at Northfield Academy in the longer term.
- 3.2 Officers secured the expertise of 4 external members to form the Advisory Group as reported to Committee on 23rd May 2023. The interim Director Children and Families shaped a draft agenda for the first meeting of the Group in a bid to ensure that the first meeting would provide the Advisors with a clear understanding of the school and community.
- 3.3 Advisors fed back on the proposed agenda, and amendments were made to provisional plans to ensure that all Advisors were able to glean the information they require.

DISCOVERY DAY ON 23RD JUNE 2023

- 3.4 The Advisory Group spent 23rd June at Northfield Academy. The group explored a range of school and community data, and had an opportunity to tour the school, meet with parents and carers, with young people and with the staff. The group also met with members of the Tactical Team and heard of the progress made to date and of planned next steps.
- 3.5 The Advisors commended the work undertaken to date and noted the considerable expertise being made available through the Tactical Team.
- 3.6 They believe that the innovative S1 model being implemented from August, which would see all young people being a member of a 'crew' and crew participation in a residential outward-bound experience at the start of the new school year to build strong relationships and teamwork, could provide the reset the school requires. The proposed S1 curriculum, designed to support the setting of clear expectations and awareness of and responsibility for community, was welcomed. Advisors noted the positivity around the model by S1 staff and reported important levels of positivity based on how they saw current P7s responding to the model on their transition days.
- 3.7 Advisors suggested that it would be helpful to consider how subject specialists might influence the S1 model as the initiative moves forward and noted that co-operative delivery of the S1 curriculum provides significant opportunities for staff to share ideas on pedagogy with each other.
- 3.8 The Advisors are keen to continue to receive information on levels of pupil engagement in S1 and suggested that there could be further opportunities to extend work with local primary schools further as this might help establish trusting relationships with the school in advance of transition points. There may also be opportunities to extend this model to other schools. It was suggested that young people should decide how to describe the new S1 block.
- 3.9 The Advisors commended the speed at which changes to the curriculum were made and were pleased that approaches to consultation had been clarified. The Group noted that considerable time will require to be invested by Northfield staff to ensure that appropriate courses and programmes are available and that this work should be overseen, but not delivered by the Tactical Team. Support may be available to support the development of programmes through Education Scotland.
- 3.10 Discussions with young people and parents and carers highlighted that there may be a need to invest more time in ensuring that pupils and parents are taken through the rationale for proposed changes in more depth by the school. The group also noted the importance of work currently underway to ensure that planning for S2 in 2024 builds on the successes of the S1 model and does not feel like a transition. The Advisors noted that work will be required to ensure that subject specialists benefit from their time with S1 staff delivering project-based learning, as this will help support long term improvement. The group noted that young people and parents of the S2 – S4 cohort could perceive that they were not benefiting from the change being experienced in S1 and for senior phase pupils through the ABZ campus model and the need to ensure that the benefits of the reset for all children and young people, staff and school community are well communicated and clear.

- 3.11 The Group were pleased that work to develop the vision and values for the school would culminate in a clear description of what delivering the vision, values and aims would look like. They noted that increased awareness of how pupil presentation links to trauma will take time to embed. The Group advise that careful consideration be given to how those who are witnessed not delivering the values be challenged and noted the criticality of this in helping embed sustainable changes. Mechanisms will be required to ensure that all members of the school community have a high level of personal awareness and work together to monitor compliance. This will require extremely high levels of persistence.
- 3.12 The group welcomed the work being undertaken on health and wellbeing and recognised that there will be a need to guide staff to understand when to review situations more fully. The stronger use of data to understand the impact of changes being made was welcomed.
- 3.13 The level of investment in the school by the Tactical Team and Officers is significant. The Advisors advise the establishment of a risk register to help proactively mitigate risks associated with the withdrawal of the Tactical Team and other Officers at some point in the future. They urged a consistent focus on sustainability.
- 3.14 The Advisors noted that young people and parents/carers are very invested in the school and want the school to do well. There is a considerable risk that the prevailing narrative about the school and community hampers progress and the Advisors welcomed the cross-party political support for the school and community noting the importance of this.
- 3.15 The Advisors advise the development of a media strategy to help shift the narrative. This could include:
- Taking a more proactive approach to helping young people achieve awards
 - Seeking support from partners to help promote successes
 - Engaging with the media to share how negative media coverage impacts young people
 - Routine and regular celebrations of young people and community
- 3.16 The Advisors commend current work with the Lord Dean to help engage ex pupils in the improvement journey of the school. They suggest further consideration of the skills required for life and encouraged consideration of scholarships from the Robertson Trust.
- 3.17 The Advisors suggest proactively gathering data on the assets in the community and extending partnerships with CLD and community groups and building a fuller picture of all assets available to shift the narrative around the community.
- 3.18 There is a need to ensure that the voices of young people continue to strongly steer decision making. The Advisors suggest consideration of commissioning of an independent organisation to support this work. Advisors would welcome regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of stakeholder groups (range of pupil groups, parent/carer groups and access to staff holding different positions) and suggested that engagements with stakeholders be explored more fully at the next meeting to agree an approach for the Advisors.

- 3.19 The Advisors asked that information be provided on:
- The prevalence of foetal alcohol syndrome in the community
 - Levels of domestic abuse in the community
 - Health Visiting in the community
 - Community perceptions
- 3.20 It was suggested that having an independent researcher chronical the school community improvement journey would be helpful to ensure that learning is captured to inform the next steps for both school and Local Authority. This would help ensure that scaling up opportunities are planned for and appropriately resourced. It will be important to ensure that there is clarity around what and how improvement is being measured to ensure that wider evaluative activity supports that already planned through the established LOGIC model.
- 3.21 **Summary of areas highlighted for consideration by the Advisors**
The Group advise that careful consideration should be given to how those who are witnessed not delivering against the values be challenged and noted the criticality of this in helping embed sustainable changes. Mechanisms will be required to ensure that all members of the school community have a high level of personal awareness and work together to monitor compliance. This will require a very high level of persistence.
- 3.22 Advisors suggested that it would be helpful to consider how subject specialists and S1 staff can benefit from sharing pedagogy with each other.
- 3.23 The Advisors suggest the establishment of a risk register to help proactively mitigate risks associated with the withdrawal of the Tactical Team and other Officers at some point in the future. They urged a consistent focus on sustainability.
- 3.24 The group would welcome a meeting with the Senior Leadership Team at the next meeting.
- 3.25 The Advisors suggest the development of a media strategy to help shift the narrative and suggested that the school should ensure effective communication of the benefits of the reset for all children and young people, staff and wider school community.
- 3.26 The Advisors suggest proactively gathering data on the assets in the community and extending partnerships with CLD and community groups and building a fuller picture of all assets who can support us to shift the narrative around the community.
- 3.27 There is a need to ensure that the voices of young people continue to strongly steer decision making. The Advisors suggest consideration of commissioning of an independent organisation to support this work or considering the role of the Advisors in this area.
- 3.28 It was suggested that having someone chronicle the school improvement journey would be helpful to ensure that learning is captured to inform the next steps for both school and Local Authority. This might be most easily supported through a clear framework which identifies responsibilities to ensure there is no duplication.

3.29 Members of the Education and Children’s Services Committee were invited to meet the Advisors at the end of the first meeting of the Group. The Advisors appreciated the opportunity to engage directly with Committee members.

3.29 The school and Tactical team will consider the feedback from Advisors at the start of the 2023/24 session.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Costs will be met from established budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Having regard to the Advisors feedback will assist the Council discharge its statutory duties under the Education legislation more effectively.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No risks 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 at Northfield.	Detailed plan in place to address the findings of the inspection.	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Detailed plan in place to address the findings of the inspection with on-going support from across our secondary schools and beyond.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that improvement work does not lead to improved outcomes for learners	Weekly Tactical meetings to look at the impact of changes on young people.	L	Yes
Financial	No risks identified			

Reputational	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	Weekly meetings of the Tactical Team will help address any issues timeously.	M	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p>Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices.</p> <p>Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p>	<p>External scrutiny can support wider reform when issues are entrenched. It is thought that the external report will serve as a catalyst for change at Northfield Academy.</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>Engagement with Advisors provides an opportunity to learn from both national and international best practice. The establishment of the Expert Advisory group will help ensure that the provision of services from Northfield better serves the community.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</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	A Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	No

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

None

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Eleanor Sheppard
Title	Interim Director Children and Family Services
Email Address	esheppard@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01225 522707

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Summer in the City Programme 2023
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/257
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Sharon Skene
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report shares a high level evaluation of the Summer in the City programme 2023 and outlines a planned approach for delivering a holiday programme for the 2023 autumn holiday period.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 note the high level evaluation of the Summer in the City programme; and
- 2.2 notes that the Chief Education Officer will report to Committee on the impact of the autumn (2023) programme following delivery.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 A Summer in the City programme was made available to children and young people across Aberdeen City over the school holiday period. This programme, shaped by the feedback of young people and their families, included a range of short, half-day, full-day and week-long activities ranging from sport, dance and outdoor activities to drama camps, museum trails and science sessions. In line with previous years, the programme was delivered across three strands; universal activities, activities designed to support children and young people with additional support needs, and a programme for young people who directly, or through their family, identify as part of a 'priority group.'
- 3.2 Priority groups were consistent with the groups identified nationally as being most at risk of poverty and therefore included:
- Children from lone parent families
 - Children from ethnic minority families
 - Children from families which have 1 or more person with a disability or additional support needs (adult or child)

- Children from families with a young parent (under 25)
 - Children from families with a child under 1 year old
 - Children from larger families (3+ children)
- 3.3 A budget was allocated by Council to deliver holiday programmes over summer, autumn 2023, and Easter 2024. Shortly before the launch of the Summer 2023 programme, additional funding was allocated to Aberdeen City Council by the Scottish Government resulting in an additional allocation of £107,169 being available for the 2023 summer holiday. This budget helped increase the offer being made to families.
- 3.4 Officers from across the organisation and local partners worked together to quickly increase the number of spaces and activities being offered through the Summer 2023 programme. The full Summer in the City programme delivered is available in Appendix A.
- 3.5 Sport Aberdeen, We Too and community assets involved in delivering the programme operated their own bookings. Microsoft Bookings was used to manage all remaining bookings. Bookings opened on Monday 26 June at 12pm and 71% of all opportunities available through Microsoft Bookings had been booked in the first 90 minutes. Families eligible for priority activities were asked to only book 3 half or full day activities OR 2 half/full day activities and 1 weeklong camp per child to ensure that as many families had the opportunity to utilise invaluable weeklong, daylong, and half-day activities as possible.
- 3.6 Council social media channels were used to highlight the programme and available places to maximise uptake. Colleagues in the customer function updated webpages, delivered an associated social media campaign and responded to social media enquiries. The overall campaign saw an 84.4k reach (number of times customers saw our posts on their social media channels). Across the entire campaign we saw 186 likes and 188 shares/retweets. Our Summer in the City webpages had 49,448 page views with customers landing on our webpage directly from the links shared on social media and through other promotional avenues, such as colleagues in schools and social work sharing the programme with families to achieve the widest possible reach and impact.
- 3.7 The universal programme provided 2,788 bookable opportunities to all children and young people in the city as well as numerous drop-in activities in parks, museums, galleries, and local communities.
- 3.8 The programme for priority groups provided a total of 3,516 bookable opportunities available. 567 of the 3,516 bookable opportunities were weeklong and multi-day camps/holiday clubs, and this provided greater flexibility for many parents accessing the programme. The remaining spaces were made up of day-long activities (these activities included biking, beach days, scrambling and included lunch) and shorter activities such as dance and art. Figures from the ACC booking system showed over 96% occupancy was achieved on weeklong, multi-day and day long activities. Proactive social media coverage of available

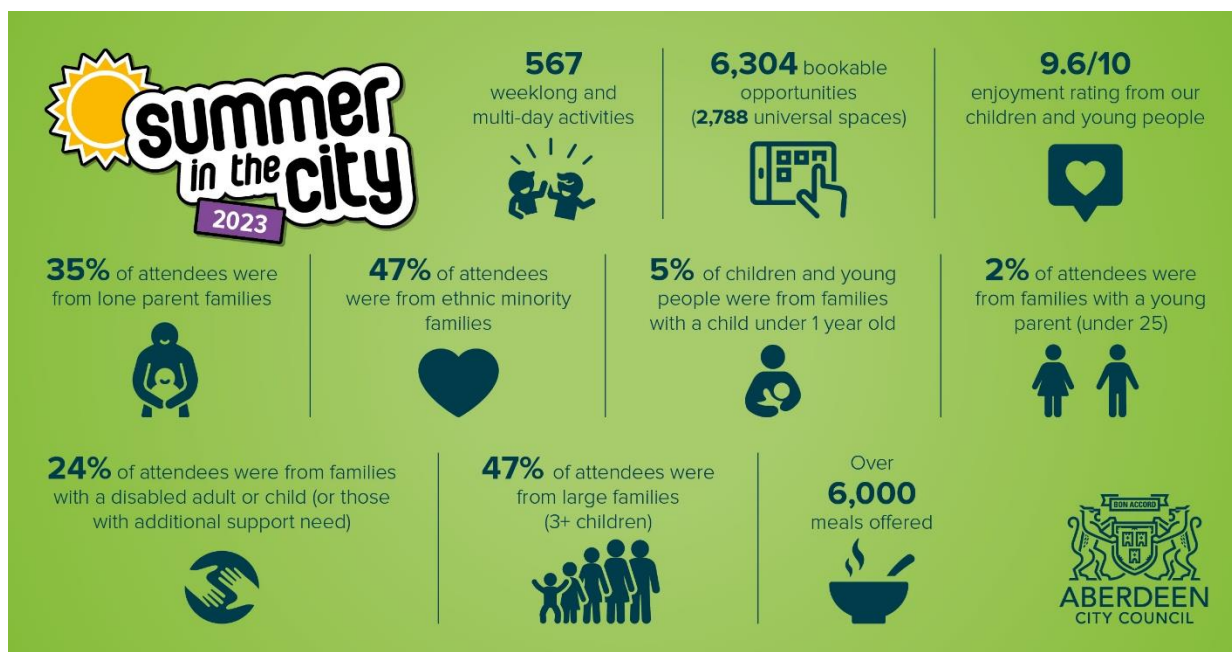
spaces is thought to have contributed to this high uptake figure, in addition to the popularity of previous programmes.

3.9 There is clear evidence that the targeted programme benefited those in the priority groups with the ACC booking system showing participation statistics as follows:

- 35% of children and young people were from lone parent families
- 47% of children and young people were from ethnic minority families
- 24% of children from families with a disabled adult or child (or those with additional support need)
- 2% of children from families with a young parent (under 25)
- 5% of children and young people were from families with a child under 1 year old
- 47% of children and young people were from larger families (3+ children)

3.10 The data above does not take account of those with additional support needs/disabilities who benefited from an accessibly adjusted programme delivered by the We Too and Early Intervention services. It should also be noted that some young people / families may identify as part of more than one group, such as a child of a larger family may also identify as a lone parent family.

3.11 The average enjoyment rating as given by children and young people who attended the activities was 9.6/10. This high rating was consistent with the previous programme.



3.12 Officers are extremely grateful to all partners listed in para 4.1 who helped deliver a varied and high-quality Summer in the City programme.

3.13 In addition to the Summer in the City activities programme, a Summer Holidays What's On webpage was created as a resource for parents and families. On

this webpage, families can access information on other activities -outside of the Summer in the City programme- that were taking place during the school holiday, as well as find out more information on free and paid for available activities and discounts with local providers. This webpage was visited 2,183 times since its launch in June 2023.

3.14 The Chief Education Officer, who has already been given delegated authority to design and deliver similar programmes for autumn (2023) and spring (2024), will report to Committee on the impact of the autumn (2023) programme following delivery.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Costs for the Summer in the City programme were met from the resource allocated at Full Council, and from the Scottish Government Grant of £107,169 awarded for the summer programme 2023. The total cost of delivery of the Summer 2023 programme was £125,885.98.

Partner	Total Cost
Sport Aberdeen	£59,999.98
Peep	£500
Museums and Galleries	£600
Techfest	£1,200
Creative Learning	£4,000
CLICC	£5,400
Kidsize	£3,124
AFCCT	£2,000
Transition Extreme	£6,552
ASV	£2,000
We Too	£8,010
Community Groups – Aberdeen Lads Club, Russell Anderson Foundation, Printfield Community Project, Early Intervention Aberdeen, Middlefield Youth Flat @ the Hub, King's Foundation (VicTorry Summer Camp), Aberdeen City Council Family Learning Team, Fersands and Fountain SCIO, Shazam Theatre Company SCIO, Hip-Hop School Scotland, Devana Parish Church of Scotland, and Cummings Park Community Association	£31,000
Cleaning	TBC (Approx. £1,500)
TOTAL	£125,885.98 (subject to cleaning costs)

4.2. There is £81,283.02 within 23/24 budget to fund the autumn (2023) and spring (2024) programmes.

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. Good use has been made of outdoor space where feasible to do so.

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 fully using the opportunity to support those in our priority groups	Priority access is given to those identified as being at risk of poverty in keeping with national guidance and local intelligence	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Continuing to provide a priority group exclusive programme, in addition to the universal offering, actively increases the opportunity for priority families to participate.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that parents and carers are unclear of how the national policy will impact on opportunities available to their child.	Communicate the parameters of the national guidance clearly with families. Monitor uptake carefully to determine any remedial action required.	L	Yes

Financial	No significant risks identified			
Reputational	Risk that reduction in the number of spaces offered through the programmes will lead to reputational risk	Pivoting from full-week activities and focusing exclusively on part day and full-day activities will allow for participation opportunities to be maximised within the available budget and delivery constraints.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p>Council Delivery Plan 2022/23 - Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.</p> <p>Council Delivery Plan 2022/23 - Continue to promote diversion activities for youths and adults in our city with enhanced focus on our three locality areas</p>	<p>The provision of a programme which prioritises those impacted by poverty will help mitigate some of the wellbeing harms associated with those living in poverty and help address the attainment gap by working with partners to provide a range of activity to support wellbeing.</p> <p>Providing activities for those aged 14+ will help complement work to provide diversion activities to youths. Activities for a range of ages have been provided directly in and around the three locality areas, as well as some providers providing transport for young people within the locality areas to attend activities out with their locality.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
<p>Prosperous Economy - 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026</p> <p>1.1 Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty.</p>	<p>The proposals in this report will help mitigate the impact of poverty on families due to those who are identified as being in poverty, or at risk of being in poverty being given priority access to the programme at no charge.</p>

<p>1.3 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.</p>	
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026</p> <p>Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty</p> <p>Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups</p> <p>Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities</p> <p>95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026</p> <p>Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need</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>As corporate parents we will ensure 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in</p>	<p>The programme has been deliberately tailored to meet the needs of those most in need and this approach will help ensure positive impacts against many of the people stretch outcomes.</p> <p>By prioritising groups who are known to be at risk of poverty and those already experiencing poverty we are able to work to ensure positive impacts on groups who most need our help including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children and young people from lone parent families • children and young people from ethnic minority families • children from families with a disabled adult or child (or those with additional support need) • children and young people from families with a young parent (under 25) • children and young people from families with a child under 1 year old • children and young people from larger families (3+ children) <p>The programme will help provide a range of supports for families which will help mitigate some of the costs associated with school holiday periods and support the wellbeing of children and young people.</p> <p>The programme has been designed to offer a range of physical activities given the close alignment between good physical health and positive mental wellbeing and will therefore support positive mental health and wellbeing in our children and young people. The programme will also offer opportunities for our children and young people to make positive choices which are not influenced by financial resources which will hopefully help establish positive health habits in the longer term.</p> <p>The continued prioritisation of our care experienced young people, and those on the edge of care, helps ensure that we effectively discharge our Corporate Parenting responsibilities and promote and support the wellbeing of those in our care. The provision of activities will also provide support for carers.</p>

<p>education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026</p> <p>Improving education outcomes for care experienced children and young people.</p> <p>Supporting attainment of balance of care where children are able to remain more often at home and or with kin.</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 within this report support the delivery of the Regional Cultural Strategy due to close collaboration with our Museums and Galleries team. The programme is fully aligned to the city prevention strategy. Work has been done to address poverty in the Children’s services plan, the Child Poverty Action Plan, and the National Improvement Framework Plan.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<p>Integrated Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Previous Integrated Impact Assessment (stage 1 / stage 1 and 2) relating to In the City Programmes has been reviewed and changes made.</p>
<p>Data Protection Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Not required</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>None</p>

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Full Summer in the City Programme

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Sharon Skene
Title	FIS Development Officer
Email Address	Sskene@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	

APPENDIX A- Summer in the City programme

Universal Offer available to all children and young people

Provider	Event Description	Ages	Sessions
Libraries	Young people are invited to join sessions playing board games.	All	Throughout holiday
	Coding club for young people interested in learning to code	8+ years	4
	Join the libraries team for a story and crafting session	5+ years	15
	Building fun with Lego Club	8+ years	15
	Learn about animation and create your own	8+ years	7
	Bookbug library session	0-5 years	22
Museums and Galleries	Join the springtime fun with a self-led spring trail.	Families	Throughout the holiday
Creative learning	Artist Assemble: Building A Play Factory	8-12 years (AM) and 12-17 years (PM)	1 full week
Sport Aberdeen	Family swimming sessions	All ages	28
	Family ice skating session	All ages	6
	Family Footgolf	All ages	12
Peep	Peep is a free service that provides families and their young children opportunities to play, sing, and share stories together. It is also an opportunity for children and their grownups to socialise with others.	0-12 months	6
		1-3 years	6
		1-4 years	1
		2-5 years	4
		0-5 years	4
Tech Fest	Sociable science drop-in sessions at local parks	All ages	4

Targeted offer for Priority Groups

Provider	Event Description	Ages	Sessions
Sport Aberdeen	Let's Dance camp	5-12 years	2 weeklong camps
	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces (Hazlehead Primary School)	5-12 years	1 weeklong camp
	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces (Beacon Sports Centre)	5-12 years	1 weeklong camp
	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces (Kincorth Sports Centre)	5-12 years	1 weeklong camp

	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces (Aberdeen Tennis Centre)	5-12 years	4 weeklong camps
	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces (Cults Sports Complex)	5-12 years	2 weeklong camps
	Get Active Camp Weeklong Spaces (Bucksburn Academy)	5-12 years	1 weeklong camp
	Leadership days-The young leaders will gain confidence and experience in leading multi-sport sessions to support reaching a positive destination.	14-17 years	9
	Multi Active Day (AM or PM)-	5-12 years	8
	Family Tubing at Snowsports	All ages	6
	Multi Active Days	5-11 years	4
	Burn O Vat Day trip	5-7 year	2
	Burn O Vat Day trip	8-11 year	1
	Beach day at Balmedie	5-7 years	2
	Biking trail	8-11 years	1
	Biking trail	12-14 years	1
	Scrambling/sandboarding	8-15 years	3
	Gorge walking	9-15 years 12-14 years	2
	Mountain Biking	8-11 years 9-15 years	2
	Forest Adventure	5-7 years 8-11 years	2
	Mini Riders Bronze Award	4-8 years	6
	Coasteering/Scrambling	9-15 years	1
	Hill walking	8-11 years 12-14 years	3
Aberdeen Sports Village	Multi Sports Camp	5-14 years	2 weeklong camps

Middlefield Community Project	Holiday club with various trips and activities across Aberdeen	11-14 years	3
Fersands	Youth led holiday programme- young people develop their own holiday programs working within a set budget and incorporating informal learning.	12-17 years	3 weeks (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday)
Printfield Summer Playscheme	Activities for children and young people including day trips, sports sessions, arts and crafts, street play, making healthy food, music, dance.	5-16 years	12
Family Film event (Cummings Park Community Association)	Child friendly film at Cineworld Aberdeen beach, with lunch	Family activity	1
Kidsize	Summer themed activity holiday club	5-12 years	6
Creative Learning / City Moves	Creative dance sessions	5-8 years	3
	Artists Assemble arts and crafts session	8-12 years 5-8 years 8-12 years	9
Family Learning Team	Family Learning Summer Sessions- a variety of activities such as arts, summer treasure trail, map making, sports, dance etc. Sessions will be held all over the city	Families	10
King's Church Aberdeen	Summer holiday club	P1-7	1
Transition Extreme	Skate and scran multi activity session	8-14 years	6
	Climb and Dine	5-14 years	6
Shazam Theatre Company SCIO	Drama and musical weeklong workshop	8-11 years	2 full weeks
Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust (AFCCT)	Go Fitba sessions with AFCCT	9-12 years	2 full weeks
Music School	Musical activities at Muirfield Primary School	7-14 years	Full week (AM and PM)
Russell Anderson Development School (RADS)	Fun sporting activities	7-11 years	2 weeklong camps

Aberdeen Lads Club	Children can expect to have fun filled days with many activities and a trip.	5-11 years	4 weeklong camps
Summer Holiday Club (Devana Parish Church of Scotland)	Children enjoy a varied programme of activities including games, stories, crafts, movie time & snacks.	P1-P3	6
Community Link Childcare	Seaton holiday club	5-12 years	1 full week
Hip-Hop School Scotland presents	The camp will involve children and young people learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how to write Street poetry (Rap) or song, - how to DJ (mixing different songs together) - new and exciting Hip-Hop Dance moves - how to draw Graffiti art. 	P2-upwards	6

Additional Support needs specialised sessions	<p>A range of activities were provided for children and young people with additional support needs and their families including a comprehensive programme delivered by We Too including session such as 'relaxed' activities and gaming-based activities.</p> <p>Early intervention Aberdeen also ran workshops, sensory play, messy play, therapy ponies, trips to a farm, silent disco, and pond dipping amongst other activities throughout the holidays.</p> <p>Sport Aberdeen ran stay and play and relaxed swimming sessions.</p>
--	---

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Armed Forces Covenant
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/243
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Linsey Hay
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Armed Forces Act 2021 amended the Armed Forces Act 2006 to create legal obligations on specified bodies in all four home nations of the UK. These legal obligations are referred to as The Armed Forces Covenant and came into force on 22nd November 2022. This report outlines how the education service intend to continue to discharge their duties under the Covenant.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 instructs the Chief Education Officer to monitor implementation of the proposed actions for education and build them into the National Improvement Framework Plan; and
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to update on progress through routine reporting on the National Improvement Framework Plan.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Armed Forces Act determines that when a specified body exercises a relevant function, it must have due regard to:
- the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces;
 - the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces, and
 - the principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.
- 3.2 The Duty applies to members of the regular forces and the reserve forces; members of British overseas territory forces who are subject to Service law,

former members of any of His Majesty's forces who are ordinarily resident in the UK and relevant family members.

- 3.3 The specified bodies who need to demonstrate due regard to the Covenant include:
- Local authorities and local authority landlords
 - Integration authorities, Health Boards, Special Health Boards, and the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service
 - Persons or bodies whose help is requested under section 23 of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004
- 3.4 The Duty must be complied with when a specified body develops, implements and/or reviews a relevant policy, or makes decisions on its delivery of relevant services.
- 3.5 Specified bodies, including Local Authorities, can demonstrate 'due regard' by having mechanisms in place that prompt decision-makers to assess how their decision making might impact on those who are currently or have previously served and maintaining records of this consideration.
- 3.6 The Education Service collaborated with the Association of the Directors of Education (ADES) to consider the implications of the Covenant more fully and are already considering the Covenant as policies are being refreshed, for example through the recently refreshed Quality Improvement Framework presented to Committee in July 2023.
- 3.7 The Education Service has undertaken some analysis of current practice in keeping with the expectations outlined in the Statutory Guidance in Appendix A in order to identify a proposed direction of travel.
- 3.8 **Identifying service children**
- Schools have an awareness of current service children, but less oversight of veterans unless parents have disclosed this. So far as the education of children and young people is concerned a requirement to have "due regard" already exists in Scotland through the provisions in Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 Sections 3A and 3B of that Act imposes a duty of "due regard" on Scottish Ministers and education authorities to reduce inequalities of outcome for all pupils. This by default also includes those pupils from families with an armed forces background. It is thought however, that amending yearly school data capture forms, to accurately identify those parents and carers who are impacted by the Covenant, would help schools more effectively discharge their duties.
- 3.9 **Admissions**
- Schools have been briefed on the need for timely admission arrangements for those covered by the Covenant. Officers place siblings together in local schools wherever possible. The school application process does not currently identify service families. As a result, there currently isn't a mechanism to track the time taken from school application to school placement. It is proposed to amend the school admissions form and SEEMiS fields to enable live data collection and more comprehensive monitoring.

3.10 Educational attainment and curriculum

Secondary school staff have been briefed on the need to give due regard to the continuation of secondary courses wherever possible. School Improvement Plans already support work to improve the outcomes of particular groups although there wasn't specific reference to armed forces families in Local Authority guidance for session 2022/23. The Local Authority guidance has been amended to consider this group where children impacted by the Covenant are in attendance.

3.11 Wellbeing

It is important to ensure that children and young people of Armed Forces families receive the support they need to address barriers to participation, learning and achievement; promote positive mental health and wellbeing; benefit from the development of high-quality education which is sustained; and achieve their full potential through established GIRFEC arrangements. Training has been delivered to Head Teachers. These arrangements could be further strengthened by offering those covered by the Covenant a GIRFEC meeting on at least a yearly basis. A professional learning film on the needs of those covered by the Covenant will be developed for dissemination to staff to support this more proactive approach.

3.12 School transport considerations

In Scotland, children and young people who are 5-21 years old, are eligible for a card giving free bus travel (from 31 January 2022). Children under 5 years old already travel for free on buses and don't need a card. Provided the child is living in Scotland and has proof of person (proving name and age), proof of residence and proof of photograph, all required to be verified as part of the application, they are eligible for the free bus travel. To apply for the cards, proof of residence in Scotland is needed. A letter from the child's school/college/university is one of the options and is thought to be the most straight forward for an Armed Forces family. We propose to amend Local Authority guidance to reflect the need for school leaders to prioritise the writing of a letter to act as proof of residency to enable free bus travel.

3.13 Attendance

Absence from school, whatever the cause, disrupts learning. It is important that parents encourage their children and young people to attend school and that parents arrange family holidays during the holiday period wherever possible. School leaders already have a mechanism to record family holidays outwith the school holiday period as authorised absence where absolutely necessary. We propose to continue to monitor the attendance of those covered by the Covenant at school and Local Authority level.

3.14 Additional support needs

A range of services to support those with additional support needs is currently available. However, there is no way of tracking access to services for those covered by the Covenant. It is proposed to add an additional field into the Request for Assistance process to enable more effective tracking.

3.15 Identified Education Lead

An Education Authority lead is already in place. No specific information is available to families regarding the provision of education for Armed Forces

families and this should be rectified by adding to the information already available on the Council website.

- 3.16 It is proposed that the service proactively amend existing processes in order to take account of the new legislative duties rather than await official review periods to ensure that we accelerate progress. Proposed improvements will be included in the National Improvement Framework Plan for 2023/24 with progress reported through the established tracker presented to each meeting of the Education and Children’s Services Committee.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Implementation of the recommendations and actions set out in this report will enable the Authority to meet its duties under the 2006 Act more effectively.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not complying with the Armed Forces Covenant	Proactive consideration of the statutory guidance and identification of next steps has kept this risk low.	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Proactive planning and approaches to improve the data available to help monitor the impact of our policies on those covered by the Covenant will support our compliance.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that school are unaware of children and	Improved data collection will help schools discharge their duties	L	Yes

	families covered by the duties			
Financial	No risks identified			
Reputational	Risk that the Council isn't seen to prioritise those covered by the Covenant	Proactive planning and monitoring will help mitigate this risk	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p>Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices.</p>	<p>This report will help improve our understanding and monitoring of those covered by the Armed Forces Covenant.</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>Improved monitoring of a range of processes and the progress of those covered by the Armed Forces Covenant will help identify areas for further improvement.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p> <p>Prevention Strategy</p> <p>Children's Services Plan</p> <p>National Improvement Framework Plan</p>	<p>Careful analysis of data will help identify any further preventative actions required to support the children of armed forces personnel.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Assessment completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Statutory Guidance on the Armed Forces Covenant Duty](#)

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Armed Forces covenant Action Plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Linsey Hay
Title	ESO
Email Address	Lhay@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Act 2021 amended the Armed Forces Act 2006 to create the following legal obligation on specified bodies in all four home nations of the UK. The duties came into force on the 22nd of November 2022.

When a specified body exercises a relevant function, it must have due regard to:

- (a) the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces;
- (b) the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces, and
- (c) the principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.

The Duty applies to members of the regular forces and the reserve forces; members of British overseas territory forces who are subject to Service law, former members of any of His Majesty's forces who are ordinarily resident in the UK and relevant family members.

The specified bodies who need to demonstrate due regard to the Covenant includes:

- Local authorities and local authority landlords
- Integration authorities, Health Boards, Special Health Boards, and the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service
- Persons or bodies whose help is requested under section 23 of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

The Duty must be complied with when a specified body develops, implements and/or reviews a relevant policy, or makes decisions on its delivery of relevant services. In real terms this means that we need to be able to demonstrate:

- Due regard to the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the armed forces.
- Due regard to the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the armed forces.
- Due regard to the principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the armed forces.

Appendix A

Specified bodies can demonstrate 'due regard' by having mechanisms are in place that prompt decision-makers to assess how their decision might on those who are currently or have previously served and maintaining records of this consideration.

ABERDEEN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP		
Potential vulnerability to be addressed through the Covenant	Current state	Next steps
Understanding the healthcare needs of the local Armed Forces Community		
Understanding local need in order to plan the provision of healthcare services	There are long standing good relationships between NHS Grampian (NHSG) and the Armed Forces in Grampian.	Meet with NHS Grampian to ensure full awareness and compliance with the Covenant, and that due recognition be given to the principle of special provision in some circumstances.
Identifying service users from the Armed Forces Community	Expected to be identified through existing relationships.	Ensure compliance via NHS Grampian. Any potentially identified persons or issues can be raised directly by Armed Forces to NHSG via Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP).
Healthcare professionals' knowledge of healthcare issues relevant to the Armed Forces Community	Good awareness of mental and physical health issues that may be experienced by Armed Forces within NHSG.	Offer to meet bi annually with Armed Forces representative to resolve any outstanding issues.
Provision of services		
Priority treatment	NHS Grampian working to comply with all Scottish Government treatment guarantees	Check Covenant compliance with NHS Grampian.
Waiting lists to start treatment		Offer to meet bi annually with Armed Forces representative to resolve any outstanding issues.

Appendix A

Waiting lists to resume treatment		Offer to meet bi annually with Armed Forces representative to resolve any outstanding issues.
Reassessments	Current situation. Any reassessment of armed forces staff will be as per clinical requirements.	
Local variability in healthcare services	Current situation. Grampian aim would be to have little variability of service provision across Grampian and Armed Forces population. Any anomalies should be highlighted.	
Relationship with healthcare professionals	There are strong local relationships between NHS Grampian and the Armed Forces	
Provision of tailored services		
Planning and funding		
Co-operation between bodies and professionals		

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

EDUCATION SERVICE

Potential vulnerability to be addressed through the Covenant	Current state	Next steps
Identifying Service Children	<p>Schools have an awareness of current service children, but less oversight of veterans unless parents have disclosed this.</p> <p>So far as the education of children and young people is concerned a requirement to have “due regard” already exists in Scotland through the provisions in the Education (Scotland) Act, 2016. Sections 3A and 3B of that Act imposes a duty of “due regard” on Scottish Ministers and education authorities to reduce inequalities of outcome for all pupils. This by default also includes those pupils from families with an armed forces background.</p>	<p>Amend yearly school data capture forms, to accurately identify those parents and carers who are impacted by the Covenant.</p> <p>To be completed by December 2023 (requested from Seemis)</p>
Admissions	<p>Schools have been briefed on the need for timely admission arrangements for those covered by the Covenant.</p> <p>Officers place siblings together in local schools wherever possible.</p> <p>The school application process does not currently identify service families. As a result, there currently isn't a mechanism to track the time taken from school application to school placement</p>	<p>Reflect the Covenant as Admissions guidance is amended.</p> <p>To be completed by October 2023 (requested from Digitalfirst)</p> <p>Amend the school admissions form and SEEMIS fields to enable live data collection and more comprehensive monitoring</p> <p>To be completed by October 2023 & December 2023 respectively – as above)</p>
Educational attainment and curriculum	<p>Secondary school staff have been briefed on the need to give due regard to the continuation of secondary courses wherever possible.</p> <p>School Improvement Plans already support a school's work to improve the outcomes of particular groups although there is no specific reference to armed forces families in Local Authority guidance.</p>	<p>Amend Local Authority guidance to reflect the need to consider this group where children impacted by the Covenant are in attendance.</p> <p>To be completed by October 2023</p>
Wellbeing	<p>That children and young people of Armed Forces families receive the support they need to address barriers to participation, learning and achievement; promote positive</p>	<p>Strengthen arrangements further by offering those covered by the Covenant</p>

Appendix A

	<p>mental health and wellbeing; benefit from the development of high-quality education which is sustained; and achieve their full potential through established GIRFEC arrangements.</p> <p>Training has been delivered to Head Teachers.</p>	<p>a GIRFEC meeting on at least a yearly basis. To be completed by October 2023</p> <p>Develop a short professional learning film on the needs of those covered by the Covenant for dissemination to staff. To be completed by March 2024</p>
School transport considerations	<p>In Scotland, children and young people who are 5-21 years old, are eligible for a card giving free bus travel (from 31 January 2022). Children under 5 years old already travel for free on buses and don't need a card. Provided the child is living in Scotland and has proof of person (proving name and age), proof of residence and proof of photograph, all required to be verified as part of the application, they are eligible for the free bus travel. To apply for the cards, proof of residence in Scotland is needed. A letter from the child's school/college/university is one of the options and might be the most straight forward for an Armed Forces family.</p>	<p>Amend Local Authority guidance to reflect the need for school leaders to prioritise the writing of a letter to act as proof of residency.</p> <p>To be completed by October 2023</p>
Attendance	<p>Absence from school, whatever the cause, disrupts learning. It is important that parents encourage their children and young people to attend school and that parents arrange family holidays during the holiday period wherever possible. School leaders already have a mechanism to record family holidays outwith the school holiday period as authorised absence where absolutely necessary.</p>	<p>Monitor the attendance of those covered by the Covenant at school and Local Authority level.</p> <p>To be completed by termly monitoring in place by January 2024</p>
Additional needs support	<p>A range of services to support those with additional support needs is currently available. However, there is no way of tracking access to services for those covered by the Covenant.</p>	<p>Add an additional field into the Request for Assistance process.</p> <p>To be completed by October 2023</p>
Identified Education Lead for the Covenant	<p>An Education Authority lead is already in place.</p> <p>No specific information is available to families regarding the provision of education for Armed Forced families</p>	<p>Include next steps in the National Improvement Framework Plan for 2023/24. To be completed by Sept 2023 Develop information for Armed Forces Families and include it on the city Armed Forces pages.</p>

		To be completed by March 2024
HOUSING SERVICES		
Potential vulnerability to be addressed through the Covenant	Current state	Next steps
Identifying Service Users from the Armed Forces Community	This is currently identified at the Housing application stage as a question in the application.	Housing will need to revisit how we identify current tenants who are from the armed forces community.
Allocations policy for social housing	<p>Armed Forces Personnel leaving full time regular service will be classified as having urgent housing need as set out in our Allocation Policy.</p> <p>Armed Forces personnel</p> <p>We will ensure up to 1% of our Council new build houses are offered to those leaving the armed forces. With up to a further 0.5% being adapted for those injured in service. Applications from service personnel who are planning to leave the armed forces who wish to be housed in one of the Council's new social housing developments only, will be given priority status and placed on the Urgent List and awarded a medium priority 56 days before they are due to leave the forces.</p> <p>They will be made one reasonable offer of accommodation under this priority. Where a reasonable offer is made and subsequently refused, the priority will be removed. If applicants wish to add other housing choices such as house types and areas out with the new build properties, their housing application can also be placed on the waiting list, and they will be awarded points in accordance with their housing needs as per the criteria in this policy.</p>	<p>We have had 18 applications from this group in 2021/22 and 16 in 2022/23. Currently we have 7 live applicants among this group, therefore the 1% target will be difficult to achieve for all new developments.</p>
Availability of suitable social housing	<p>We have let 1.1% of our new builds at Auchmill Road (2022) and 1.4% of our new builds at Wellheads Avenue (2022)</p> <p>We have not yet met the target at our Summerhill Development which is still being let.</p>	

Communication with Service families														
Homelessness	<p>This is recorded in homeless applications and is a relatively small number of applications.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>In service 5 or More Years Ago</th> <th>In Service Less than 5 Years Ago</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2022/23</td> <td>9</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021/22</td> <td>2</td> <td>26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020/21</td> <td>5</td> <td>28</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		In service 5 or More Years Ago	In Service Less than 5 Years Ago	2022/23	9	34	2021/22	2	26	2020/21	5	28	
	In service 5 or More Years Ago	In Service Less than 5 Years Ago												
2022/23	9	34												
2021/22	2	26												
2020/21	5	28												
Disabled Facilities Grants	This is not currently recorded specifically for people from the Armed Forces Community.													
<p>CORPORATE NEXT STEPS</p> <p>The Council has pledged to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant and has a devoted webpage. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/people-and-communities/our-support-armed-forces. The Lord Provost is the Armed Forces and Veterans Champion. In order to strengthen our response, we will now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop our webpages with content as this action plan is implemented. • Undertake a population needs assessment as part of our Local Outcome Improvement Planning cycle. • Reflect the need for due regard in the Council policy and strategy guidance. • Communicate the improvements we are making regularly through our social media channels. • Update our Integrated Impact Assessment to reflect the Covenant. 														

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Community Learning and Development Plan
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/288
DIRECTOR	Andy McDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Jacqui McKenzie
REPORT AUTHOR	Margaret Stewart
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update on progress towards delivery of the Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024 and propose a change in governance arrangements to better align the work of Community Learning to other partnership activity relating to our model of Family Support.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee

- 2.1 Note the progress made towards delivery of the Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024;
- 2.1 Endorse the proposed change in governance for the Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024 and for future Community Learning and Development plans; and
- 2.2 Instruct the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to report annually to the Education and Children Services Committee with an annual update on progress.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Scottish Government Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships, Community Learning and Development, places a number of obligations on Community Planning Partnerships and Local Authorities in respect of Community Learning and Development (CLD) including the establishment of 3 yearly Community Learning and Development Plans.
- 3.2 The responsibility for meeting the requirements of the CLD Regulations rests with the Local Authority as a whole. In line with the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, the CLD Regulations refer to the "Education Authority" but staff who have

a role in securing the provision of CLD may be located in a number of different settings within the Local Authority. Within Aberdeen City Council, CLD Services comprise Community Development, Youth Work, Adult Learning and Family Learning.

3.3 The Government's National Performance Framework sets out the strategic objective for all public services including those delivering CLD. Within this the focus of CLD should be:

- Improved life chances for people of all ages through learning, personal development and active citizenship
- Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.

3.4 Local authorities cannot meet the requirements of the CLD Regulations without engaging with other partners, learners and community groups and organisations. Such engagement is carried out in accordance with [CLD values and principles](#).

3.5 Local authorities also consider how the process which they put in place to secure the provision of CLD contributes to the Community Planning process.

3.6 The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 are intended to support the achievement of national policy goals for CLD ensuring:

- communities, but particularly those who are disadvantaged, have access to the CLD support they need
- communities are enabled to express their needs for CLD provision
- Community Planning Partnerships (CPP), local authorities and providers of public services more generally, respond appropriately to the expectations set by the CLD Guidance.

Current Situation

3.7 The current Aberdeen City Council Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024, developed in line with national expectations, was approved by the former Operational Delivery Committee on 16 September 2021.

3.8 Since establishment of the Plan, CLD and partners have worked hard to deliver against the Plan, whilst taking account of the rapidly changing context and circumstances arising from the pandemic, the cost of living crisis and desire to positively respond to the needs of those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine.

3.9 Progress against the Plan is currently tracked within CLD Teams and overseen and scrutinised by The Community Empowerment Group on behalf of Community Planning Aberdeen and partner organisations. This includes consideration of how the CLD Plan supports delivery of the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan and underpinning Locality Plans to ensure improved outcomes for people and communities across the city.

3.10 The CLD team have undertaken an evaluation of progress against the CLD Plan in order to identify priorities for action over the final year of the current plan. All those involved in the delivery of CLD across the city are proud of

their collective achievements in delivering on the Plan to date. Considerable progress has been made in:

- Working in partnership with primary and secondary schools; delivering Edge of Care pilots as a response to The Promise and funded youth work supporting young people's mental and physical health.
- Supporting young people to gain the employability skills required for the world of work, through Fairer Aberdeen Funded, shmuTrain.
- Working with partners from the Family Wellbeing Hubs to provide early intervention support to children, young people and families.
- Improving the Mental Wellbeing of adults in our communities
- Equipping Adult Learners to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives; enabling those seeking sanctuary or asylum and empowering our Gypsy Traveller community to gain new skills and confidence.
- Providing capacity building support for communities to create, develop and sustain programmes and activities which address emerging priorities and provide increased opportunities for citizens for example; Warm Spaces and the Pop up Ukrainian Community Centre.
- Enabling social enterprise and community wealth building through partnerships with Elevator, NESCOL, Pathways and localised community groups to take action forward.
- Further, developing a clear and coherent framework to support volunteers and volunteering within communities and across community groups and organisations.

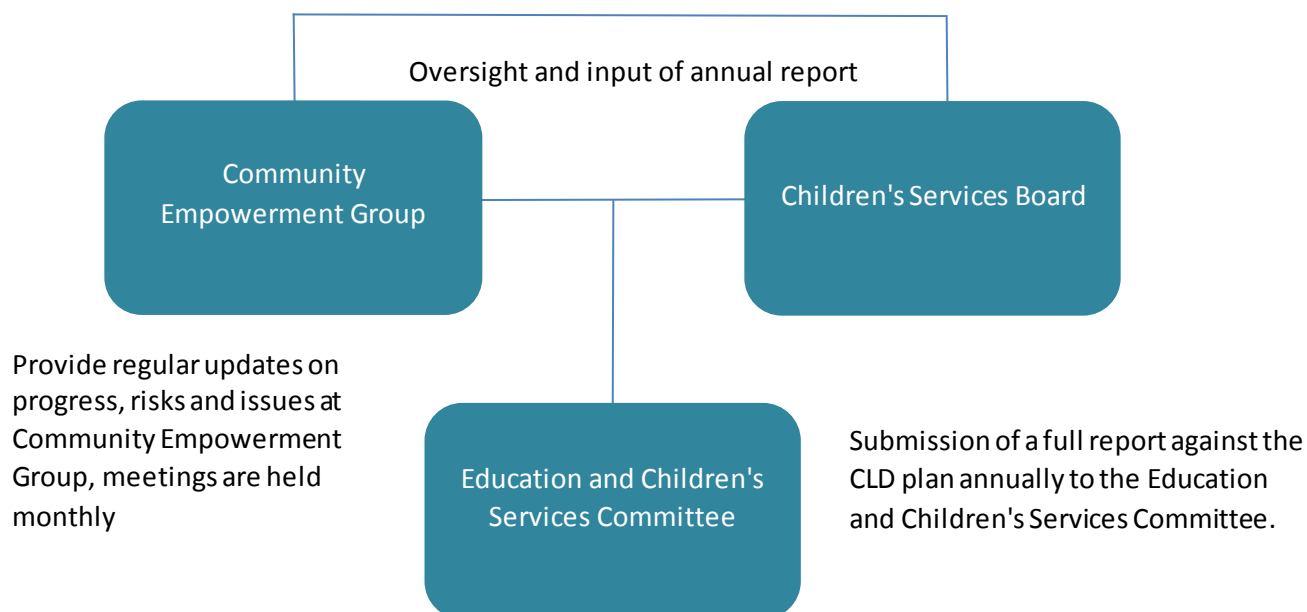
3.11 Areas for greater focus over the final year of the current plan include:

- Improve data sharing and joint planning between youth work and employability providers.
- Further work to define and promote clear learning pathways across different providers.
- Test engagement approaches in collaboration with Police Scotland and retail partners to address the number of City centre youth related disturbances.
- Continue to evaluate the need and explore alternative services and measures to provide support for Kinship Carers.
- Explore how commissioned CLD services contribute to the family Support Model.
- Establish a citywide network of resilience reps from communities to share good practice, ensure resilience plans are up to date
- Improved capturing of learner voice to inform the future plan for CLD provision.

3.13 Community Learning and Development officers currently share annual reports with the Community Empowerment Group; however, this annual monitoring and reporting has not been shared with members.

3.14 The proposed change in governance would see reporting on the Community Learning and Development plan and subsequent plans being part of the Education and Children's Services committee business plan, with annual updates on progress presented for scrutiny. This would happen following

oversight and input from the Community Empowerment Group and Children Services Board.



- 3.15 The evaluative report, in Appendix A, incorporates the impact of the internally delivered aspects of the CLD Plan from its approval in 2021 to September 2023 and information from CLD providers mostly covering the period from 2021 to 2022. Commissioned CLD providers and CLD Partners are currently finalising their evaluation of activity for presentation to the Community Empowerment Group in November 2023. Receipt of this final information will trigger a review of this evaluation (particularly the RAG ratings). The information received will be shared with Members through a Service Update.
- 3.16 It is proposed that future yearly reports on the progress of the CLD plan will retain this format and be produced in collaboration with CLD providers from across the city to ensure Members of the Education and Children’s Services Committee have access to a comprehensive overview of the impact of Community Learning activity.
- 3.17 Work is now beginning to plan our approach to the development of the next Community Learning and Development Plan. This will ensure the seamless transition from the final evaluation of the current plan in August of 2024 to delivery against the next.

Children’s Rights

- 3.17 This report contains no recommendations or content that require for the direct accounting of impact on children’s rights.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 place duties upon the Authority in relation to the process to be undertaken in securing community learning and development including a requirement to publish plans every 3 years containing information about the provision of CLD.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications

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 delivering against statutory requirements.	Mitigated by establishing and reporting progress against the CLD Plan	L	yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with CLD regulations.	Mitigated by embedded self-evaluation by CLD teams and staff CPD	L	yes
Operational	Risk of not working to the national policy goals given the changing context in the city.	Mitigated by being agile and responsive to changes in the needs of the community	L	yes
Financial	Risk of not using resource most	Mitigated by delivering against the CLD Plan and by remaining alert to unanticipated	L	yes

	effectively to support communities	challenges facing those we serve and responding proactively.		
Reputational	Risk of not delivering a strong CLD provision for city residents	Mitigated by having a clear and well scrutinised plan	L	yes
Environment / Climate	Risk of not complying with local and national NetZero target	Mitigated by proactive measures to manage resources	L	yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p>A City of Opportunity</p> <p>Empowering Communities</p>	<p><i>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:-</i></p> <p><i>Sharing the progress against the Community Learning and Development Plan aims to increase awareness of the scope of CLD provision and the impacts delivered through the plan as well as ensuring effective, responsible and inclusive delivery against the CLD plan contributing to a City of Opportunity and Empowering Communities.</i></p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
<p>Prosperous Economy</p> <p>Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p><i>Sharing the progress against Community Learning and Development Plan aims to increase awareness of the scope of CLD provision and the impacts delivered through the plan as well as ensuring effective, responsible and inclusive delivery against the CLD plan contributing to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026. 2. 400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026.

<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p><i>Sharing the progress against the Community Learning and Development Plan aims to increase awareness of the scope of CLD provision and the impacts delivered through the plan as well as ensuring effective, responsible and inclusive delivery against the CLD plan contributing to</i></p> <p>Prosperous people (Children and Young people):</p> <p>5.2 Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach.</p> <p>7.1 Improving pathways to education, employment and training for all our children</p> <p>8. 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p> <p>9. 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination</p> <p>Prosperous People (adults):</p> <p>11.1 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.</p> <p>11.2 Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation.</p> <p>11.3 Encouraging adoption of healthier lifestyles through a whole family approach.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p><i>Sharing the progress against the Community Learning and Development Plan aims to increase awareness of the scope of CLD provision and the impacts delivered through the plan as well as ensuring effective, responsible and inclusive delivery against the CLD plan contributing to Prosperous Place:</i></p> <p>13.2 Contributing to the delivery of Aberdeen Adapts by developing a bottom up approach to community resilience to encourage greater ownership and independent action towards understanding communities' risks from climate change and adapting to them.</p> <p>15.1 Increasing the diversity, quality and use of the Aberdeen's green spaces by facilitating community participation in them to restore nature and increase people's satisfaction, health, and wellbeing</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024 Children's Services Plan</p>	<p><i>The proposals within this report support the Community Learning and Development plan 2021-2024 and subsequent plans and their governance.</i></p>

Community Empowerment Strategy	
--------------------------------	--

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-2024](#)
- 10.2 [Community Learning and Development Plan 2021- 2024 - Committee Report 16/09/2021](#)
- 10.3 [Strategic guidance for community planning partnerships: community learning and development](#)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A - Learning changes lives for the better – progress on the CLD Plan 2021-2024
- 11.2 Appendix B – CLD Case studies

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Margaret Stewart
Title	Service Manager, Libraries and Community Learning
Email Address	Mstewart@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 067624

Learning changes lives for the better – progress on the CLD Plan 2021-2024

This report aims to capture the progress made in Aberdeen in delivering against the ‘outcomes’ to date of the [Community Learning and Development 2021 – 2024 CLD Plan](#)

The Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships: Community Learning and Development (2012) underpins national CLD policy in Scotland. The Guidance sets out the core contribution that CLD activities can make to national outcomes: with specific reference to:

1. Improved life chances for people of all ages, including young people in particular, through learning, personal development and active citizenship; and
2. Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities and includes clear guidance that CLD should support ‘primarily disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to engage in learning, with a focus on bringing about change in their lives and communities.’

Outcomes from CLD Plan 21-24	The impact of what we have done together	RAG rating	Next steps
Priority 1 - Youth Work			

<p>Support young people to gain the employability skills required for the world of work. This will increase the number of young people leaving school into a positive destination, especially those from priority areas. Work with school leavers to develop their employability skills.</p> <p>LOIP Stretch Outcome 7. 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority</p>	<p>Employability Learning Offer</p> <p>Youth Work providers across Aberdeen City Council teams and commissioned services and third sector organisations contribute to the development of employability skills of young people. The Fairer Aberdeen Fund allocates funding to Youth Work provider Station House Media Unit (shmu) to supporting young people across all priority areas to achieve positive destinations. This includes Youth Media and shmuTRAIN. Programmes are developed in partnership with ACC schools Quality Improvement Officer, ACC Employability team (ABZ Works), Aberdeen Foyer, Barnardo’s and the schools they are delivered in.</p> <p>Shmu developed and delivered a learning offer for a group of young people identified as being least likely to secure a positive destination, through the provision of shmuTRAIN and 73 young people (16-25 years) participated in the Positive Transitions programme in 2021-23. Most (74%) participants subsequently moved on into positive destinations (6 into work, 8 into education and 30 into training). Most (85%) participants report an increase in their health and wellbeing, aspirations and job search skills. In 21-22 this figure was 73%, increased to 100% in 22-23.</p> <p>Case study 1 – shmuTrain can be found in Appendix B</p> <p>Highlights from other delivered programmes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHMU Training Academy Summer Programme supported 40 young people. The majority (65%) of participants secured a positive next step (6 re-engaged with education, 5 moved onto further training and 5 progressed on to college). • 59 people took part in Foyer Reach. Less than half (23%) of participants secured a positive next step (10 moved into further education or training and 4 into work). • 57 people took part in the Prince’s Trust programme. Less than half (37%) of participants secured a positive next step (21 moved into positive destinations, including 6 into employment). 	<p>Green</p>	<p>Improved data sharing and joint planning between youth work and employability providers.</p>
--	--	--------------	---

<p>neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 and 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026</p> <p>Key driver 7.1 Improving pathways to education, employment and training for all our children</p>	<p>In total 489 young people have participated in Fairer Aberdeen employability support programmes and activities with the majority 50% (239) securing an immediate positive outcome and are now in education, training or employment.</p> <p>Employability programmes work with some of the most vulnerable young people furthest from the job market, delivered at the most appropriate level for the individuals. They are designed to move participants closer to work, arming them with the skills and abilities to gain employment and sustain it successfully. Activities build confidence and resilience alongside core employability skills required to secure a positive destination in the future. Organisations work in partnership with community and employability services to build a coordinated multi-agency approach to employability support across the city. Working together they target priority neighbourhoods to deliver support and to signpost individuals to the most appropriate and relevant support services for the stage they are at in their employability journey. They continue to provide employability support after participants have completed the programmes.</p> <p>Supporting refugees to settle in the city and engage in learning The CLD Youth Work team has adapted plans to ensure proactive support for young refugees and asylum seekers from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine to proactively support their integration into the city. Young people have participated in city tours, cooking courses, ESOL classes, sessions with Countryside Rangers and activities with Creative Learning.</p> <p>In response to the war in Ukraine and arrival of over 1800 Ukrainians in the city from June 2022, the youth work team ran a summer programme to complement the Settle in the City programme delivered by health and education partners for those aged from 3 to 16. The focus on Ukrainian young people of school-leaving age enabled all young people to be supported to access education, formal training or employment. The majority of participants reported an increase in their understanding of Aberdeen and Scottish culture and increased confidence. A majority felt that the programme made</p>	<p>Identified a gap in engagement provision for 15 to 18 year olds, not fully engaging in school, Adult Learning and Ukrainian society looking at ways forward</p>
---	--	--

integration easier and helped improved English Language skills.

ABZ Works

Youth Work, Education, Youth Social Work, Housing, Community Learning and Development, Healthy Minds, Financial Inclusion Team, Refugee Support Team, Libraries, Creative Learning, and Communities staff, along with partner agencies such as DWP, Skills Development Scotland, NESCol, health services, and Third and private sector employability organisations take a collaborative approach to supporting individuals who need employability help through ABZ Works. ABZ Works Keyworkers meet and engage with participants and help coordinate supports based on individual need. The youth work team remain responsive to requests for assistance from key workers.

In partnership with the DWP Work Coaches, keyworkers offer weekly employability support from within the Job Centre Plus Office. Keyworkers also lead additional community outreach activities by offering drop-in sessions and meetings at Skills Development Scotland offices, within secondary schools, local libraries and from Community Hubs, such as the Tillydrone Community Campus and the Torry Community Hub.

Outcome summary

As support for young people to gain the employability skills required for the world of work progresses, more young people are achieving positive destinations or support to increase their capacity to reach a positive destination in the future. This work is targeted and flexible ensuring that those young people most vulnerable and furthest away from the job market. Young people are encouraged to develop new skills and supported to progress aspects of wellbeing, integration and any barriers they experience in reaching their potential. Continued funding through Fairer Aberdeen and other grants will enable this work to continue and develop supporting young people in priority areas or responding to need as it presents.

<p>Support young people’s mental and physical wellbeing and increase the number of young people who report that they feel mentally well.</p> <p>LOIP Stretch Outcome 5 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026</p> <p>Key Driver 5.2 Increasing children’s knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention</p>	<p>Consistently supporting mental health needs as a Community Planning Partnership</p> <p>Most CLD Youth Work staff have completed introductory Let’s Introduce Anxiety Management (LIAM) training with one Development Officer now fully LIAM trained. The adoption of this training, which has also been undertaken by all school nurses, Fit Like Family Wellbeing staff and 48 school staff, is helping ensure a consistent understanding and approach to supporting children and young people displaying anxiety.</p> <p>Learning offer to Increase confidence through Award Schemes</p> <p>12 CLD Youth Workers in schools focus on giving primary and secondary pupils opportunities to improve confidence levels, build resilience, learn new skills and feel more optimistic for the future by gaining recognition for their achievements through SCQF accredited Youth Scotland Awards. During 2022-23 competent and trained Youth Work staff successfully supported 118 young people to achieve a youth award. 73 took part in a Hi 5 award and 45 took part in a Dynamic Youth Award. The Awards are now being used by partners with wider appreciation of how the Awards can support delivery of flexible learning pathways.</p> <p>The majority of pupils who took part in the Hi5 award said that they had improved their ability to joining in more activities; work better with others and had gained more skills, discovered new things and generally felt better about themselves.</p> <p>Participants were asked to what extent taking part in the awards helped them “a lot, a little, the same”.</p> <p>Of those who achieved a Dynamic Youth Award:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than half (44%) said they had a better and more positive view of themselves a lot; • Less than half (49%) said they were better at solving problems and making decisions a lot; • The majority (60%) said they were better at working with others a lot; 	<p>Green</p>	<p>Improve the referral system into youth work to ensure better understanding from partners what the offer is.</p> <p>Address unmet need in schools by filling vacancies with people who have the skills we need.</p> <p>Evaluate whether the youth work offer is relevant and still meets the needs of</p>
--	--	--------------	---

<p>approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than half (47%) said they had better skills in listening and talking a lot;• Less than half (42%) said they feel more valued as a member of their group/school/community a lot. <p>Increasing no cost opportunities to interact with peers</p> <p>The CLD Youth Work team sought to focus on providing opportunities for young people to connect with each other and feel less socially isolated. Young people tell us that the cost-of-living crisis is impacting on affordable and safe opportunities for them in their communities. The Public Health restrictions in place in 2021 negatively impacted on the team’s community-based programme initially although these have now resumed and are being further developed at pace.</p> <p>Groups for children and young people in Primary 6 and 7 have been running in Kincorth and Mastrick and are proving popular. Youth Workers are supporting the Northfield drop-in at Northfield community centre; the drop-in offers a safe and welcoming place for young people to come to and where they can develop positive relationships with trusted adults. Young people are connecting with peers and making friends. They tell us they are benefiting from the range of recreational and informally educational activities offered at their group and are learning new skills. Plans to spread this approach further are currently being developed.</p> <p>Work with targeted groups</p> <p>The CLD Youth Work team has supported targeted communities such as New Scots and LGBT+ to support them to feel included, respected, confident and optimistic for the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Zone Youth is a citywide group for young people who are LGBT+• Aberdeen Youth Movement brings young people together from across the city and provides opportunities for connection and personal development activities.	<p>young people and identify changes to the offer if not.</p>
------------------	---	---

The CLD Healthy Minds team supported 6 young people with a diagnosed mental illness aged between 18 and 25 to take part in a 12-week programme in conjunction with creative learning Youth Arts Practitioner Awards (YAPA) to increase confidence, develop leadership skills, create a strong feeling of community for the participants and give them opportunities to improve their social skills and develop relationships. Almost all reported an increase in confidence and skills and 50% moved into paid employment.

Developing life skills and resilience

The CLD Youth Team has worked with schools and other partners to identify those pupils at risk of, or already impacted by, poor mental health and provide those young people with the support they require. As a result, transition programmes for Primary 6 and 7's are being delivered in almost all ASGs and these include Transition after-school clubs in partnership with Active Schools and school staff to support a smooth transition to secondary school. The youth team continue to provide 1-1 support, award and small group work, drop-in sessions at lunchtime/breakfast clubs to allowing young people to socialise in a safe environment with trusted adults.

Youth Work in Schools delivered Confidence 2 Cook sessions to young people. 31 young people have taken part at Deeside Family Centre from January 2022-July 2023 to further develop their life skills and continue to support positive health and well-being.

Work undertaken with partners to understand the physical and mental wellbeing needs of children and young people, has led to the establishment of a Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport Groups, driving multi-agency activity to increase levels of physical activity across all city schools.

2074 young people (aged 10-18 years) and 689 children (aged 5-9 years) have engaged in youth work activity since 2021 with 1648 of those young people reporting improved mental health and wellbeing as a result of their engagement with the service. In total 2,459 young people have engaged with the Saltire Awards in Aberdeen 2021.

Two years of data strongly supports the provision of youth work in schools and Scottish Attainment Challenge funding will be used to maintain this provision. Strong partnership between school, youth workers and other partners is enriching the learning offer for young people. Work will continue to align this provision with the Family Support Model over session 23/24. This work will be informed further by the formal evaluation of the two Edge of Care Pilots before the end of 2023. [Case study 2 – Youth Work in Schools can be found in Appendix B](#)

What does the data now tell us?

As an Education Authority, we continue to work with SHINE (Scottish Health Improvement Research Network) to undertake mental wellbeing surveys with learners from P6-S6 so that we can track progress and respond proactively to emerging needs. Currently 57% (2013 pupils) in primary 6 report that they always or often feel confident. This is a rise of 5% from the 52% reported in March 2022 and reflects a statistically meaningful improvement by gender and phase.

The proportion of all S1-S6 pupils who express that they always or often feel confident has risen by a substantive six percentage points from March 2022, with an average of 53.7% for boys and 27.3% for girls. These gender based averaged measures represent an increase of just over six percentage points for boys and five percentage points for girls. Although there isn't a directly comparable national measure, national data suggests that our gender difference is more marked than the national average. Locally, the gap between boys and girls sits at 29% with the national sitting at 17%. This is being considered by the Children's Services Board.

Outcome Summary

CLD Youth Work is now embedded within most primary and secondary schools and children and young people are benefitting from the opportunities provided by youth workers to gain skills, develop confidence and improve wellbeing. There is a need to further evaluate the offer to ensure it is relevant and still meeting the needs of young people.

<p>Work with partners from the Family Wellbeing Hubs to provide early intervention support to children, young people and families.</p> <p>LOIP Stretch Outcome 4 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27–30-month review by 2026.</p> <p>Key Driver 4.1 Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need.</p>	<p>Collaboration with Fit Like!</p> <p>The Fit Like Family Wellbeing Hub, a multi-disciplinary, rights based, and family first service established in 2020, continues to help ensure that families can access early and preventative support. There is clear evidence that engagement with the service realises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feeling supported to manage their anxieties and worries • Parents/carers and children and young people feeling listened to and heard • Strengthened family relationships • Improved child mental health and wellbeing. <p>Those accessing the service tell us that it feels like a bespoke service and that it is the first time support has ‘felt right’. As a result, we have the confidence in our ability to deliver high quality, rights based integrated services that adapt based on what children and families tell us. Families tell us that they appreciate this, and other more integrated services and this feedback is helping to shape our work to establish a Bairns Hoose to support those who experience the care and justice system.</p> <p>The CLD Family Learning team use solution-focused approach including initial conversations, assessment of need and discussion with partners to help provide intensive 1-1 support to help families overcome barriers and access relevant services. Taking this approach is helping to build resilience and adopt positive practices within the home. Family Learning currently commits a duty worker who attends a number of meetings, leads on initial conversations, provides feedback and manages referrals on a weekly basis.</p> <p>As of July 2023, The Family Learning team are currently working with 24 Fit Like families. The Team continues to be guided by CLD principles and the high standard of practice Family Learning is known for with the team benefiting from the additional advantage of referring back to, or working in partnership with, other agencies aligned to</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>Ensure continuity in working relationships with Fit Like Wellbeing Hubs</p>
--	--	--------------	--

	<p>Fit Like to tailor the 'best fit' for families.</p> <p>The link between Family Learning and Fit Like has been heralded as a successful and productive partnership. As an example of this partnership working, Family Learning and Children 1st, have supported each other's delivery, planned for future interventions together and Children 1st hold and administer emergency fuel funds on behalf of the service. Fit Like families receive priority booking on Family Learning holiday activities. The benefits of this fully integrated way of working will be further considered and spread as the Community Planning Partnership refreshes the Local Outcome Improvement Plan in early 2024.</p> <p>Evaluation tool used by Fit Like Family Wellbeing Hubs shows young people's wellbeing is improving as per Plan.</p> <p>Outcome Summary</p> <p>Working in partnership with Fit Like has generated excellent working relationships ensuring positive, impactful change for parents, young people and children. Playing a full and active part in this bespoke service has benefited staff, offering valuable CPD opportunities and an extended level of support while providing the best fit for families facing complex challenges.</p>		
--	---	--	--

<p>Support Community Planning Aberdeen's work to promote and protect Children's Rights.</p> <p>LOIP 5. 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026</p>	<p>Reporting on Children's Rights</p> <p>Considerable progress has been made in promoting and upholding children's rights and has been reported in our partnership Children's Rights Report. Over the course of 2022 alone, 11 training sessions have been delivered benefiting 180 ACC staff and Community Planning Partners.</p> <p>The full overview of activity in this area is captured in the Children's Rights Report with highlights including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of our multi-agency Fit Like Family Wellbeing Hubs. • Successful partnership delivery of a Holiday programmes in keeping with the self-reported needs of children, young people and families. • Establishment of our Youth Network to improve youth engagement in strategic decision making and increase cohesion between pre-existing participatory groups for children and young people across the city. • Improved Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to ensure that Officer recommendations which directly or indirectly affect children and young people take account of the UNCRC. • The introduction of community walkabouts with children and young people working alongside officers and Elected Members to jointly identify and act on the concerns in local communities • 65840 free school meal vouchers delivered to eligible families • The Provision of 14564 chrome books, 500 Wi-Fi connections with dongles and 210 data only SIMs during periods of school building closure • Updated child protection practices in keeping with updated national guidance • Commissioned Mental Health Aberdeen to offer year-round counselling for our children and young people • Children and young people have directly influenced city master planning • Appointment of a Pupil Climate Change President • Current engagement on the shape of Future Libraries 	<p>Green</p>	<p>The Youth Work Network needs to move forward and increase membership.</p> <p>Aberdeen will host a Sitting of Scottish Youth Parliament in October 2023. This will bring hundreds of young people to the city and will be used to create a legacy for youth participation and youth politics.</p>
---	---	--------------	---

	<p>The Local Authority continues to be proactive in preparing for the incorporation of the UNCRC with the Council Strategy Board maintaining oversight of progress. The publication of statutory guidance in 2023 will trigger a review of the actions required to ensure preparedness for incorporation.</p> <p>Aberdeen Youth Movement Aberdeen Youth Movement (AYM) is the name of the new youth-voice group that emerged from a review of Aberdeen City Youth Council and the need to refresh the youth work team’s approach to Youth Participation. AYM are supported by youth work staff but the aim is for the team to be as self-run and “young people-led” as much as possible. AYM want young people’s voices in all their diversity to be heard and for young people to be at the heart of planning for change. AYM members are on the Youth Activities Funding group; this group looks at and decides which funding applications should be awarded a YAG. AYM have their own branding and social media presence. Key achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some AYM members have reported that being involved with the group has helped with their personal development. • AYM has ensured that young people have been represented at city-wide events such as the Community Planning Network Day and the White Armband Remembrance Day. • Youth Activity Grants Funding Group has helped distribute grants to young people that will enable them to take part in activities that support wellbeing and personal development. YAG Funding Group members are using and developing skills such as negotiation and decision-making <p>Case Study 3 –Aberdeen Youth Movement can be found in Appendix B</p> <p>Community Empowerment Strategy The new Community Empowerment Strategy outlines our shared commitment through the delivery of 7 improvement projects from June 23, including Child Rights, with the</p>		<p>Lead children and young person's LOIP refresh consultation activity</p>
--	---	--	--

aim that 100% of decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them by 2026. Children and young people are being included in the development of Tests of Change. The development of tests of change includes children and young people's involvement in the Future Library Consultation. Findings from these projects will be shared with partners, in the form of usable resources to form a toolkit for others.

Sharpening our focus on Child Poverty

The cost of living crisis has sharpened our focus on the [child poverty agenda](#). A review of data by community evidence that most (78%) communities were performing better than expected as of 2020/21. This means however, that 22% were not. There is now a need to establish a mechanism to better track our progress in addressing the child poverty agenda across our communities and localities in real time to ensure that our collective endeavours realise more equitable levels of improvement. There is also a need to improve the quality of qualitative and quantitative data on the 6 groups most likely to be impacted by poverty to inform our work and this will be an area for development with Community Planning Partners over school session 2023/24.

Outcome Summary

Progress on the promotion and the protections of children's rights has been amplified over the course of the CLD plan, the voice of children and young people is sought in just less than half of the decisions that affect them within Community Planning Aberdeen with ambitions and projects to make this 100%. The mechanisms for this are constantly being adapted to be child and young people friendly, by creating access to information and means in which to input. There is also the development in supported roles for children and young people to become representatives through the Young Ambassadors, Aberdeen Youth Movement, Scottish Youth Parliament and other youth led inclusive initiatives.

<p>Promote and deliver diversionary activities for young people with an enhanced focus on the priority areas.</p> <p>LOIP Stretch Outcome 8 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026</p> <p>Key Driver 8.1 Young people receive the right help at the right time to improve outcomes for young people at risk of becoming involved in the Justice System.</p>	<p>Developing diversionary opportunities for young people Funded Community Projects (Aberdeen Lads Club, Fersands Community Project, Middlefield Community Project, and SHMU) provide a range of diversionary activities for young people across priority areas. Projects provide quarterly and annual performance reports, including KPIs that are linked to the LOIP, Locality Plans and the CLD Plan. 788 young people have participated in diversionary activities. Over 2021-23 these projects supported 2,841 children and young people with 788 young people participating in diversionary activities and 912 reporting that their confidence and resilience had increased.</p> <p>Building the capacity of providers Mastrick Outdoor Hub is an initiative involving partners from ACC Youth Work, Police Scotland, Denis Law Trust, AFC Community Trust and Tesco. It was set up to reduce antisocial behaviour in the area by providing young people with a youth-friendly space where they could take part in positive, diversionary activities. It continues to be a very popular attraction for young people. An offshoot of the Mastrick Hub was a youth group for children of P6 and 7 age. This age group was just a bit too young for the Hub but a need to offer something in the area for them was identified. In April 2023 group members took part in a residential at Cromdale Outdoor Centre where they took part in activities such as canoeing and mountain biking. These activities promoted mental and physical wellbeing and developed skills to do with teamwork and communication. Calls to Police Scotland and ASBIT regarding antisocial behaviour in the area have reduced since the Hub has been up and running with young people participating in a range of activities such as those offered by Street Sports</p> <p>Case Study 4 – Mastrick Youth Hub can be found in Appendix B</p> <p>Establishing the Youth Providers Network</p>	<p>Amber</p>	<p>Youth Work Providers' Network to more effectively work together to plan and deliver diversionary activities.</p> <p>Test engagement approaches in collaboration with Police Scotland and retail partners to address number of City centre youth related disturbance</p>
---	---	--------------	--

	<p>The CLD Youth Work team has established a Youth Work Providers' Network in 2022 where information about diversionary activities is shared and gaps identified. The purpose of the Network is to improve communication between services, have a better understanding of what partners can offer and what they are doing, share examples of good practice and funding and training opportunities. Partners are using the Network to share information quickly to a wide range of providers. Information to do with jobs, training, funding and upcoming events is shared via the Network.</p> <p>Outcome Summary Children and young people are taking part in a range of social, recreational and educational activities that diverts them away from antisocial behaviour in their communities. There is a higher level of provision in priority areas and there is a need to increase the number of diversionary activities and safe spaces for young people in other neighbourhoods.</p>		s.
<p>Work in partnership with primary and secondary schools, with a focus on priority areas, to support improvements relating to the National Improvement Framework priorities</p>	<p>Universal access to youth work Since the CLD Plan was put in place, Scottish Attainment Challenge funding has been allocated to secure the provision of youth work across all city schools. This resource is enabling direct work on skills for life, learning and work at school level when vulnerability is first identified and supporting young people's ability to sustain engagement in employability groups. This use of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding will be maintained.</p> <p>Universal access to youth work is enabling easier identification of those most likely to benefit from CLD programmes and helping make the best use of resource. Almost all referrals to Third Sector programmes are now influenced by youth workers</p> <p>Demand for youth work</p>	Green	Provide a timely response to unmet need.

<p>LOIP Stretch Outcome 5 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026</p> <p>Key Driver 5.1 Improving timely access to support</p>	<p>Over 2022-23 617 referrals have been received from across all secondary schools. 178 individual 1-2-1 sessions were delivered along with 421 group sessions. Of those referrals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26% of referrals sought support with health and wellbeing. • 20% of referrals sought support to manage relationships. • 16% of referrals sought support to improve communication with others. • 13% of referrals sought support to improve self-awareness <p>All of the children and young people being targeted by this support, give regular feedback against their progress. This requires 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. CLD Youth Workers and Family Learning Workers gather and provide agreed supporting data on a monthly basis. Family Learning feed into and take direct referrals for 1-1 or requests for group delivery from every active Partnership Forum. Those Associated Schools Groups with more proactive Partnerships Forums are able to demonstrate higher levels of impact and this is an area to be considered for school session 2023-24.</p> <p>Youth work in schools</p> <p>Increased levels of anxiety and escalating mental health needs are being seen in children, young people and families. The increase in the size of the in-school Youth Work team allowed all primary and secondary schools in every ASG to receive an offer from Youth Work. This offer included one-to-one support, enhanced support for transition, girls' groups, boys' groups, lunchtime drop-ins and opportunities to develop life skills through courses such as Confidence to Cook and the Leadership programme.</p> <p>The number of participants registered for a youth work Education Recovery activity between August 2021 and the end of August 2022 was 1018 with 7318 sessions provided equating to 7513 learner hours.</p>	
--	---	--

The majority of young people who took part in the enhanced transition programmes said that they were more prepared for secondary, that the programme improved their confidence and that they gained new skills. The majority experienced improvement in their wellbeing.

Young people tell us that Lunch-time drop-ins provide opportunities for pupils to socialise with their peers in safe and inclusive settings. Youth Work Staff reported during the sessions *'the group are really supportive of each other and help each other during the session. They also make new members coming along to the group feel very welcome'*.

There is also evidence in evaluations that there was a further increase in confidence in trying new things and an increase in decision-making and team building skills.

One young person also referred themselves for further Youth Work support in school and as YW staff work in close partnership with Education colleagues, this enables supports to be put in place in a timely manner to further promote young people's health and wellbeing.

Youth Work Staff report they ensure inclusion, build positive trusting relationships with young people, support young people to participate safely in groups, ensure young people voice their opinions and are listened to.

Building confidence and developing trusting relationships with adults in the school ensures young people are more confident talking to adults about their concerns.

Resources are being effectively used to provide timely interventions to children and young people. Referral processes have been developed that allow partners to refer quickly and easily. Partnerships between schools and CLD are improving, and the former are recognising the contribution youth work and family learning can make to support children and young people.

Edge of Care pilots as a response to The Promise

The benefits of having Youth Workers in schools is being recognised as an integral part of our emerging model of Family Support aligned to The Promise. The Youth Work and Family Learning Teams have committed 6 staff (4 youth workers and 2 Family Learning staff) to the multi-agency Edge of Care pilots in Lochside and Northfield Academies since Nov '22 with the goal of listening to and supporting Young people and their families to achieve positive destinations often from a starting point of zero or low attendance and facing multiple barriers to both attainment and achievement. Progress is routinely reported to [Committee](#)

Young people referred to the pilots are benefitting from enhanced support and the whole-family focus of the partners who are involved. There are 26 pupils from Northfield currently being supported and 16 from Lochside. The Pilots have been operational since October/November 2022. Our evaluation of their impact to date, while still evolving, indicates that they have largely been positive. There are encouraging indicators that the pilots are having a positive impact on the lives of the young people and families. This can be seen through a range of quantitative and qualitative data which indicates improvements in relation to levels of 'engagement' and 'achievement'.

The learning and feedback from young people and families would indicate that the 'pilots' offer valuable support to young people and families who have an escalating need and risk profile, beyond the early intervention support offered by the Fit Like Service but not yet requiring intensive intervention. Adopting a whole family approach has been essential. It is also recognised that levels of need and risk are not static. How we support families move up and down the continuum of support without experiencing multiple changes of people supporting them, continues to be an area to worked through.

Feedback from staff working in the pilots, strongly supports the value of a collocated and integrated approach to delivering early and enhanced support to young people and their

	<p>families. Adopting a relational approach, staff have been able to form positive and effective relationships with the families to facilitate change. They are often viewed differently by family members, not necessarily by the title on their ID Badge which in turn is supporting creative ways of working and a blurring of traditional roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>As noted above the data supports that the five identified ‘problem statements’ have helped to guide and inform an iterative development of the pilots. It is right that each pilot operates according to the needs of their ASG. However, it is also apparent that learning is being shared so there is broad alignment to the delivery model.</p> <p>We are conscious that the pilots have only been operating for two full terms and plan to extend the ‘test and learn’ phase until the end of 2023. This will provide for a stronger evidence base to determine the impact of the pilots and to inform how we scale up and sustain their future role and remit.</p> <p>Outcome Summary The increase in the number of youth workers in primary and secondary schools because of Education Recovery and The Promise funding is improving equity of opportunity. Children and young people are being supported by youth workers to develop skills and capacities that are improving their wellbeing. Children and young people on the edge of care from Lochside and Northfield ASG’s are receiving an enhanced offer of support from a range of partners.</p>		
<p>Outcomes from CLD Plan 21-24</p>	<p>The impact of what we have done together</p>	<p>RAG rating</p>	<p>Next steps</p>
<p>Priority 2 - Adult learning</p>			

Families are supported to raise attainment and build their capacity and resilience

LOIP 4.1
Ensuring Families receive the parenting and family support they need.

Early intervention work with families

The CLD Family Learning team, work both individually and with a range of partners to provide timely early intervention supports to families and their children. The team deliver intensive 1-1 and small group work focusing on a range of themes identified by families including emotions, anxiety, sleep management, confidence and assertiveness building as well as outdoor activity classes to tackle social isolation.

Over academic year 21/22 the Family Learning team offered:

187 activities to 402 participants, equating to 3027 registered learner hours and 4043 total learner hours including children.

The on-going cost of living has increased demand for the service over 22/23 with an increased:

275 activities to 542 participants, equating to 1170, registered learner hours 7627.

Across all Family Learning team, work in 22/23 a total of 12,043 learner hours was delivered across the city. From these 1-1 and small group sessions almost all (92%) of learners report their confidence levels have increased since working with Family Learning, and almost all (97%) had gained new knowledge and skills. Through gathered written feedback families have shared that support from Family Learning has reduced isolation, generated a sense of belonging and introduced life changing family practices.

[Case study 9 – Family Support can be found in Appendix B](#)

Funded Community Projects

Funded Community Projects provide a range of valuable supports for families, young people and children across priority areas. Supports include Early Learning and Childcare, After School Clubs, holiday activities/playschemes, Family Support, Adult Learning, Youth Work, Community Capacity Building and access to free food and food

Green

pantries. Funded Projects also provide direct support to help families living in communities facing issues such with fuel poverty, welfare reform, benefits, employment, health and wellbeing, isolation and social exclusion. Over 3,000 families (and 2,841 children and young people) have been supported through funded Community Projects over 21/23. 411 volunteers have contributed 65,625 volunteer hours this way. The CLD provision delivered by these community projects enables the ACC CLD teams to direct capacity to other priority areas and groups, ensuring there is no duplication of resource.

Fairer Aberdeen support for families

The Fairer Aberdeen Programme funds a range of organisations providing support to families, including Middlefield Youth Hub, HomeStart, ACIS Youth Counselling, Befriend A Child, Choices, ACC Creative Learning Geronimo, CFINE, Pathways, CAB, and community flats in Tillydrone, Seaton and Cummings Park. 939 parents with more complex needs were supported in this way over 21/23. Key successes include:

- 752 adults and 434 young people accessed counselling services through Fairer Aberdeen funded organisations.
- A total of 1,439 people took part in employability programmes through community groups and 487 less than half (37%) of those people moved into work.
- 7,683 people received money and income maximisation advice, with 2,289 of them receiving a total financial gain of £8,265,521 the equivalent of a gain of £3,611 per person.

Kinship Carers

St Machar Parent Support Project has supported 180 Kinship Carers over 2021-23. They provide peer group support through fortnightly meetings, counselling, group work sessions exploring child development, and one to one support. 100% of Kinship Carers reported that they felt less isolated. Following the closure of St Machar Parent

Following the closure of St Machar Parents Support Project; continue to evaluate the need and

Support group, The Family Learning team have provided invaluable support to families to mitigate the loss of St Machar Parent Support Project maintaining relationships with families and continuing with fortnightly meetings.

[Case Study 5 – St Machar Parent Support, Kinship Carers and Case study 6 – Childhood in Scotland, can be found in Appendix B](#)

Increased collaboration

The CLD Family Learning team works closely with a range of internal and external partners and these partnerships have grown stronger over the last 2 years. Of the 946 participants supported by Family Learning since August 2021, the majority will have engaged with and received direct support from an average of 2-5 services this demonstrates staff's relationships with and knowledge of other providers as well as understanding learners' evolving needs and progression routes.

Strong partnerships have been fostered through the Family Learning team's continued contribution to the Fit Like Family Wellbeing Hubs. This multi-agency approach has enabled greater understanding of what each service brings in terms of expertise, approach and capacity which in turn has strengthened partnership working and in bringing the right services around a family at the right time.

Close collaboration with education

Since 2021 the CLD Family Learning team have recruited a Family Learning Development Officer and between 8-10 Development Workers via Education Recovery Funding. This has enabled Family learning services to be accessible city wide and is maintained through the use of Local Authority Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) funding. Family Learning have provided essential life skills and other supports to all 11 Associated Schools Groups across the city having spent time establishing relationships in areas where Family Learning had little or no presence previously. The Team now plan to work with education colleagues to share some of

explore alternative services and measures to provide support for those who require it.

Explore how commissioned services

the emerging best practice to inform next steps.

Almost all (92%) of all registered learners share that their confidence levels increase due to their engagement with the service and almost all (97%) report gaining new knowledge and skills. There is clear evidence that the targeted and inclusive programmes delivered by Family Learning improve life chances and effectively enable parents to develop their parenting skills, helping to enable families to give their child the best start in life. The team and colleagues from across the Community Planning Partnership now intend to consider how best to represent our model of Family Support in keeping with The Promise.

Responding to emerging need

The increased cost of living has had a direct impact on many of the families supported by the CLD Family Learning team, particularly in the early stages of engagement, the team responds, helping families overcome the most basic barriers of food, fuel and financial poverty as well as support for the mental health complexities they face. The team continues to be agile in approach and guided by families, ensuring that their basic needs are met before engaging in further learning programmes.

Outcome Summary

Across our communities there are a range of experienced and responsive services and learning programmes that continue to support family learning and families' capacity to cope with change. In many instances families have required support to meet their basic needs before being able to progress to other areas of learning. Partnership working and how that sustains whole family support has been a strength in meeting families' needs and building resilience. Recognising that families have the biggest impact on their child's development and learning, this work contributes to increasing attainment across the city, by addressing barriers that families face and building their confidence in their involvement in their child's learning.

contribute to
the family
Support Model

<p>Develop and deliver targeted learning package for those whose employment opportunities have been hardest hit by Covid-19</p> <p>LOIP Stretch Outcome 2. 400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026</p>	<p>Targeted employability programmes across partners</p> <p>Targeted learning packages aligned to ABZ Works have been provided by a diverse range of partners to those most impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. In most instances projects took place through short-term funding. Blended learning opportunities were maximised across partners, providing learning pathways and appropriate support/referral routes.</p> <p>Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Handmade Changes’, a weekly group, established in Oct 2022 by Family Learning for up to 9 women, facing multiple daily challenges. The group focused on transferable employability skills developed through group work and craft activities. Most learners successfully achieved qualifications. • 42 learners, supported by CFine completed their Grow Learn in Nature Award with some moving on to paid work and volunteering and most reporting improved confidence and skills. • Grampian Regional Equality Council (GREC) provided courses to support English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) learners’ complete certification in construction and theory driving test. 40 learners' English ability was assessed (pre intermediate level) and 8 went on to complete the construction qualification with 4 moving into employment. • Station House Media Unit ran a women’s return to work course for 7 women who all reported an increase in confidence. Most participants went on to volunteer at SHMU to run a radio show on women’s issues. • 12 ESOL learners were supported by Adult Learning, to complete CV courses 	<p>Amber</p>	<p>Evaluate the effectiveness of Power Tools delivery as a sustainable employability programme across all adult learning.</p> <p>Further work to define and promote clear learning pathways across different providers.</p>
---	---	--------------	---

<p>LOIP Key Driver 1.4 Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities.</p>	<p>in 2021/22 18 ESOL learners were supported with employment skills in 2022/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability reading lists were created by Aberdeen Library and Information services to enhance job seeking and employment skills. Since February 2022 there have been 180 audiobooks, 104 eBooks and 166 books loaned from this collection and these continue to be promoted in all libraries and through outreach work. • 18 CLD staff across Adult Learning, Family Learning and Healthy Minds have been trained in the delivery of Power Tools (8 personal development modules designed by CLD Aberdeenshire) 14 courses have been delivered across the city to 63 learners. Of the initial 33 learners who engaged with Power Tools, half went on to engage with Pathways for employability support and 3 achieved an adult achievement award. <p>Reducing re-offending through skills development</p> <p>The CLD Adult Learning team work in partnership with Community Payback Order team and the Social Work Criminal Justice team, offers a learning programme as part of the client's payback order. The focus is to expand opportunities and alternative coping strategies with the aim of reducing re-offending and custodial sentences.</p> <p>54 learners have accessed skills development at Shoe Lane or Spring Garden sites which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed group and a women's group– literacy, ICT, health and wellbeing, life skills, confidence building, core skills SVQ • Problem solving courts – mixed learning, tailored to meet the individual needs 		<p>Increase numbers of learners following delays in court system and the move of Community Payback Order premises from Willowdale to Shoe Lane</p>
--	--	--	--

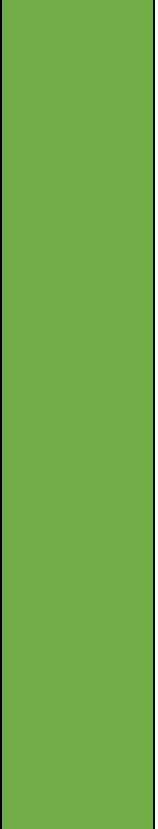
of the learners

All learners are offered accredited learning, at the end of their Community Payback Order they have also have the opportunity to attend classes within the community.

Outcome Summary

These employability interventions have been successful in supporting individuals to increase in confidence and learn new skills. Learning and employability pathways have been central for those taking part in short term projects, this has led to accreditation, volunteering and employment. As work continues through the delivery of the CLD plan there is a need to define and promote clear learning pathways across different providers.

<p>Improve the Mental Wellbeing of adults in our communities</p> <p>LOIP Stretch Outcome</p> <p>11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026</p> <p>Key Driver 11.1 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.</p>	<p>Adult Mental Wellbeing in the community</p> <p>The CLD Healthy Minds team supported 134 adults with a diagnosed mental illness to access learning opportunities. All learners received 1-1 support to develop a personal learning plan which is regularly reviewed and evaluated. Learners also took part in various groups (184 learning opportunities over the 2 years) in partnership with Creative Learning, Aberdeen Art Gallery, CFine, RGU Sports, Countryside Rangers, Grampian Hospital Art Trust and Station House Media Unit with most reporting an increase in their confidence and skills. Most moved onto other opportunities including employment, volunteering, further education and community groups.</p> <p>Of the 113 participants who engaged between September 2021 and August 2022 53% returned an evaluation showing that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most (79%) believed the programme had improved their confidence level and • Most (81%) had improved skills. <p>The return rate in June 2023 increased to 86% (51 of 59 participants) and showed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority (73%) believed confidence had improved and • The majority (69%) had improved skills. • 3 learners were supported to participate in the mental health strategy consultation. • 13 learners attended our celebration of learning event in February 2023. <p>Learners had taken part in multiple learning opportunities with some gaining awards including Adult Achievement Awards, SQA in Volunteering and Grow Learn in Nature awards. One learner has since been nominated for an Adult Learner Award and we are awaiting the outcome of this.</p> <p>An Adult Learning Tutor (Healthy Minds Team) is based in the Blair Unit (Forensic) of Cornhill hospital 12 hours per week. They have supported 7 patients since May 2021</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>The Healthy Minds Team are promoting the service across all partners to increase appropriate referrals and will increase accredited learning by 30%</p>
---	---	--------------	--

<p>Key Driver 11.2 Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation.</p>	<p>with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all (96%) reporting improved confidence • Almost all (92%) improved skills. • sessions total 196 learning hours. <p>A further 12 patients have been supported by the Healthy Minds team in the community equating to 249 learning hours. A few learners are continuing their learning within the unit while others are regularly attending community opportunities. One learner is progressing with an adult achievement award and an SQA qualification in volunteering.</p> <p>Case study 10 – Healthy Minds can be found in Appendix B</p> <p>Outcome Summary Adults with a diagnosed mental illness are being facilitated by the Healthy Minds Team to aid their own recovery by accessing learning opportunities across Aberdeen and in the forensic unit at Cornhill. Most report an increase in confidence and skills and move on to volunteering opportunities, employment, other learning opportunities or groups within their own community. Learners report that they take better care of themselves and are more able to do things on their own. Some learners have participated in accredited learning and the team have a target this year to increase this by 30%.</p>		
--	---	--	--

<p>Equip Adult Learners to meet key challenges and transitions in their lives – to include Digital inclusion, literacy, numeracy, ESOL and financial resilience.</p> <p>LOIP Stretch Outcome 11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026</p>	<p>Enabling those seeking sanctuary or asylum</p> <p>The rapid rise in the number of those seeking sanctuary or asylum in the city has driven our focus on the provision of ESOL classes to support their integration in the city.</p> <p>ABZworks have dedicated workers who have been working directly with the resettled community to support adults into work or training, creating weekly seminars to develop skills and understanding about the Scottish job market. Similar approaches to support have been offered to the Afghan community over 21/22 who also have been temporarily housed in Aberdeen and housed nationally and locally. The CLD, Adult Learning team have been pivotal in the support offered, with every female arrival being assessed and offered English for Speakers Of other Language (ESOL) classes on a regular basis, with average attendance reaching close to 100%.</p> <p>In total, the Adult Learning team assessed 900 learners in the year 22/23 from the assessment learners were either offered a class or sign posted to the most appropriate provider for their ESOL needs.</p> <p>The CLD Adult Learning team have delivered 197 classes at an averaging 45 classes per term. and 150 learners per term receiving a minimum of 2 classes per week. The classes range from pre beginner to pre intermediate, in addition to our mainstream classes we have offered additionality with walk and talks, employability short courses and 2 x ESOL for the Care Sector which has resulted in all but 1 participant gaining employment.</p> <p>All learners are encouraged to gain an SQA qualification in literacy Nat 1 or ESOL Nat 2. In response to requests from learners and staff, we are in the process of establishing an SQA in Tenancy, which covers both the tenant and landlord's rights and responsibilities.</p> <p>Case study 7 – Afghan Women achieving SQA qualifications and Case study 8 – ESOL Care sector can be found in Appendix B</p>	Green	
---	--	-------	--

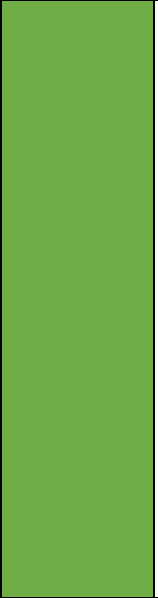
<p>Key Driver 11.1 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.</p> <p>Key Driver 11.2 Provide individuals and communities with the social resources needed to reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation.</p>	<p>Empowering our Gypsy Traveller community</p> <p>The CLD Adult Learning team have well established relationships with the Gypsy Travellers at the Clinterty Travellers Site. Gypsy Travellers have the lowest educational attainment of any minority group and literacy levels are intergenerationally low. Adult learning work with partners nationally and locally looks to improve educational outcomes and tackle inequalities for Gypsy Travellers. (link to action plan). We aim to support Gypsy Travellers' access to education and other services particularly at key transition stages, this is particularly important as many of the families disengage from school at an early age.</p> <p>The current Gypsy Traveller site at Clinterty is being renovated and the team have supported families through this transition. While the re-development of the site is positive, the impact on families, individuals and children has proven to be a challenge for those who have been relocated. Separation from friends and family has left people feeling isolated particularly and exacerbated after the effects of the COVID lockdowns on the Community. Families have been housed in the Bucksburn area and continue to receive support through Adult Learning, the well-established, education group, young parents group continue alongside 1:1 support to help with benefits applications in collaboration with Bucksburn Library and the Beacon centre community group. Food poverty continues to be an issue for this group and the service made applications to CFINE who now provide weekly food parcels for delivery to families.</p> <p>16 large family groups have regularly accessed support, with SQA awards and Adult Achievement Awards.</p> <p>Connecting Scotland and an increase in digital skills</p> <p>The Fairer Aberdeen Fund supports Silver City Surfers to provide support to older people to learn how to use computers and the internet safely, and SHMU Community</p>		<p>Re-establish learning programmes as the refurbished site reopens. supporting the Community to actively engage in policy and decision making.</p>
--	--	--	---

	<p>Media, including community newsletters which are delivered across the priority areas, and community radio, which includes weekly community shows for each priority area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 211 older people were supported to develop digital skills. • 189 people were involved in producing community media and • 285 people participated in training and skills development. • 43 projects were awarded devices through Phases 1-3 of the Connecting Scotland programme. • Phase 3 of Connecting Scotland provided 320 devices to individuals who were unemployed and on low incomes. <p>Adult Learning run weekly digital skills workshop with 11 learners who benefited from the Connecting Scotland initiative, classes are running in Seaton and Cummings Park Flat with scope to be scaled up further.</p> <p>Establishing an Adult Learning Providers Network</p> <p>The Adult Learning Providers involved in the development of the CLD plan worked together to establish the Adult Learning Network. The network has met 14 times since August 2021 with 8 partners attending regularly and others intermittently. The Adult Learning Network now meets 4 times a year with a diverse range of partners. Participants have reported an increase in knowledge in partner agencies offer which has made signposting learners easier and an increase in partnership working and avoiding duplication.</p> <p>ESOL subgroup well established Accreditation/Digital/Family Learning in initial stages.</p> <p>The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) sub group and has been crucial in effectively co-ordinating our response to the significant influx of new learners by coordinating the ESOL response to Afghan and Ukrainian Learners ensuring all who</p>		<p>Progress other adult learning subgroups for Family Learning and Accreditation.</p> <p>Progress partnerships relating to digital inclusion through the City Digital Group.</p>
--	---	--	--

presented were assessed and signposted to the appropriate service for appropriate level learning,
All sub groups are assessing training needs of adult learning practitioners so that future training offers meet these needs.

Outcome Summary

Agility, understanding and development has been demonstrated in this work as CLD teams have responded with urgency to the changing circumstances of some of the most vulnerable citizens in the city. Working across partners has been essential to appreciate and anticipate the experiences and needs of individuals, families and communities who require assistance to access resources and support including learning and access to ESOL as an integral part of their integration and prosperity in Aberdeen.



Learner's Voice
- Development of opportunities for the voice and experiences of adult learners to shape future provision and priorities

<p>Develop and support outdoor learning initiatives</p> <p>Key Driver 15.1 Increasing the diversity, quality and use of Aberdeen's green spaces by facilitating community participation in them to restore nature and increase people's satisfaction, health, and wellbeing</p>	<p>Outdoor learning</p> <p>The CLD Family Learning team adapted its provision efficiently and effectively to outdoor opportunities during Covid, the legacy of this approach has meant that all staff are skilled to adapt and innovate using outdoor spaces. Family Learning continues to embed outdoor learning providing stimulating learning environments while promoting wellbeing across the rich outdoor resources the city has to offer, providing creative outdoor learning experiences that connect children and families, assessing risk, building resilience, confidence and skills through activities and play.</p> <p>Outdoor sessions are delivered in each locality through Geronimo – Time to Play, Coastal Project, Wellbeing Walks and RE-Wilding Outdoor Education sessions, Holidays of Play, Pop-up in local parks as well as families accessing residential in Cullen looking at environmental issues and the impact humans have on the climate. CLD's Family Learning team has supported approximately 460 families to access outdoor learning opportunities.</p> <p>Outdoor Learning at The Grove - Hazlehead</p> <p>The CLD Healthy Minds team enabled partner agencies to access the Grove site for outdoor learning delivery of courses, including One Seed Forward and accredited courses from CFINE. The teaching space at the Grove has been revamped and is available for horticultural skills as well as a general meeting space.</p> <p>Volunteering opportunities at the Grove continue to be developed in partnership with other agencies. The resource has enabled successful delivery of a variety of courses including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Grow and Learn in Nature (GLiN) employability focused courses – outcomes for learners include return to paid employment and volunteer posts. • One Seed Forward (OSF) have delivered a programme of courses, one strand focusing on basic gardening skills and the other on community gardening, with 	<p>Green</p>	<p>Maintain outdoor learning skills across the workforce as staff move on,</p> <p>More One Seed Forward courses will be offered from August 23.</p> <p>Healthy Minds will deliver a monthly environmental group in partnership with ACC Ranger Service focusing on mental wellbeing and open to mental health agencies</p>
--	---	--------------	--

	<p>ongoing support provided to engage with existing community gardens and to set up new ones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Learning Outdoor learning - 346 families benefiting in the last year. Increase in Adult learning outdoor activity particularly around employability • Healthy Minds ran 10 outdoor focused courses including gardening, environmental group, Conservation and Outdoor Skills, Summer Walks and City Explorers, and, with ACC Ranger service, support to learners to access public events, including volunteering. There were a series of events held at the Grove supporting longer term learners to build volunteering skills and work towards a qualification. From this 3 learners went on to mainstream volunteering, 2 received their SVQ in Volunteering and one achieved an Adult Achievement Award. All learners reported increased confidence which resulted in improved social skills and quality of life. • Healthy Minds also ran a short course for patients from Corgarff Ward at Royal Cornhill Hospital giving them confidence to support their own garden within the hospital grounds. <p>Learners who have engaged at The Grove have progressed on to volunteer positions with other agencies including One Seed Forward, The Allotment Market Stall and Springhill Community Garden.</p> <p>Outcome Summary Aberdeen benefits from a wealth of varied outdoor spaces providing more relaxed learning environments, with associations of leisure time, play and the benefits to wellbeing from spending time in nature, these create the excellent conditions for learning, especially if learners have not had positive experiences in more traditional settings. Growing and ground maintenance activity translates well and provides learners with volunteering experiences and the development of employability skills with direct routes to employment.</p>		<p>across the city.</p> <p>Evaluate the need for an outdoor learning sub group of the Adult Learning Providers Network.</p>
--	--	--	---

<p>Increase focus on accredited qualifications and development of Progression Routes</p>	<p>Learner Accreditation and progression routes</p> <p>The Adult Learning team has trained 9 new Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) assessors and 3 Internal verifiers, with a plan to train a minimum of 10 more assessors in the next year. The training offer will be available to the wider CLD team and the Adult Learning Network, enabling increased opportunity and progression routes for learners through gaining qualifications.</p> <p>Adult Learning programmes have successfully supported learners with their qualifications as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 individuals from Community Payback at Willowdale have completed their Core Skill Level 2 in Information and Communication Technology. • 8 individuals have completed their Core Skill Level 3 in Information and Communication Technology. • 12 SQA awards 2021/2022. • 94 SQA awards and 19 Adult Achievement Awards in 2022/23. These included Volunteering, ICT, Communication-writing, Communication-reading, working with others, ESOL for everyday life and ESOL preparation for literacy. <p>This a substantial increase as we work with learners to increase confidence and build engagement after lockdown.</p> <p>Outcome Summary</p> <p>Qualifications sought by learners is a powerful, respected and lasting recognition of their commitment, skills and knowledge specific to their chosen subject area. Such qualifications offer clear pathways for progression and give learners confidence in the value and credibility of their learning. By increasing the number of staff and partners</p>	<p>Amber</p>	<p>To complete accreditation mapping exercise. To offer assessors training across the wider CLD team and network</p> <p>Scoping exercise of all accredited learning across the city, look to develop clear progression routes, share resources and staff training opportunities</p>
---	--	--------------	---

	across the city who can assess and verify for SQA there will be more opportunities available for our learners now and in the future.		
--	--	--	--

Outcomes from CLD Plan 21-24	The impact of what we have done together	RAG rating	Next steps
Community Development			

<p>Provide capacity building support to communities to create, develop and sustain programmes and activities which address emerging priorities and provide increased opportunities for citizens</p> <p>Emerging priorities being not detailed in the plan: Welcoming New Scots and refugees Cost of Living Crisis Warm Spaces</p> <p>11.1 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.</p>	<p>Building community capacity</p> <p>Partners worked together to support Management Committees to re-establish centres and centre based projects following Covid-19 closures.</p> <p>Our Community Learning staff are in the heart of communities supporting many initiatives including volunteer roles that build community capacity and enhance individuals' employability skills.</p> <p>At most community/learning centres across the City, enthusiastic and committed volunteers are developing knowledge, skills and abilities to create programmes of activities which meet the needs of their local community, and to begin to overcome the challenges of rebuilding meaningful programmes in the aftermath of periods of lockdown.</p> <p>Warm Spaces</p> <p>In response to the cost-of-living crisis 'Warm Spaces' providing support to local communities. were established across this city, in a mix of Council premises and community and third sector organisations.</p> <p>As part of the wider offer of Warm Spaces, the CLD Community Development took a lead in developing a support and training offer for volunteers working within Warm Spaces across the city.</p> <p>A Warm Space Volunteer support programme was created – this included a Warm Space remit, an induction, and training opportunities such as First Aid, REHIS (The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland) and MEOC (Making every opportunity count). Volunteer training opportunities were offered to all 58 Warm Space venues across the city.</p>		<p>With partners and communities, co-create a clear, consistent, readily available suite of training, including an e-toolkit, to help build their capacity to deliver opportunities and services to meet the needs of their community</p>
--	--	--	---

	<p>Community Learning staff worked with communities to pilot a Warm Spaces approach at three Learning Centres - Cummings Park, Rosemount, and Seaton - from October 2022.</p> <p>All three learning centres provided a safe warm space for members of the community to access a warm drink, comfortable seating and offered access to activities and information/advice on cost-of-living support. Each centre took a unique approach to their Warm Space provision. The opening hours, activities and resources were based around existing centre programmes, volunteer capacity and opening hours. Over time community meals, food pantries and a diverse range of activities developed due to community members feedback and the volunteers' initiative.</p> <p>The centres offered a wide range of well organised and relevant services to community members. Many people accessed hot community meals and fresh fruit, vegetables and groceries through the two food pantries. Community Meals Total meals served 1024 meals in two centres. 590 Volunteer hours for community meals. Food pantry No of people supported – 510 food parcels. Volunteer hours for food pantries - 331 hours</p> <p>Volunteers contributed (957 hours) significantly to the success of Warm Spaces by taking the lead in the provision of community meals, serving at food pantries and leading new initiatives and developments. Warm Space volunteers valued the support and training offered and were took a lead and developed initiatives and have informed future centre developments.</p> <p>Staying Well & Warm Roadshow - 4 roadshows took place offering a range of supports and advice in response to the cost-of-living crisis. (Central library, Cummings Park, Tillydrone Community Campus & Kincorth Community Centre) A wide range of partner agencies attended – CFINE- safe team, Scarf, Home Energy Scotland, Financial Inclusion, Library service, Grampian Credit Union, Care & Repair, NHS vaccination team, Family & Adult</p>		
--	---	--	--

	<p>Learning, Adult Learning, Social Security Scotland, Health Point, health Improvement team and Housing. Thirteen partner agencies provided staff to share specific information relating to cost of living from energy efficiency, financial and benefit checks to health and wellbeing tips, activities, and access to vaccination team. 120 people engaged and accessed specific support and advice to help with the rising cost of living.</p> <p>Warm Spaces' success will be measured not just on the number of people who turn up but also the connections made, the learning opportunities accessed and impacts on individuals' health and wellbeing as a result of maximising resources and working collaboratively.</p> <p>Case study 11 – Warm Spaces can be found in Appendix B</p> <p>Ukrainian Resettlement</p> <p>Opportunities to support Ukrainian welcome and resettlement work were done at rapid pace given the circumstances. Opportunities were varied and ranged from collecting donations of food and clothing to preparing properties for Ukrainian tenants and assisting with the popup 'Ukrainian Community Centre. Opportunities were advertised in a variety of ways including press, social media, on the volunteering hub and particularly by cascading word of mouth requests through community groups and organisations. More than 100 Volunteers from across the city have contributed more than 2000 hours of volunteer time,</p> <p>Interventions required as a result of the current situation in Ukraine, included the opening of a 'pop up' Community Centre for all Ukrainian refugees and host families each Friday and Sunday to give support, information and also to help allow relaxation and socialisation.</p>		
--	--	--	--

	<p>As part of a wider support package the Ukrainian Community Centre was established by the Communities Team at Rosemount Community Centre, this space was created to welcome Ukrainian nationals to the city and to support the Ukrainian community to develop and deliver their own provision. A programme was created to offer refugee support, build social connections, share information, provide English classes, and try new activities. The facility is open to all Ukrainian refugees and host families.</p> <p>The programme on Fridays, running since March 2022, has been instrumental in supporting Ukrainian Refugees across the city, providing them with key supports through services such as the Resettlement Team, Citizens Advice Bureau, the Financial Inclusion Team, the Employability Team, Pathways, Start Scotland, ESOL Classes, Sport Aberdeen mixed sports sessions, Countryside Ranger outings, Chess Class, Music Class, Volunteer-run English classes, Arts and Crafts, bike donations, managing food and household donations, volunteer translators and 'welcomers'.</p> <p>Sundays have been more focused on social events. The Ukrainians have now established a Sunday School which now has over 100 children on the register and cultural events like the Scottish vs Ukrainian Food Battle</p> <p>CLD Team worked with Ukrainians already in the city to co-design and develop a wide-range of opportunities and build the capacity of volunteers to establish a Ukrainian Community Association and Sunday School alongside supporting the community centre whilst this was developing.</p> <p>Case study 12 – Ukrainian Community Centre can be found in Appendix B</p> <p>Funded projects</p> <p>Through Funded Projects and the Fairer Aberdeen Fund a range of organisations are funded to provide programmes of activities and support in communities.</p> <p>During 2021-23 Funded Projects supported 6,936 people and 411 volunteers contributed 65,625 hours of volunteering time, and the Fairer Aberdeen</p>		
--	---	--	--

programme supported 81,870 people and 1,382 volunteers contributed over 250,000 hours of volunteering time with a value of £3.9m.

Participatory budgeting

The Fairer Aberdeen Board allocated £75,000 to undertake a Participatory Budgeting process in 2021-22, which focussed on funding for initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of young people, recognising the impact the pandemic had on their mental health and wellbeing, relationships with their peers and their activities and social lives.

26 organisations working across the city received funding. Following an initial slow response, the steering group worked in partnership with Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership's Health Improvement Fund and ACVO's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund to support a wide variety of initiatives which otherwise would not have received funding.

The Fairer Aberdeen Board allocated £25,000 to a PB process in 2022-23. A steering group made up of partners and community representatives prioritised the funding for the Garthdee area, focusing on initiatives to improve the community, support social inclusion, and tackle isolation and loneliness.

10 applications were received from organisations working in the area, and funding was awarded to the 9 projects that were most popular in the public vote on the day. Activities focused on bringing people back together after the isolation of the pandemic, with youth groups, football and athletics for young people, outdoor initiatives including allotments, road safety, a forest garden, and community benches, and a community Christmas Party.

Feedback from the event showed that the majority of people valued and enjoyed the opportunity to come together in person, to celebrate volunteers and community groups, take advantage of networking opportunities, and learn more about what was happening in their area.

Come And Network (CAN) Day

Due to the Lockdown a significant number of volunteer capacity has been lost. The CAN Day provides a clear suite of training to community groups and volunteers to aim towards strengthening communities.

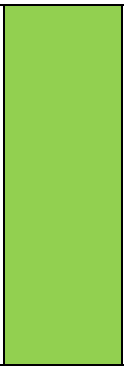
	<p>The Community Development and ACVO formed a CAN Day Planning Team which reached out to community volunteers and organisations to ask what capacity/learning needs they had. The following themes were identified: <i>Health and Wellbeing, Strengthening Communities, Digital Skills, Crisis and Hardship, Promoting Diversity and The Environment</i>. These themes were then broken down into 14 workshops and delivered at the Town House</p> <p>The aim is to enable volunteers in the city to come together and learn from each other through workshops and to increase skills & knowledge to support their communities.</p> <p>Outcome summary</p> <p>Capacity building support is enabling and empowering local people to develop the skills and confidence to further develop programmes of activities that are making a difference to their communities</p>		
--	---	--	--

<p>Support the creation and development of social enterprise and community wealth building</p> <p>3.1 Promoting inclusive economic growth for our most disadvantaged communities.</p>	<p>Enabling community wealth building in our most disadvantaged communities</p> <p>Partnerships have been created with Elevator, NESCOL, Pathways and localised community groups to take this action forward. Most notable is the connection between Elevator and Community groups who are moving towards a social enterprise model. These include Earth and Worms, Fresh Wellness and Quinney's Antiques</p> <p>Partners focused on providing the support within the heart of our communities with a dedicated Business Gateway Adviser based in a priority neighbourhood in each locality to help increase the number of direct referrals. delivering evening workshops supporting those interested in starting a business (within Central there were 6 and 4 in North who attended these workshops).</p> <p>In addition, the Community Business Advisor also attends Tillydrone Community Campus and Cummings Park Community Centre to provide a monthly drop in service. This has been going for 12 months and on average attracts 2 attendees looking for support to start up a business.</p> <p>We have supported a total of 37 individuals to start a business, with 23 in 2022/23 and 14 in 2021/22 which has either taken them off universal credits or significantly reduced their universal credits. Of the 37 people who started a business there are 8 from Central, 5 from South and 3 from North Priority Neighbourhoods. This has been achieved through new bespoke funding streams targeting support to young people and parents to support them start a business resulting in 104 referrals of individuals in receipt of universal credits who are investigating starting a business since the start of the programme.</p>		<p>Further awareness raising programme in communities to increase take-up of opportunities</p>
--	---	--	--

	<p>The Parental Employability Support Fund PESF programme worked in partnership with several organisations including NHS Grampian, Alcohol and Drugs Action, Health and Social Care, and CLD Family Learning to create a Young Parents group held weekly at Tillydrone Community Campus. The purpose of the group was to provide young parents with coping strategies and tools to use when facing the challenges of being young parents. Keyworkers attended the weekly sessions and provided advice and support regarding learning, training, working, and volunteering.</p> <p>At the Finance and Resources Committee on 7th of December 2022, a Community Wealth Building Action Plan was approved, which will embed a Community Wealth Building approach across council services.</p> <p>Outcome summary</p> <p>Partners are working well together to ensure local people, particularly in our priority communities are aware of and supported to access opportunities</p>		
<p>Ensure Community Planning partners work closely with people and communities to improve our collective understanding of strengths, needs and opportunities</p>	<p>Empowering communities through more effective engagement</p> <p>Community Learning and Development partners continue to build the capacity of the community to take charge of their outcomes and make a positive impact. The development of the capacity (knowledge, ability and skills) of community representatives is enabling increasing numbers to participate more effectively in groups such as Locality Empowerment Groups (LEGs), Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships (PNPs), Fairer Aberdeen Board and other community bodies. Partners have brought disparate community groups and networks together to galvanise efforts on shared priorities.</p> <p>In November 2022, Community Planning Aberdeen approved a new Community Empowerment Strategy to complement and support the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), recognising that we</p>		

	<p>need an active and inclusive citizenship where all people have a voice and ability to influence what happens to them and their community. The ambition of the Community Empowerment Strategy is for all communities across Aberdeen to be equal community planning partners in realising the LOIP's vision.</p> <p>In February 2023, a team of 5 staff from Community Learning and Development alongside 4 staff from the Health and Social Care partnership, came together to create a Locality Planning team. This team has responsibility to support community members to design and deliver Aberdeen's Locality Plans. Providing targeted support for Locality Planning to support and encourage communities' participation. Now that we have this in place, we are looking to increase participation and diversity of the PNPs/LEGs and create more simple processes to offer more attractive/accessible opportunities for participation.</p> <p>Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships continue to enable Community members and partners to come together to collectively contribute to the delivery of the LOIP. There are 3 PNP areas, Northfield, Torry and Tiilydrone, Woodside and Seaton. The restructure of support at the beginning of the year has led to additional support for community reps to take the lead in setting Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships agendas with support from CLD Community Development Officers. Each PNP is now chaired by a local community member and receives ongoing support from a Community Development Officer. All three PNPs have been supported to now have a community led pre-meeting to develop the agenda in addition all PNPs have a local community representative as chairperson of the PNP. The chairperson and all community reps have support from a dedicated staff member for their area for work around PNPs.</p>		
--	---	--	--

	<p>After a break during and following Covid-19 all 3 Locality Empowerment Groups have now been re-established and each have met at least once since April '23</p> <p>The Fairer Aberdeen Board includes 7 volunteers from priority areas and 2 from the Civic Forum. The community representatives are supported through the Regeneration Matters Group which meets monthly and are involved in monitoring funded initiatives and considering their impact on issues that affect all the priority areas. They are supported to participate in the annual process of allocating funding. They are also supported to deliver PB events, which has included training and input from PB Partners and the Democratic Society.</p> <p>Funded Community Projects continue to support community involvement in priority areas.</p> <p>As part of the launch of the new Community Empowerment Strategy, the Community Empowerment Group held the first Community Gathering event on 13 May. The event provided an opportunity for people and community groups from across the City to come together to connect and find out about what is going on in their local community. 121 people attended (87 general admission, 28 exhibitors and 69 workshop participants), not including people who dropped in on the day.</p> <p>PDSA Training for Communities is in the process of being tested with small groups of community members and community planning partners.</p> <p>Outcome Summary</p> <p>Some community representatives are benefitting from targeted support to participate in local planning.</p>		
--	--	--	--

<p>Further, develop a clear and coherent framework to support volunteers and volunteering within communities and across community groups and organisations</p>	<p>Strengthening Volunteer capacity</p> <p>Local Third Sector Interface ACVO provide and continue to develop a flexible variety of means to access volunteering, support volunteers and match volunteers to opportunities to ensure everyone has the opportunity to volunteer and that our city and communities benefit from the crucial help people provide through volunteering.</p>		<p>Develop certificated learning programmes that lead to enhanced personal development , career</p>
---	---	---	---

<p>LOIP 11.2 Increase opportunities for people to increase their contribution (volunteering) to communities by 10% by 2023; and All Locality Plans</p>	<p>ACVO facilitate the Aberdeen Volunteer Co-ordinators Network (447 volunteer involving organisation contacts) and helped shape/was part of the working group for the recently launched Quality Standards Pipeline for Volunteering in Scotland.</p> <p>Funded Projects and the Fairer Aberdeen Fund supports a range of organisations that support volunteers. Funded Projects supported 411 volunteers who contributed 65,625 hours of volunteering time. The Fairer Aberdeen programme supported 1,382 volunteers who contributed over 250,000 hours of volunteering time with a value of £3.9m.</p> <p>CLD Community Development is proactive in working within some communities to create awareness of volunteering opportunities in their local community and supporting local people to take on volunteer roles in community groups and programmes. Effective training programmes are designed and delivered around the needs of the community groups and the personal development needs of volunteers to sustain and enhance provision in almost all settings. Most volunteers report increased confidence and skills and that the training is beneficial and enabling them to move on to other opportunities. For example, volunteers at Seaton Pantry have benefitted from support and training (including practical skills such as first aid and food hygiene). and also signposted to learning opportunities such as SHMU Radio programmes.</p> <p>Outcome summary</p> <p>Support for volunteering is contributing to the personal development of those involved and making a difference in communities across Aberdeen.</p>		<p>progression and increased opportunities for individuals and enhance the capacity of community provision.</p> <p>More effectively measure and demonstrate the impact of volunteering on individuals and our communities.</p>
--	--	--	--

<p>Develop and implement a training and development programme to ensure best practice is adopted across partners, informed by the National Standards for Community Engagement</p> <p>All LOIP and Locality Plan Outcomes</p>	<p>Training and Development for staff, partners and communities</p> <p>The CLD Community Development Team worked with SCDC (Scottish Community Development Centre) to develop a programme of training opportunities for staff across the community planning partnership and community representatives. This training was co- designed and delivered with the assistance of partners from Police Scotland, Aberdeen Heath & Social Care Partnership and Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) and is promoting awareness of and effective use of the National Standards of Community Engagement, for customer facing staff.</p> <p>A small working group was formed, and training delivered to support and promote community engagement for community members and partner organisations. Sessions were planned - two sessions for grass root community workshops and two for staff. Training sessions were designed to explore legislation, local and national policy, and explore methodology and practical tools for engagement for both communities and agencies to use.</p> <p>Sessions have been well attended and almost all participants provided positive feedback: Community Members, Session 1 – 26, Session 2 – 25; Staff /Partner Agencies (representation from Police, ACC Housing, CP, NHS, AFCCT and HSCP) Session 3 – 22</p> <p>The 4th session, bringing together staff and community still to be delivered – staff and community members is still to be delivered (14th Sept '23)</p> <p>Community members participating in the training felt valued and welcomed the priority given to taking this forward. Partners better understand the Standards and how to use them, enabling shared planning of community engagement with colleagues/partners and communities.</p>		<p>Feedback from all sessions will inform future training on community engagement practice and standards with the intent of embedding this into Community Planning Aberdeen's annual training programme.</p> <p>Encourage use of the VOiCE tool to, among other things: increase clarity of purpose for community engagement;</p>
---	--	--	---

	<p>Baseline data of attendees confidence, knowledge & skills relating to Community Engagement will be followed up to evaluate impact</p> <p>Outcome summary</p> <p>A few staff and community members are benefitting from carefully designed and delivered training which is improving their understanding and practice in engaging with communities, There is scope to consolidate the learning from the successful pilot training programme and extend it to a wider audience across the partnership.</p>		
--	--	--	--

<p>Support communities to develop and contribute to local projects which tackle poverty (food, fuel, and benefit maximisation) - need to focus projects on those most effected by Covid 19 e.g., young people, minority ethnic communities, disabled people, and how they can be supported</p> <p>LOIP Stretch Outcome 1. No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026</p>	<p>Tackling poverty together</p> <p>Effective community development is providing communities with the support required to enable them to create and deliver local solutions to poverty related issues. This is enhancing skills which are being effectively applied and bringing about local improvements and building community capacity</p> <p>Taking a flexible and agile approach to responding quickly to emerging challenges CLD Community Development have effectively enabled and empowered community groups across the city to develop and sustain local solutions such as community food provision.</p> <p>Provision developed by community groups such as the Cubby in Cummings Park and Seaton Community Hub is making a real difference in the lives of local people.</p> <p>The Fairer Aberdeen Fund supports work in priority areas and across the city with vulnerable groups and individuals. The Fairer Aberdeen Board includes a majority of community representatives who make decisions on funding, and also delivers participatory budgeting (PB) events in communities.</p> <p>Funded organisations provide regular feedback on their services and are linked to LOIP and Locality Plan outcomes, supporting LOIP themes of economy, adults, and children and young people.</p> <p>The Fairer Aberdeen Programme funds community and third sector initiatives tackling poverty - 1,317 people took part in employability programmes and 487 people moved into work. 7,683 people received money and income maximisation advice, with 2,289 of them receiving a total financial gain of £8,265,521 the equivalent of £3,611 per person. 1,111 tonnes of free food was distributed, the equivalent of 2.9M meals.</p>		<p>Continue support to established and emerging groups to develop the capacity to meet local needs</p>
--	---	--	--

	<p>Feedback from organisations funded through the Fairer Aberdeen Fund and CLD consistently show the value they bring to supporting communities to develop projects that tackle poverty and support the most vulnerable people.</p> <p>The Fairer Aberdeen Fund supports CFINE to develop community pantries and community food outlets. There are currently 30 pantries and community food outlets and 193 community organisations receiving FareShare food, and over 4,000 people benefiting from Mobile Cooperative Vehicle services.</p> <p>Funding ACVO has distributed this year such as the Scottish Government Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund and Scottish Government Community Based Adult Learning Recovery Fund in partnership with Aberdeen City Council Community Learning & Development Team has further helped increase volunteer opportunities, community involvement and assisted in supporting local priorities</p> <p>Case study 13 – Community Pantries can be found in Appendix B</p> <p>Outcome summary</p> <p>Effective capacity building support is enabling and empowering communities to deliver solutions to effects of poverty and many groups are delivering high quality services based on community need</p>		
	<p>Contribute to the learning and development of opportunities for New Scots</p> <p>In response to demand the CLD Family Learning Team developed a bespoke programme to give families new to Scotland an understanding of Scottish law regarding parenting and greater understanding of differences between</p>		Continue development and delivery of learning offer across ASGs

	<p>countries. It was decided to use SHANARRI to break the learning down into manageable chunks whilst staying true to the legalisation.</p> <p>Family Learning have run 'Childhood in Scotland' workshop five times with refugees and asylum seekers, with approx. 100 participants attending. This has since been delivered within schools to multinational parents new to Scotland and Aberdeen. The impact being greater awareness of the laws and legislation New Scots will be met with in Scotland, the impact has yet to be fully evaluated to see how far it leads to increased confidence and successful integration into Scottish life for families and their children.</p> <p>Outcome summary</p> <p>Along with ESOL and other learning programmes this work with families is making a difference in supporting the integration of some new arrivals in the City and there is scope to extend opportunities to more families</p>		
<p>Harness the increased levels of community volunteering to build greater resilience - support communities to develop resilience plans and groups</p> <p>LOIP 13.2 Community led resilience plans in place for areas most vulnerable to flooding by 2023, leading to resilience plans in place</p>	<p>Community resilience</p> <p>As a result of the raising awareness and building the capacity of volunteers we have seen the following achieved as a result of increased opportunities for people to get involved in supporting their community Official Community Resilience Volunteer Groups established in Culter and Cults.</p> <p>A new Community Resilience Volunteer Group established and launched Bridge of Don and Danestone December 2022.</p> <p>In 2023 there are already two new groups who have noted their interest to start a CRVG and are receiving support with the set up and with initial plan creation as well as support on guidance, training and exercising</p> <p>Volunteers have also responded in great numbers again and with fantastic compassion and kindness in response to recent emergencies such as Storm</p>		<p>Continue to work with stakeholders to develop training and resources and share learning, skills and knowledge across organisations</p>

<p>across all areas of Aberdeen by 2026.</p>	<p>Arwen, welcoming refugees from Afghanistan and in response to the war in Ukraine/support for Ukrainian refugees.</p> <p>Additional work is being undertaken across the City to consolidate learning following recent Storms, engage and establish additional resilience groups alongside communities to develop and embed community resilience plans to enable them to be fully resilient in the face of weather events and other civil contingencies incidents</p> <p>Outcome summary</p> <p>Enthusiastic and capable volunteers in a few communities in Aberdeen are successfully developing the capacity to make a difference in times of emergency through a well planned programme of development opportunities with the intent of extending this learning to a wider range of local communities.</p>		<p>Establish a citywide network of resilience reps from communities to share good practice, ensure resilience plans are up to date etc</p>
<p>Support community management/ownership of green spaces and the development of food growing spaces and projects</p> <p>15.1 Increasing the diversity, quality and use of the Aberdeen's green spaces by facilitating community participation in them to restore nature and increase people's</p>	<p>Developing green spaces</p> <p>Effective development of a green space network of communities and partnerships is empowering communities to establish, take responsibility and run their local green spaces leading to more local engagement and an increase in volunteering and community pride</p> <p>Successful introduction and support of visible community champions is raising awareness and changing thinking about wider sustainability issues in communities and enabling shared information on initiatives, projects, and funding with community partners included linking groups up with each other.</p> <p>Thirty new community run green spaces were established from Sept 21 to June 2022.with 4125 people volunteering across green spaces, across the city in 21/22. An increase in volunteers has been vital in helping to care for and invest in local green spaces. Most volunteers are active participants of</p>		<p>Continue to raise awareness of opportunities in communities and support groups to develop new initiatives</p>

<p>satisfaction, health, and wellbeing.</p>	<p>the green network, providing support and connecting with each to overcome when appropriate.</p> <p>Outcome summary</p> <p>Across Aberdeen local people are actively engaged in the planning, design and delivery of local environmental and community space projects which are making a difference to the quality of life in their localities</p>		
<p>Neighbourhood planning - develop toolkits and training to strengthen community's capacity to produce their own neighbourhood plans</p> <p>All LOIP and Locality Plan Outcomes</p>	<p>Still to be actioned</p> <p>Clearly identify the capacity building support partners can commit to offering to community groups to support the development of neighbourhood plans. Work with stakeholders to develop a toolkit and training programme to support community groups to produce their own neighbourhood plans Deliver and evaluate an ongoing programme of capacity building support to neighbourhood groups to engage with their communities to produce and update neighbourhood plans</p> <p>Links to LOIP improvement project 16.7 : Increase the number of people (staff and communities) who state they have the skills, tools and support they need to work together to make improvements in the community by 50% by 2025.</p>		<p>Support taking forward LOIP 16.7</p>

Case studies - Community Learning and Development Plan -2021-2024

Priority 1 – Youth Work

Case Study 1 – ShmuTrain

Case Study 2 – Youth Work in Schools

Case Study 3 – Aberdeen Youth Movement

Case Study 4 – Mastrick Youth Hub

Priority 2- Adult Learning

Case Study 5 – St Machar Parent Support, Kinship Carers

Case study 6 – Childhood in Scotland

Case study 7 – Afghan Women achieving SQA qualifications

Case study 8 – ESOL Care sector

Case Study 9 – Family Support

Case study 10 – Healthy Minds

Priority 3 – Community Development

Case study 11 – Warm Spaces

Case Study 12 – Ukraine Community Centre

Case study 13 – Community Pantries

Names changed throughout to maintain confidentiality.

Priority 1 / Youth Work / Case Study 1 / shmuTRAIN

Social
Return on
Investment
for every £1
of funding
received by
shmuTRAIN
there was a
return of
£3.69

shmuTRAIN



“The course re-ignited my motivation to go out and do something so made the jump to work less scary.”

We are seeing a big increase in the number of referrals at Stage 1 of the pipeline – those who are furthest from the workplace. We believe this will be a growing trend as we respond to the fallout from the Covid pandemic and cost of living crisis. Many participants are presenting with complex barriers such as lack of social skills, lack of group work skills and high levels of anxiety. We are seeing less and less of those for whom the relatively ‘quick fix’ of a 12-week employability intervention is enough; many require layers of support beyond the traditional employability skills.

Across our employability programmes we have always built in additional bespoke support to our participants relevant to their needs. For example, we have supported participants to access local food banks and supported young people to attend Marischal College to get support related to housing issues.

Many participants on the shmuTRAIN programme engage with us from a place of social isolation. They are then brought into a group of their peers to work together, with structure and support, on a common goal. Through this they find commonalities with people they may once have dismissed due to being from ‘somewhere else’.

TG joined the shmuTRAIN Succeed employability course for young people at Stage 3 of the employability pipeline. On the course TG focussed on traditional employability skills such as CV’s and interview techniques as well as employer visits. She also took part in the media activities, developing her transferrable skills.

Once the course was complete TG continued to get support from the shmu Employability team to job search and apply, keeping up the good habits and routine she had developed. A job opening came up for a Trainee Youth Worker, TG applied and was successful in securing the position.

“Since the course am more willing to talk to people, more willing to put myself forward for things and more confident in myself. I would recommend the course, even if you know what you want to do, it is good to come along and get into a routine and talk to others as that helps a lot.”

“It was good to get to do something new and it made me want to learn and get good at something again. It gave me a routine and schedule which was very important for my mental health, something to look forward to. The course re-ignited my motivation to go out and do something so made the jump to work less scary. It helped with my communication skills and regularly attending shmu and getting out of the house helped me work on my anxiety and with dealing with different situations. It was good to meet new people that were not education staff or family!

Youth Work / Case Study 2 / Youth Work in Schools

“Youth work has helped me be more confident and feel better about going to the academy”

– Young person P7



Young people can discuss their emotions with a trusted person.

Youth Work

In responding to children, young people and families most at risk of disengaging from education. CLD Youth Workers, Family Learning Workers and improved access to Financial Inclusion services have been established for session 2022/23 as an early intervention to build resilience and life skills, support attendance and attainment across all Associated School Groups (ASGs).

Hazlehead ASG (1 Academy, and 5 feeder primaries) Young people were identified and referred by their school. Youth Workers delivered a weekly slot to support young people with an identified need or area of focus relating to transition.

Through the Hi5 awards young people took charge of the activity and organised a talent show within the group, utilized resources and supported each other to undertake individual and group challenges.

Work during these sessions contributed to almost all young people achieving Hi5 awards, due to the success of these sessions there is a commitment to continue to ensure that relationships and support continues into S1 with the young people, and youth worker.

The impacts; Increased confidence. **Reduced anxiety about the future.** Young people have a safe space to express their feelings. **Improved friendships/relationships/issues resolved.** Young people can discuss their emotions with a trusted person. **Young people have a relationship with YW staff for after transition to academy, after the summer.**

“This protected time is very important to the pupils as they look forward to the sessions. Having a transitions focus is important in P7. Pupils being given the opportunity to work on new skills and things like the High-Five awards is a good thing and gives the sessions and pupils a clear focus. Hopefully we can begin looking at data to assess the impact even further”. - Hazlehead Primary School P7 Transition Teacher

“Youth work has helped me be more confident and feel better about going to the academy” – Young person P7

“I feel a lot less anxious in social situations” – Young Person P7

“The small group has meant that there is time to look at any issues or anxieties and there has been space to deal with them and bring [Young person] confidence for starting Academy.” - Parent

“Continue what has been done this year as it has made a huge difference for [young person] in lots of areas of development.” – Parent

Youth Work / Case Study 3 / Mastrick Youth Hub, Tesco

Youth anti-social behaviour call when from near 600 to 2020 to 7 in 2022.

Youth Work



91% of young people identified the Youth Hub as helpful in making them feel part of their local community

The Mastrick Youth Hub was established in 2021 as a response to soaring youth antisocial behaviour calls to Police Scotland from store staff and customers at Tesco. Antisocial behaviour displayed included; assaults, shoplifting, vandalism and fire setting with damages resulting in costs of over £150,000. Young people were also congregating around the shop doorways to stay warm and dry and accessing the store's free WiFi to stay in touch with friends and family. Young people were being arrested and criminalised.

The Hub is a partnership with Tesco, Police Scotland, Denis Law Legacy Trust, Aberdeen North Parish and Aberdeen City Council, CLD Youth Work.

Funding was secured from Cash Back to Communities as this initiative was aiming to divert young people from risk taking behaviour and crime. Weekly sessions are delivered on a Thursday evening in a covered area of the carpark at Tesco, Lang Stracht. Benches, a concrete table tennis table and a free WiFi service was installed. Young people were engaged in developing the Youth Hub area through graffiti art, consultation took place in the local academy with young people. Over the past year the service has developed through engagement and positive relationships. Young people take part in a range of sporting activities, crafts sessions, chats with staff and termly barbeques. Snacks and drinks are always available at sessions with hot chocolate being a favourite in cold weather.

Youth antisocial behaviour calls in 2020 reached a total of almost 600 calls. The Mastrick Youth Hub was established in 2021 leading to a reduction in calls to 12 for that year, continuing to fall in the following year to 7 and there are 4 recorded calls to June 2023.

What Young People said about the Hub (Police Scotland's Research and Insight Team)

- [The hub provided a] space to make friends and meet new people
- Young people recognise the Youth Hub as an opportunity to develop and learn new skills through volunteering, group work or physical activity.
- 12 young people attending the hub have gained Saltire Certificates for volunteering time on mural projects and supporting staff to deliver activities to their younger peers.
- Young people see the Youth Hub as a safe space to pass their free time, listening to music, playing football or socialising with peers. Youth Hub is seen as a good alternative to spending time indoors.
- Almost all (91%) identified the Youth Hub as helpful in making them feel part of their local community.
- The majority (73%) rating the Youth Hub's contribution as excellent (5 out of 5).

The positive impact of the Youth Hub was attributed to the support and positive relationships with the youth workers, the range of activities available and having an opportunity to establish new relationships and socialise with friends.

Youth Work / Case Study 4 / Aberdeen Youth Movement

Have one identifiable group for the city for youth participation

Youth Work



“AYM allows me to share my views on young people’s involvement within the city in a safe, supportive environment. It is vital that young people’s voices are heard by decision makers, and AYM provides an ideal platform for this to occur.”

During 2022 there was a review of Aberdeen City Youth Council (ACYC). It was felt, in complete agreement with the current members and CLD staff, that the time was right to recognise the great work the service had carried out to date and develop a new model of engagement for the city. The new model would focus on being inclusive, engaging, youth friendly and importantly empowering for the young people of the city whether they are involved with services or not.

A dedicated focus group of young people from several projects and backgrounds across the city worked with youth work staff. Building on the legacy of ACYC this group shaped and developed a new service; Aberdeen Youth Movement or AYM, setting out the following aims:

- (1)** *Have one identifiable group for the city for youth participation that young people want to engage with*
- (2)** *Use a modular/fluid set up for meetings, more appealing to young people*
- (3)** *Provide a platform so young peoples’ views are heard, locally, regionally and nationally no matter whether they are fully engaged or not with services and projects*
- (4)** *Combat participation fatigue across the city with the same individuals often being consulted*
- (5)** *Provide a platform for public and third sector to engage in decision making and informing practice*
- (6)** *Two way learning between adults and young people*
- (7)** *Host an annual youth friendly summit; share thoughts, ideas and set aims and objectives for the city and create an unified voice for young people. The first one is planned for 2024.*
- (8)** *Use social media to generate news and as a useful tool to gain the views of young people across the city.*

Members of the steering group stated:

“Very happy with the support and motivation from [staff], makes it a lot easier to get stuff done”

“It feels great to be at the heart of change of a new system”

“This work has been great! And the people I work with have been even better!”

“Change starts when a single voice shouts, I feel like we are that voice”

“AYM has given me a unique insight in the needs of people across Aberdeen, helping develop my personal views on certain key issues”

“It has been incredible to meet a variety of young people with differing views, however who collectively share one goal, making positive change for young people”

“The support and opportunities provided through AYM has been instrumental in my personal progression and development”

100% of kinship carers reported that they felt less socially isolated as a result of the support group.



St Machar
Parent Support
Project

St Machar Parent Support Project provided support to parents, helping them identify issues and to engage with the relevant agencies before they reach crisis point, preventing future long term need for statutory services. They also provide support to kinship carers which is delivered due to an identified need and increase of referrals within the communities they work in.

Kinship carers, and the children they look after, often face many challenges. The carers aged between 44-78 years, are going back to parenting for a second time, with many of them struggling to play the role of the parent rather than the grandparent.

Kinship carers attend fortnightly group sessions, as well as receiving one-to-one support. During 2021-22 18 carers were supported and 100% of them reported that they felt less socially isolated.

Jane contacted the group regarding her grandson Ben who she cares for. Jane is a Kinship Carer and has been the main carer for Ben since he was 4 months old. Mum suffers from mental health issues that prevented him living with her full time. Ben is in primary school and was displaying angry outbursts at home and at school. He wanted to stay off school and stay home with his grandmother. He was still going to see his mum every week but Ben was very confused as to why he could not stay with his mum overnight. Jane needed help talking to him so that he could understand why he was in this situation and not living with his mum. This was affecting his attendance as he was saying he had bad stomach pains and did not feel well. Jane was struggling with his mood swings and behaviour.

Jane was supported in the Kinship Group and referred her onto our counsellor for 10 sessions. She attended small group work sessions for Kinship Carers which discuss child development and how children's understanding of being in care changes as they get older. We contacted the School to speak with Ben's teacher so that the school was aware of the work we were aiming to do with the family, so they could support him in school.

Ben has more understanding of the family situation and is now able to stay with mum overnight at a weekend. He is settled at school and his attendance and behaviour has improved enormously.

Jane attends the Kinship Care Group every fortnight and our weekly Health Group. She is more confident and aware of Ben's challenging behaviours and how to deal with them. Jane is feeling much less isolated and the family have attended Summer Playschemes.

Since the closure of St Machar Parent Support group CLD Family Learning team and continued to offer support to families.

Improving
community
integration
and access
to services

Family Learning



Through this work we have a clearer understanding of the cultural differences around the roles and shared responsibilities with parents and/or siblings.

Concerns from Social Work over some parenting practices that were occurring within family homes and in the hotels where refugee families were staying, were raised with CLD, Family Learning. The team aimed to welcome families new to Scotland and provide an understanding of Scottish law regarding parenting. We wanted it to be handled sensitively due to cultural differences as well as being factual and to the point so nothing got lost in translation. The SHANARRI framework was used to break the learning down into manageable chunks whilst staying true to legislation. Family Learning worked with social work to ensure we had up to date understanding of the legislation and laws applicable to the areas covered. Social Work also peer reviewed the resources before we delivered the learning with adults.

Family Learning have run this initially with a mixture of refugee and asylum seekers groups and now in schools where there are many multiple nationalities. Through this work we have a clearer understanding of the cultural differences around the roles and shared responsibilities with parents and/or siblings. In particular, there are different cultural approaches to the responsibility of siblings' roles in a household.

It is important that adults understand the laws of Scotland in relation to childcare, looking after children and the school system in Scotland. This work has supported adults understanding as well as strengthening links with the schools, by ensuring systems are understood and barriers to engagement are removed.

Using a partnership approach with schools, a teacher is also in attendance to discuss and answer questions on the school system in Scotland, expectations and involvement in parents, both in school and in the home.

Family Learning developed a 'Thinglink' which allows us to translate into a huge number of languages. This supports the learners to access written material, refer back to material. **'I belong tae to Aberdeen'** is a further resource created to accompany *Childhood in Scotland*. This resource for families contains information about the city from parks to play in, bus routes, our local football team and our local favourites; butteries. These sessions and information provided; support social isolation for the families, information on their local area, share the local dialect to support understanding of regional accents and provide useful information for families to feel included in their community and most importantly to be made to feel welcome in their new place to live.

Adult Learning / Case Study 7 / ESOL SQA

“They have been among the most motivated and hardworking learners we have had.”



This group achieved an SQA in Preparation for Literacy National 2

Adult Learning

Over the last 20 months Aberdeen has become a home to large number of Afghan refugees creating significant demand on English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services within CLD, Adult Learning. ESOL support for the Afghan community has predominantly been for women as most men had a good level of English due to them already working in the UK.

Over the last year 3 groups of Afghan women achieved the Preparation for Literacy (National 2) Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) award during their ESOL classes. As women have limited access to education in Afghanistan, this is the first and probably the only qualification these learners have achieved to date, bringing joy and a significant feeling of achievement, resulting in their increased confidence.

These groups of learners attend 2 - 90 minutes long ESOL classes per week since they arrived in Aberdeen. Less than half had no previous schooling experience and were not able to read and write. They greatly appreciated being able to be in a class situation and supported to learn. By doing so much practice and participating in the lessons they are now able to write their name and other personal details and can speak in English to a basic level.

The ESOL lessons were focused on developing their writing skills, starting with their name in capital letters and then mixed upper and lower case before progressing to general writing and basic reading. Pictures are used to make connections to English language enabling the learners to start building a vocabulary bank of topics like food, clothes, parts of the body or health issues to name some but a few. Due to literacy levels, learners need to memorise all the new words in the class. Having learners installing a voice recorder app on their phones was a major game changer because they were able to record themselves in the class and listen to the recording back in the hotels so they could commit the words to memory and then put into practice. Setting up WhatsApp groups and using voice messaging has been an invaluable tool for learning and communicating across the groups.

The women have made considerable progress with their English, some being able to have a conversation in English, others have developed or strengthened the basic skills like reading and writing and are able to recognise and use words for objects in everyday life.

By achieving this SQA reward they have not only gained confidence and satisfaction that comes from learning new things, but also have experienced sitting tests and trying to learn from their mistakes. These skills will be valuable for their future life in the UK, enabling them to communicate with services around health, education, finance as they further integrate into the community.

Adult Learning / Case Study 8 / English for the Care Sector

100% of learners were taking the initiative in applying for work.

Adult Learning

**Starting
Wednesday
26th April 2023
10am - 12noon**

**Seaton Learning
Centre**

The biggest barrier to employment for non-native speakers is low levels of English.

From exploring routes to employment for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners, the care sector was identified as an area where there was demand for skilled workers across a range of roles. The biggest barrier to employment for non-native speakers was low levels of English.

To address this need and test an ESOL approach to this area of the employment sector, CLD Adult Learning partnered with Bon Accord Care to deliver our first English for the Care Sector course. This was an 8 week course which was held in the learning hub at Bon Accord Care and centred around the vocabulary used in the care sector, in addition to the language we use around daily routines. These sessions also included general employability sessions, focussing on CV writing, writing letters of application, and developing interview skills.

As the course progressed ABZworks secured funding to enable learners a work placement in the care sector with two ESOL learners referred into this programme. One learner felt confident after the employability sessions and applied for work with an agency, attended the interview and secured employment.

Three learners agreed that their general English needed a bit more work and have been signposted to community centre classes to fit in with their current work patterns. To further improve his spoken English a learner joined our conversation group in the library and is progressing well.

Evidence collected shows that all learners (100%) indicated that:
Their confidence had improved.
They were taking the initiative in applying for work.

Positive partnership working between CLD, Adult Learning (ESOL) Bon Accord Care and ABZworks supported learners with their work trial. Learning from this initial test of change has informed subsequent training offered to learners.

Adult Learning / Case Study 9 / Family Support

“It was the first time they had been out of the city as a family and they made some great friends.” – Family Learning worker



Enabling families to live their best lives

Family Learning

David's referral to CLD Family Learning was a de-escalation from Social Work to support him in meeting his and his children's emotional needs and promote positive mental health. David is a single father of four children aged 7 - 18. He spent time in care as a child and has had social work involvement for a large part of his life. His relationship with services has been strained and he feels he has often been treated punitively in the past. David often experiences poor mental health and is at risk of isolation as he doesn't have many close social contacts in the area he lives. Due to his financial situation, David shared that he is often unable to access activities that would give the children meaningful experiences and support their learning and development.

Through working and building a relationship with David, he was encouraged and supported to attend a Family Learning "Dad's group" sporting event with two of his children in December 2022 at the Sports Village, the event offered badminton, tennis and football, and included tickets to an Aberdeen football match afterwards. Following on from this, David and his three younger children attended the Family Learning Residential trip to Cullen in April 2023. They really enjoyed this trip and David remarked on it being a great learning experience for the children and something he would not have been able to give them otherwise. On this trip the family made friends they are still in contact with and following on from the trip David discussed organising a children's rave to fundraise for another residential trip.

Recently David and his family have attended the Supper and Science events run by Family Learning and Aberdeen Science Centre and were also supported to access a family ticket to the Science Centre family event. Further support provided to David include accessing bus tickets to allow David and his children to attend medical appointments, and food vouchers to ensure there is enough food in the house for the family. David also attended the Understanding Emotions course for Dads in June.

Prior to the support there were concerns around how well David was able to meet his children's needs and manage his own mental health. David spoke at length about how he knows how to meet his children's needs but needs support to be able to do this the best way he can. David had no family or community support, and the support from friends in the area was limited which left him at risk of isolation.

“Since receiving Family Learning support, I have seen David's confidence grow. Through participating in these activities David has built positive relationships with Family Learning staff and the activities he has attended have supported him and his family to be more involved in the community. Although David still has difficulty with his mental health, he has remarked on being in a “better place” since support began, feeling more able to meet his and his children's needs. The feedback from the family was that they really enjoyed the trip as it was the first time they had been out of the city as a family and they made some great friends. “

Adult Learning / Case Study 10 / Healthy Minds

Progression
takes times
but the
achievement
has been
great

Healthy
Minds



*“Scott has shown how
someone can achieve
their goals with the
right support “*

-Health Minds staff

Scott was referred to the CLD, Healthy Minds team by his Occupational Therapist at Cornhill as he experienced social anxiety and lack of confidence. His main goal was to attend the Grow and Learn in Nature (GLIN) course being run by CFINE but was finding this difficult to fill in the referral form and attend.

On our first meeting we filled in the referral form for GLIN but it was clear Scott wanted to try other new activities but was anxious about attending and taking on too much. He stated that this was always an issue, saying yes to everything then feeling overwhelmed. We spoke about what he wanted from working with the Healthy Minds Team and from there we put together a learning plan. We invited and supported Scott to attend a Mindfulness group we were running. He really enjoyed it and began to meet new people and build on his confidence. He started the GLIN course and this further developed his confidence.

We were developing new groups and Scott wanted to attend these although we always ensured he was not taking on too much through regular discussion. He also joined in on the more social groups we run such as walks in the summer. With encouragement, Scott gradually took a leading role within these groups, making new learners comfortable and making decisions about what we would do within these sessions.

We continued to meet 1-1 to develop and review the learning plan. When we reviewed Scott's learning plan he had attended many of our groups. We then had learner led sessions on the run up to Christmas. Scott took a lead role in this and was teaching and supporting other learners.

Working with the Healthy Minds team Scott's confidence has improved significantly and his ability to make choices that make him comfortable has greatly increased. Scott has more confidence in his skills and sharing these with others and is more focused on his goals. He is better able to overcome barriers and participate in a variety of activities positively. He has gone onto volunteer with the Warm Spaces and further progressed to becoming a peer mentor on the new GLIN course. He attended an employability residential with Adult Learning which before working with us he would never have gone on. He gained his SQA level 4 in Volunteering.

Scott said he is now *“able to take part in activities that I couldn't before. I'm more optimistic about my future”* and that his confidence has increased very much. Scott continues to volunteer within the community and has built up his network of friends and colleagues.

Progression takes time, we worked with Scott for a year but the achievement has been great.

“The warm space is very helpful, it helped me, and my baby save money on gas, and I spoke to lots of new people now. I also had a warm meal and had good company”



There were
58
designated
Warm
Spaces in
winter
2022

Community Dev

In 2022 as temperatures started to fall and people struggled to heat their homes due to the energy crisis many communities across Aberdeen City set up 'Warm Spaces' to increase opportunities for people to stay warm and connect with others in their community.

Supported by the CLD, Community Development team, the Learning Centres at Seaton, Rosemount and Cummings Park provided Warm Spaces. Each centre took a unique approach to their Warm Space provision. The opening hours, activities and resources were based around existing centre programmes, volunteer capacity and opening hours. Over time community meals, food pantries and a diverse range of activities developed due to community members feedback and the volunteers' initiative.

A Warm Space Volunteer support programme was created, this included a Warm Space remit, an induction, and training opportunities such as First Aid, REHIS (The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland) and MEOC (Making every opportunity count). Volunteer training opportunities were offered to all 58 Warm Space venues across the city.

A Staying Well & Warm Roadshow was organised to highlight the 3 Warm Space venues and increase awareness and usage of spaces. Thirteen partner agencies provided staff to share specific information relating to cost of living from; energy efficiency, financial and benefit checks to health and wellbeing tips, activities, and access to vaccination team.

The centres offered a wide range of well organised and relevant services to community members with:

- 1024 meals served in two centres and 590 volunteer hrs for community meals.
- 510 food parcels given out and 331 volunteer hours for food pantries
- 957 volunteer hours across 3 Learning Centres
- 120 people engaged and accessed specific support and advice to help with the rising cost of living through the Stay Warm and Well Road Show

Warm Spaces made a positive impact on community members; financially, physically, and to their emotional wellbeing. Local people who attended and engaged with the Road show were able to access specific services and information on the cost of living. Volunteers have contributed significantly to the success of Warm Spaces by taking the lead in the provision of community meals, serving at food pantries and leading new initiatives and looking to future developments.

“Warm spaces are great, it's a safe space for me and the kids, the staff are always amazing and welcoming. I feel comfort in the community centre. Supper club is great too because we get good food, and everyone is friendly. I would be lost without this centre” -parent

Community Dev / Case Study 12 / Ukrainian Community Centre

CLD staff were able to respond at pace, providing a welcoming community space

Community Dev



The Ukrainian Community Centre offers crucial informal space for social and peer support which also alleviates pressure on services

Following the events of February 2022, Aberdeen welcomed refugees from Ukraine who required immediate support. In response, the CLD, Community Development team identified the most appropriate venue and staff resource to welcome refugees and to adapt services to immediate needs.

As part of a wider support package the Ukrainian Community Centre was established at Rosemount Community Centre. This space was created to welcome Ukrainian nationals to the city and to support the Ukrainian community to develop and deliver their own provision.

The programme on Fridays, running since March 2022, has been instrumental in supporting Ukrainian Refugees across the city, providing them with key supports through services such as the Resettlement Team, Citizens Advice Bureau, the Financial Inclusion Team, ABZWorks, Pathways, Start Scotland, ESOL Classes, Sport Aberdeen mixed sports sessions, Countryside Ranger outings, Chess Class, Music Class, Volunteer-run English classes, Arts and Crafts, bike donations, managing food and household donations, volunteer translators and 'welcomers'. Sundays have been more focused on social events. The Ukrainians have now established a Sunday School which now has over 100 children on the register and cultural events like the Scottish vs Ukrainian Food Battle.

Impacts supported through the Ukrainian Community centre include:

- An increase in those gaining employment.
- An increase in ESOL class learners.
- An increase in take up of social and sport activities.
- An increase in knowledge and orientation in Aberdeen and wider.
- Ukrainian Association established with charitable status.
- 12 Ukrainian volunteers undertaken First Aid training.
- Establishment of a Mental Health Support Project 'To Be Ok in Anyway'

The establishment and success of the Ukrainian Community centre has demonstrated CLD's ability to utilise partner services enhanced by previous working relationships and to adapt and be flexible in order to provide essential and relevant services.

Community Dev / Case Study 13 / Community Pantries

“The pantry has helped me so much as I am struggling to get a job to cover other costs so coming here has significantly helped with my bills, I am so grateful” -University Student



Schools highlighted concerns about children's access to healthy food after holidays

Community Dev

Community pantries in Seaton and Cummings Park are having a significant positive impact on their communities. People reported it has been life changing knowing they can access food and other items at the centre without being questioned or judged.

The Cubby, Cummings Park is loosely based on the larder model. Funding for the project was sourced and support given from CFINE in the form of guidance and food, financial and volunteer support given from Cummings Park Community Association. Up to 30 households can join and fortnightly “shop” for items at Cummings Park Centre. The Cubby encourages healthy eating; fresh fruit/veg, frozen, chilled food as well as dried and tinned goods are supplied. Fridges/freezers were paid for by funding. There is no charge, but there is a donation box with no pressure to donate as it was recognised that some members would not be able to pay fees.

Initially it was planned for the Cubby to be supported by volunteers, but soon after starting and due to covid restrictions could only be run by staff. As restrictions eased volunteers became more involved, currently there is a pool of 10 volunteers.

One of the other aims of the Cubby was to signpost and inform. Events have been held for benefit advice, oral health, keeping warm/fuel bills and housing during the Cubby sessions. Using left over food from the Cubby and support from the Cummings Park Community association a weekly meal has started, cooked and served by volunteers, with a regular attendance of 25.

Jan-June 2023

Cubby -280 support packages provided via 10 sessions, 105 volunteer support hours

Meals – 630 meals provided via 21 sessions, 241.5 volunteer support hours.

Most volunteers have attended food hygiene and first aid training workshops.

“Getting babies nappies and other items for my baby made a huge difference in my daily budget, as I can use the money to buy nappies to buy other stuff like food and pay energy bills”.

“I went to the café and had chicken and chorizo soup...I asked about volunteering opportunities. I have now been at the café, working in the kitchen for about 7 weeks. This is by far the happiest I have been for many a long year and because I walked through the door to access the pantry at Seaton.”

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Accessibility Plan
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/263
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Mhairi Shewan
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.5

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek approval for the Aberdeen City Accessibility Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

2.1 approves the Aberdeen City Accessibility Plan (Appendix 1);

2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to review the impact of the Plan in 2026 in accordance with legislation; and

2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to present an updated Accessibility Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee within 3 calendar years.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 The Accessibility Plan ensures that long-term strategic planning meets the requirements of sections 1 to 3 of the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) Act 2002.

3.2 In keeping with legislation, this Plan will ensure we continue to:

- enable and support disabled pupils to access the curriculum
- improve the accessibility of our school buildings
- improve communication with children and young people and parents and carers in a variety of appropriate formats.

3.3 A range of data sets were reviewed to support the development of this Plan. These included evaluation of the 2020-23 plan, information gleaned from Quality Improvement Visits, online surveys conducted over the last school term with children, young people, parents and carers and information held on the range of needs and disabilities evident in our children and young people.

- 3.4 Qualitative data was sought to complement this process, mainly gathered through consultation with learners, children's services staff, voluntary organisations and a range of Council functions.
- 3.5 Consideration of all available data has helped identify a set of clear next steps for inclusion in the proposed refreshed Plan.

Progress and next steps

- 3.6 We have made significant progress regarding the availability and diversity of professional learning opportunities. There has been a reduction in exclusions of learners with disabilities, improvements to understanding of universal and targeted supports and an increase in the number of learners who are declared as disabled. Consultation responses from parents and carers suggest we need to ensure a greater consistency of understanding including of reasonable adjustments and of the need for Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs).
- 3.7 There have been rapid improvements in our use of accessible technologies and availability across our settings. Quality improvement visits have shown that, where used correctly, these can enable learners to lead their own learning and be as independent as possible. We are committed to building further confidence in our staff through provision of ongoing professional learning opportunities and the sharing of effective practice.
- 3.8 Despite the broad range of training that has been made available, consultation responses from parents and carers suggest that there is still work to be done regarding use of effective planning processes. Work on planning formats will be progressed to ensure that they are accessible.
- 3.9 We are proud of the wider opportunities that our learners are experiencing, however consultation responses from learners, parents and carers suggest that more could be done. Extracurricular activities will continue to be a focus in the new plan.
- 3.10 There is a need to maintain focus on the active participation of our children and young people in decision making as we work to give them the skills and confidence to do so.
- 3.11 Effective transition planning impacts positively on our learners and families. Our evaluation shows an ongoing requirement to ensure that our supports continue to be responsive to changing needs.
- 3.12 Improved data collation is clarifying the needs of learners, this, alongside professional learning, has enabled a clearer understanding of how a curriculum can be personalised. We have seen an increase in some of our attainment data but acknowledge that the attendance of learners is essential.
- 3.13 External expertise has been commissioned and a specialist consultant has been appointed to carry out site surveys at a cross section of school buildings to inform next steps around school signage.

- 3.14 Design work on new school buildings has included a range of partners and specialists. The proposed model for school buildings has been validated by a pupil survey across the city. Access to the physical environment has been enhanced through understanding the universal supports that can be put in place. For learners with Autistic Spectrum Condition or sensory needs, this is particularly important as we move to flexible learning areas.
- 3.15 The key aspects from this evaluation have been built into a proposed Version 2 of our Accessibility Plan which is available in Appendix 1.

Implementation and monitoring

- 3.16 Overall progress will be monitored and reported through the regular National Improvement Framework updates to the Education and Children's Services Committee.
- 3.17 In accordance with legislation, the Accessibility Plan should be reviewed formally within three years and a report presented to the committee on progress.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Recommendations in the plan will make use of existing budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Authority has many legal duties including those of:

- Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) Act 2002
- The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004
- The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

- 5.2 The approach being taken to develop the actions outlined in this Report will assist the Council to fulfil these duties more effectively, and secure necessary and appropriate education and additional support for our disabled children and young people and their parents and carers.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

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?
Financial	Risk of not having sufficient resource	Mitigated by realigning services to better meet the needs of our young people in Aberdeen City.	L	Yes
Compliance	Non-compliance with legislation, financial claims and legal challenge (reference to ASN tribunal, Disability Discrimination)	Mitigated by services developing understanding to better meet the needs of our young people in Aberdeen City working in partnership with learners and families.	M	Yes
Operational	Staff are overwhelmed which leads to low morale as staff feel unable to meet the needs of disabled children and young people and those with additional support needs.	Mitigated by offering high quality professional learning for staff to ensure that they meet their statutory duties under The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and Equality Act (2010)	L	Yes
Financial	Risk of not having sufficient resource	Mitigated by realigning services to better meet the needs of our young	L	Yes

		people in Aberdeen City.		
Reputational	Risk of not effectively meeting the needs of all learners and communication needs of their parents and carers	Monitoring of plan to ensure shared planning and understanding.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified		L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement and Council Delivery Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>As a Council, it is a key priority that we invest in our children's futures, to ensure that they achieve positive destinations and are given the best opportunities in life.</i> • <i>Ensuring that children and young people receive accessible information and opportunities to engage and participate in decision making.</i> • <i>Improve pathways to education, employment and training for identified groups (including disability, ASN, term time leavers and those from priority neighbourhoods)</i>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 7 Improving pathways to education, employment and training for our children with ASN/disabilities and Stretch Outcome 9: ensuring our children with ASN/disabilities and their families receive the support they need.
Regional and City Strategies	
Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the Children's services plan, and the National Improvement Framework Plan.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	<i>Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.</i>
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Aberdeen City Council Accessibility Plan 2023-2026

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Mhairi Shewan
Title	Quality Improvement Officer
Email Address	mshewan@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 522609

Schools' Accessibility Plan

2023 – 2026 Draft

Document Control

Approval Date:	September 2023
Implementation Date	
Document Number	Version 2
Document Author(s) and Owner	Mhairi Shewan
Approval Authority	Education and Children's Services Committee
Scheduled Review	Version 3 must be approved by Committee within three years.
Changes	Updated goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsive support for families• enhanced transition planning• school estate feasibility study• use of CIRCLE framework• child's plan format• one good adult programme

1 Context

1.1 The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupil Education Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 requires all Education Authorities to prepare and implement an Accessibility Strategy for all schools for which they are responsible. This is informed by Planning improvements for disabled pupils' access to education Guidance for education authorities, independent and grant-aided schools, 2014.

In keeping with agreed Local Authority protocols, this is known locally as our Accessibility Plan.

1.2 In 2019/20, 503 learners within our schools were recorded as being disabled. In 2022/23 that number has risen to 676, a 34% increase. This plan is focussed on improving access to education for all disabled pupils, this includes those who are declared disabled and attending schools and early learning and childcare settings and those who choose not to declare.

1.3 Our schools support a high number of children with additional support needs. Although data for 2022/23 has yet to be validated, 39.8% of children and young people are identified as having an additional support need. The number of children with additional support needs continues to rise and this rise triggered a greater focus on the group through the Integrated Children's Services Plan 2023-26.

1.4. The Schools Accessibility Plan encompasses the vision for Aberdeen: 'a place where all people can prosper' and the values and objectives stated in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

1.5 The Council has a range of Plans to support improvement planning and decision making, Our Children's Services Plan supports delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan which integrates many of our Strategic Plans. The Schools Accessibility Plan aims to pull improvement activity together into one high level accessible document which can be used to support self-evaluation and planning for improvement.

1.6 Delivery of this Schools Accessibility Plan will ensure that the Council continues to evaluate and focus on the three planning duties under the Act:

- Increasing disabled pupils' participation in the curriculum;
- Improving the physical environment of the school, or schools, in relation to which the strategy is prepared for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by such school or schools;
- Improving communication with disabled pupils and their parents and carers.

1.7 The first Accessibility Plan was presented to Committee in 2020. The public health restrictions impacted on when many of the priorities were progressed with some areas progressing at a greater rate than initially anticipated and other areas still very much in development.

2 Disability Definitions

- 2.1 The [Equality Act 2010](#) defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes:
- Physical, including sensory impairment
 - Mental impairment, including learning difficulties
 - Impairments as a result of a mental health issue, must have substantial, long term impact on day to day, but need not be recognised through NHS.
- 2.2 In addition, the following are also defined as disabilities:
- Cancer, HIV infection, Multiple Sclerosis
 - Severe disfigurement
 - Progressive conditions, eg muscular dystrophy, where the effect on the ability to carry out day-to-day activities is not substantial but is likely to be so in the future.
- 2.3 As a result, disability includes what may be termed hidden disabilities such as dyslexia; autistic spectrum condition and speech and language impairments.
- 2.4 The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) definition represents a wider and more holistic view of disability as it recognises impairment and environmental factors. It defines disability as '*an umbrella term of impairments, activity limitations or participation restrictions*'.
- 2.5 The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities definition includes aspects of both previously noted definitions: '*Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others*'.
- 2.6 This Plan interprets disability in the widest sense.

3 Key Legislation and Guidance

- 3.1 The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupil Education Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 requires all Education Authorities to prepare and implement an Accessibility Strategy for all schools for which they are responsible. This includes the three planning duties to:
- increase disabled pupils' participation in the curriculum;
 - improve the physical environment of the school, or schools, to enable better access to education and associated services provided;
 - and improve communication with disabled pupils. In particular, relating to the provision of information in appropriate alternative formats and taking account of any preferences expressed by them or their parents, that would be provided in writing to pupils who do not have a disability.

Planning improvements for disabled pupils' access to education Guidance for education authorities, independent and grant-aided schools, 2014, provides advice about how these duties can be met in the light of legislative and policy developments since 2002.

- 3.2 The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 provides the legal framework for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people who face a barrier, or barriers, to learning and this includes those who are disabled. This framework and accompanying Supporting Children’s Learning: Statutory Guidance on the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Scotland Act 2004 (as amended) Code of Practice (Third Edition) 2017 guides the provision of appropriate support to help them work towards achieving their full potential.
- 3.3 The Children and Young People Scotland Act 2014 guides careful consideration of effective universal and targeted support following an assessment of wellbeing. The legislation recognises that many children require support from a range of different agencies. Children’s Services Plans are to be prepared with a view to securing the aims that children’s services are provided in a way which best safeguards and promotes children’s wellbeing, action is taken at the earliest appropriate time and where appropriate is also preventative.
- 3.4 The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation based on a range of protected characteristics including disability. The Act sets out duties in relation to disabled pupils including the duty to make reasonable adjustments to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled pupils. This Act also places Aberdeen City Council under a public sector equality duty which requires it, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to: eliminate prohibited conduct under the act; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by disabled pupils, taking steps to meet the needs of disabled pupils that are different from those without a disability, and encouraging disabled pupils to participate in public life or any other activity in which participation is disproportionately low.
- 3.5 The United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC): Part 1 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 seeks to embed UNCRC rights in Scottish legislation and place children’s rights duties on Scottish Ministers and public authorities. Part 1 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 places duties on Scottish Ministers and public bodies to report on the steps they have taken to give further effect to the UNCRC requirements. The UNCRC states

“A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families” Article 23

“Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.” Article 29

The United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) will soon be incorporated into Scots Law

Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) recognises the rights of persons with disabilities to education and commits local authorities to ensure an inclusive education system at all levels

4 The Self Evaluation Process

- 4.1 A short life working group supported the gathering of data, review of legislation and guidance to help evaluate progress against Version 1 of this Plan. Data sources included:
- Data sets held by Integrated Children and Family Services
 - Quality Improvement data from recent school visits
 - School inspection reports
 - Attainment data
 - Tribunal data
 - Complaints
 - Pupil and parent surveys
 - School Estate Plan
 - Data held by Corporate Landlord
- 4.2 Initial early engagement took place with groups representing parents and carers of disabled children, disabled pupils and professionals who support children and families impacted by disability.
- 4.3 Twenty five parent groups and charities were also invited to give their views on progress made against the 2020 plan. They were also asked to consider which areas required further focus.
- 4.3 A Citizen Space consultation was developed with the link shared with schools and Parent Councils. 59 responses were received, of which, 26 have a child with a disability (44% of respondents), and 15 a child with an additional support need (25.4%). 69.5% of total responses were from a parent or carer whose child has an additional support need and/or a disability.
- 4.4 Consultation with learners included focus groups in schools and an on-line survey. Quality improvement visits facilitated discussions with learners in mainstream and specialist provisions. Views were sought on the impact of environment, structures and routines in school, participation in learning, planning for their learning, consideration of what worked well for them and where they would like more support. 367 learners responded to the online survey, 74 or 20.2% of which advised they had an additional support need and 67 or 18.2% advised they had a disability.
- 4.5 All of our school buildings are regularly surveyed, to assess both the physical condition of the buildings and also their suitability for delivering high quality learning and teaching. The relative accessibility of buildings is also considered, within the assessment of the building's suitability.
- 4.6 Updated goals were shared with parent groups and charities again, through Citizen Space consultation and directly with the twenty four parents who shared email addresses. It was also shared directly with professionals including: Social Work, Education, Education Psychology, NHSG including: Community Child Health, Health Visitors, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy.
- 4.7 Feedback from all stakeholders was used to shape the draft Plan and the final draft circulated once again for feedback. Almost all feedback on the final draft was positive. Additional areas highlighted for consideration following consultation on the final draft are highlighted below:

Parent responses highlighted effective practice in relation to transition planning through the sharing of information and building of trust. Parents welcome opportunities to receive and share information on academic progress as well as wellbeing, subject choice and extra-curricular opportunities. Parents and carers report that this enables parents and carers time to consider the choices available in advance of decisions being required.

Parents welcome the use of the city website to share information on disabilities but feel that the link could be shared more widely so that more parents are aware of the where to access the information. Parents would welcome this same information being available in accessible formats and summary information available in school handbooks.

Parents are keen that schools are confident in their understanding of additional support needs and disabilities and suggested that parent focus groups or joint training opportunities might be helpful.

One Parent group advised that although data on learners with additional support needs was welcomed, they felt that Accessibility Plan should focus only on those with a disability.

One parent group welcomed the work on school buildings but would welcome the plans going further with sensory considerations highlighted as a potential area of focus, in particular lighting, the acoustics in open areas and better provision of quiet spaces.

Responses showed an interest in how goals would be realised and how progress would be reported.

4.8 Feedback from all stakeholders has been used to inform the final version of this Plan.

5 Is the Curriculum Accessible for All Disabled Learners?

5.1 The curriculum in Scotland is recognised as the totality of experiences planned for children and young people through their education, wherever they are educated.

5.2 As part of their learner journey, all children and young people in Scotland are entitled to experience a coherent curriculum from 3 to 18, in order that they have opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to adapt, think critically and flourish in today's world. <https://education.gov.scot/curriculum-for-excellence/about-curriculum-for-excellence/what-is-curriculum-for-excellence/>

5.3 Curriculum is defined as the totality of all that is planned for children and young people from early learning and childcare, through school and beyond. That totality can be planned for and experienced by learners across:

- Curriculum areas and subjects
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Ethos and life of the school
- Opportunities for personal achievement

5.4 **2020 Goal – To improve awareness of legislation**

- 5.4.1 School Improvement Plans reference the UNCRC and all staff continue to undertake mandatory training in children’s rights at the start of each school session. The Local Authority Quality Improvement Framework helps ensure that working practices take account of learner voice, national expectations as outlined in How Good Is Our School 4 and the cultural shift required to deliver The Promise. We continue to engage with the Compassionate and Connected Communities (CCC) programme to help build an ethos of trauma informed practice with sixty four CCC trainers now supporting the rolling out of this trauma informed practice across Aberdeen.
- 5.4.2 Webinars and practice exemplification have been developed to support staff in the creation of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Child’s Plans, with a focus on meeting learners’ needs through appropriate SMART targets. Webinars and guidance have been developed to support staff in their understanding of Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs). As part of the Quality Improvement calendar aligned to our Quality Improvement Framework, a sample of plans are routinely shared with the central team. Good practice is captured and cascaded. A baseline is being currently being established to inform where additional support is required to ensure greater consistency in this area.
- 5.4.3 In addition to professional learning to support particular groups of learners, city wide professional learning in the CIRCLE framework has helped to support the establishment of more consistent expectations around environmental factors. The [CIRCLE](#) resources were developed through collaboration between Queen Margaret University, NHS Lothian and City of Edinburgh Council. This resource provides practical strategies to support the skills that pupils require to enable them to participate in school. The CIRCLE Framework is a way of organising and supporting input using a staged system of support, beginning with setting up an inclusive classroom. It also enables consideration of those learners who may require further support, through identification of learner’s strengths and where support and strategies or further specific assessment may be required.

MEASURE (1 = low, 5 = high)	EDUCATION STAFF CONFIDENCE to IMPLEMENT THE CIRCLE FRAMEWORK (%)	
	PRE-TRAINING	POST- TRAINING
1	24	0
2	12	0
3	41	12
4	18	73
5	6	15

- 5.4.4 In 2020, a generic request for assistance form was developed to function as a single access point for all ASN and Outreach services including the School Nursing Service, Children’s Social Work, Autism Outreach and the virtual school. The request for assistance system enables the gathering of city-wide data in relation to the emerging needs of children/young people, families, and schools. This integrated approach to service

delivery provides a level of flexibility and agility to proactive planning and service deployment, which can be based on emerging data. Aligning services provides more opportunity for 'give and take' within the system, enabling a focus on learners as individuals as opposed to 'a need'. The data is used at three levels; at whole system level to help us determine the success of our current approaches, at category of need level to help shape approaches and at individual pupil level to help inform individual planning for children and young people. The system has helped transform working practices, resource allocation and our commissioning of internal services. It is now being extended to include all services for children as we design our model of Family Support.

- 5.4.5 In 2022-2023, 159 requests for assistance were made for learners with a learning disability from 116, in 2021-22. Over 22/23 there were 461 requests for those with communication support needs from 116 in 2021-22. In response to increasing demand for support, a Complex ASN Outreach Service is being piloted in 2023.
- 5.4.6 27% of requests for assistance were submitted to the Autism Outreach Service, this demand is significantly higher than pre-pandemic. The Autism Outreach service feedback shows that 66.7% of schools are satisfied that the level, type and consistency of support, interventions, resources, strategies, advice and training given have been appropriate and implemented in a way that has improved outcomes for children and young people. The Autism Outreach Team are creating a resource bank to enable easy access to relevant information. In 2022-23 feedback from schools confirmed that 77.8% of staff in mainstream settings feel their confidence and capacity has increased which has positively impacted on supporting learners.
- 5.4.7 We know that resolutions are most effective when they are timely and resolved at as local a level as possible. We have noted a reduction in the number of cases referred to the First Tier Tribunal from 5 in 2020 to 0 in 2022.
- 5.4.8 In keeping with the plan, an increased number of pupils are now declared disabled in our Management Information System. In 2019, 280 learners were declared disabled and the figure was relatively stable. For 2022/23 those declared disabled has risen to 365, a rise of 30%.
- 5.4.9 Validated Curriculum for Excellence (2020/21) data shows improvements in achievement for learners with additional support needs in P1, P4, P7 literacy from 43.01% in 2020/21 to 50.34% in 2021/22, and in Numeracy from 54.13% to 61.70%.
- 5.4.10 The Local Benchmarking Measure: Literacy shows 72.5% of learners with additional support needs achieved qualifications at SQCF Level 4 in 2020, in 2022 this increased to 78.2%. 54.6% of learners with additional support needs achieved qualifications at SQCF Level 5 in 2020, in 2022 this increased to 60.4%. 54.9% of learners with additional support needs achieved qualifications at SQCF Level 6 in 2020, in 2022 this increased to 56.1%.
- 5.4.11 The Local Benchmarking Measure: Numeracy shows 61.2% of learners with additional support needs achieved qualifications at SQCF Level 4 in 2020, in 2022 this increased slightly to 61.5%. 35.5% of learners with additional support needs achieved qualifications at SQCF Level 5 in 2020, in 2022 this decreased to 26.5%. 35.2% of learners with additional support needs achieved qualifications at SQCF Level 6 in 2020, in 2022 this decreased

slightly to 34.7%. Phase 2 ABZ Campus plans to provide a wider range of courses for learners with additional support needs.

5.4.12 In accordance with 'All Learners in Scotland Matter' (2023) we will continue to work on key themes: high-quality teaching and learning, widening the range of different learner pathways, establishing alternative routes to success, and considering the range of appropriate assessments required to reflect the individual learner.

5.4.13 Schools are supported by the Quality Improvement Team to promote inclusion and prevent exclusion. Officers continue to monitor data monthly to enable earlier discussion with Senior Leadership Teams and proactive planning where trends are becoming established. This includes ensuring robust plans are in place to support individual learners as required. We continue to see a reduction in the number of children with disabilities being excluded. Prior to the refreshed Minimising Exclusion Policy in 2020, in the Scottish Government statistics 2018-19, Aberdeen City recorded 52.9 exclusions per 1000 pupils compared to the local authority average of 21.6 per 1000. In the most recent validated Scottish Government statistics from 2020-21, Aberdeen City recorded 12.4 exclusions per 1000 pupils compared to the local authority average of 11.9. Currently, on average 3.3% of exclusions involve learners who are disabled. Progress in this area is positive but there is clearly more to do.

5.4.14 In summary, we have made significant progress regarding the availability and diversity of professional learning opportunities. There has been a reduction in exclusions of learners with disabilities, improvements to understanding of universal and targeted supports and an increase in learners who are declared as disabled. Consultation responses from parents and carers suggest we need to ensure a consistency of understanding including of reasonable adjustments and of the need for Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs). Given the importance of this, improving awareness of legislation and guidance remains a focus for the 2023 plan.

5.5 2020 Goal – To Increase the use of digital technology

5.5.1 The pandemic accelerated progress in this area and the use of accessible technology such as Texthelp and Google tools remains a focus. These enable disabled learners to personalise their support and access the curriculum as independently as possible. We have seen a marked increase in awareness and eagerness to use technology to support communication. In our learner survey, 24% of learners identified IT as helping their learning.

5.5.2 Access to the curriculum has been supported through the managed provision of technological tools, training and devices. Since 2020, over 24,000 devices have been deployed across all schools.

5.5.3 TextHelp Read&Write is available to all learners to support accessibility on devices. [Note application](#) has been deployed to allow voice recording and feedback for all learners.

5.5.4 Our work with CALL Scotland has enabled a number of school staff to be trained in the use of accessible technology and alternative and augmentative communication (AAC). This included the use of: symbols for all, specific technology including for example grid sets, switches, big macks and eye gaze technology for learners with complex needs. In Orchard Brae School, the PE team are adapting lessons to include technology as a way of making the lesson interactive for pupils - hairdryers controlled by switches to play bowling, archery

involving hitting a switch to activate lights and basketball targets setting off lights. Schools can also access specialist advice from the Quality Improvement Officer (Digital) and central team on accessible software, hardware and websites.

- 5.5.5 Our online “Workspace Skills” training package has been completed by 168 teachers at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. 2023/24 will feature digital learning sessions supported by our partners: Education City, Text Help, Thinglink and Google. Our digital tools maximise our investment in Chromebooks while also making digital learning available to pupils in any location. Almost all pupils engage with Google Classroom each month, with most users engaging weekly (typically over 21,000, 86.3% of learners). Digital infrastructure across the city is being upgraded and gigabit fibre should be in place by September 2023.
- 5.5.6 Orchard Brae School built upon links with [Soundplay Dome](#), a self-contained creative touring installation to establish a weeklong residency within the school where they worked with almost 100 learners and offered training to school and community partners. Partnered with a residency in the art gallery, this afforded primary pupils the chance to transfer their skills into a new space. The workshops within the gallery were attended by over 462 visitors, including school families. This work has resulted in the music teacher expanding the creative use of digital technology, has underpinned the ongoing inclusive work of the city’s art gallery and provided commitment and financial backing to an ongoing partnership.
- 5.5.7 In summary, there have been improvements in our use of accessible technologies and availability across our settings. Quality improvement visits have shown that where used correctly these can enable learners to lead their own learning and be as independent as possible. We are committed to building further confidence in our staff through provision of ongoing professional learning opportunities and the sharing of effective practice.

5.6 2020 Goal – To increase provision of professional learning

- 5.6.1 Professional learning regarding legislation and disabilities has included input to senior leadership teams from a variety of sources including: ASN and Outreach Service, Legal Services and the Educational Psychology Team. This has been supported by a framework of professional learning for Pupil Support Staff aligned with the recommendations from the Morgan Review. This framework includes professional learning on additional support needs including for example: Autism, Developmental-coordination disorder, ADHD, trauma.
- 5.6.2 Our Grassroots professional learning programme includes ‘Inclusive Practices’ and ‘Supporting Learners with ADHD’. Training developed in partnership with teachers and with Autism Understanding Scotland, an Autistic led charity has enabled training for more than 900 members of staff over the last two years, including senior leaders, teachers, pupil support assistants and early years professionals. Further opportunities are being developed to align with the needs of our schools and learners. All probationary teachers undertake professional learning addressing themes including Learning & Teaching, Planning for Assessment, Inclusive Practice, Trauma Informed Practice, Learning for Sustainability and Building Positive Relationships.
- 5.6.3 Opportunities to study at Masters level with the University of Aberdeen has been available through access to Northern Alliance Partnership funding. As a result 7 members of staff have participants in Inclusive Pedagogy and 3 in the PGCERT Autism and Learning.

- 5.6.4 Our Early Level Continuing Professional Development programme includes a digital platform with a programme of tutorials enabling professional collaboration. Autism-specific input is delivered in partnership with VSA's Additional Support Needs Advisory Project, ASNAP, who are delivering training on supporting Sensory Integration. ASNAP have advised their focus will now also be childminders and parents who report feeling isolated.
- 5.6.5 Our Educational Psychology Service have now trained 52 Support Staff in the Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) programme. This intensive programme enables staff to deliver targeted individual programmes to develop self-esteem, resilience and emotional literacy and regulation in learners. Other training delivered includes: Emotion Coaching, Seasons for Growth, Positive Psychology and Mindfulness. [Educational Psychology Service Hub \(google.com\)](#)
- 5.6.6 The September 2022 census shows 16.1% of pupils recorded as having English as an additional language (EAL). The national percentage is 7.7%. 2022-23 improvement planning for Secondary EAL highlighted the development of early literacy skills as a priority; with a particular focus on reading. In partnership with the Dyslexia Outreach team, the Fresh Start approach was trialled in one Secondary school. 3 distinct groups were created. Anecdotal review indicates that this approach has been successful with regards to the majority of learners' engagement and literacy levels. This session we are extending the provision to another Secondary school to support learners with high levels of literacy need. Almost all participants in a professional learning offer facilitated by the Secondary EAL team reported an increase in confidence with regards to supporting bilingual learners.
- 5.6.7 The Dyslexia Outreach Team's Whole School Dyslexia Development & Modelling programme has been implemented and Dyslexia Champions have been established. Combined stakeholder feedback demonstrates positive impact on stakeholder outcomes on all programme evaluations. Following the successful implementation in Primary schools, the team have adapted the programme for Secondary schools this session. This has involved 'looking outwards' to best practice in other authorities. The approach is being trialled with schools and initial feedback indicates a high level of success. Although sample sizes are small, general trends of increased confidence levels observed from the initial data across Secondary stakeholders are consistent with that of the Primary input.
- 5.6.8 Current data shows 2.2% of children in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) are thought to have a speech delay/disorder and this rises across the primary stages. In order to support improvement in communication skills we will continue to roll out the CIRCLE framework including Up and Away for early years, Talk Boost and Early Talk Boost to help improve the development of literacy and communication skills.
- 5.6.9 In summary, despite the broad range of training that has been made available, consultation responses from parents and carers suggest that there is still work to be done regarding use of effective planning for individuals and this will be taken forward in the refreshed Plan.
- 5.7 2020 Goal – To improve knowledge of and access to extracurricular activities**
- 5.7.1 The pandemic impacted on the provision of extracurricular activities for a significant period of time. In order to mitigate this, considerable emphasis was placed on ensuring provision for those with additional support needs and disabilities through the [In the City](#) programmes.

These were directly shaped by the voices of children and young people with resources allocated according to their self-reported needs. The programmes have been supported by WeToo, Early Intervention Aberdeen and Sport Aberdeen.

In addition to specific programmes designed for those with additional support needs, a targeted programme of activities was available for priority groups identified nationally as most at risk of poverty which included:

- Children from lone parent families
- Children from ethnic minority families
- Children from families which have 1 or more person with a disability or additional support needs (adult or child)
- Children from families with a young parent (under 25)
- Children from families with a child under 1 year old
- Children from larger families (3+ children)

24% of places on the targeted programme were taken up by families with a disabled adult or child, or those with additional support need.

5.7.2 The Orchard Brae School play scheme provides support for families with complex needs during designated holiday periods. Learners are identified through Education and Social Work to ensure support for those who would benefit most. This did not run during the Easter break 2023 and feedback from parents and carers is clear that this provision is highly valued. The additional support needs after school club supports learners throughout the year.

5.7.3 The Physical Education, Physical Activity & Sport (PEPAS) action plan includes specific consideration for increasing the range of accessible options for children and young people with sensory and physical impairments. Work continues with Disability Scotland and Grampian Disability Sport to widen access and promote opportunities. This work will include auditing school staff to identify training needs.

5.7.4 The Physical Education, Physical Activity & Sport (PEPAS) team have rolled out Boccia Training directly to pupil leaders in Primary 6 across the city who have further disseminated this training across their school communities. It has also been delivered to over 400 school staff. Schools are working towards a city wide Boccia Festival.

5.7.5 In 2022, as part of the Education Recovery funding and the Active Schools Education Recovery Project, Active Schools assistants were deployed to work across all schools. This work focussed on developing and delivering training and resources to support school staff, which included:

- Playground Leaders programmes for pupils
- Delivering and supporting organised playground activity
- Using sport and physical activity to achieve positive outcomes for individual pupils or with small groups of pupils with additional support needs
- Supporting teaching staff to deliver PE

5.7.6 Evaluation advised that this has positively impacted on the wellbeing of children and young people through this approach. Some schools continue to work with Active Schools Assistants, using their Pupil Equity Funding to support vulnerable learners, including those with additional support needs.

- 5.7.7 Specially crafted for students undertaking the Senior Phase Sports Development Course, Active Schools delivered training to learners at Bucksburn & Dyce Academies on Boccia. This focussed on skills and strategies to champion inclusivity, and fostering inclusive sports environments.
- 5.7.8 A group of learners from Northfield Academy and Orchard Brae School took part in an adventurous residential sailing voyage with Ocean Youth Trust Scotland in 2023. Pupils from Bucksburn Academy mainstream and those in the Additional Support Needs Wing take part in similar sailing experiences through TALE (Travel and Lifeskills Education) with the Ocean Youth Trust. As well as sailing skills, the activity included opportunities to build self-confidence, develop problem solving and leadership skills, experience the need for team work, develop social and life skills and gain an awareness of our environment.
- 5.7.9 Learners with additional support needs from two primary schools took part in an Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust (AFCCT) Fair Play for all day in June 2023 alongside two primary schools from Aberdeenshire. This inclusive football led event at Cormack Park enabled learners to build skills in teamwork, first aid and resilience whilst having fun.
- 5.7.10 A group of learners from the Bucksburn Academy ASN Wing achieved their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award in June 2023. Some are now going on to the Silver Award. Learners with additional support needs and disabilities have taken part in a variety of events and festivals through Sport Aberdeen, Active Schools, AFCCT, and Grampian Disability Sport.
- 5.7.11 In our parental survey, 31% of parents who have children with an additional support need or disability would like more access to extracurricular activities. Five respondents requested staffing to support access. Of all children and young people who responded, 3.9% would like support to attend clubs. Of those with a disability who responded, 13% would like support to attend identifying peer support and being better understood and respected as appropriate supports. The main barriers to attendance in extracurricular activities identified by learners were knowing what was available, and their own confidence.
- 5.7.12 In summary, we are proud of the wider opportunities that our learners are experiencing, however consultation responses from learners, parents and carers suggest there is more to do. Extracurricular activities will continue to be a focus in the new Plan.

5.8 2020 Goal – Learners are more involved in their own learning, planning and review

- 5.8.1 Quality improvement visits evidence improvement against core Quality Indicators in How Good is Our School 4. The level of improvement however is inconsistent with different patterns emerging across sectors. In many settings there remains a need to continue to focus on high quality learning, teaching and assessment and to improve approaches to planning for individuals and effective differentiation.
- 5.8.2 Quality Improvement visits have seen that supportive, respectful relationships are experienced by the majority of learners in our schools. This is achieved through a shared understanding of values and high expectations and is evident especially where Compassionate Connected Classroom has driven a consistency of understanding. We now

plan to utilise the expertise of staff achieving high evaluations to support less confident settings.

- 5.8.2 In our learner survey, quality of explanations (37%) and teacher support (31%) were identified as having the highest impact on learning after time (44%). 19% of respondents want more challenge. To ensure all learners experience high quality learning and teaching, access a curriculum which meets their needs and benefit from opportunities to plan and assess their own learning to inform next steps, 49 Quality Assurance Moderation Support Officers (QAMSOs) have undertaken Education Scotland training to support practitioners.
- 5.8.3 As reported in our Children's Services Strategic Plan 2023-2026, 70% of the 755 children and young people from Primary 5 to S6 who responded to a recent survey feel that their views are taken into account by adults, this is higher than the national average. 15.9% didn't feel that what is best for them is considered by people making decisions about them. In our consultation with learners, 20% of respondents with a disability would like to be invited to meetings about them.
- 5.8.4 In our survey of parents, 80% of those with a disabled child, advised they felt their opinions were respected. Of those who received information about their child's disability or additional support needs, 89% found this helpful.
- 5.8.5 Evaluation has shown variation in the use of Child's Plans and Individual Education Plans (IEPs). In order to support effective planning, professional learning has been developed. This has included in person whole school training, individualised in person support as well as webinars and practice exemplification to focus on meeting learners' needs through appropriate and SMART targets and ensuring the learner is an active partner to the plan. Professional learning has been delivered to professionals regarding Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs).
- 5.8.6 In summary, in accordance with Article 12 of the UNCRC, there is a need to maintain focus on the active participation of our children and young people in decision making as we work to give them the skills and confidence to do so. This will be a focus in our new plan along with consideration of how we use a format for planning which is accessible and understandable for those being planned for.

5.9 2020 Goal – Improved transition planning

- 5.9.1 Transition planning for those with additional support needs and disabilities continues. In 2020/21 there were 169 requests for assistance for transition planning to Child's Planning Support, this rose to 205 in 2022/23. Continued development of provision through the Request for Assistance process and Fit Like Hubs has enabled identification processes and personalised pathway planning in partnership with schools. In 2020/21 there were 519 requests for assistance for multiagency support via the locality hubs, this rose to 675 in 2022/23.
- 5.9.2 Our Educational Psychology Service supports schools through Early Intervention Consultations, which take place between staff at all levels. Data from last year showed that most of the problem solving discussions that generate strategies and supports for

interventions focused on social and emotional including attachment, self-regulation, Autism and attention/ concentration.

5.9.3 The Children's Disability Social Work Team have been working closely with schools and adult services to improve the transition phase. In 2022, 25 identified leavers with complex needs accessed a care manager from the Adult Social Work Learning Disability Team. This rose to 33 in 2023. Three in-school meetings are held with the team around the young person. Services connect when the young person is 14, so that the teams can start working together. Where possible all learners participate in these meetings. Consideration will be given on how best to support individual families moving forward. Our schools continue to support Futures Events and in its pilot phase, Orchard Brae School is working in conjunction with Bucksburn ASN wing and the Adult Learning Disabilities Team to have a consistent approach to enhanced transitions across the senior phase.

5.9.4 More effective transition planning is helping increase the number of positive destinations being achieved by young people. A refreshed pathway planning process has added rigour and consistency. Positive destinations data for August 2022 increased by 5.1% from last year to 95.1%. Destinations for learners with additional support needs is at 94% compared to the national average of 92.81%.

5.9.5 In summary, effective transition planning impacts positively on our learners and families and our approaches need to continue to be responsive to changing needs.

5.10 2020 Goal – Improve the level of personalisation of curriculum

5.10.1 The ASN and Outreach Service supports young people in the senior phase to undertake qualifications appropriate to their wider pathway planning. Staff within sensory services: Vision Support and Hearing Support provide consultation with regards to assessment arrangements for learners, this includes use of Braille, Books for All, tactile diagrams and timings for example. Staff within the Wellbeing/Fit Like? Aberdeen Team support young people in partnership between the relevant school and the Wellbeing Team, the learners often undertake a mixture of National Qualifications in Literacy, Numeracy, Maths and English, and Personal Development/Achievement Awards.

5.10.2 The English as an additional language Team, deliver English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) qualifications. At present, dedicated classes are delivered through schools and ABZ Campus. 81 candidates are being presented across National 2, 3, 4, 5 and Higher levels. Learner Voice data tells us that most children and young people who feedback via the questionnaire enjoy their sessions from ASN & Outreach staff and all feel they have opportunities to lead their own learning. 93% of returns highlighted that they have opportunities to set their own targets and 60% are involved in planning the activities they engage with during sessions.

5.10.3 Following the increase in use of the outdoors to facilitate learning during the periods of COVID restrictions, and the publication of associated research, the ASN & Outreach Service expanded the outdoor learning offer to schools during session 2022-2023. The service invested in specialist equipment and training to support delivery of interventions. The impact is initially monitored through the use of a case-study approach with positive impacts noted on learners' engagement and 'readiness to learn' within their educational setting.

Approximately 50 children/young people are accessing this support. Plans are in place to integrate Duke of Edinburgh Awards into this area.

- 5.10.4 Aberdeen School for the Deaf works closely with the Hearing Dogs charity, which links directly into the deaf studies curriculum. These enrichment opportunities are targeted to key year groups using local intelligence such as the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and wellbeing conversations. Swimming lessons were initiated as a response to data collected from permissions at the start of the session, which indicated approx. 90% of learners were unable to swim and had little water experience.
- 5.10.5 Third sector organisations Barnardo's, Foyer and Station House Media Unit (SHMU) continue to support the delivery of a programme of support. Consultation responses confirm that effective partnerships positively impact on the educational experiences and outcomes for learners. It is thought that the ABZ Campus model across all city schools will provide a greater variety of choice, especially vocational opportunities, for children and young people. During the latter part of the 2022-23 session, planning has turned to a design for Phase 2 of ABZ Campus in session 2024-25. A group comprising staff from local authority and multiagency partners has formed to progress and pilot an employability and placement solution for a group of young people with additional support needs.
- 5.10.6 Partnership with FitLike Aberdeen and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) colleagues has supported the wider roll out of LIAM (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management). This multi-agency collaboration will continue to build on the current supports we have in place across many schools in order to strengthen the universal offer to children and families. All school nurses are currently trained to deliver LIAM, as are a team of FitLike staff and various staff within school settings. By August 2023 there will be almost 50 staff trained in LIAM in schools.
- 5.10.8 There is evidence of a broadening of the curriculum for example through the establishment of the SQA Adult Learning and Transition Award (National 1) at Orchard Brae School. 18 pupils achieved an Award (12 Bronze, 2 Silver and 4 Gold Awards) ensuring that young people gain recognition for the work that they are doing through work experience, college or transition visits.
- 5.10.9 In summary, improved data collation has made clearer the needs of our learners. This alongside professional learning has enabled a greater understanding of how a curriculum can be personalised to meet needs. We have seen an improvement in some of our attainment data but acknowledge that regular attendance is crucial for raising attainment. Collaboration is key in future curriculum planning to ensure any offer is flexible enough to meet the needs of the child.

6. Are we Improving the Physical Environment?

6.1 2020 Goal - Augmentative and alternative signage at learner appropriate height

- 6.1.1 In 2020 Learners identified that signage in school could be improved by being at an appropriate height, accessible and labelled inclusively as accessible where appropriate. Access to the physical environment is being supported by work undertaken by Corporate

Landlord on the school estate review including the provision of new schools. This work has not progressed at the anticipated pace due to the public health restrictions in place.

- 6.1.1 In our recent learner survey, two learners advised they couldn't access all areas of the school they wanted to. 22% of those with a disability continue to request better signage.
- 6.1.2 External expertise has been commissioned and a specialist consultant has been appointed to carry out site surveys at a cross section of school buildings to inform next steps. A report on the findings from the review, including recommendations on any improvements which could be made to the accessibility of our school signage, is expected during Summer 2023, after which a plan will be put in place for improvements to be implemented as part of the school estate review. This action will help progress work swiftly against this goal from the current Accessibility Plan.

6.2 2020 Goal - Involve disabled children, parents, specialists and services the development of the school estate strategy, including nurseries and preschool centres

- 6.2.1 Children, parents and staff were consulted on the school estate plan in Autumn / Winter 2022, and feedback was gathered via an online survey. Further stakeholder engagement is ongoing as individual projects from the school estate plan are rolled out with regular reports considered by the Education and Children's Services Committee.
- 6.2.2 Design work on new school buildings has included a range of partners and specialists. The proposed model for school buildings was then validated by a pupil survey across the city. All our new schools are wheelchair accessible and there is a focus on creating flexible spaces for learners that can be adapted to suit a range of needs. Our designers are fully briefed on this from the outset of each new school project. All our classrooms have free flow to outdoor space for play and learning and are designed so that all pupils can engage and enjoy the variety of outdoor play/learning on offer. All our new school designs are shared with the school community to allow feedback and comments during the design development stage of the project.
- 6.2.3 Within our existing estate, the design and construction of some older buildings, including our nine Victorian buildings for example, cannot easily be made fully accessible for those with limited mobility. A feasibility and options appraisal will be undertaken to consider suitability, accessibility and capacity within Victorian schools.
- 6.2.4 The school roll is now 10% higher than in 2019. This has led to changes in the use of spaces in some schools to increase capacity. On-going consultation on the school estate review has highlighted that spaces to support learners are essential when supporting those with additional support needs, for example outdoor space, sensory rooms and areas for therapy which allow dignity. The increased school roll may have impacted on the creative use of spaces and sensory experiences in the short term.
- 6.2.5 The increase in the number of children finding returning to school challenging post pandemic triggered work to promote whole school approaches to inclusion and promoting positive relationships, including the roll out of Compassionate Connected Communities.

6.2.6 In summary, more active engagement around the school estate has been established and will be maintained.

6.3 2020 Goal - Provide guidance on how to meet a range of needs (particularly sensory needs) when environments are not as flexible

6.3.1 2022 saw the launch of the CIRCLE framework to help ensure learning environments support children and young people. Training and surgeries led by education include close working with health professionals. Schools are making use of the CIRCLE framework to consider environments at universal level. This is in its early stages, with some schools beginning to utilise targeted strategies. Use of the framework will enable consideration to be given to the impact the environment can have on those with sensory, processing differences and sensory impairments.

6.3.2 We are beginning to see the shared vision and language of the CIRCLE framework during quality improvement visits. This links to our work to improve the curriculum and quality of learning, teaching and assessment.

6.3.3 Of parents who responded to our recent survey, 24 out of 59 believed the environments in schools could be improved. Four of these noted sensory issues, three requested training for staff. In our learner survey, 32% of those with a disability identified classrooms as being noisy.

6.3.4 Work at Orchard Brae School continues through delivery of bespoke sensory training across the whole school. This has included redesigning all the school's sensory rooms, supported by Pupil Equity Fund (PEF), to better meet the needs of the current learner population. This has increased regulation across the school enabling learners to engage in their learning. Consideration will now be given as to how this practice can be shared to impact positively on learners in other schools.

6.3.5 Consultations with specialist services including Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Educational Psychology, ASN and Outreach Service including: Vision Support, Hearing Support, and Autism Outreach take place for advice on physical requirements and advice on adaptations required to ensure environments are accessible for individual learners.

6.3.6 In summary, access to the physical environment has been enhanced through understanding the universal supports that can be put in place. For learners with Autistic Spectrum Condition or sensory needs, this is particularly important as we move to flexible learning areas.

7 Do Disabled Pupils Have Access to Information in a Timely Manner, which Takes Account of Disability and Meets their Communication Needs?

7.1 2020 Goal - Information regarding additional support need is meaningful, relevant and readily available in variety of formats or language

7.1.1 The ongoing partnership with the Financial Inclusion Team, funded through Scottish Attainment Challenge funding, provides timely support for families experiencing financial difficulties. A booklet providing information on sources of financial supports, grants and

benefits has been distributed to all families with children attending our schools and ELC provisions. This was supplemented by information pertaining to the targeted communication around the benefits available for those impacted by additional support needs and disability. It will also be shared with new families enrolling children in our early years settings and schools.

- 7.1.2 A few primary schools have produced learner friendly versions of their Improvement Plan. These enable learners to understand what improvements are planned and when they are achieved.
- 7.1.3 The service has worked to increase the number of documents available in child friendly formats and has worked with specialists to produce documentation appropriate to supporting a wider range of communication needs.
- 7.1.4 A broader range of mechanisms have been adopted to ensure that children and young people are directly influencing decisions which affect them. Work to develop ASN and Outreach services and our Fit Like Hubs has been directly informed by service users. Their voices continue to influence the on-going development of both services.
- 7.1.5 Children, young people and families confirm that effective communication includes anticipating changes and sharing information in a timely manner both to learners and families. This includes but is not limited to timetables, transition points, choices – for example instrumental tuition, extra-curricular activities, subject choices and support to understand the process as well as the subjects themselves, pathways, key personnel, physical and virtual tours, photographs and assessment arrangements. Further awareness raising is required to ensure that all school staff understand the importance of this and key mechanisms for sharing information in a timely and appropriately accessible manner for all.

Communication methods can include:

- Seesaw
- home/school books
- newsletters
- groupcalls
- emails
- parent groups

It may also include sharing information directly with learners for example:

- Through their preferred communication method
- Further clarification within a class setting
- Google classroom
- In a small groups
- Individually

As well as meetings with learners and parents where appropriate.

- 7.1.6 In response to feedback from young people and families, the Child's Plan format is being revised. Some schools use an accessible IEP format and this practice is being shared. Schools will be encouraged to ensure they are sharing key contact information with parents including for example, email address and telephone details for the named person on the Child's Plan.

- 7.1.7 Learning in the local community reinforces, extends and enriches school-based learning, particularly with regards to language & communication. Aberdeen School for the Deaf includes whole school swimming; wider experiences involve Aberdeen Performing Arts, Aberdeen Airport, Aberdeen Art Gallery and links with the Deaf community. Families benefit from a weekly 'Family Sign Class', which is run by a British Sign Language qualified Early Years Practitioner. This gives the opportunity to develop and improve BSL skills.
- 7.1.8 Opportunities are enhanced through partnership with North East Sensory Services (NESS) and include regular Coffee Mornings, to encourage use of skills and enable peer support for families. NESS have advised that the collaborative and innovative approach used by Vision support and Hearing support staff at Aberdeen allows young people to flourish.
- 7.1.9 Aberdeen School for the Deaf commissioned a bespoke Emotional Literacy intervention with our British Sign Language tutor from the National Deaf Children's Society aimed at increasing learner's' emotional literacy and developing their understanding of emotions, feelings and strategies for self-regulation. This programme will be further extended by linking with Emotion Works which is an educational programme with training and practical resources to support emotional education in schools, nurseries and additional support services.
- 7.1.10 In our learner survey, 79% of respondents with a disability advised that information is not shared in the best way for them. Learners identified the use of technology as a positive support that for many can be accessed independently.
- 7.1.11 Professional learning identified to ensure access to enable access to the curriculum will include ensuring that professionals consider the communication needs of disabled pupils in day to day communication, including for example access to alternative or accessible formats.
- 7.1.12 In summary, although considerable work has been undertaken in this area, the learner should as far as possible receive information, including everyday communication in school, in a format that they can understand. Further work is required to ensure that information is readily available in a variety of formats and that everyone knows where these can be accessed.

7.2 2020 Goal - Establishment of Digital Hub as a one stop shop for all information for all stakeholders

- 7.2.1 The ASN & Outreach Service's website has been continuously updated since its launch in Spring 2022. Careful thought has gone into the website to ensure it provides information mandated by the Additional Support for Learning Code of Practice (2017). The site provides information for young people, parents and professionals regarding each area of the service including vision and hearing support. Improving 'communication and the accessibility of information' is a key aim and good progress has been made against this through the establishment of the website. Analytics data evidences recent promotional activity has increased activity on the service's website. Most stakeholders rate the content as either 'good', 'very good' or 'excellent' with almost all stating the same regarding layout and presentation.
- 7.2.2 The Education Psychology Service review and update their digital hub to offer supports to pupils, parents and staff based on information gathered throughout the year about topics and areas of need arising through their work in Education.

7.2.3 In summary, the ASN & Outreach Service's website will continue to evolve in response to the needs of our children, young people and families.

7.3 2020 Goal - Information gathered and shared directly with ASN Parent forum

7.3.1 For families living in the Clinterty Travelling Persons Site, contact is made within 2 days and education, learning, health and accessibility needs are discussed directly with families. This may include giving information, advice and liaison with appropriate schools and services.

7.3.2 Aberdeen City Council is committed to communication which is easy to understand as seen in our We CARE Charter and Commitments. Where people need information provided in different ways this should be acknowledged and provided. This includes alternative languages including British Sign Language (BSL), Easy to Read, Braille and audio recordings. All information should be available to parents, carers and pupils in a format which is accessible to them. School information can be made available in Braille, audio recording, online or translated into other languages upon request.

7.3.3 To enable sharing information directly with families we have liaised with [WeToo](#), a parent driven organisation, to empower families of children with disabilities. Parent/carer information events at their drop in centre in the Trinity Centre have taken place on a variety of themes including: an information session with the Fit Like Hub, an information morning with the Financial Inclusion Service, and Cuppa and Chitchat with a Quality Improvement Officer from Education. In its early stages we are in discussions as to next steps based on WeToo evaluations.

7.3.4 The [ASN & Outreach Service's Parents' and Carers' Group](#) was established in early 2022, as a forum for all parents and carers of children and young people with additional support needs and disabilities. The group comprises of volunteer parent/carer representatives who meet every 6 weeks with the Head Teacher and one other member of the Service's Senior Leadership Team. The Group's Charter was designed by members and aims to acknowledge parental expertise, capture voice, improve service, open channels of communication, provide accessible information (including Statutory), represent views, share practical experience, and support home learning. Information about the group is available on the ASN and Outreach Service website and was shared with all parents via the Aberdeen Learns Parents and Carers newsletter. This will be shared at the beginning of each school session.

7.3.5 Effective practice has been identified where schools work in partnership with parents and agencies to share effective strategies and solutions, through timely communication. This includes where they have their own parent groups to enable effective and timely communication and partnership working. When moving towards the updated plan there requires to be a high level of collaboration in curriculum planning to ensure any offer is flexible enough to meet the needs of the child.

8 Review and Evaluation

8.1 The Implementation of this Plan will be monitored and reported to Committee through the regular National Improvement Framework updates presented to Committee.

8.2 Progress will be reviewed annually by the central team. Where appropriate, the Accessibility Plan will be revised to take account of any changes which may be required. Formal review will take place after 30 months to ensure a new Plan is in place three years after completion of this one. This will ensure that we maintain a focus on improving outcomes for those who are disabled and meet our duties set out in the 2002 Act.

Action Plan to improve access to the curriculum:				
What are our goals?	What will this achieve?	When will we do this by?	Who will make sure this happens?	How will we know our progress?
Increase provision of physical activity for children and young people with a disability	Meet statutory duties, improve health and wellbeing	2026	School staff, Central Team	Updates from PEPAS, Increase in children and young people accessing physical activities
Embed the principles of intensive family support into practice to enable responsive support for families, continue to provide responsive support through ASN & Outreach services	System in place which provides evidence of demand in real time	2025	Central Team, ASN & Outreach Service	System established, resource allocation better matched to needs through request for assistance process
Use of CIRCLE framework, Talkboost and Early Talkboost to support robust classroom identification and inclusion of learners with language, literacy and communication support needs	Inclusion of learners	2026	ELC & School staff, Senior leadership teams Quality Improvement Team	Number of learners showing an increase in scores on CIRCLE participation scales
Work with partners to develop enhanced transition planning for those with a disability by better joining children and adult services	Meet statutory duties, timely supports identified	June 2026	Senior Leadership Teams, Multiagency, Quality Improvement Team	Improved transitions, including learning transitions reported

Increase the number of children and young people with additional support needs accessing a curriculum which meets their needs	Improve attainment and pathways to education, employment and training	June 2026	Senior Leadership Teams, school staff, Quality Improvement Team Multiagency	Increase in children and young people accessing full time opportunities
<p>Improve awareness of legislation and guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability and Equality • Additional support needs • Assessment Arrangements • Attendance 	Improve consistency of practice and build confidence and knowledge base of staff	Dec 2025	Senior Leadership Teams, Central team, ASN & Outreach Service	<p>Professional learning evaluation</p> <p>Reduction in the number of associated complaints and requests for dispute resolution</p>
Increase awareness, improve knowledge of and access to extra curricular activities for disabled learners	Improved access and uptake of activities	Dec 2024	School staff, Senior Leadership Teams	<p>Disabled Learner feedback</p> <p>Feedback from parents and carers of disabled pupils</p>

Action Plan to improve access to the physical environment:				
What are our goals?	What will this achieve?	When will we do this by?	Who will make sure this happens?	How will we know our progress?
<p>Augmentative and alternative signage at learner appropriate height</p> <p>Toilets signposted as accessible</p>	Inclusion of those with disabilities, hidden and visible	June 2025	School Support Managers, Senior Leadership Teams Corporate Landlord	Signage in buildings compliant
Consider suitability, accessibility and capacity within Victorian schools through feasibility study and options appraisal	Options and recommendations to consider accessibility	Dec 2024	Corporate Landlord	Study complete
CIRCLE framework training delivered with partners across settings including use of Up and Away to support understanding of environments to meet needs.	Increased understanding and approaches, improve the quality of environments/ supports for those with additional support needs	June 2026	Senior Leadership Teams Central Team, Multiagency	Evidence of consistent approaches and language through dialogue and Quality Improvement visits.
Develop guidance to meet a range of sensory needs	Inclusion of those with sensory needs, improvement in attendance	June 2025	Central team, multiagency, Outreach Services	Improvement in understanding and attendance

Action Plan to improve communication and access to school information:

What are our goals?	What will this achieve?	When will we do this by?	Who will make sure this happens?	How will we know our progress?
Child's planning format which is accessible for learners	Learners understanding the information which is being shared about them, their next steps, who and how this will support them, meet statutory requirements	June 2024	Children's Services Board	Young people report format is understandable and they engage with it
Empower children and young people to have their voice heard when experiencing child protection processes through effective use of alternative communication systems	Key information is available to inform decisions, planning and outcomes, UNCRC, statutory duties met	June 2025	Quality Improvement Team, multiagency	Number of children using alternative communication system increases
Access to information through a single digital source of information for parents, carers and disabled young people	Information available in accessible format for all	June 2026	Quality Improvement Team, Multiagency	Single site of information available and highlighted on school websites
Implement "one good adult" programme	Children and young people know they have an adult who listens to them	June 2025	Quality Improvement Team, Senior Leadership Teams	Number of learners who advise they have an adult who listens to them
Ensure summary information regarding additional support needs is accessible and available in a variety of formats in accordance with legislation	Meet statutory duties	Jan 2024	Quality Improvement Team	Audit of school handbooks & websites Feedback from parents

Appendix 1

Useful resources for early learning and school staff

[GTCS Professional Standards Additional Support Needs, Professional Standards Care Inspectorate](#)

[Aberdeen City Council Standards: Learning, Teaching and Assessment; Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion](#)

[ASN & Outreach Service](#)

[Autism Outreach Service](#)

[Educational Psychology Service Hub](#)

[Aberdeen City Council Supporting Learners](#)

[CIRCLE Framework & Up and Away Enquire](#)

[Equality and Human Rights Commission: Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils \(Scotland\)](#)

[Technical guidance for schools in Scotland for the Equality Act \(2010\) regarding discrimination](#)

[What equality law means for you as an education provider – Schools](#)

[Scottish Government: Additional Support for Learning Equality Act 2010](#)

[Scottish Government: Decision-making: children and young people's participation](#)

[Education Scotland: Learner Participation in Educational Settings \(3-18\)](#)

[My rights, my say](#)

[The Lundy model of participation](#)

[Tools for gathering the views of children and young people - Highland Council Psychological Service](#)

[Look Who's Talking: factors for considering the facilitation of very young children's voices, 7 Golden rules for participation](#)

[Children in Scotland, e-learning Hub](#)

[Principles of good transitions](#)

[Compass: transitions](#)

[Scottish Government: Children and Families](#)

[Scottish Government: Guidance on School Transport](#)

[Scottish Government: Supporting children and young people with healthcare needs in schools: guidance](#)

[Education Scotland: Curriculum Support](#)

[Aberdeen City Council: Health and Safety](#)

[HSE Guidance on School Trips](#)

[Going Out There – Health and Safety guidance on leaving the school grounds](#)

[HSE Guidance on supporting pupils with disabilities, special educational needs, and additional support needs](#)

[SQA Assessment arrangements](#)

[Included, engaged and involved part 1: promoting and managing school attendance](#)

Useful Resources for Parents

[ASN & Outreach Service](#)

[Autism Outreach Service](#)

[Aberdeen Parent Learning Hub](#)

[Aberdeen Digital Learning Hub](#)

[Educational Psychology Service Hub](#)

[CIRCLE Framework](#)

[Enquire - The Scottish Advice Service for Additional Support for Learning](#)

[Compass: transitions](#)

[Enquire: Steps to resolving disagreements](#)

[Govan Law Centre - Education Law Unit](#)

[CALL Scotland](#)

[Dyslexia Scotland](#)

[Scottish Traveller Education Programme \(STEP\)](#)

[Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service - Respect Me](#)

[Advocacy Services](#)

Useful Resources for Children and Young People

[Aberdeen Digital Learning Hub](#)

[Reach.scot: understanding your rights](#)

[My rights, my say](#)

[Enquire: Children and Young People](#)

[ASN & Outreach Service](#)

[Compass: transitions](#)

[Govan Law Centre - Education Law Unit](#)

[Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service - Respect Me](#)

[Dyslexia Scotland](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	The content of the report is public, but it contains an exempt appendix. (Paragraph 8 – Estimated Expenditure on Contracts: 'This report refers to the acquisition or supply of goods/services where disclosure to the public of the amount to be spent would be likely to give an advantage to a person or organisation seeking to enter a contract with the Council.')
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Outline Business Case: Oldmachar Primary Schools Excess Capacity
REPORT NUMBER	RES/23/278
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte / Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Jones
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1 & 1.1.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents a completed Outline Business Case, setting out the findings of a recent feasibility study, to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools within the Oldmachar Associated Schools Group (ASG).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes that no suitable options for reducing the number of primary schools within the Oldmachar ASG have been identified within the outline business case, and:
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out further work to identify potential future options for improving and consolidating primary school provision in the Oldmachar ASG, alongside the planned work to review secondary school provision in this area of the city, and to report back to the Committee with recommendations and next steps as appropriate.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on 8 September 2022, the former Education Operational Delivery Committee approved the Council's School Estate Plan, and instructed officers to take forwards a detailed action plan to develop and improve the school estate. This included an instruction to officers to carry out a feasibility study, to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools within the Oldmachar Associated Schools Group (ASG), in order to minimise excess pupil

capacity, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate.

- 3.2 The outline business case, included at Appendix 1 of this report, sets out the findings of the feasibility study, and provides an analysis of the options available for reducing the number of primary schools within the Oldmachar ASG.
- 3.3 The outline business case considers each of the existing primary school sites in the ASG, and the extent to which those schools could be merged together on one site, allowing one of the buildings to be closed.
- 3.4 In tandem with the feasibility study, a stakeholder engagement exercise was undertaken, in which parents, pupils, staff and the wider communities associated with the schools in the ASG were invited to review the brief for the feasibility study, and to provide their comments and feedback. Key messages from the feedback received included:
 - The need to maintain reasonable walking distances from home to school, if a school is to be closed
 - The need to avoid the remaining schools becoming overcrowded, if a school is to be closed
 - The importance of maintaining additional space in schools for children with additional support needs
 - The need for all pupils to continue to have access to good quality school facilities
- 3.5 In response to the feedback received from stakeholders and the concerns raised about the possible loss of space as a result of schools being merged together, there was an emphasis given within the outline business case to whether the options being considered provided sufficient space in the schools concerned to accommodate additional pupils, whether the options were likely to provide improved facilities for learning and teaching, and whether appropriate space for additional support needs provision could be maintained.
- 3.6 In developing the outline business case, several of the existing school sites were found to be unsuitable to support merging with another school on that site, due to limitations of space, or constraints created by site topography, and were therefore discounted.
- 3.7 Two of the sites, Forehill School and Glashieburn School, were deemed to have potential to accommodate a merged school, and were assessed in further detail within the outline business case to determine which adjacent schools could be merged with them, so that those buildings could be closed.
- 3.8 However, it was found that none of the options for merging schools on the Forehill or Glashieburn sites sufficiently fulfilled the identified project objectives, and would likely create challenges and pressures for the school communities concerned, particularly in terms of the available space and the opportunities for providing improved facilities for learning and teaching. There would also be a need to provide temporary alternative accommodation for pupils and staff,

whilst the necessary changes to buildings are made, and there were no suitable solutions found for this.

- 3.9 For these reasons, no preferred option for reducing the number of primary schools in the Oldmachar ASG has been identified at this time. The feasibility study for the secondary school estate at Bridge of Don, Oldmachar and Grandhome is due to start in late 2023. The scope for this study could be widened, to consider options for providing improved facilities and consolidation for both primary and secondary education within the ASG.
- 3.10 It is therefore recommended that the Committee instructs officers to carry out further work to identify potential future options for improving and consolidating primary school provision in the Oldmachar ASG, alongside the planned work to review secondary school provision in this area of the city.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Any costs related to further feasibility work will be met from existing budgets.

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 A proposal to close or merge a school and catchment area is a relevant proposal under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. 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.

5.4 Section 2A of the 2010 Act provides for a restriction on making a school closure proposal in relation to the same school for a period of 5 years following either:

- (a) a decision to refuse closure...; or
- (b) a decision made by the education authority following the publication of a consultation report not to proceed with the closure.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations 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 risks identified			
Compliance	Risk that the Council is seen to make significant changes to schools without considering the views of stakeholders.	The recommendation not to proceed with changes to the schools at this time demonstrates that full consideration has been given to the views of stakeholders which were raised during the stakeholder engagement exercise.	L	Yes
Operational	Failure to engage and consult with communities on the future of the school estate which serves them, could lead to a breakdown in	The recommendation not to proceed with changes to the schools at this time demonstrates	L	Yes

	relationships with community members. Proposals to close schools may not be popular with some stakeholders	that full consideration has been given to the views of stakeholders which were raised during the stakeholder engagement exercise.		
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. Proposals to close schools may not be popular with some stakeholders	The recommendation not to proceed with changes to the schools at this time demonstrates that full consideration has been given to the views of stakeholders which were raised during the stakeholder engagement exercise.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	Taking no action on reducing the number of schools in the ASG will not provide opportunities for reducing carbon emissions from the school estate	The recommendation to consider further options may provide additional opportunities in the future to contribute to reducing carbon emissions	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The recommendations within this report support the delivery of the following policy statements:
<u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	<u>A City of Opportunity</u>

	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 of the 21st century. The report considers the options for providing improved school facilities in the Oldmachar ASG
Regional and City Strategies	This project forms part of the School Estate Plan which will support the delivery of the Council's Property and Estates Strategy and the Net Zero Routemap for Aberdeen City.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Stage 1 Assessment has been completed.
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 Exempt Appendix 1: Outline Business Case – Oldmachar Primary Schools Excess Capacity

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Andrew Jones
Title	Service Manager
Email Address	ajones@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	045101

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	School Estate Plan Annual Update 2023
REPORT NUMBER	RES/23/282
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte / Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Jones
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.5

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the 2023 annual update to the School Estate Plan, providing updates on progress with implementation of the Plan, and highlighting new priorities which have been identified since the School Estate Plan was first approved in September 2022.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the updates to the School Estate Plan which are provided at Appendix 1 of this report;
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to continue to implement the School Estate Plan in accordance with the updated timeline, presented at Appendix 1 of this report;
- 2.3 Notes that the review of sports facilities at Harlaw Road and Rubislaw sports fields will now be incorporated within the feasibility study for improving the suitability of facilities at Harlaw Academy (Recommendation H1);
- 2.4 Instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a public consultation on a proposal to alter the school catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, so that they align with the city boundary and no longer extend beyond it into Aberdeenshire. (Recommendation O4/BD2)

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on 8 September 2022, the former Education Operational Delivery Committee approved the Council's School Estate Plan, and instructed officers 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”*. This report seeks to fulfil that instruction.

- 3.2 The annual update to the School Estate Plan, included at Appendix 1 of this report, provides information on progress to date with the actions and instructions which were agreed within the School Estate Plan, and highlights further priorities for action which have been identified during the course of the last year.
- 3.3 It is recommended that the Committee approves the new recommendations which are listed in Section 2 above, and which are reflected in the update report at Appendix 1, and that it instructs officers to continue to implement the School Estate Plan, in line with the updated timeline for implementation, which is provided in Section 3 of the update report.
- 3.4 Recommendation O4/BD2 above relates to proposed minor changes to the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, which currently extend beyond the city boundary and into a small area of Aberdeenshire. Earlier this year Aberdeenshire Council approved a change to its catchment area for Balmedie School, which now extends to the Aberdeen City / Aberdeenshire boundary, and includes these small areas of land, which currently are also part of the Greenbrae or Scotstown catchment areas. This means there are effectively 'dual zones' in place, and any children living within these areas of Aberdeenshire would have an entitlement to attend Balmedie School as well as Greenbrae School or Scotstown School.
- 3.5 To remove any ambiguity and provide clarity on the zoning arrangements for this area, it is recommended that a public consultation is undertaken on a proposal to alter the school catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, so that they no longer extend beyond the city boundary, removing the dual zone issue and confirming that the area of Aberdeenshire is zoned only to Balmedie School.
- 3.6 At its meeting of 4 July 2023, the Education and Children's Services Committee approved a recommendation for officers to carry out a statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new primary school at Bucksburn / Newhills, and on proposed changes to the catchment area for Brimmond School. At the same meeting, the Committee also instructed the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to provide Members with a firm date for the statutory consultation, and to report the date to the next Committee meeting.
- 3.7 As detailed in Section 3 of the annual update report at Appendix 1 below, it is proposed that the statutory consultation for the proposed new school at Bucksburn / Newhills is carried out from **5 February 2024 to 22 March 2024**. The outcomes of the consultation would then be reported to the Committee for its consideration at its meeting in May 2024.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The School Estate Plan will continue to be implemented using funding which has been allocated for this purpose within the General Fund capital programme. There are no further direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

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 updated School Estate 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.
- 5.5 The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 requires local authorities to prepare and keep under review an accessibility strategy for increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the curriculum; improving the physical environment of schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of education and improving communication with pupils with a disability. In taking account of the Accessibility Plan, the School Estate Plan assists the Education Authority to realise these statutory aims.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The School Estate Plan outlines the approaches which will be taken to bring about positive impacts on the environment in the future, through reducing carbon emissions from the existing school estate and from future new build schools to contribute to the Council's net zero carbon ambitions, and through ensuring improved resource efficiency by rationalising the school estate where appropriate.
- 6.2 All new build and refurbishment projects are compliant with the Council's Building Performance policy, and through the location and design of new buildings we will seek to promote active and sustainable travel to school.

6.3 Designing new schools for the future presents opportunities to make positive impacts on other aspects of the natural environment, including, for example, making space for nature through sustainable approaches to landscaping, avoiding over-use of synthetic materials in school grounds, and providing space for food growing initiatives. Officers will continue to work closely with colleagues in Environmental Planning when designing new and refurbished outdoor spaces, to ensure consideration is given to these important factors.

6.4 However it is also recognised that carrying out physical changes to the school estate, such as removing surplus capacity or constructing new buildings, could potentially result in a negative impact on the environment, for example through disturbance to habitats and roosting animals, or affecting existing open spaces. Any such activity will be planned carefully to minimise any such negative impacts wherever possible.

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 sets out updated 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	Failure to engage and consult with	The School Estate Plan emphasises an approach which	L	Yes

	communities on the future of the 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	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 emphasises an approach which places community engagement and consultation at the centre	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	Development of the school estate and the addition of new school capacity may lead to increased carbon emissions	Climate risks and the need for the school estate to contribute to the Council's net zero carbon emissions targets will be embedded into planning and decision making.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>The updated School Estate Plan 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 of the 21st century. The report seeks Committee's approval of the School Estate Plan.</p> <p><u>A Prosperous City</u></p> <p>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>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The updated School Estate Plan supports 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 sets out how all stakeholders including children and young people will be consulted on proposals to make changes to the school estate.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The updated School Estate Plan supports the delivery of Stretch Outcome 13 in the LOIP – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate. The School Estate Plan sets out the approach which will be taken to reduce carbon emissions from the school estate.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p>	<p>The School Estate Plan will support the delivery of the Council's Property and Estates Strategy (currently in draft).</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment (Stage 1) relating to the School Estate Plan has been reviewed and no changes 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 Annual Update September 2023

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Andrew Jones
Title	Service Manager
Email Address	ajones@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	045101

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1

Aberdeen City Council School Estate Plan

Annual Update September 2023

1. Introduction

Aberdeen City Council's School Estate Plan, approved by the former Education Operational Delivery Committee in September 2022, included an instruction to officers "*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*".

This annual update report therefore provides information on progress to date with the actions and instructions which were agreed within the School Estate Plan, and provides further recommendations as appropriate, to help ensure that Aberdeen City's school estate can continue to be developed and improved, in line with the principles of the School Estate Plan.

The full School Estate Plan, approved in September 2022, can be accessed [here](#).

This report provides updates to the following key elements which form part of the School Estate Plan:

- The **Action Plan** which sets out the proposed practical actions and decisions which need to be taken to address the identified priorities for individual assets and areas of the city;
- The **Implementation Plan** which provides detail on the anticipated timescales for carrying out the actions identified within the Action Plan.

2. Updated Action Plan

Update On Existing Priorities

- The updated action plan below includes a summary of the Committee decisions taken in September 2022, and provides information on the current status of the actions and projects which were instructed, along with any revised or new recommendations on further actions which need to be taken, for individual school sites, Associated Schools Groups (ASGs), or wider areas of the city.

Area / ASG / School	SEP Priority (September 2022)	SEP Objective (September 2022)	Previous Committee Decision (September 2022)	Current Status	Update
City-wide Strategic Priorities	A1: There is a requirement to reduce carbon emissions from the school estate	Net zero carbon emissions through the Council's assets and operations by 2045	Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to adopt an approach which favours the improvement and repurposing of existing assets, over the construction of new school buildings, where this is appropriate, and to ensure that where new school buildings are required, these are designed from the outset, to comply with the low carbon criteria set out within the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP), and where appropriate, with the Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard. (Recommendation A1)	On Track (Ongoing)	Feasibility studies carried out in the past year have focused on improving and repurposing existing assets. The specification and brief for our new school buildings has been updated to reflect LEIP criteria.
	A2: We need an efficient estate, with over-provision and under-provision of school places kept to a minimum	All new primary schools to be constructed with a minimum pupil capacity of 434, and all new secondary schools to be constructed with a minimum pupil capacity of 1000	Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to ensure that all new primary schools are designed with a minimum pupil capacity of 434, and all new secondary schools are designed with a minimum pupil capacity of 1000, in order to support high quality learning and teaching. (Recommendation A2)	On Track (Ongoing)	Plans for new schools will continue to be based on these minimum capacity requirements.

	A3: Some existing schools are operating significantly under capacity, and are forecast to remain under capacity, due to population changes over time	Future capacity of all operational schools to be managed, with a target to maintain occupancy levels at a minimum of 80% of available capacity, to ensure the efficiency and sustainability of the school estate	Notes that potential changes in pupil population across the city are 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 will 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. (Recommendation A3)	On Track (Ongoing)	Work undertaken to date within the School Estate Plan, and any future recommendations will be focused on maintaining school occupancy levels at 80% to 95% where possible
	A4: Where there is spare capacity within schools, in the short to medium term this may be better utilised by other appropriate services	Short to medium term spare capacity within schools to be used flexibly and creatively to ensure efficiency and sustainability of the estate, where appropriate to do so	Notes that where appropriate, officers will 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 also benefits local communities. (Recommendation A4)	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers will continue to consider options for repurposing spaces for other uses where this is appropriate.
	A5: the Council has made a commitment through the Schools Accessibility Plan, to improve signage in schools	Augmentative and alternative signage to be provided in all schools where required	Instructs 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 agrees to refer this to the budget process. (Recommendation A5)	Delayed (In Progress)	Due to staffing resource pressures, it was not possible to complete the review of signage by Summer 2023, as previously intended. A specialist consultant has been appointed to carry out a review of signage in schools and to make recommendations on required improvements. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by the end of 2023.
	A6: Plans for the school estate need to be continually reviewed	The School Estate Plan to be updated regularly based on the latest available school	Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to present a delivery plan for implementing the agreed actions in this report to the	On Track (In Progress)	A Delivery Plan was approved by the Education and Children's Services

		using the latest available data	roll forecast and other key data	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. (Recommendation A6)		Committee in November 2022, and an updated version of this is provided in Section 3 below. This updated Action Plan fulfils the requirement to provide an annual update to the Committee.
City-wide Priorities: Denominational Primary Schools	St Peter's RC School, St Joseph's RC School and Holy Family RC School	RC1: Poor suitability and lack of capacity at St Joseph's RC School, and forecast excess capacity at St Peter's School and Holy Family School	Ensure sufficient and sustainable long term denominational primary school provision for the city	Instructs 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. (Recommendation RC1)	On Track (Not Yet Started)	The feasibility study is scheduled to be carried out in Autumn/Winter 2023/24
North Area Priorities	Grandhome / Oldmachar / Bridge of Don Bucksburn / Dyce	NA1: Requirement for secondary school provision for Grandhome / potential over supply of places across Grandhome, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don	Reduce the predicted long term excess secondary school capacity in Grandhome, Oldmachar and Bridge of Don	Instructs 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. (Recommendation NA1)	On Track (Not Yet Started)	The feasibility study is scheduled to be carried out in Winter/Spring 2023/24
		NA2: Forecast long term lack of capacity at Bucksburn Academy /	Ensure sufficient and sustainable long term secondary school	Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a	On Track (Not Yet Started)	The feasibility study is scheduled to be carried

		low pupil numbers at Dyce Academy	provision for Bucksburn and Dyce	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. (Recommendation NA2)		out in Winter/Spring 2023/24
Central Area Priorities	Victorian School buildings	CA1: Issues with suitability and capacity of Victorian School buildings	Ensure sufficient school places are available within city centre schools and improve the suitability of Victorian school buildings	Instructs 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. (Recommendation CA1)	On Track (In Progress)	A Strategic Outline Case, detailing plans for the feasibility study, was approved by the Council's Capital Board in June 2023. The Design Team has been appointed to undertake the Feasibility Study which will be carried out over Autumn/Winter 2023/24
Bucksburn ASG Priorities	Bucksburn Academy	B1: Requirement to increase capacity at Bucksburn Academy in the medium term	Ensure sufficient capacity at Bucksburn Academy in the medium term	Notes that officers have completed a feasibility study on the proposed permanent extension to Bucksburn Academy, and instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report back to the Finance and Resources Committee with an outline business case for consideration. (Recommendation B1)	On Track (In Progress)	Capital funding for this project was approved at the Full Council meeting in March 2023. Design work for the new extension is progressing, and a business case will be presented for approval in due course
	Brimmond School	B2: Additional primary school provision likely to be required for Bucksburn / Newhills	Ensure sufficient primary school places will be available to serve the new communities in Bucksburn / Newhills	Instructs 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 City Growth & Resources Committee with an	On Track (In Progress)	The outline business case for the proposed new school was approved by the Finance and Resources Committee in July, subject to statutory consultation. Consultation on the proposal to establish a new school is

				outline business case. (Recommendation B2)		scheduled to be carried out in Spring 2024
Oldmachar ASG Priorities	New Grandhome primary provision	O1: New primary school provision may be required to meet forecast demand from new Grandhome community	Ensure sufficient and sustainable primary school places will be available to serve the new Grandhome community	Notes that officers are 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. (Recommendation O1)	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers are continuing to monitor progress with the Grandhome development and will bring forward plans for new school provision as and when required.
	Greenbrae School	O2: Forecast lack of capacity at Greenbrae School	Ensure sufficient and sustainable primary school provision across the Oldmachar ASG	Instructs 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. (Recommendation O2)	Complete	A public consultation was carried out in November / December 2022 and following a subsequent Committee decision, changes to the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Glashieburn School were implemented in August 2023
	Danestone School / Glashieburn School / Middleton Park School	O3: Forecast combined over-provision of pupil places at Danestone School, Glashieburn School and Middleton Park School	Reduce predicted excess capacity in primary schools in the Oldmachar ASG	Instructs 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. (Recommendation O3)	On Track (In Progress)	The feasibility study concluded in Summer 2023 and an outline business case will be presented for consideration by the Education and Children’s Services Committee in September 2023
Bridge of Don ASG Priorities	Scotstown School /	BD1: Short term excess capacity at Scotstown School and lack of	Ensure appropriate balance of provision across Scotstown	Notes that officers will continue to monitor forecast rolls at Braehead School and Scotstown School,	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers continue to monitor pupil numbers at these schools and

	Braehead School	capacity at Braehead School	School and Braehead School	and that any required actions will be reported in future updates to the School Estate Plan. (Recommendation BD1)		will bring forward recommendations for further action as and when required
St Machar ASG Priorities	Riverbank School	S1: New school building at Tillydrone under way to replace Riverbank School, which will provide additional pupil capacity which is no longer required by Riverbank School.	Consider options to avoid potential excess capacity at the new school	Instructs 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. (Recommendation S1)	On Track (Not Yet Started)	The options appraisal is scheduled to be carried out in Winter 2023/24
	Sunnybank School	S2: Forecast lack of capacity at Sunnybank School	Ensure sufficient capacity is available at Sunnybank School for rising pupil numbers	Instructs 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. (Recommendation S2)	On Track (Not Yet Started)	The options appraisal is scheduled to be carried out in Winter 2023/24
	St Machar Academy	S3: Requirement for investment in outdoor space at St Machar Academy	Ensure there is sufficient and good quality outdoor space available at St Machar Academy	Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study to consider the options for the removal of unused modular 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. (Recommendation S3)	On Track (In Progress)	The feasibility study is currently under way and an outline business case is due to be presented for consideration by Committee in November 2023
Northfield ASG Priorities	Westpark School and Heathryburn School	N1: Forecast lack of capacity at Heathryburn School and over-provision of places at Westpark School in the short to medium term	Ensure appropriate balance of provision across Westpark School and Heathryburn School in the short to medium	Notes that officers will 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	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers continue to monitor pupil numbers at these schools and will bring forward recommendations for

			term and in the longer term to accommodate pupils generated by the planned Greenferns development	recommendations as required will be included in future updates to the School Estate Plan. (Recommendation N1)		further action as and when required
	All Northfield primary schools	N2: Forecast combined over-provision of pupil places at primary schools in Northfield	Reduce predicted excess capacity in primary schools in Northfield ASG	Instructs 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. (Recommendation N2)	On Track (In Progress)	The feasibility study concluded in Summer 2023 and an outline business case will be presented for consideration by the Education and Children’s Services Committee in September 2023
Hazlehead ASG Priorities	Hazlehead Academy / Countesswells secondary provision	HH1: Concerns about condition and suitability of Hazlehead Academy building / requirement for new secondary school provision to serve Countesswells	Improve the condition and suitability of the Hazlehead Academy building and ensure there is sufficient secondary school provision to serve Hazlehead and Countesswells	Instructs 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. (Recommendation HH1)	Delayed (In Progress)	Due to staff capacity pressures and delays to the announcement of LEIP funding, work on the outline business case did not commence as early as had been anticipated. A Service Update on this has been circulated to Committee members in September 2023. The outline business case is in development and will be presented for consideration by Committee in November 2023
	Countesswells School	HH2: Additional pupil capacity may be required in the future to accommodate pupils from the new	Ensure there is sufficient school capacity available to accommodate future pupil numbers likely to	Notes that officers will continue to monitor the situation with the housing development at Countesswells and will bring forward recommendations as	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers are continuing to monitor progress with the Countesswells development and will bring forward plans for

		Countesswells development.	be generated by the Countesswells development	appropriate regarding requirements for additional primary school capacity to serve the development, in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan (Recommendation HH2)		new school provision as and when required.
	Hazlehead School	HH3: Possible increase in pupil numbers which may result in Hazlehead School exceeding its available pupil capacity	Ensure there will be sufficient capacity at Hazlehead School to accommodate pupil numbers	Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Hazlehead School and will include any required recommendations for action in future updates to the School Estate Plan. (Recommendation HH3)	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers continue to monitor pupil numbers at the school and will bring forward recommendations for further action as and when required
	Hazlehead Academy (Gaelic Medium Education)	HH4: Following consultation in 2021 on proposals to establish a catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education provision, officers were instructed to further engage with stakeholders.	Establish an appropriate catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education provision at Hazlehead Academy.	Instructs 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. (Recommendation HH4)	Complete	A public consultation was carried out in January to March 2023 and following subsequent Committee decisions, the new GME catchment area was implemented in August 2023
Aberdeen Grammar ASG Priorities	Aberdeen Grammar School	AG1: Possible further additional capacity requirements at Aberdeen Grammar School	Ensure there will be sufficient capacity at Aberdeen Grammar School to accommodate pupil numbers	Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Aberdeen Grammar School and will include any required recommendations for action in future updates to the School Estate Plan. (Recommendation AG1)	On Track (Ongoing)	Funding has been included within the Capital Programme to assist with creating additional classroom space at the school to accommodate rising pupil numbers. This work will be taken forwards over the next two years.
	Mile End School	AG2: Pupil numbers at Mile End School are over the school's stated capacity and are likely to rise again from August 2022.	Ensure there is sufficient capacity at Mile End School to accommodate pupil numbers	Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Mile End School, and include any required recommendations in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan. (Recommendation AG2)	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers continue to monitor pupil numbers at the school and will bring forward recommendations for further action as and when required
	Gilcomstoun School (Gaelic)	AG3: Following consultation in 2021 on	Establish an appropriate catchment	Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a	Complete	A public consultation was carried out in

	Medium Education)	proposals to establish a catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education provision, officers were instructed to further engage with stakeholders.	area for Gaelic Medium Education provision at Gilcomstoun School.	further statutory consultation on the creation of a school catchment zone for Gaelic Medium Education provision at Gilcomstoun School. (Recommendation AG3)		January to March 2023 and following subsequent Committee decisions, the new GME catchment area was implemented in August 2023
Harlaw ASG Priorities	Harlaw Academy	H1: Lack of PE and dining space at Harlaw Academy	Identify space for off-site PE provision and free up space on site to provide additional dining capacity	Notes that officers are 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 will be reported in future updates to the School Estate Plan. (Recommendation H1)	Revised	Officers now consider that it would be more appropriate to include a review of the Harlaw Road facilities within the separate feasibility study to improve the suitability of facilities at Harlaw Academy (see Priority H2 below). Recommendations for PE facility improvements will be included within the findings of the overall feasibility study.
		H2: Harlaw Academy is expected to exceed its capacity, and the age and layout of the building present challenges for effective curriculum delivery	Identify costed options for future improvements to the suitability of the Harlaw Academy building and to ensure the school will have sufficient capacity to accommodate future pupil numbers	Instructs 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. (Recommendation H2)	Delayed (In Progress)	The feasibility study is under way, however, due to pressure on staffing resources, and also the complexity of this project, more time is required to complete this work. It is now anticipated that an outline business case will be presented for consideration by Committee in February 2024
	Ferryhill School	H3: Insufficient dining space and issues with building layout creates difficulties for ELC provision, flow of pupils	Ensure there is sufficient dining capacity, appropriate ELC facilities, and that the layout of the building is suitable	Instructs 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	On Track (In Progress)	The feasibility study has been carried out and an outline business case is scheduled to be presented for consideration by

		and supervision of children		facilities at Ferryhill School, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations and costs. (Recommendation H3)		Committee in November 2023
Cults ASG Priorities	Cults Academy	C1: Possible further additional capacity requirements at Cults Academy	Ensure there will be sufficient capacity at Cults Academy to accommodate pupil numbers	Notes that officers will continue to monitor pupil numbers at Cults Academy, and include any required recommendations in future annual updates to the School Estate Plan. (Recommendation C1)	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers continue to monitor pupil numbers at the school and will bring forward recommendations for further action as and when required
	Culter School	C2: Forecast over-provision of places at Culter School	Ensure sufficient and sustainable primary school provision for the Peterculter community	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 as appropriate. (Recommendation C2)	On Track (Ongoing)	Officers continue to monitor pupil numbers and use of space at the school, and will bring forward recommendations for further action as and when required
Lochside ASG Priorities	Loirston Loch	L1: New primary school places required to serve new housing at Loirston Loch	Ensure sufficient and sustainable primary school places are available to serve the new Loirston Loch development	Instructs 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. (Recommendation L1)	On Track (Not Yet Started)	The feasibility study is scheduled to be carried out in Autumn/Winter 2023/24
	Walker Road School	L2: Victorian design, layout and size of the current Walker Road School site create challenges for effective curriculum delivery; forecast over-provision	Ensure appropriate, sufficient and sustainable provision of primary school places to serve the Torry community	Instructs 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	Complete	A public consultation was carried out between December 2022 and February 2023, and subsequently the Committee approved

		of primary school places in Torry.		the Education and Children's Services Committee with the outcomes of the consultation and recommendations as appropriate. (Recommendation L2)		the proposal to relocate Walker Road School (which thereafter will be named Greyhope School) to the new school building following its completion
	Tullos Playing Fields	L3: Pavilion building no longer required	Consider options for alternative use or disposal	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. (Recommendation L3)	Complete	The pavilion building has now been declared surplus to requirement.

New Priorities and Recommendations – September 2023

Greenbrae School and Scotstown School Catchment Areas

- The catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School currently extend partially across the city boundary and into a small area of Aberdeenshire. This small section of the Greenbrae catchment zone covers an area of land with just one residential property, which is a farm property, and the area of the Scotstown catchment zone covers a small number of recently constructed residential properties within the Aberdeenshire settlement of Blackdog, which is otherwise zoned to Balmedie School.
- In May 2023, Aberdeenshire Council approved a change to its catchment area for Balmedie School, which now extends to its boundary with the city and covers the area of land which is currently also included within the Greenbrae and Scotstown catchment areas. This means there is effectively a 'dual zone' situation, and any children living within this area of Aberdeenshire would have an entitlement to attend Balmedie School as well as either Greenbrae School or Scotstown School. To remove any ambiguity and provide clarity on the zoning arrangements for this area, it is proposed that a public consultation is undertaken to alter the school catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, so that they no longer extend beyond the city boundary, removing the dual zone issue and confirming that the area of Aberdeenshire in question is zoned only to Balmedie School.
- It is therefore recommended that the following two priorities are added to the School Estate Action Plan:

Area / ASG / School		Issue	Objective	Proposed Action	Resource Requirement	Priority
		<i>Where are we now?</i>	<i>Where do we want to be?</i>	<i>How do we get there?</i> It is recommended that the Committee:	<i>What additional resource is needed to carry out the proposed action?</i>	<i>How soon does the Objective need to be fully realised?</i>
Oldmachar ASG Priorities	Greenbrae School	O4: Dual zone issue with Balmedie School in Aberdeenshire, which creates ambiguity	Remove dual zone issue with Balmedie School	Instructs the Chief Officer (Corporate Landlord) to carry out a public consultation on a proposal to alter the school catchment area for Greenbrae School, so that it aligns with the city boundary. (Recommendation O4)	No additional resource required	Short Term (1-2 yrs)
Bridge of Don ASG Priorities	Scotstown School	BD2: Dual zone issue with Balmedie School in Aberdeenshire, which creates ambiguity	Remove dual zone issue with Balmedie School	Instructs the Chief Officer (Corporate Landlord) to carry out a public consultation on a proposal to alter the school catchment area for Scotstown School, so that it aligns with the city boundary. (Recommendation BD2)	No additional resource required	Short Term (1-2 yrs)

3. Updated Implementation Plan

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	Current Status	Updated Indicative Timescale
<u>Projects Commencing Autumn 2022</u>		
HH1 - Hazlehead / Countesswells Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Delayed (In Progress)	Autumn 22 - Summer 23
<i>Develop and submit LEIP funding application</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Autumn 2022
<i>Deadline for LEIP application</i>	<i>Complete</i>	31/10/2022
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Autumn/Winter 22/23
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	Spring 23 - -Autumn 23
<i>F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i>		November 2023
<i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal</i>		November 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
A5 - Review signage in all schools	Delayed (In Progress)	
<i>Research / project scoping</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Summer 23
<i>Survey schools</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	Autumn 23
<i>Council Budget Meeting (secure budget)</i>		n/a
<i>Implement Changes</i>		Winter 23/24

B2 - Bucksburn / Newhills additional primary provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	On Track (In Progress)	Autumn 22 - Summer 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Autumn 22
<i>Feasibility Study & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Winter 22/23
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Winter/Spring 23
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	<i>Complete</i>	17/05/2023
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	<i>Complete</i>	04/07/2023
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>		05/02/24 – 22/03/24
<i>ECS Committee Meeting – consider consultation feedback & confirm decision on implementing proposals</i>		July 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
O2 - Greenbrae School rezoning - Consultation	Complete	Autumn 22 - Spring 23
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Autumn/Winter 22
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	<i>Complete</i>	21/03/2023
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	<i>Complete</i>	01/08/23
B1 - Bucksburn Academy Extension - Outline Business Case (OBC)	On Track (In Progress)	Autumn 22 - Spring 23
<i>Update and finalise OBC</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Autumn/Winter 22
<i>Capital Funding Allocated at Council Budget Meeting</i>	<i>Complete</i>	March 23
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of Full Business Case		TBC
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of Full Business Case		TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		TBC
<u>Projects Commencing Winter 2022/23</u>		

L2 - Walker Road School Relocation - Consultation	Complete	Winter 22/23 - Spring 23
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Winter 22/23
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	<i>Complete</i>	21/03/2023
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		<i>TBC</i>
N2 - Northfield ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity - Outline Business Case (OBC)	On Track (In Progress)	Winter 22/23 - Autumn 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Winter 22/23
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Spring/Summer 23
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Spring/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>		<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>
O3 - Oldmachar ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity - Outline Business Case (OBC)	On Track (In Progress)	Winter 22/23 - Autumn 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Winter 22/23
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	<i>Complete</i>	Spring/Summer 23
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>Complete</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>		<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>
HH4 / AG3 - Gaelic Medium Education catchment areas - consultation	Complete	Winter 22/23 - Summer 23

<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Winter/Spring 22/23</i>
<i>ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>23/05/2023</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>01/08/23</i>
CA1 - Victorian School Building Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	On Track (In Progress)	Winter 22/23 - Spring 24
<i>Planning & Preparation / Analysis & Research</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Winter/Spring 22/23</i>
<i>Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessments</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Summer/Autumn/Winter 23/24</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>		<i>Winter/Spring 24</i>
<i>F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)</i>		<i>May 2024</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>
Projects Commencing Spring 2023		
H2 - Harlaw Academy Condition & Suitability Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Delayed (In Progress)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Spring 23</i>
<i>Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Summer/Autumn 23</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>		<i>Autumn/Winter 23/24</i>
<i>F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i>		<i>February 2024</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>
S3 - St Machar Academy Outdoor Space Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	On Track (In Progress)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Spring 23</i>
<i>Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Summer 23</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>		<i>Summer/Autumn 23</i>
<i>F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC</i>		<i>22/11/2023</i>
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>		<i>TBC</i>

<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>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Spring 23</i>
<i>Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Spring/Summer 23</i>
<i>Develop OBC</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Summer/Autumn 23</i>
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
<u>Projects Commencing Summer 2023</u>		
RC1 - Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility - Outline Business Case (OBC)	On Track (Not Yet Started)	Summer 23 - Summer 24
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>		<i>Summer/Autumn 23</i>
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & 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 (date TBC)		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
L1 - Loirston Loch Additional Primary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	On Track (Not Yet Started)	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
<u>Projects Commencing Winter 2023/24</u>		
S2 - Sunnybank School Relocation of Additional Services - Options Appraisal	On Track (Not Yet Started)	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 2024
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal (date TBC)		June 2024
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		TBC
NA1 - Grandhome / Oldmachar / Bridge of Don Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	On Track (Not Yet Started)	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)	On Track (Not Yet Started)	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>
<i>F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC (date TBC)</i>		<i>September 2024</i>
<i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal (date TBC)</i>		<i>September 2024</i>
<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>
S1 - Riverbank School Excess Capacity - Options Appraisal	On Track (Not Yet Started)	Winter 23/24 - Spring 24
<i>Options appraisal</i>		<i>Winter 23/24</i>
<i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of recommendations (date TBC)</i>		<i>March 2024</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		
<u>Newly Identified Projects (subject to Committee approval)</u>		
O4 / BD2 – Changes to catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School	Pending Approval	Winter 23/24 - Spring 24
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>		<i>Spring 2024</i>
<i>ECS Committee Meeting - approval of recommendations (date TBC)</i>		<i>May 2024</i>
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>		

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	St Peter's RC School – Long Term Education Provision
REPORT NUMBER	RES/23/283
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Maria Thies
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work to date regarding the refurbishment of the Riverbank school building, and to seek instruction from members to conduct a feasibility study to assess the potential of refurbishing Old Aberdeen House, as an alternative option for providing improved facilities for St. Peter's RC school.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the identified alternative option and instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a feasibility study to assess the feasibility of refurbishing and repurposing Old Aberdeen House to provide a two stream building for St. Peter's School;
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to commence engagement with the RC diocese and the school community regarding this new additional option; and
- 2.3 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report back to the Committee in November with an updated Outline Business Case for the relocation of St Peters RC Primary, to include the outcome of this feasibility study as an additional option, and the associated stakeholder feedback.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Background

- 3.1.1 St Peter's RC Primary School provides denominational primary education for the north area of Aberdeen and parts of Aberdeenshire and is the only primary school building within the estate which has a condition rating of 'C – Poor'. The school occupies a site within Old Aberdeen and due to limited

space within the main building, some of the classrooms are located on the first floor of the separate Old Aberdeen House, which shares the site with the school (See appendix A).

- 3.1.2 To address issues with the condition of the building and its suitability for learning and teaching, and following a public consultation on the matter, the former Education Operational Delivery Committee agreed in September 2019 to “relocate St Peter’s RC School to the existing Riverbank School building, after the new replacement Riverbank School has opened... subject to the condition of the Riverbank building first being improved to a category A status”.
- 3.1.3 A capital budget allocation was approved by Council in March 2022 to support the extensive refurbishment of the Riverbank School site prior to St Peter’s School relocating to it, in order to bring the building to an A standard for condition and suitability.
- 3.1.4 Ongoing feasibility work has been carried out, to explore the options for developing the existing Riverbank School building into a 21st century learning environment for St Peter’s, which also contributes to the Council’s net zero carbon ambitions. The project provides an opportunity to explore how an existing building can be refurbished and improved to meet the ambitious energy targets set out within the Learning Estates Investment Programme (LEIP) criteria, whilst also aligning with the Scottish Government’s Investment Hierarchy which prioritises maintaining and enhancing existing assets over new build options where possible. Appendix B provides an overview of design plan proposals developed in line with LEIP criteria.
- 3.1.5 The updated School Estate Plan was approved at the former Education Operational Delivery Committee on 8 September 2022, when Members instructed 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”. [Decisions 08th-Sep-2022 10.00 Education Operational Delivery Committee.pdf](#)
- 3.1.6 A successful bid would provide up to 50% funding from Scottish Government received through annual revenue payments during the first 25 years following successful completion, subject to ongoing compliance with LEIP funding criteria for the first 25 years of the completed building operations. To date there has been no announcement of Phase 3 LEIP funding awards.
- 3.1.7 The timescale since the original committee decision in 2019 coupled with the recent relocation of the Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratories from Old Aberdeen House has highlighted an opportunity to test and review the original project drivers for an alternative option, whilst also allowing stakeholders to re-engage with ACC regarding their current needs and experiences for optimum learning environments.

- 3.1.8 Early discussions with the project team indicate the potential to deliver a two stream school using the Old Aberdeen House with a new build extension. The Old Aberdeen House is situated adjacent to the existing school building and would therefore allow the school to remain on its current site. Appendix C provides a conceptual layout for information, however further feasibility work is required to develop and review this option in more detail.
- 3.1.9 The Archives Service is currently located at Old Aberdeen House and occupies space on both the ground and first floor of the building. If the Old Aberdeen House option is taken forward, the project scope will need to include the relocation of this service to a new premises. Early site capacity work has also determined that no early years provision could be delivered and incorporated as part of the Old Aberdeen option.
- 3.1.10 The proposed feasibility study will provide further details on cost, delivery programme, constraints, risks and benefits/disbenefits of this option.

3.2. Stakeholder Engagement

- 3.2.1 In line with the approved School Estate Plan, ACC has committed that “All stakeholders within a community, including the learners themselves, will be given the opportunity to share their views and contribute to the decision making process on future plans for the estate”. Taking this collaborative approach should lead to better outcomes for all.
- 3.2.2 All stakeholders within the St Peter’s community including the learners themselves, will be given the opportunity to share their views, during the feasibility study process. It is recognised that a lot has changed in our world since 2019 and this new option provides an opportunity to re-engage with stakeholders so that we can deliver optimum learning environments to improve educational experiences and outcomes. Methods of engagement with our stakeholders will be proportionate and appropriate to the timescales in which priorities need to be addressed.
- 3.2.3 Building on the original engagement work back in 2017 it is proposed to continue to work with the established St. Peter’s stakeholder group during this feasibility stage. The group includes the St. Peter’s Head Teacher, representatives from the St. Peter’s parent council, and The Roman Catholic (RC) Diocese. This allows officers to continue to work collaboratively with St. Peter’s Community and the RC Diocese. This group has previously proved successful in ensuring a two-way communication process. It is also proposed to use our online consultation hub to update and seek feedback from the St. Peter’s school community. The feedback received will be reported back as part of the OBC to November’s committee meeting.

3.3 Delivery Programme

- 3.3.1 Dependencies regarding the delivery of the replacement Riverbank School have been aligned to the project delivery programme, a further programme update will be provided within the outline business case in November detailing delivery timescales for each option.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Costs arising from the recommendations of this report will be met from the existing project budget within the Capital programme. Updated option costings will be detailed within the proposed outline business case.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report, in terms of undertaking a feasibility study.

5.2 The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) requires education authorities to follow statutory consultation processes in regard to “relevant proposals” as outlined in schedule 1 to the 2010 Act (which includes relocation (in whole or part) of a school). It is not considered that refurbishing and repurposing Old Aberdeen House to provide a building for St. Peter’s School would amount to a “relevant proposal” under the 2010 Act as the building occupies the same site and it is not being proposed that the St Peter’s address and management will change.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations within this report. The recommended design option will feature reduced operational energy and whole life carbon emissions which will contribute to ACC’s Net Zero target for 2035.

6.2 The refurbished school design will feature zero emissions heating/cooling and will maximise the opportunities in good passive design principals, primarily targeted around minimising heating demand and heat losses through thermal performance characteristics, efficient window fenestration detailing and reducing losses associated with thermal bridging and air infiltration rates.

6.3 Embodied carbon targets will feature in the design brief and shall be referenced against the performance targets within Scottish Futures Trust’s LEIP criteria.

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	Failure to plan effectively for St Peter’s leading to	The School Estate Plan sets out priorities for the	L	Yes

	the Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate and efficient provision	school estate and proposals for continually monitoring and updating plans to ensure adequate and efficient provision is maintained		
Operational	The new option doesn't meet the aspirations of the Community/ stakeholders	An inclusive communications plan will form part of this next stage. Both internal and external stakeholder engagement will take place and be reported as part of the OBC	L	Yes
Financial				
Reputational	Risk of damage to Council reputation if the Old Aberdeen House option not assessed for further consideration and feasibility	Implementing the recommendations in this report will ensure that both options can be tested against the project objective of providing a two stream school for St. Peters	L	Yes
Environment / Climate				

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p><i>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:-</i></p> <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 to assess the feasibility of using the existing Old Aberdeen House to provide a two stream school for St Peter's.</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>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</p>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	<p>The proposals in this report support the delivery of Stretch Outcome 3 – 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026. The investment in our estate is interlinked with the investment in our workforce and will contribute to the diversification of the local economy</p>
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Prosperous People: The project will support Stretch Outcome 8 in the LOIP - <i>Child friendly city where all decisions which impact children and young people will be informed by them by 2026</i>. The feasibility study will seek feedback from pupils and be reported within the outline business case.</p>
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	<p>Prosperous Place: The project will support Stretch Outcome 14 - Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as a main mode of travel by 2026.</p> <p>Sustainable routes to school, safety, fitness and the well being of our communities will be assessed as part of the outline business case</p> <p>This project will also support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 13 – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of changing climate. The project will be exemplar in terms of net zero and green credentials.</p>
Regional and City Strategies	<p>This project forms part of the School Estate Plan which will support the delivery of the Council's Property and Estates Strategy and the Net Zero Routemap for Aberdeen City.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	A Stage 1 Assessment has been completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	No other assessments required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Education Operational Delivery Committee, 8 September 2022:

[Decisions 08th-Sep-2022 10.00 Education Operational Delivery Committee.pdf](#)

10.2 Staff Governance Committee, 26 June 2023

[Decisions 26th-Jun-2023 10.00 Staff Governance Committee.pdf \(acc.gov.uk\)](#)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A – St Peter’s Site Location
Appendix B – Riverbank Design Work
Appendix C – Old Aberdeen House Concept Design

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Maria Thies
Title	Estates Programme Manager
Email Address	Mthies@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	07793365907

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix A – St. Peter's Site Location



This page is intentionally left blank

Proposed Layout

Optimum Refurbishment (Band A)

The outline design has been developed to reflect the previous engagement undertaken with St Peter's business case, while considering the education design principles in section 3, page 33. A number of interventions are proposed in order to increase both the condition and the suitability from rating B to A.

These include the addition of an elevator to connect the ground floor, first floor and mid level circulation. The proposal also provides an alternative level access which connects the circulation loop without any change of level.

Overall, there are three proposed extensions that increase the overall internal area. These improve the form factor which in turn increases the energy performance of the building. The additional areas also provide opportunity to create more welcoming and flexible learning spaces.

Classrooms are rearranged around newly formed breakout spaces with retractable partitions and new rooflights. This encourages interaction not only between classes, but also between the various age groups within the school.

Toilet and changing facility provision will be addressed through the detail design.

Essential Work

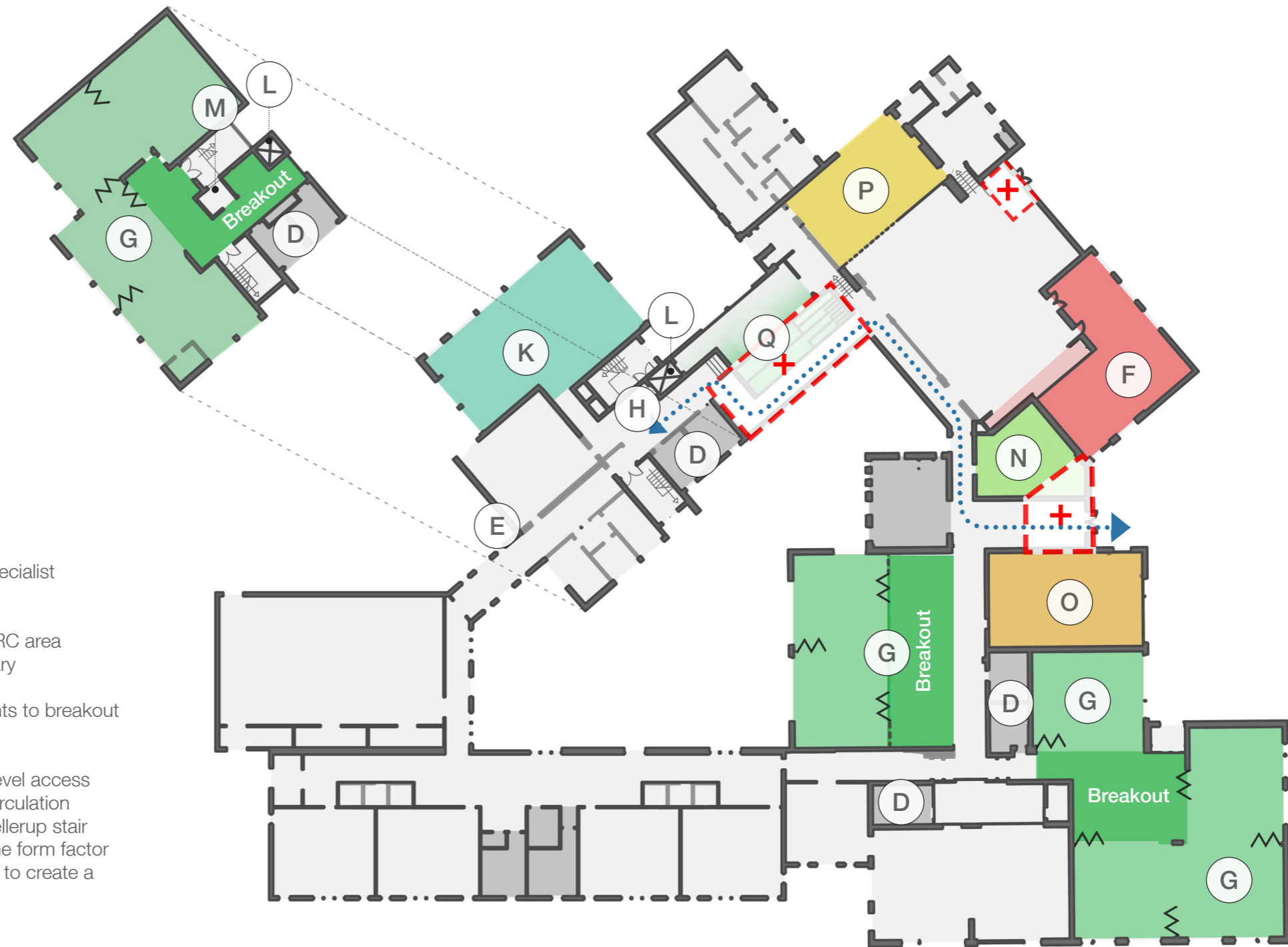
- (A) Asbestos removal
- (B) Drainage work
- (C) Replacement of leaking and pre 2021 windows
- (D) Refurbishment to toilets
- (E) New entrance door

Highly Desirable

- (F) Increasing kitchen's size and adding a new servery
- (G) Optimising classroom sizes
New teaching walls
Adding breakout space
- (H) Refurbished cloak area
- (I) Upgrade to finishes

Added Value

- (E) New entrance
- (G) Creating open classrooms by adding sliding walls
- (K) Partitions removed to create a visiting services hub
- (L) Adding a lift
- (M) Adding a stair lobby
- (N) Creating new staff space
Improving the form factor by creating a new lobby (additional area)
- (O) Adding a specialist classroom
- (P) Refurbish LRC area
Door to library
- (G) New rooflights to breakout areas
- (Q) Creating a level access
Improving circulation
Adding a Hellerup stair
Improving the form factor
Adding area to create a link corridor



Landscape Strategy

Proposed Landscape and Parking

The proposed landscape strategy reflects on the current problems with the external facilities provision at Riverbank School and aims to provide a newer and more suitable outdoor environment for the pupils.

Alterations to the car parking layout have been introduced to allow for a new bus and car drop off / pick up area. Further, the parking has been optimised and extended, accommodating for a total of 35 parking bays.

Access to the main entrance has been resurfaced and made accessible. A new bicycle storage has been provided in the proximity to encourage active travel to the school.

The design further proposes to resurface the outdoor play areas, to provide new play equipment and to include a new 3G pitch.

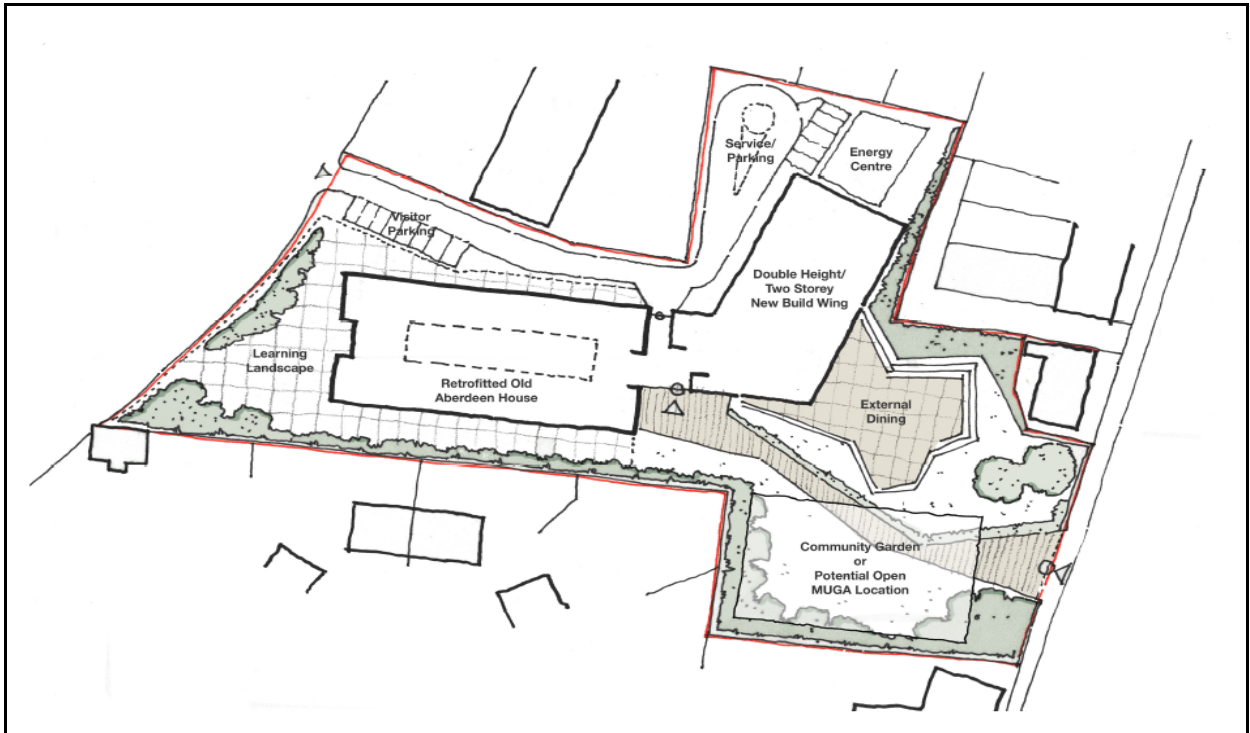
The strategy aims to achieve condition and suitability rating A, A.



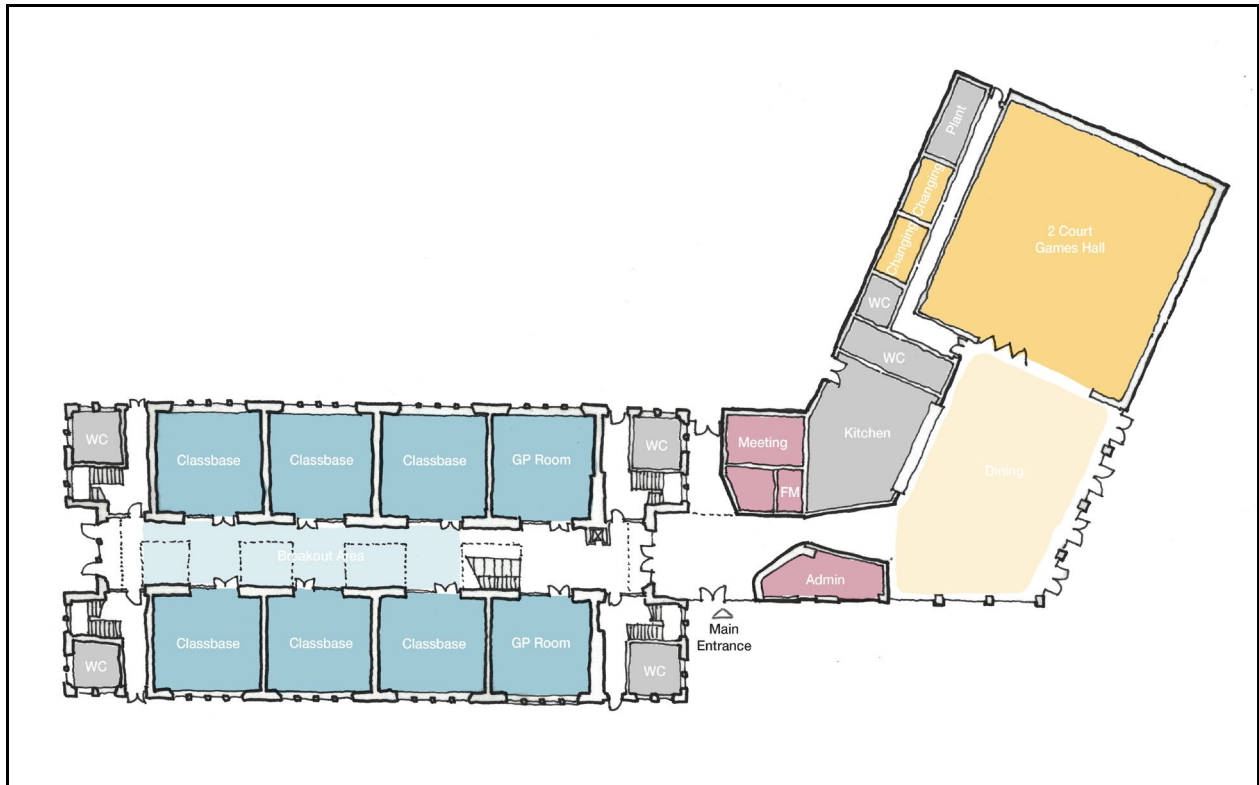
Key to external design upgrades

- (A) Proposed parking
New drop off / pick up area
On site bus drop off / pick up
Optimised parking layout
New bicycle storage
Improved access
- (B) New landscaped entrance
- (C) New 60x40 3G pitch
Improved access
- (D) Existing courtyard
Improved layout
Added new playing surface
- (E) Improved early learners' garden
Resurfacing of playing areas

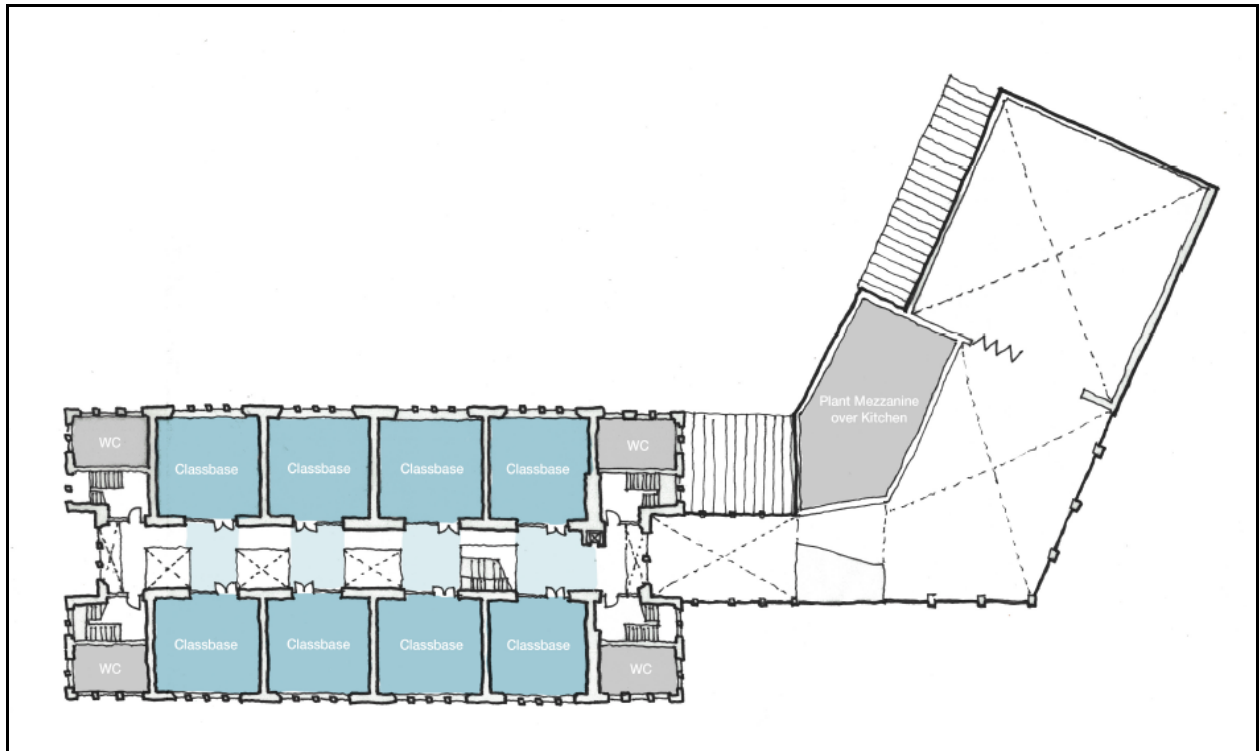
Proposed Site Layout



Proposed Ground Floor Layout



Proposed Second Floor Layout



Exempt information as described in paragraph(s) 8 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2021-22, and an Aberdeen comparison.
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/260
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.3 and 1.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To share the Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2021-22 report and provide a commentary on the performance of Aberdeen City Council compared with the national position.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 Note that care experienced children and those children who need protection in Aberdeen City, are, predominantly, receiving care and protection in line with national averages; and
- 2.2 Note that where performance differs from national averages, there are improvement plans in place.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Aberdeen City stands up positively in most respects with the national picture reported in the [National Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland: 2021 to 2022 report \("the report"\)](#). This is an annual retrospective report reporting on data relating to Child Protection activity and activity in relation to Looked After Children.
- 3.2 The report contains extensive statistical information using snapshot data as at 31 July 2022 in line with Scottish Government reporting, from which we have identified the following areas of interest:

Where Aberdeen City is in-line with or better than the national average:

- Reducing numbers of looked after children and young people
- Proportion of looked after children in secure care
- Majority of looked after children are placed in the community

Where Aberdeen City differs from the national average:

- Number of children on the child protection register
- Proportion of children looked after at home or with kin
- Percentage of children placed in foster care

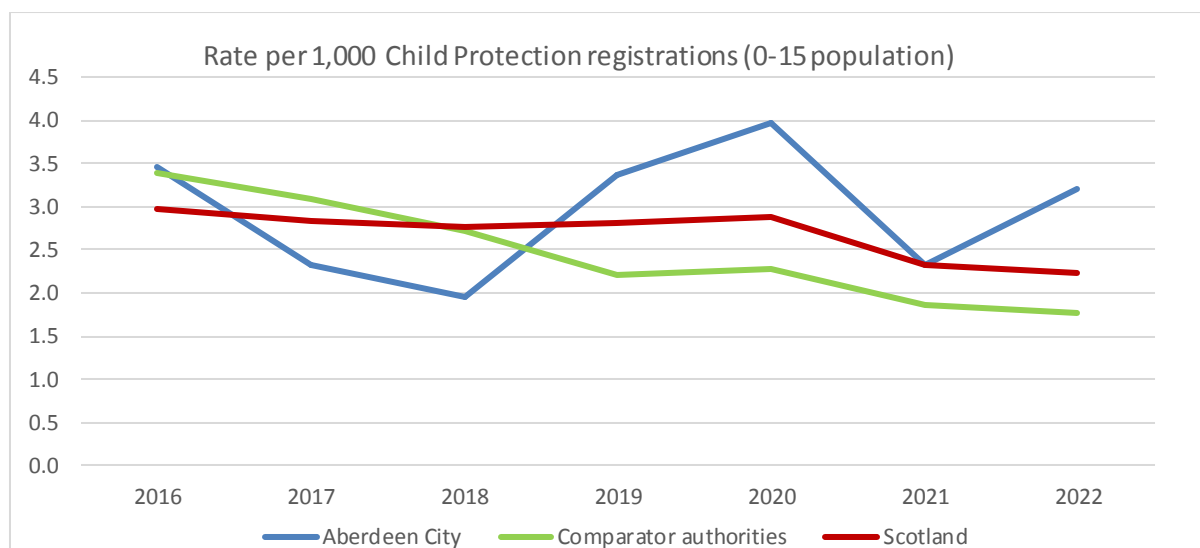
3.3 The Scottish Government are proposing to extend the breadth of data included in the annual report. Going forward this will include data in relation to Brothers & Sisters as well as children considered via Care & Risk Management processes.

3.4 CHILD PROTECTION

3.4.1 It is reported (page 6 of [the report](#)) that across Scotland, the number of children on the Child Protection Register has decreased by 4.2% over the last year. Looking at published Local Authority Child Protection Statistics [benchmarking tool](#), in comparator authorities it is a decrease of 5.6%. The number of children on the Child Protection Register (a snapshot on 31 July 2022) in Aberdeen City in 2022 was 115, an increase from 83 in 2021 which constitutes a rise of 38.6%. If we look at the averages across 2021 and 2022 Aberdeen City has an average number of children on the register of 93 in 2021 and 105 in 2022. Although still a rise, it is just under 13%.

3.4.2 The rate (per 1,000 pop 0-15) of children on the Child Protection Register in Aberdeen City is 3.2 which is an increase on the 2.3 rate from the previous year. This is also higher than the Comparator Authorities (1.8) and Scotland average rate of 2.2 in 2022. See Figure 1.

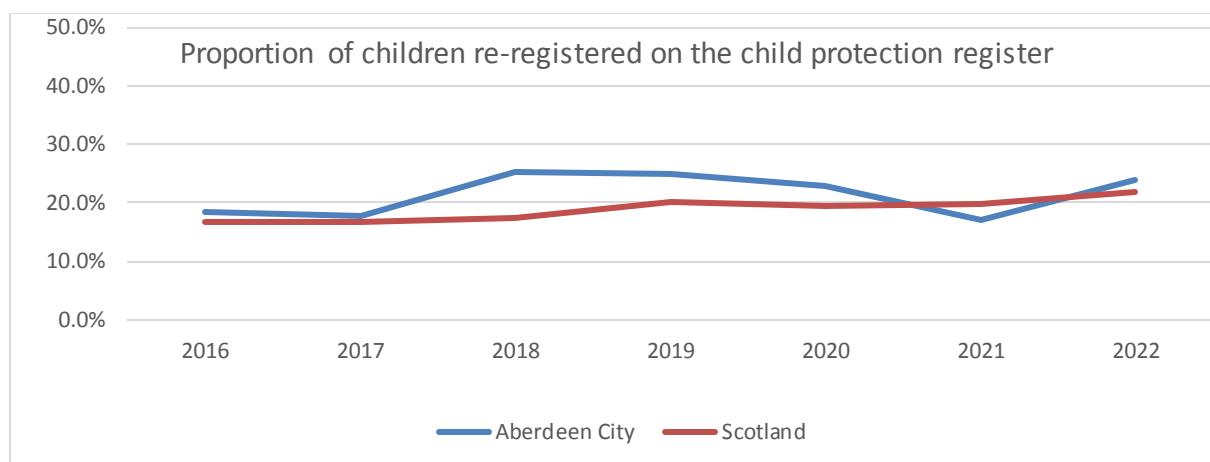
Figure 1



3.4.3 The number of re-registrations has increased in 2022 but remains closely aligned to the national position. In July 2022 28 children on the Aberdeen City register had a previous registration period. This compared with 14 in July 2021. Comparing with National data reported on page 17 of the report, the proportion of children on the CPR (Child Protection Register) who had been registered previously (for any reason) on 31 July 2022 was 24%. This remains in broad alignment with the national figure of 22% (see Figure 2).

3.4.4 Predominant factors that result in children’s names being placed on the Child Protection Register relate to parental mental health/addiction needs. Recognising that the pathway to recovery will often include episodes of relapse it is not surprising the re-registration of children’s names feature on the CPR. In 2018/19 the Child Protection Committee (CPC) undertook an audit of re-registration cases which found a lack of support post registration was not a contributing factor. The CPC continues to track this data, ensuring a timely response if appropriate.

Figure 2



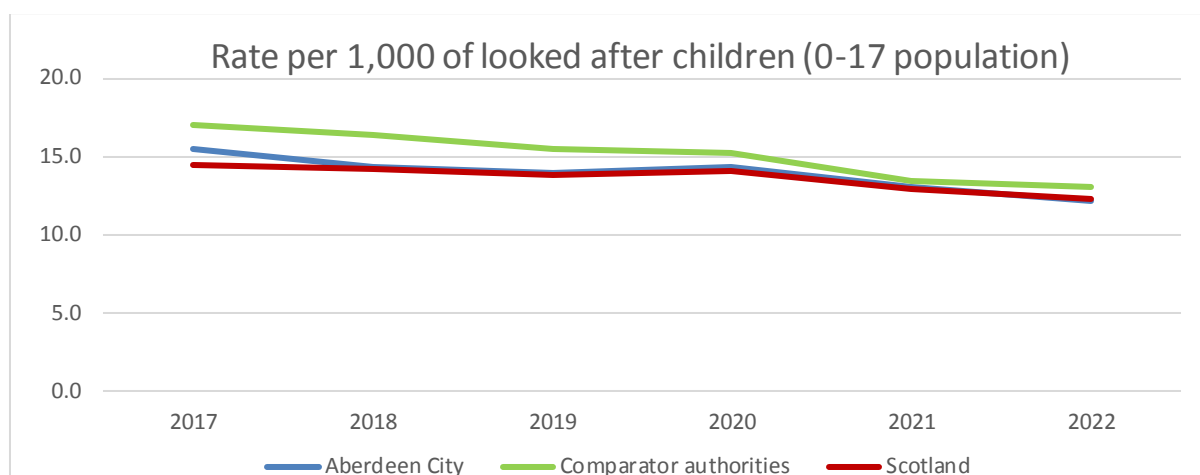
3.4.5 The decision to place a child’s name on the Child Protection Register will always be based on individual circumstances and the professional judgement of the multi-agency team around the family. At its meeting in June 2023, the Child Protection Committee, acknowledged the slight increase in the numbers on the Child Protection Register and agreed there was value to exploring our collective thresholds in relation to registration. This will be taken forward by the Child Protection Committee later in the year.

3.5 Looked after Children

3.5.1 On page 3 of the report, it is reported that nationally there has been an 5% decrease in the number of Looked After Children in Scotland from 2021, to 2022. The decrease is similar for Aberdeen City at 5.7% during that same period (516 in 2021 July snapshot to 487 in July 2022).

3.5.2 The number of Looked After Children in Scotland has reduced by around 3,000 in a ten year period. This reduction is also true of Aberdeen City which averaged around 738 Looked After Children in 2011/12 and this decreased to averaging 523 by 2021/22. Figure 3 illustrates that the rate per 1,000 population (0-17 years) is steadily reducing nationally (to 12.3), in comparator authorities (to 13) and locally (to 12.1).

Figure 3



3.5.3 The 2020 [Independent Care Review report -The Promise](#) reemphasised that legal measures to secure children’s care should only be utilised where there is no alternative. This aspiration was echoed in the [2023 Children’s Hearing System Review report](#). It is consequently anticipated that the numbers of Looked After Children will continue to reduce in the coming years. This reduction does not reflect a reduction in demand but rather a need for all agencies to think differently about how they support children, young people and families without the need for statutory intervention.

3.5.4 The national report also identifies the proportion of children remaining in the community.

“In 2022, the majority of Looked After Children (88%) were placed in the community. This included 34% of children and young people placed with Kinship Carers, 33% placed with Foster Carers and 21% were looked after at home.

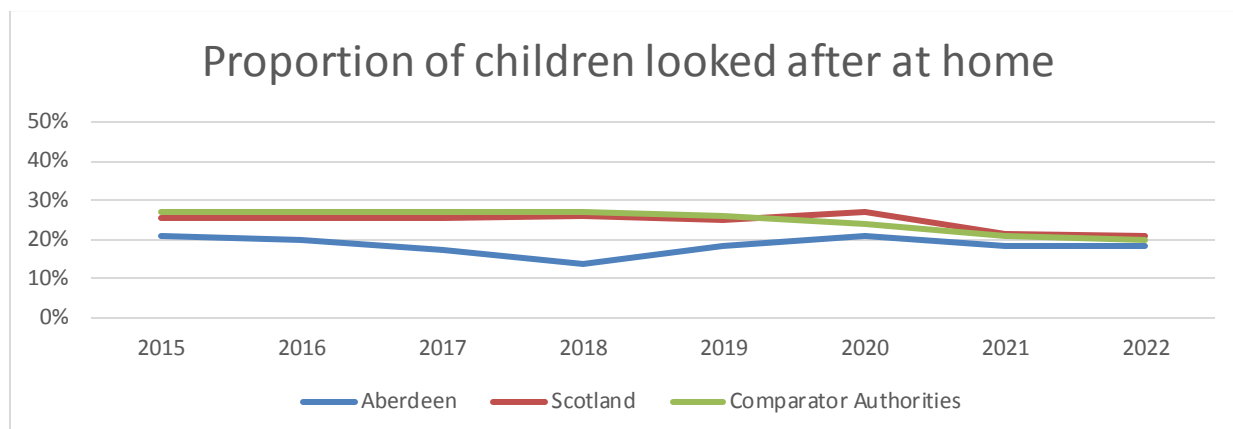
A smaller proportion of Looked After Children (10%) were placed in residential accommodation, including 5% placed in a local authority home.”

3.5.5 In Aberdeen City, looking at the Local Authority Looked After Children Statistics [benchmarking tool](#), the proportion of all Looked After Children placed in the community in 2022 at the snapshot time was 84%, this included 21% in kinship care, 45% in foster care and 18% looked after at home.

A balance of 12% were in residential settings within and external to ACC.

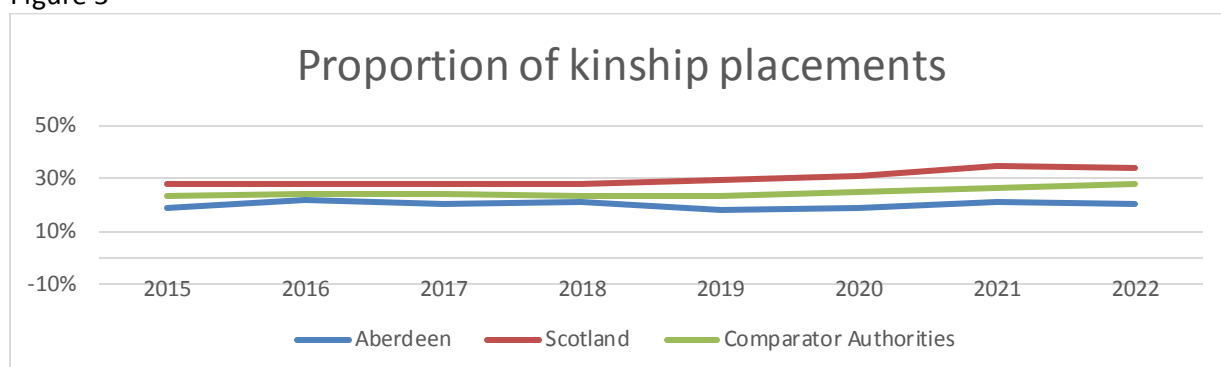
3.5.6 Aligned to the national trend, locally there has been a decrease in the proportion of Looked After Children living at home. However, as can be seen in Figure 4, there was a fairly significant gap in 2018 which has narrowed over the past two years at 18% compared with 21% nationally and 20% in comparator authorities.

Figure 4



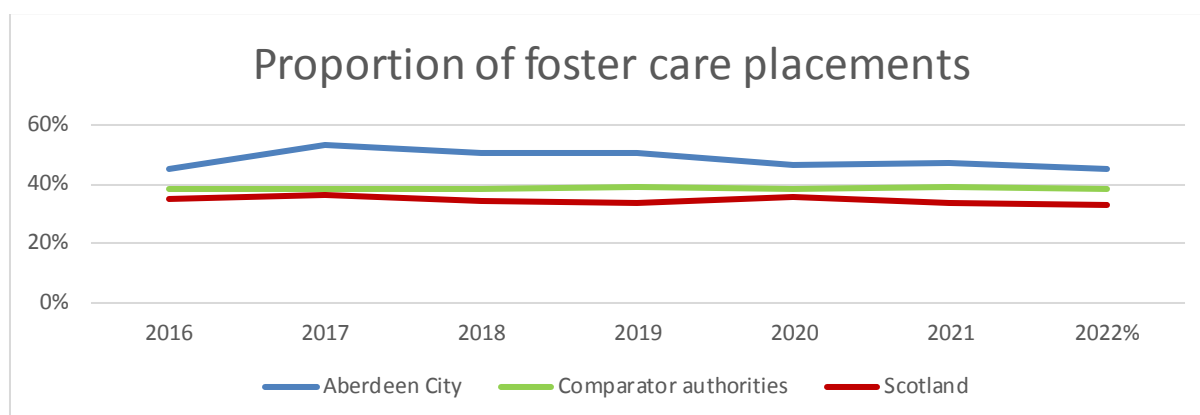
3.5.7 The proportion of Kinship placements has increased over the past few years nationally, the proportion of children looked after by friends or relatives has also risen slightly across Aberdeen City. It has increased by 2% from 19% in 2020 to 21% in 2021 and 2022 as seen on Figure 5. This was in line with the target set in the LOIP (Local Outcome Improvement Plan) for “43% of looked after children should be at home or with family and friends by reporting of 2023 data”.

Figure 5



3.5.8 Comparing Aberdeen City with comparator authorities and national data for children placed in foster care ([using CLAS data](#)) it can be seen in Figure 6 that there is a higher proportion of fostering placements used by Aberdeen City compared with comparator authorities and national data. The trend is decreasing over time for the City.

Figure 6

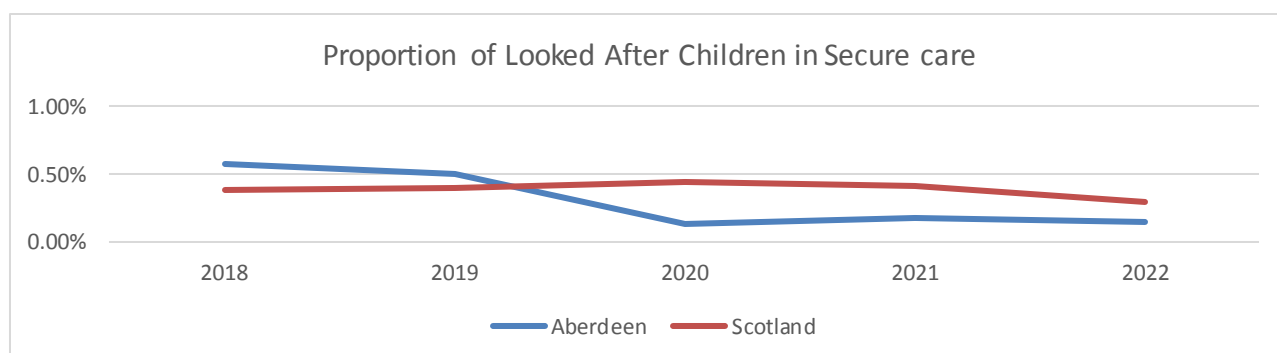


3.5.9 Resetting our 'balance of care' is a longer term aim, set out in Aberdeen City's refreshed Children's Services Plan 2023 – 26 and Aberdeen City's Corporate Parenting Plan 2023 – 26 both of which were presented to committee earlier in 2023.

3.5.10 Addressing the balance of care is a challenge we share with many local and comparative local authority partnerships. Strategic plans seek to address this. We are committed to supporting children and young people to remain within their families and communities where it is safe to do so and returning Looked After Children and young people to placements in the City where such is in their best interests. In line with The Promise, we are endeavouring to keep brothers and sisters together. Where we cannot, we ensure that we review this decision and that children are connected to the people who are important to them.

3.5.11 The number of children in secure care is very low and is less than 1% of the Looked after population and has been for 10 years. Looking at averages across calendar years for Aberdeen City is below the average national percentage reported in the [publication tables](#) for the past three years. See Figure 7. The Care Inspectorate are undertaking a national inspection of Secure Care. This inspection is due to be reported on in September 2023 and its findings shared with members later in the year.

Figure 7



4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, the costs associated with care for children out with their family are significant. Reducing the proportion of children being looked after in out of authority foster and residential placements will be positively significant.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications 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 improvements required to support more children to be looked after at home or kinship as part of the requirements of Plan 21-24. These 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 Child Protection Committee, Children's Services Board and Community Planning Management Group have oversight of the delivery of the relevant aspects of 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 related risks.	Services across all multi-agency partners are aware of legislative requirements and ensure compliance	L	Yes
Operational	Care experienced children and young people are a vulnerable cohort whose needs require to be recognised and met. Competing resource demands may have an impact	These are duties which have been incorporated across existing structures and will be consolidated in practice	L	Yes
Financial	That the number of children having to be looked after away from home continues to remain high leading to poorer outcomes and higher resource costs.	Plan 21-24 and various strategic plans are in place to address these issues	L	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			
------------------------------	--------------------------------	--	--	--

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 23-24</u>	
	Impact of Report
	The information in this report has no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.
	WorkinginPartnershipPolicyStatement.pdf (aberdeencity.gov.uk)
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>The report seeks to provide an update on how ACC compares with National 'performance' in Child Protection and Care Experienced children. This links with Corporate Parenting activities, including the following improvement projects within the LOIP:</p> <p>Increase to 43% by 2023 the proportion of children and young people who are supported to live in kinship care or are looked after at home by 2023</p> <p>For the Child Protection programme, in particular stretch outcomes 4, 5, and 6 with the following key drivers:</p> <p>4.1 Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need</p> <p>4.2 Keeping Children Safe</p> <p>5.2 Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach</p> <p>6.2 Supporting attainment of balance of care where children are able to remain more often at home and or with kin.</p>

9 IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	It is confirmed by Chief Officer Graeme Simpson that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required

Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 [Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2021-22](#)

10.2 [Children's Services Plan 2023-26](#)

10.3 [Aberdeen City Corporate Parenting Plan 2023-26](#)



CP Programme
2021-24.pdf

10.4 Child Protection Programme 2021-24

11 APPENDICES - NONE

12 REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Graeme Simpson
Title	Chief Officer/CSWO
Email Address	GSimpson@Aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 523496

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	12 September 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Bairns Hoose
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/23/289
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise and share with members Aberdeen City's Children's Services partnership Bairns Hoose Pathfinder application and the associated planning.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note Aberdeen City's Pathfinder Application, Appendix 1; and
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Officer Children & Family Services/CSWO to provide a Service update in early 2024 on the outcome of the Pathfinder application and progress to develop Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose.

3.1 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Scottish Government's vision for a Bairns' Hoose (Barnahus) in Scotland is that by 2026: *"All children in Scotland who have been victims or witnesses to abuse or violence, as well as children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused significant harm or abuse will have access to trauma-informed recovery, support and justice."*
- 3.2 A Bairns Hoose is based on the concept of 'four rooms'. It brings together the four elements of justice, health, social work and recovery support into a single setting to deliver integrated support to best meet the needs of children who are victims of abuse or have witnessed violence as well as children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused significant harm to others.
- 3.3 In Autumn 2022 Aberdeen City's Public Protection Chief Officers Group unanimously committed to delivering an Aberdeen City Bairns Hoose on a collaborative basis. To drive forward a multi-agency Bairns Hoose Delivery

Group was established in early 2023, bringing together key members of the Child Protection Committee (CPC) along with other relevant stakeholders. The Group has responsibility for:

- Planning, implementation, and delivery of a Bairns Hoose to provide trauma-informed recovery, support and justice.
- Ensure that delivery of trauma recovery support aligns to the wider Family Support Model.
- Ensure as a partnership a trauma recovery lens is central to the delivery of IRD's (Interagency Referral Discussions) and SCIM (Scottish Child Interview Model) interviews.
- Develop the capacity of a Bairns Hoose to deliver a trauma-informed remote Court facility for children and young people.
- Engage with partnerships across the North East of Scotland to explore opportunities for co-delivery and shared learning to improve outcomes for children and young people.

- 3.4 The strategic group with primary oversight for the development of our Bairns Hoose is the CPC. There is an important interconnection with the Children's Services Board and the development of our broader preventative approach to Whole Family Support in the city. The whole family support provided by the Bairns Hoose will form part of our continuum of support and cannot exist within a silo of its own making.
- 3.5 Aberdeen City Council has identified the unused half of the Links Hub, Early Learning Centre on Regent Walk as an ideal location to serve as our Bairns Hoose. It will require significant re-development and Council has already identified £1m from its capital programme to support the redesign. Multi-agency partners unanimously agree this option has the potential to support the delivery of a high quality trauma informed service to children, young people and their families. A strategic business case is being finalised and the re-design of the space is being informed by children and families as well as relevant partners.
- 3.6 Central to delivery of a Bairns Hoose is the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM). SCIM is a new rights and trauma informed approach to gathering best evidence from children and young people who have been victims of abuse/harm or witness to violence. The SCIM model went live in Aberdeen City in November 2022. The National SCIM team have been highly praise worthy of our implementation.
- 3.7 Following a consultation exercise in 2022, the Scottish Government published the [Bairns' Hoose standards](#) in May 2023. These standards set the blueprint for delivering a Bairns Hoose, at their core is ensuring the voice of children, young people and families who use the services of a Bairns Hoose is central to its design and delivery. To support our planning a Reference Group of children and family members who have had experience of child protection processes has been established. We will actively engage with this group on our planning and design for delivering a Bairns Hoose.
- 3.8 In June 2023 the Scottish Government announced a Pathfinder Application process. Aberdeen City have submitted a Pathfinder Application which closed on 21 August 2023 (Appendix 1). A decision on who the successful bidders are

is expected in September/October 2023. Some funding will be awarded to successful applications although it is not anticipated that funding will cover the full cost of developing and delivering a Bairns Hoose.

3.9 The Council is drawing on the support of Children’s 1st who are involved in the delivery of a Bairns Hoose in North Strathclyde and already are a key partner in delivering the Fit Like, Aberdeen service. To support our own learning we will work in partnership with Children 1st and the NIHR funded Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaboration (AHDRC) to commission the University of Edinburgh, who have undertaken evaluation and development of programme theory relating to Scotland’s first Bairns Hoose [North Strathclyde Bairns Hoose \(Barnahus\)](#). We will draw upon established protocols for designing ethical research approaches; data management, security and sharing protocols and data collection tool design. The participation of AHDRC will provide additional support ensuring learning is captured and shared at a local level. This partnership will also deliver on the expectation of all Pathfinders that successful bids will share learning with other partnerships and with the Scottish Government’s Bairns Hoose team.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising out of this report. As noted the Council has already identified some capital funding to support the redesign of the identified Links Hub.

4.2 Successful applicants will receive some funding to support delivery of their pathway bid, the level of funding is at this stage unclear. The application also makes clear that delivery of a Bairns Hoose will require all agencies to contribute to its delivery.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising out of 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) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant related risks	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	The Scottish Government policy is that every child in Scotland will	The CPC has primary oversight on progress to develop and deliver a	L	Yes

	<p>have access to a Bairns Hoose service by 2025.</p> <p>It is anticipated that national reporting will in future include reporting against the Bairns Hoose Standards.</p>	<p>Bairns Hoose. Regular reporting will be shared with Aberdeen's Public protection Chief Officers Group.</p>		
Operational	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people who have experienced harm or whose behaviour poses a risk to others is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children's Social Work. Children's Social Work and Police Scotland have lead responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse or where children's behaviour poses a concern to others. While this duty is currently being fulfilled the environment in which these investigations occur does not fulfil the requirements of the Bairns Hoose standards nor best meet the needs of the children and young people.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City has a well established Child Protection data reporting framework. Going forward the framework will be amended to include reporting against the Bairns Hoose standards.</p>	L	Yes
Financial	<p>There are no significant related financial risks from this report.</p> <p>The Strategic Business case is being concluded and will upon its conclusions be reported to Finance and Resources Committee. This will be informed by funding awarded to a successful Pathway Application.</p> <p>All agencies will be responsible for funding the individual service components that will deliver a Bairns Hoose.</p>	<p>One of the core principles of delivering a Bairns Hoose service is that by providing early trauma informed support to children and their family it will reduce the demand on services in the longer term and reduce the likelihood of children requiring intensive support.</p>	L	Yes
Reputational	<p>Failure to deliver on the Bairns Hoose standards will have a reputational impact on the Council. It will also adversely impact on the assessment of Children's Services within future strategic joint inspections.</p>	<p>By being a pathfinder the Council will benefit from support from the National Bairns Hoose team to deliver a high quality service.</p>	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	<p>No significant risks identified.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN

Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people 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 local services identify young people with mental health problems and help them get early support and help. • 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.
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>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 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. 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 is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children’s Social Work. This activity is relevant to the 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 is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children’s Social Work supports the Scottish Government’s 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</p>

People (Scotland) Act 2014, Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and Children (Scotland) Act 2020.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Delivery of a Bairns Hoose will positively impact on all children, young people and families who require to access a Bairns Hoose. It will enhance the Council's ability to deliver on its statutory duty to investigate allegations of harm and to respond effectively to meet the needs of children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour pose a risk to others. As such it is considered that a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment to be completed. Stage 1 IIA completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	Not required.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Aberdeen City Bairns Hoose Pathfinder Application.

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Graeme Simpson
Title	CO – Children & Family Services/CSWO
Email Address	gsimpson@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Bairns' Hoose

Pathfinder Application Pack



Bairns' Hoose

June 2023

Contents

Introduction	3
Bairns' Hoose Background.....	3
Phased Approach.....	5
Pathfinder Phase.....	6
Minimum Criteria for Pathfinder Partnerships.....	6
Benefits of Becoming a Pathfinder	7
Bairns' Hoose Funding Model	7
Pathfinder Fund.....	7
Timeline for Pathfinder Phase	7
Assessment of Pathfinder Applications	8
How applications will be assessed	9
Pathfinder Application Form	10

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Bairns' Hoose Pathfinder phase. This is an exciting opportunity for close working between Pathfinder partnerships, the Scottish Government and other key partners to deliver improved outcomes and experiences for children and their families.

This application pack provides information about the Pathfinder phase, what is expected of a Pathfinder and what support the Scottish Government will provide. We have set out the commitments that will be asked of your partnership.

The Pathfinder Application Form follows on from this information. Your responses to the questions in this form will help us understand your current strategic and delivery context, your commitment to delivering transformational change and how you intend to deliver the Bairns' Hoose vision and principles, as part of your local approach in applying the Bairns' Hoose Standards.

The design and delivery of Pathfinders will be agreed between partners at a local level and through local structures, in liaison with the Scottish Government Pathfinder Project Team. It is anticipated that applications will be made by Pathfinder partnerships working collaboratively across organisational boundaries, according to their local context and needs, and proximity to local resources. Chief Officers' Public Protection Groups will play a key role in the delivery of Bairns' Hoose.

During this phase, we anticipate a number (approximately 5) of Pathfinder partnerships, from across the country, and a mix of applications from urban, rural and island environments, to ensure testing of the applicability of the Standards across a range of contexts.

The Standards will be tested and developed in Pathfinder areas, with the involvement of practitioners. Pathfinders also must include participation and engagement with children and young people with lived experience, as a basis for informing pathways of care and recovery within the service.

Bairns' Hoose Background

The ambition of Bairns' Hoose, which is based on the Icelandic model of Barnahus (child's house), provides Scotland with an opportunity for transformational change through a child-centred, trauma-informed approach for children and young people who are victims or witnesses of significant harm, to improve their right to justice, care and recovery. Services will be co-located, reducing the need for multiple interviews by different agencies in different locations, which we know can be retraumatising.

Ministers previously agreed our ambition for the scope of Bairns' Hoose eligibility. This recognises the evolving policy context and issues associated with that. We aim to include:

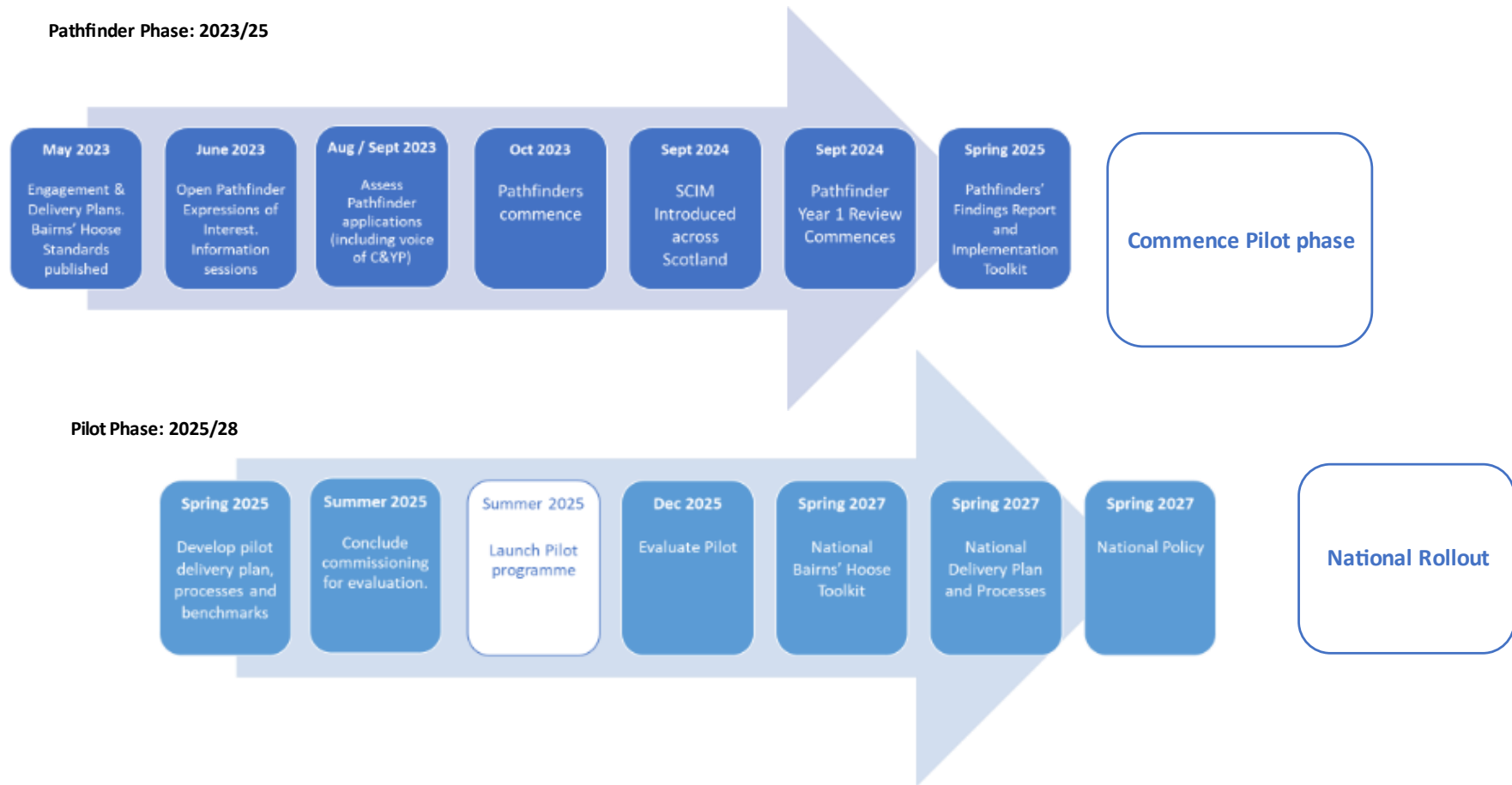
- all children in Scotland, who are believed to have been victims or witnesses to abuse or violence, which has caused or likely to cause significant harm

- children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused significant harm or abuse

In May this year, we published our refreshed [Bairns' Hoose Vision, Values and Approach](#), setting out how Barnahus should be implemented in Scotland, including the values underpinning its development. We also published a Bairns' Hoose [Project Plan Progress Report and Pathfinder Delivery Plan](#), which sets out the intended steps for delivery and is aligned with publication of the Standards.

Phased Approach

Our revised delivery timeline adopts a three-phased approach over 2023 – 2028. This allows time to build in the learning and evaluation needed to ensure that the Bairns’ Hoose model is achieving the correct outcomes ahead of national rollout; and ensures alignment with other key policy objectives.



Pathfinder Phase

The first phase of Bairns' Hoose development will be the Pathfinder phase. The purpose of the Pathfinder phase is to learn both about the systems, practices and culture changes required to achieve our Bairns' Hoose vision, and the methods, practices and resources required to facilitate transformational change.

This phase will be used to trial the Bairns' Hoose Standards, which were published in May 2023; in the context of different geographical and service models. The Pathfinder phase will identify what can be applied in different settings and which aspects of the Standards may need to be revised, with a view to identifying and sharing learning for a national model. By spring 2025, we will have an initial blueprint for the Bairns' Hoose model in Scotland and will develop a Delivery Plan for the Pilot programme.

A further output of the phase will be a Pathfinders Findings Report with a set of conclusions, along with a toolkit to support partnerships during the Pilot phase. We will work closely with Pathfinder partnerships in a collaborative way to identify measures of success and gather data and intelligence. The intention is to gather data at the end of the Pathfinder phase that will act as the baseline for the evaluation of the pilot.

Minimum Criteria for Pathfinder Partnerships

The Bairns' Hoose Standards are based on the European Barnahus Quality Standards. Our national model for implementing Bairns' Hoose across Scotland should be flexible enough to allow local partnerships to provide Bairns' Hoose services to suit local circumstances, whilst still demonstrating commitment to the four rooms approach. Close collaboration across agencies and between local partnerships is a pre-requisite for development, implementation and evaluation of the approach.

All applicants **must** meet the minimum criteria for Pathfinder Partnerships as set out below with the commitment to provide the required resource and partnership leadership to achieve the overall aim of the Pathfinder phase:

- Commitment to be a Pathfinder Partnership from 2023 - 2025
- Commitment to work towards becoming a Bairns' Hoose and to apply the Standards
- Commitment to test the full set of Standards in current context and conduct GAP analysis on application of the Standards and report on findings
- Pathfinder Partnership must comprise of a collaboration across all three statutory partners (Health, Social Work, Police) with demonstrable links with 3rd sector and education partners
- Commitment to meaningfully involve children and young people, with lived experience of child protection and justice processes, in the design and delivery of the Pathfinder work

- Commitment to develop trauma responsive approaches across the Bairns' Hoose Pathfinder partner organisations, systems and workforces in line with ["Creating Trauma-Informed Change: What, Why and How A Quality Improvement Framework for Trauma-Informed Organisations, Systems and Workforces in Scotland"](#)¹.
- Commitment to gather, analyse and share relevant data for learning and monitoring at regular intervals
- Commitment to share information and learning openly and honestly

Benefits of Becoming a Pathfinder

- Opportunity to design and implement new ways of working to deliver meaningful trauma-informed outcomes, with benefits to both community and workforce
- Opportunity to engage with Scottish Government and influence policy development
- Opportunity to identify and share both enablers and barriers
- Opportunity to shape Bairns' Hoose nationally through the development of the Bairns' Hoose national toolkit
- Participation in the Bairns' Hoose learning network
- Access to Bairns' Hoose Pathfinders Fund

Bairns' Hoose Funding Model

Delivery of Bairns' Hoose will be the responsibility of Chief Officers' Public Protection Groups. However, the Scottish Government will make a financial investment to support this transformative systems change. This will be a contribution on a partnership basis, alongside statutory agencies, towards the development of the Bairns' Hoose model. Initially, this investment will be towards establishing a small number of Pathfinder areas, followed by further investment for the Pilot programme and then national rollout.

Pathfinder Fund

A Bairns' Hoose Fund of up to £6m will support the Pathfinder phase in 2023-24, with a similar amount anticipated for 2024/25.

Further details will be made available to successful Pathfinder partnerships.

Timeline for Pathfinder Phase

Timescale	Milestone
12 June 2023	Open Invitations for Pathfinder Applications

¹ A final version of the Quality Improvement Framework is due for publication in summer 2023.

June and July 2023	Pathfinder engagement events
21 August 2023	Closing date for Pathfinder Applications
August – September 2023	Assessment of Pathfinders
September 2023	Final selection of Pathfinders Bairns' Hoose Fund Manager appointed
October 2023	Announcement of successful Pathfinders
November 2023	Bairns' Hoose Fund opens

Assessment of Pathfinder Applications

The submitted application will be assessed by a Level 1 panel of Scottish Government assessors and approved by a Level 2 panel, comprising Bairns' Hoose Pathfinder Programme Board members and the independent Chair of the National Bairns' Hoose Governance Group. The Level 1 panel will assess the applications against the criteria, provide a summary of the applications and make recommendations to the Level 2 panel.

The applications will also be assessed by children and young people. The Scottish Government has funded Healthcare Improvement Scotland to engage with children and young people through their link worker model, to assess and give their views on the applications. This input will be considered in detail alongside the individual scores in the Level 1 panel discussions and assessors may revise their scores based on the feedback from the children and young people.

The Level 2 panel will agree the successful Bairns' Hoose Pathfinders selection, based on the summary recommendations of the Level 1 assessment panel, and subject to Ministerial approval.

Successful Pathfinders will then be asked to submit formal proposals to the Scottish Government for Ministerial decision, to formally contract their participation.

How applications will be assessed

Submitted forms will be assessed at Level 1 by an assessment panel comprising Scottish Government assessors.

Each member of the panel will evaluate each submission in isolation of the other assessors, and will award a mark for each section between 0 and 4, in accordance with the following scoring guidance:

0 = unacceptable (inadequate, fails to demonstrate ability to meet requirements, major weaknesses)

1 = poor (partially relevant but with insufficient detail and/or weaknesses)

2 = acceptable (relevant but lacking some detail or with some weaknesses)

3 = good (relevant and sufficiently detailed, minor weaknesses)

4 = excellent (no weaknesses).

Assessors will be required to provide a rationale for their scores in the assessment form. Additionally, assessors will be asked to identify the overall key strengths of each submission.

Once each assessor has independently evaluated each submission, an assessment meeting will be held with all panel members to discuss scores and ensure consistency of approach.

The assessment by children and young people will also be taken into account at this stage.

In recognition of the different challenges faced by islands and rural communities, part of the selection process will be to ensure that there is coverage of these communities to ensure rich learning and to test the applicability of the Standards in these contexts. We are looking to include at least one area from the 'island and remote' category and one from the 'mainly rural' category, using the RESAS² fourfold classification.

Additionally, assessors will consider the applications across a range of other characteristics, with a view to selecting Pathfinders across as wide a range of contexts as possible. This will include a mix of different development stages; and to maximise on the possible learning, assessors will look for partnerships with the potential to test out the full set of Standards across a range of operating models and facilities, such as flexible opening hours, live court links, forensic medical examination suites and cross boundary agreements.

The assessment panel will then summarise the applications and make recommendations to the Level 2 panel, with their scoring and rationale.

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/understanding-scottish-rural-economy/pages/13/>

Pathfinder Application Form

As stated previously, the purpose of the Pathfinder phase is to learn both about the systems, practices and culture changes required to achieve our Bairns' Hoose vision, and the methods, practices and resources required to facilitate transformational change. The purpose and the focus of the selection process is to identify Pathfinder areas where there is the greatest opportunity to learn.

The purpose of this Application is for the Scottish Government to collect information regarding existing and planned multi-agency settings across Scotland, their potential and their commitment to become a Pathfinder Partnership.

SECTION 1	Partnership Lead Contact details for application
<p>Please give details of the Partnership Lead Contact person for this application. Please note that the Partnership Lead Contact should have the authority to share/express the decisions and capacity to support engagement with this programme.</p> <p>We will liaise with the lead contact person for this application for any further information requirements or for clarifying questions.</p> <p>Section 1 will not be scored.</p>	
Partnership Name:	Aberdeen City +
Partnership Lead Contact Organisation	Aberdeen City Council
Partnership Lead Contact Name	Graeme Simpson
Job Title	CSWO
Email	gsimpson@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Partnership's geographical area of coverage	<p>Aberdeen City +</p> <p>Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose will operate on a 'soft boundary' basis. This will build on the North East partnership developed to deliver SCIM.</p> <p>We are actively exploring with Orkney and Shetland options to support their delivery of SCIM. Aligned to this, given existing Child Protection links both authorities have with NHS Grampian and recognising Aberdeen City is the primary transport hub to both islands, we have had initial discussions as to how an Aberdeen City Bairns Hoose could support children and young people from Orkney and Shetland.</p>

List of partners signing up for this application	Aberdeen City Council NHS Grampian/Aberdeen City HSCP Police Scotland Children 1 st SCRA Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaboration Evaluation Partner - University of Edinburgh
	We have positively connected with COPFS/SCTS and the Sheriff Principle and local members of the judiciary to share our planning to deliver our Bairns Hoose.

SECTION 2	Minimum Criteria
<p>Please confirm that your Partnership commits to the following Minimum Criteria.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commitment to be a Pathfinder site from 2023 – 2025 2. Commitment to work towards becoming a Bairns’ Hoose and to apply the Standards 3. Commitment to test Standards in current context and conduct GAP analysis on application of the Standards and report on findings 4. Pathfinder partnership must comprise of a collaboration across all three statutory partners (Health, Social Work, Police) with demonstrable links with 3rd sector and education partners 5. Commitment to meaningfully involve children and young people with lived experience of child protection and justice processes in the design and delivery of the pathfinder work 6. Commitment to develop trauma responsive approaches across the Bairns’ Hoose Pathfinder partner organisations, systems and workforces in line with “Creating Trauma-Informed Change: What, Why and How A Quality Improvement Framework for Trauma-Informed Organisations, Systems and Workforces in Scotland”³. 7. Commitment to gather, analyse and share relevant data and evidence (quantitative and qualitative) for learning and monitoring at regular intervals 8. Commitment to share information and learning openly and honestly. <p>All applicants must meet the minimum criteria for Pathfinder Partnerships in order to be included in the assessment process, with the commitment to provide the required resource and partnership leadership to achieve the overall aim of the Pathfinder phase.</p> <p>These criteria will be set out in a contract with the Scottish Government for successful Pathfinders.</p>	

³ A final version of the Quality Improvement Framework is due for publication in summer 2023.

Yes, the Partnership commits to the Criteria	Please sign to confirm: Graeme Simpson
---	---

Responses relating to each question can be up to 500 words but may be less where appropriate.

SECTION 3	Bairns' Hoose Delivery
Section weighting	15%
<p>3.1. What stage of development towards becoming a Bairns' Hoose is your proposed Pathfinder Partnership currently at? [wordcount maximum 500] <i>We welcome applications from Partnerships at different stages of development. Scoring will be based on how self-reflective applications are of their current position, as well as on their stage of development.</i></p> <p>The partnership has evaluated current practice against the Bairns' Hoose Standards and given consideration to the learning from Stages 1 and 2 of the CELCIS Children's Services Reform research to support the completion of this Pathfinder application.</p> <p>Standard 2 – Everyone who is professionally responsible for protecting children works together to ensure Bairns Hoose helps me and other children.</p> <p>Committed Leadership and shared Governance</p> <p>Our Local Chief Officer Group (COG), Child Protection Committee (CPC) and Children's Services Board (CSB) identify a Bairns Hoose as a central element of our Public Protection arrangements and emerging Family Support Model. As a result, the impact of the Bairns Hoose on children and families will be overseen by COG, scrutinising established multi-agency data reports. Given the transformational nature of the policy, a research partner has been identified to work alongside our own Health Determinants Research Collaboration.</p> <p>Established regional approaches, such as our SCIM arrangements will ensure we maximise the alignment of our Bairns Hoose. As with SCIM our Bairns Hoose will operate on a 'soft boundary' basis recognising that around 20% of JII's for neighbouring Local Authorities are for children on the periphery of City boundary. We are continuing to develop strong connections to Orkney and Shetland who already access NHS Grampian for child protection health services.</p> <p>Shared Goals, aligned policies and Facilitative relationships</p> <p>The Partnership works well together to deliver the improvements outlined in our Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) which directly influences shared and single system Strategic Plans. The CSB identified the need to prioritise those who have experienced multiple trauma and recognise a Bairns Hoose will help reform ways of working with and for this group.</p>	

Our ambition is that our Bairns Hoose maximises the potential to fully incorporate the justice element. This will include having distinct space for Age of Criminal Responsibility interviews, but also a remote court suite that enables children/young people to give evidence to Court. This builds on our strong response to the change in legislation around the age of criminal responsibility and delivery on the [Standards for those working with children in conflict with the law](#). Discussion with SCRA have also identified opportunities for our Bairns Hoose to support delivery on many recommendations of the - [Children's Hearing Redesign Report](#). This could include aligning a Reporter to the Bairns Hoose to enabling their enhanced role prior to a referral being made.

Co-location, Shared culture and common commissioning

Community Planning Partners (CPPs) led the implementation of the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) on behalf of the region in November 2022. Regional co-delivery of SCIM builds on over 20 years of co-located practice with colleagues from the Police and children's social work. Our implementation has been recognised as best practice nationally. As a result of this maturing relationship, feedback from children/young people is directly shaping SCIM practice as well as informing our thinking around our Bairns Hoose.

Recognising that children's needs will move up and down, we continue to actively engage with Children 1st to develop a trauma recovery service. Families tell us current processes can compound their distress. The independence of Children 1st will enable honest reflections from children and families and live connections with wider community based services within our Family Support Model to provide effective scaffolding for families. Children 1st already support delivery of Tier 2 services in the city and Moray Council enabling seamless transition between services and access to more holistic support through established services.

Appendix 1 - Aberdeen Group – Bairns Hoose Creative Workshop.

3.2 With reference to any available evidence, please describe your areas of strength in terms of your journey towards full Bairns' Hoose delivery (wordcount maximum 500)

Standard 1 - My rights are upheld, and these Standards are for me. My best interests are always acted on, I am listened to and my views are taken seriously.

Co-location, Shared Goals, and Committed Leadership

Our 2019 Joint Inspection of Children's Services highlighted a commitment to multi-agency working noting that 'Joint working was effectively promoted by leaders who collaborated and shared a clear vision, values and aims'. The strength of our strategic public protection leadership was again very positively evaluated in the 2022 Care Inspectorate inspection of Adult Protection.

Since publication of the 2019 Joint Inspection report, and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Community Planning Partners have had considerable success in delivering integrated rights based services. Our multi-agency

workforce, who have experienced such integration, speak openly about the transformational nature of integration for them and those they support.

Since November 2020, our Fit Like Hubs have supported 1043 families with an increasing percentage of self-referrals (currently over 10%). There is clear evidence that engagement with the service realises:

- Parents feeling supported to manage their anxieties and worries
- Parents/carers and children feeling listened to and heard
- Strengthened family relationships
- Improved child mental health and wellbeing.

Those accessing the service tell us that it feels like a bespoke service and that it is the first time support has 'felt right'. As a result we have confidence in our ability to deliver high quality, rights based integrated services that adapt based on what children and families tell us.

Shared policies, goals and information/data sharing

IRD's, which we aim to convene within 2 hours of referral and are child focussed. Wherever possible children are given a choice on where the interview takes place. Data suggests that the right children go onto Child Protection Planning Meetings.

Shared rights based culture

Aberdeen's Young People's Rights service provides independent, relational, trauma-informed advocacy, guidance and support to children, young people/adults, aged 0-26 years, where they cannot access this service themselves, due to age or disability, the service can affirmatively promote their voice through 'non-instructed' advocacy. All children involved in child protection processes are considered for referral as part of established IRD practice, although take up is lower than we might have anticipated. A focus in delivering a trauma recovery service will allow for a re-examination how to enable effective advocacy for children/young people.

The Standards for those working with children in conflict with the law recognises that this group of children "have some of the most hidden voices." It is everyone's responsibility to ensure their voices are heard and their rights are upheld. A rights respecting approach to justice will support improving life changes for these children and we are keen that our Bairns Hoose offers them the same protections and support as a child who has been harmed.

Establishing a Bairns Hoose Reference Group, comprising children, young people and families impacted by the child protection, care and justice systems, will ensure their views and voices operationalise Article 12 UNCRC. Our partnership with Children 1st will enable Aberdeen City to draw on learning from other Bairns Hoose services.

Information/Data Sharing and Committed Leadership

Key learning we have taken from the delivery of SCIM and Fit Like is to empower and support operational leaders to have the autonomy to develop new services. The use of live multi-agency data has been critical to supporting this approach. The partnership has existing data sharing agreements that enable the routine

sharing of appropriate data to produce multi-agency data sets. CELCIS have engaged with the data reporting of our Child Protection Committee to inform national approaches to data reporting.

3.3 With reference to any available evidence, please describe areas for development in terms of your journey towards full Bairns' Hoose delivery. [wordcount maximum 500]

We have identified 2 standards that require our immediate attention.

Standard 4 – The Bairns Hoose feels cosy, comfortable, relaxed and well-kept for other children.

Co-location, Facilitative relationships, shared finance and policies

Our proposed Bairns Hoose is part of an existing ELC provision, co-delivered by health and education. The location is well served by public transport, accessible from the Airport and Harbour. It provides for privacy, anonymity with multiple entry/exit points to ensure we manage the needs and safety of all who will utilise our Bairns Hoose. The building is enhanced by accessible outdoor space.

(Appendix 2 – Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose pp)

The project is committed within the Council Capital Programme, requiring refurbishment/adaption to offer all 4 rooms. We are committed to realising the Bairns Hoose vision in exactly the way children need and deserve. Feedback from children has directly informed the business case.

It is our intention to develop our Bairns Hoose in 3 Phases recognising time needs to be taken to fully consider the changes required to effectively deliver a remote court and forensic medical facilities.

Phase 1 – Deployment of SCIM. Completed November 2022. Aberdeen City currently delivers circa 90% of joint interviews utilising the SCIM approach. Police and social work staff are collocated and for over 20 years we have had an integrated joint child protection team.

Phase 2 - Develop the Bairns Hoose to the same standard as the existing ELC provision to provide purpose built SCIM facilities including:

- interview facilities;
- co-location of SCIM staff;
- location for 3rd Sector Trauma Recovery Service;
- space for 'safe and well' medicals;
- space to support staff wellbeing/learning and development.

As a partnership we are keen to consider the viability of Police Scotland's 'IRD desk' being located within the Bairns Hoose.

Phase 3 - Develop the Bairns Hoose to fully deliver all '4 rooms':

- interview space for ACR interviews which would have the potential to be used to interview vulnerable adults
- Remote court facility

- Medical suite with the capacity to undertake forensic medicals
- Shower facilities.
- Multi-purpose space allowing for direct work with families
- Flexible space for staff learning/wellbeing / Children’s Hearings – SCRA court led processes.

Shared goals and Holistic support

We have a well-established relationship with Children 1st. They have agreed to partner our Bairns Hoose development, supporting the co-design and delivery of our Trauma Recovery Service. They will ensure children and families have meaningful involvement in the planning and design of our Bairns Hoose and its appropriately equipped and maintained. This will help ensure we realise our commitment to improve the experience for children and families.

Standard 5 - If I need to give evidence in a court or legal process, someone explains what is happening and I am supported through this. There is an option to live link to court from the Bairns’ Hoose.

Co-location, facilitative relationships, information sharing and shared policies and goals

The Standards for those Working with Children in Conflict with the Law states "all children must have access to support when going through judicial processes."

Our Partnership recognises more needs to be done to prepare and support children giving evidence to Court. We are mindful of the broad implications of the Children’s Care and Justice Bill and are keen to consider the extent to which our Bairns Hoose could serve to meet some of the changes set out in the bill including the interviewing of children and the proposal that under 18s appearing in court do so in a closed court.

A recent practice review highlighted that current arrangements can lead to our children/young people feeling they are not believed, distressed and hurt. We appreciate the importance of building the confidence of children/young people as well as if the Court has confidence in the space and supports.

The remote court facility has the potential to meet the needs of vulnerable adults who need to give evidence to Court. Where appropriate, and through careful timetabling, provision would be made through our Bairns Hoose. We have constructive engagement from COPF’s and SCTS to fully understand the requirements of a live link/remote link to court. We have positively engaged with local Sheriffs to seek their engagement and input. Their support is very welcome.

SECTION 4	Multi-agency working
Section weighting	15%
4.1. Please describe the mechanisms you will put in place to ensure multi-agency working across all sectors. [wordcount maximum 500]	
Committed Leadership, Shared Governance, aligned policy and goals.	

The NE Leadership Public Protection Group is driving work regionally. The Aberdeen City Community Planning partnership has a range of highly effective governance arrangements in place including our COG, CPC and Children's Services Board (CSB). These arrangements, where candour, curiosity and accountability between partners is actively encouraged, has significantly aided more common practice and a shared and ongoing culture of improvement around public protection. Local Government benchmarking outcome data for children suggests we are the most improved Partnership.

Standard 9 - If me or my family need help we can speak with someone who understands what we are going through. I get the help and support I need to recover.

Co-location, holistic support, shared goals and shared culture

Over the past 3 years we have developed a strong partnership with Children 1st who support delivery of Fit Like, a whole family wellbeing service which has been evaluated positively by Scottish Government Mental Health Collaborative. This multi-agency service was developed by taking a poverty & rights based approach, aligning to the 10 Principles of Intensive Family Support.

The service provides holistic early intervention support to children, young people and their families mitigating the need for them to access statutory children's social work services or CAMHS and is staffed by a range of agencies and disciplines including:

- ACC - Education; CSW; Community Learning & Development; Youth services
- NHS - CAMHS; Health Visiting; School Nursing
- 3rd Sector – Children 1st; Alcohol Drugs Action
- ACC Group - Sport Aberdeen

Operating on a 'Family First' principle, families set their own priorities and explore with staff how these are to be met. Our Trauma Recovery Service will take a similar approach. We recognise the impact of abuse and harm on all family members and the criticality of supporting parents to make sense of the harm their child has experienced. The Bairns Hoose will provide an accessible and comfortable space to undertake therapeutic work if the family deem the setting the most suitable. Therapeutic work will also be undertaken in the communities in which children/young people live.

By connecting our Trauma Recovery Service to our wider Family Support Model we will support families to access community based supports but also allow for them to easily re-access more intensive supports if required.

Standard 10 - The people who help me at the Bairns' Hoose work as a team. They get the help they need to do their jobs well.

Shared policies, shared goals and a shared culture

As a Partnership we have well established and consistently applied policies. Partners make effective use of IRD processes in keeping with national Child Protection Guidance and benefit from over 20 years of our Joint Child Protection Unit being co-located and co-delivered by Police Scotland and children's social

work. Our Bairns Hoose will build upon this well-established practice and respond to the appetite of our workforce for further integration.

We have a long established delivery model of shared learning and development which will be maintained. Effective professional supervision will also be maintained with Organisational Development on hand to support team development as required.

We are keen to ensure that we can respect the wishes of the young people wherever possible, particularly in identifying their central point of contact. We have a commitment from the partnership that staff, irrespective of the job role, will be released to support a child or young person wherever possible.

4.2. Please describe the mechanisms you will put in place to promote co-location of members of the multi-agency and multi-disciplinary team. [wordcount maximum 500]

Leadership, Co-location, shared goals and policies

The Partnership has a focus on prevention. Leaders have encouraged the deliberate utilisation of a number of policy levers, such as the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare, to progress opportunities for co-location and integration and more rights based approaches. There is strong local evidence of the impact of integration on staff and those accessing services. Partners, including Police and Health, are based in the Council Headquarters and this is further strengthening relationships and shared decision making. The partnership is keen to explore wider alignment across the region to better reflect the geographical reach of Police Scotland and NHSG.

Shared culture and aligned policy

We recognise that genuine integration has to be planned for, both strategically and operationally and propose to use the learning from the Children’s Services Reform Research to support the development of our Bairns Hoose.



Figure 1: Components model of integration

Figure 1: Components model for integration taken from The Centre for Excellence for children’s Care and Protection (CELCIS) published report on the first strand of, [Children’s Services Reform Research: Rapid evidence Review](#) will be used to guide the development of our plans and Operational Guidance.

Our SCIM team already benefit from well established relationships and working practices, and it is proposed to quickly identify other key individuals who will be attached to the Bairns Hoose, and routinely bring them together physically at the Links Hub to develop a long term programme in collaboration with appropriate support from Organisational Development. It is thought that taking this approach will help cement a shared culture and shared purpose.

We recognise and value the positive impact of the voices of children, young people and families who have lived experience of the child protection and justice

processes on our policies and culture. There are clear examples where this has already informed our Bairns Hoose planning and staff development. For example recognising the importance of food within a Bairns Hoose/child protection processes and reinforcing the critical importance of relational practice. Processes, buildings and staff were at times described negatively as 'not focused on their needs/best interests' of being 'cold' and 'unkind'

Information sharing/data sharing and holistic support

Once formally established, the Bairns Hoose team will transition to lead the Reference Group and work with wider partners through Service Design principles and make use of Human Learning systems resources. Taking this approach will enable the team to develop their theories of change and determine how to measure their impact.

Community Planning Partners benefit from an established data sharing agreement which will support this work. On-going monitoring will be supported through the development of a clear internal evaluation framework and external research capacity.

SECTION 5	Operating Model
Section weighting	10%
<p>5.1 Please describe your operation model of service delivery within your Pathfinder. [wordcount maximum 500]</p> <p>This should include an outline of how the model will be co-ordinated and operationally managed; what consideration to the four rooms approach of Barnahus has been given; details of any service core to delivery of the Standards not included in the Pathfinder; and how those services will engage with the operational model. You may also wish to consider some practical challenges such as building maintenance; information sharing etc.</p> <p>Standard 3 - Bairns' Hoose includes me and my family.</p> <p>Shared culture and shared goals</p> <p>We recognise the importance of the welcome and initial point of contact within our Child Protection processes. The design of the Bairns Hoose will provide a warm welcome and we are committed to ensuring that families will, as far as possible, have the same point of contact. The role and remit of all partners within the Bairns Hoose will need to be clearly understood to deliver on the Standards. We anticipate that this detail will be included in our Operational Guidance.</p> <p>We are committed to giving children, young people and families as much choice as possible in terms of location, access to known and trusted staff and information. We appreciate that privacy will be important and recognise that the multiple entrances to our proposed location will help and improve the flow of the service. We are exploring the potential for the Trauma Recovery Service to incorporate the role of a Bairns Hoose coordinator.</p>	

This role will be critical in helping to maximise the safe use of the physical space as well as having a key welcoming and advocating role. We anticipate this post be filled well in advance of the Bairns Hoose being operational to enable systems and processes to be established and tested and relationships built.

Standard 8 - My physical, emotional and mental health is looked after. Someone helps to plan appointments and I'm supported.

Holistic support

The development of our Trauma Recovery Service will build on our existing Family Wellbeing Service. We are actively planning for this to fully aligned to our SCIM model and serve the needs of all 3 North East Local Authorities. We are in active discussion with Orkney and Shetland to explore how our SCIM delivery and Bairns Hoose can support their children and families. Working with Children 1st will allow a seamless integration of our Bairns Hoose with established elements of our Family Support Model which already support physical, emotional and mental health.

The Partnership is confident in its 'family first' and rights based approach but recognises, through a recent audit of joint interviews for those with complex communication needs, the need for a continued focus on this group.

While only a few children require a forensic medical, partners have committed to a forensic medical suite being part of our design. The medical suite will be a flexible space to offer a range of medical appointments based on need. Discussions are ongoing with CAHMS to redesign pathways for those who require clinical mental health support.

Standard 6 - I will be supported during any interview. My interview will be recorded and used so I don't have to repeat myself as much.

Shared culture, shared goals and facilitative relationships

Children/young people currently speak positively of their experience of being interviewed by SCIM trained staff and interviews are quality assured to ensure learning is captured and continuous improvement.

Aligned policies and information/data sharing

The purpose built spaces being proposed in Phase 2 will ensure a more conducive environment for interviewing children/young people in keeping with the Bairns Hoose standards. The informal spaces, will help afford opportunities to meet staff in advance and become familiar with the environment and what to expect in a way that makes sense to the child/young person.

An effective data sharing agreement is already in place which enables COG, CPC and CSB to routinely scrutinise multi-agency data.

Families continue to tell us that not having to tell their stories more than once makes recovery easier. There is clear evidence that local integrated models help address disadvantage and risk more timeously, increases quality and helps develop a shared culture between partners.

--

SECTION 6	Planning and service design
Section weighting	25%

6.1 Please describe your key areas or planned activity which are to be included in the development and delivery plans if you become a Pathfinder area. You may wish to cross reference information provided elsewhere in the application. [wordcount maximum 500]

The Delivery Group and Reference Group continue to clarify expectations and secure agreement to help preparations for implementation of a Bairns Hoose.

Areas being developed have been referenced throughout this application and are summarised below:

- Commission a North East Trauma Recovery Service and revisit alignment to existing processes and practices. (3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 4.1; 5.1; 6.2; 8.3)
- Continue to engage with North East Local Authorities and Orkney and Shetland to finalise arrangements. (3.1; 5.1)
- Continue to progress plans for Phases 2 and 3 of the proposed building, with a particular focus given to on-going engagement with various elements of the justice system to deliver an effective remote court facility. (3.1; 3.3)
- Explore with COPFS/SCTS operational delivery of remote court facility that minimises any child under the age of 18 having to attend Court. (3.1; 3.3)
- Continue to explore with SCRA the recommendations of the Children’s Hearing System Review that have a connection to delivering a Bairns Hoose. (3.1; 3.3)
- Continue to explore with Police Scotland the viability of the ‘IRD Desk’ being located within the Bairns Hoose. (3.3; 4.1)
- Finalise the ‘trauma flow’ of the space for children/young people who need to access the range of elements within the Bairns Hoose. (3.3; 5.1)
- Utilise service design principles with the wider children’s service workforce. (6.3; 8.2)
- In collaboration with Children 1st develop opportunities to supports the workforce develop their confidence and use of the Lundy model to maximise the participation of children and young people to inform the design and development of our Bairns Hoose. (6.2)
- Explore the capacity of the Bairns Hoose to support other vulnerable groups to be interviewed within a trauma informed setting. (3.2; 3.3; 8.1)
- Continue to build the capacity of the Reference Group and consider how the voices and experiences of children, young people and families will directly influence on-going development through a ‘you said, we did’ approach. (3.2; 3.3; 6.2; 6.3; 6.4; 8.1)
- Developing our theory of change and associated evaluation framework that links to our model of Family Support (6.2; 6.3; 8.2)
- Developing Operational Guidance with clear roles and remits (4.2; 5.1)
- Establishing a programme of Organisational Development for the Bairns Hoose team. (4.1; 6.3; 7.1)

- Finalising external evaluation/research arrangements and responding to learning from other Partnerships (7.1)
- Explore the resource/financial contribution to be made from partners. (8.3)
- Consideration of how other partners (e.g. Education, Youth Services, Rape Crisis and ALEOs) can directly support the needs of families accessing the Bairns Hoose. (4.1; 8.1)
- Explore more fully how a Human Learning Systems approach could support our work (4.2; 6.6)
- Consider the implications of our evaluation against The Promise & Plan 21-24 (6.4; 7.1; 8.2)

6.2 Please describe steps you will take to ensure meaningful participation of children and young people in the service design and improvement for your site and its services. The Scottish Government’s approach to Bairns’ Hoose incorporates The Lundy Model of Child Participation and you may wish to describe how you plan to incorporate the four central components (space, voice, audience and influence) within your chosen approach. [wordcount maximum 500]

Standard 11 - People at the Bairns’ Hoose listen to what I have to say about my experience. What I tell them helps to make the Bairns’ Hoose better.

Leadership and shared culture and goals

Feedback sought from all JII’s is being collated to inform planning and young people and families are helping shape our Bairns Hoose business case through the Reference Group. The participation of children and families will continue to be central to the development of our evaluation framework to support continuous improvement. The Partnership has committed to take a ‘you say, we did’ approach to ensure that our children/young people can clearly identify how they have shaped the project. We value the offer of Children 1st to work with a group of children to select and resource internal fittings and fixtures.

Information and data sharing

Our children/young people who have experienced the care and justice system have already told us what is important to them. Utilisation of the Lundy Model of Participation is growing across the partnership, however we know there is more we need to do to embed and scale up its application.

Children 1st have significant expertise in the Barnahus model and are an Associate member of the European PROMISE network and long-time advocates for bringing Barnahus to Scotland. In addition they bring notable experience in providing recovery services to children who have been victims of violence and involved in criminal and civil justice proceedings. Dr Hill of Children 1st worked with Professor Lundy and Dr Mary Mitchell to develop ‘Building a Culture of Participation in Barnahus: Implementing children’s right to participate in decision making’. Utilising research from across Barnahus, Children 1st have analysed the application of the Lundy model and created a useful guide for current and emerging Bairns Hoose.

Our partnership with Children 1st will enable Aberdeen City to have access to invaluable resources that can support our workforce to further develop their skills, capacity and confidence in our developing use and application of the Lundy model.

Our local Partnership are currently reviewing the format of our multi-agency Child's Plan to incorporate the Lundy Model. This is expected to be rolled out over the second half of 2023. We also welcome it being a core element of the Voice of the Infant, Practice Guidance. While being utilised in pockets the consistency of its usage remains an area of focus.

Our strong focus on prevention requires us to challenge ourselves to consider the alignment between the Bairns Hoose and our model of Family Support. This will ensure that data (quantitative and qualitative) is used to shape our wider model of Family Support.

Holistic support and common finance/commissioning

The commissioning of a trauma recovery service will be on a whole family basis which will support our focus on rights across the partnership and provision of more holistic family support. This focus has been guided by what our children and families have told us about how they want to access services.

6.3 Please describe how you will involve staff in the service design and improvement for your partnership and its services. [wordcount maximum 500]

Leadership, shared governance and aligned policies.

Senior Leaders have shared a commitment to deliver a local Bairns Hoose. The development now features in integrated and single agency strategic plans. Key leads from each agency sit on the Delivery Group and our SCIM team have heavily influenced our planning to date.

Local and National leaders shared with 150 staff from across the multi-agency workforce our planning and thinking in relation to Bairns Hoose at our recent Public Protection event in May 2023. The positive enthusiasm for delivering a Bairns Hoose was palpable. The event enabled the workforce to provide invaluable feedback and a strong operational perspective. This has been captured and we have ensured their comments and thinking is fully reflected in our application and planning.

Following submission of this application we recognise there is a need to increase the level of engagement across the multi-agency workforce. Engagement with operational leaders across Children's Social Work is planned for the end of August and will be a focus for our autumn Child Protection Development meeting. Progress will be routinely reported through internal and shared governance structures to ensure both public transparency and recognition of staff commitment and achievements as well as ensuring the connectedness of the Bairns Hoose to our wider system and structures.

Shared culture and holistic support

It is proposed that the double diamond service design template be used to support the delivery of our Bairns Hoose and that the Delivery Group, staff team and Reference Group should now start to lead members of the wider multi-agency workforce through the stages of Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver to ensure they have full ownership of our Bairns Hoose.



It is thought that taking this approach will enable the wider workforce to feel part of the change and identify how their contribution will help to support those children impacted by the child protection and justice system as part of the wider model of Family Support. Taking this approach will also help the Bairns Hoose team develop a robust theory of change and associated evaluation framework to help monitor the impact of changes in the short, medium and longer term.

The tools available in [hls-practical-guide.pdf](#) are exceptionally helpful in helping us steward our system to reduce and mitigate risk of harm as we explore the interface with our wider model of Family Support. Taking a learning circles approach will help ensure that we look at the Bairns Hoose as part of our wider system and use all of the policy levers to secure improvement in outcomes for children and families. This approach also enables consideration of systems at differing levels including regional, place and at team around the child level.

6.4 Please describe the skills and capacity you have to support learning, service design and change and how you will support learning across the partnership to enable change. [wordcount maximum 500]

Information/ data sharing and shared culture

In October 2022 Aberdeen City Council launched our **D365 data system**. This replaced the Council's existing data system for Social Work which no longer served our needs. The D365 system developed with Microsoft has been designed by social workers for social workers. The system has been shared with Scottish Government given its capacity to deliver multi agency chronologies as set out within the National Care Service Bill. The D365 data system currently records IRD/SCIM data which is reported to our Child Protection Committee and nationally.

We have made considerable progress in our use of live qualitative and quantitative data to drive more agile and responsive approaches. Our "request for assistance" process, which will soon (August 2023) be utilised by all partners inclusive of 3rd Sector, is helping CPP's gain a shared understanding of risk of vulnerability and aligns to our priorities and use of resources more effectively.

The Community Planning Partnership currently utilises the IHI approach to improvement science and working practices are well established. The Local Authority offers 'bootcamp' training in quality improvement for all project leads. This resource is available to support our Pathfinder.

The Local Authority has a highly effective Data and Insights team who will support the establishment of a PowerBi monitoring, reporting and analysis to help monitor impact in real time. The partnership's approach to data gathering and reporting in relation to Child Protection and Corporate Parenting has been positively evaluated by CELCIS and the Promise Scotland team with learning drawn to support reporting at a national level.

Shared goals and aligned policy

The Local Authority People and Organisation function have staff trained to help make effective use of service redesign principles and the Children and Family Service Cluster (education and children's social work) have experience of using the principles to design innovative pilots and tests of change, informed by the voices of service users, as part of our work to develop a robust Family Support Model.

We continue to participate in a Getting it Right for Everyone Pathfinder which builds upon learning from a local audit in relation to children with disabilities within the child protection system. This work is helping to develop consistency of planning for children with complex and enduring needs to ensure their needs are effectively planned for including beyond childhood.

There is considerable evidence of our commitment to learning and development, with SCIM and our Fit Like Hubs recognised nationally as best practice. Our partnership with Children 1st will enable learning from other national Bairns Hoose models to be taken into account.

Strength based practice is well established across the partnership.

We are developing a broader feedback loop in which children, young people and parents can reflect back to us their experiences of receiving family and social work support. While this can be challenging for the workforce the insight and learning this offers is invaluable. The work of the reference group will compliment this.

Committed leadership and commissioning

The Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaboration is led by the Council and extends across NHS Grampian, University of Aberdeen and Robert Gordon University. It will work with our commissioned external research contractor to support evaluation activity.

We are open to working in collaboration with the care Inspectorate to support the development of our evaluation framework

SECTION 7	Data & Evidence
Section weighting	20%
7.1 Please describe how you will generate, collate and analyse data and evidence to monitor delivery and identify learning for improvement. Briefly outline what quantitative and qualitative data, including from children and young people themselves, you will gather, and who will be responsible for collecting and analysing information. [wordcount maximum 500]	

Information/data sharing, shared culture and shared goals

In 2017 the CPP adopted Institute of Healthcare Improvement methodology and significant progress has been made in the leadership of improvement through multi-disciplinary teams. As a result, relationships across the partnership are strong, policies are becoming more aligned through strong shared governance arrangements and fewer decisions are taken in isolation.

Pilots will “test the full implementation of the Bairns' Hoose model blueprint”. We recognise that there are three key elements to monitoring and evaluation. These are:

- standing single and multi-agency systems, practices and culture
- implementation of the Bairns Hoose approach, including application of the Bairns Hoose standards
- the impact of the Bairns Hoose approach including outcomes for the child, their family and wider society

i. Standing Systems, Practices and Culture

We have well developed monitoring and reporting of existing child protection services covering demand, pathways, processes (including SCIM), quality, resources and costs. It is important that the pilot is integrated into existing reporting arrangements so development can be considered within the context of the wider “whole system” approach. This work is supported by the Council’s Data & Insights team, working with practitioners across multi-agency partners and reported to our CPC and Chief Officers Group as part of a whole system approach to public protection.

ii. Bairns Hoose Standards

We will work with Scottish Government to agree performance indicators to support internal quality assurance against the Standards, design data collection and monitoring against the standards and support internal and external assurance.

iii. Impact of the Bairns Hoose approach including Outcomes for the child, their family and wider society

Scottish Government will “work closely with Pathfinder partnerships in a collaborative way to identify measures of success and gather data and intelligence”. From the Phase 1 evaluation and a review of other literature, we believe there are significant opportunities to develop the evaluation of impact, including:

- children and young people’s recovery
- therapeutic outcomes for children and their families
- experience of the justice process for children and families
- criminal justice outcomes

- impact for staff and organisations

We will work in partnership with Children 1st and the NIHR funded Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaboration (AHDR) to commission the University of Edinburgh, who have undertaken evaluation and development of programme theory relating to Scotland’s first Bairns Hoose. We will draw upon established protocols for designing ethical research approaches; data management, security and sharing protocols and data collection tool design. The participation of AHDR will provide additional support ensuring learning is captured and shared at a local level.

We anticipate a formative approach to evaluation informed by realist evaluation processes. We will utilise a mixed method approach to data collection, capturing both qualitative data (e.g. interviews, focus groups, observations) and quantitative data (e.g. statistical case data; survey responses; outcome measurements for children and families).

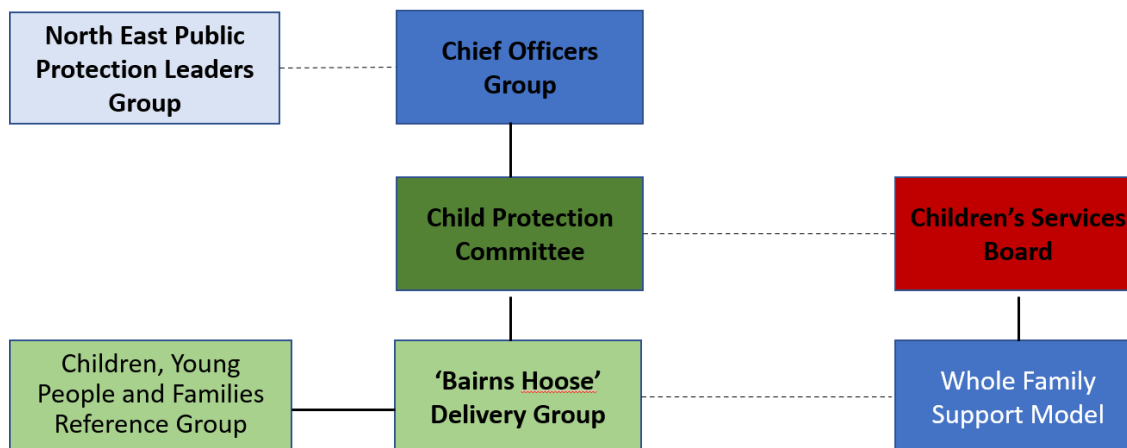
Formative evaluation will enable us to gather and analyse learning and feedback during development and implementation rather than waiting for an ‘end result’. This supports an ongoing reflective learning culture.

Realist evaluations are useful in evaluating complex programmes that produce mixed outcomes, helping to better understand how and why different outcomes occur for different stakeholders. This is considered appropriate for our evaluation. This will involve collaborative development of a programme theory (logic model) describing why and how we anticipate interventions lead to desired outcomes. This will be aligned with the Bairns’ Hoose Standards and Principles.

SECTION 8	Governance, Leadership, Resources
Section weighting	15%

8.1 Please describe your proposed Pathfinder governance and reporting structures. [wordcount maximum 500]

Bairns Hoose Governance



Our local COG has demonstrated strong leadership in their commitment to establish a Bairns Hoose. Operationally they have delegated planning to the CPC who have formed a multi-agency Bairns' Hoose Delivery Group, chaired by the CSWO. This group works in collaboration with a recently formed Reference Group of young people and families who have experienced child protection and justice systems.

The Chief Officers group have ultimate accountability for delivery at Aberdeen City Level and will receive routine progress reports and have access to agreed data as well as evaluation reports from the proposed partnership with the University of Edinburgh. This will enable them to gain robust and independent assurance that risks and issues are being resolved effectively and that the Bairns Hoose standards are being met.

The CPC shares an independent Chair with the Adult Protection Committee and this is considered to be helpful to maximise the impact of the resource and approaches available through our local Bairns Hoose.

The CPC will reporting of progress to COG will be shared with the Children's Services Board who will continue to oversee the development of our Family Support Model and ensure that the wider Family Support Model takes account of relevant learning and needs being identified around prevention and early intervention at the Bairns Hoose

The Bairns Hoose Delivery Group, has delegated authority to develop more detailed plans, is heavily influenced by the established Reference Group of those with lived experience of the child protection and justice systems. This will be an open group ensuring that newer experiences are captured and fully considered. This relationship will be maintained. Membership of the Delivery Group currently includes:

- Children's Social Work
- Police Scotland
- NHS Grampian
- SCRA
- Children 1st

We have positively connected with COPFS/SCTS and local members of the judiciary to share our planning to deliver our Bairns Hoose.

The establishment of a Bairns Hoose is outlined in both our Children's Services Plan and our Child Protection Committee Improvement Plan. A shared evaluation framework is currently in operation across both groups given the inextricable links and shared responsibilities and this connection will be maintained. Progress reports and data dashboards will be considered by both Groups to ensure that learning is fully taken account of.

Facilitated by the National SCIM Implementation team, we are actively exploring options to enable the delivery of SCIM across Orkney and Shetland. This would share capacity and extend the remit of NE SCIM co-ordinator, to include co-ordinating SCIM activity for both Island partnerships. With the SCIM model being a

core component to realising the Bairns Hoose Standards we have had extended our discussion with both Island Authorities to explore how our Bairns Hoose and planning for a North East Trauma Recovery service could support children, young people and families from Orkney and Shetland.

Aberdeen City currently provides child protection data, including SCIM data, to the Child Protection Committees of Aberdeenshire and Moray the capacity to extend this to Orkney and Shetland is would further enhance local governance and oversight.

8.2 Please describe how you will develop leadership at all levels to understand, drive and inspire the development of the Bairns Hoose. Please also outline how you will approach developing and embedding your Bairns' Hoose vision, values and culture across the partnership. [wordcount maximum 500]

Committed leadership

Senior leaders are already fully committed to the development of a Bairns Hoose. The Bairns Hoose features in single and multi-agency strategic Plans

As this Pathfinder bid is submitted, it is important that we plan an extensive engagement progress to ensure that the wider workforce are involved in driving the changes. We know from our development of SCIM it is critical that senior leaders are committed to the change, but equally important to empower and enable leaders at all levels to lead development and delivery. This work will now be progressed, building on other multi-agency improvement activity.

Shared policies and goals

As a Community Planning Partnership, we are commitment to early, preventative and sustainable support to scaffold children, young people and families to mitigate the need for child protection registration or statutory intervention in keeping with The Promise and the recommendations of the Children's Hearing System Review. This pathfinder submission is being prepared as we evaluate our progress towards delivery of Plan 21-24 and valuable learning from this evaluation will continue to inform our planning.

The establishment and development of Operational Teams will be important and a planned programme from OD, as outlined previously, is proposed. It is proposed that the Operational Team give consideration of the professional learning required by the wider workforce to ensure that all staff supporting children, young people and families are aware of the critical role of the Bairns Hoose in our wider model of Family Support.

8.3 Please describe the financial commitment that will be in place to successfully support the Partnership for the duration of the Pathfinder phase. [wordcount maximum 500]

Common financing and commissioning

The location of the Bairns Hoose within an integrated ELC provision provides great opportunities to look at the Bairns Hoose as part of the wider system to develop

our shared understanding of risk and vulnerability. The building being proposed for use is owned and operated by Aberdeen City Council.

Considerable progress has been made in pooling resource across the universal services to co-designing and deliver services to vulnerable groups. Building on this there is a commitment from all partners to collocate relevant staff and further integrate data, processes and practice to fully deliver on the Bairns Hoose 'four room' concept.

The business case for the physical infrastructure is now at an advanced stage with final approval anticipated early in 2024. . Partners have actively contributed to informing the Bairns Hoose design, highlighting their service needs to support an integrated way of working. Discussions are continuing to agree how partners will financial contribute to the building costs.

Children 1st have notable expertise in the Barnahus model, alongside considerable experience in providing whole family recovery services to children who have been victims of violence and involved in criminal and civil justice proceedings. This experience provides confidence that our trauma recovery service will mitigate the unnecessary need for families to access a multiplicity of services thereby ensuring value to the public pound. Our partnership with Children 1st will also enable our capacity to maximise funding opportunities through their existing relationships with local corporate partners.

Email your completed application to bairnshoose@gov.scot by 3pm on Monday, 21 August 2023. If you have any questions or if you would like to discuss your submission, please get in touch by contacting bairnshoose@gov.scot

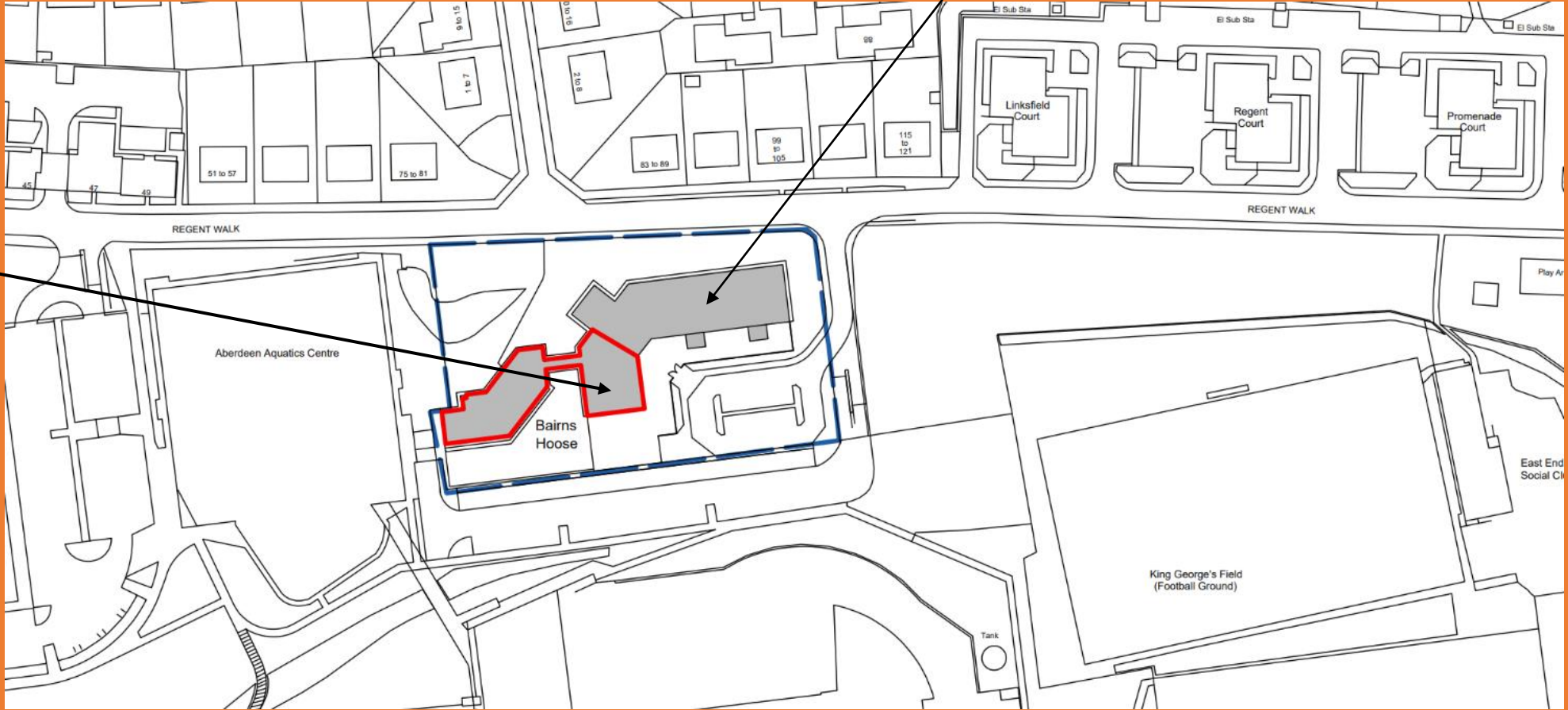
Thank you for your interest in the Bairns' Hoose Pathfinder Phase.



Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose

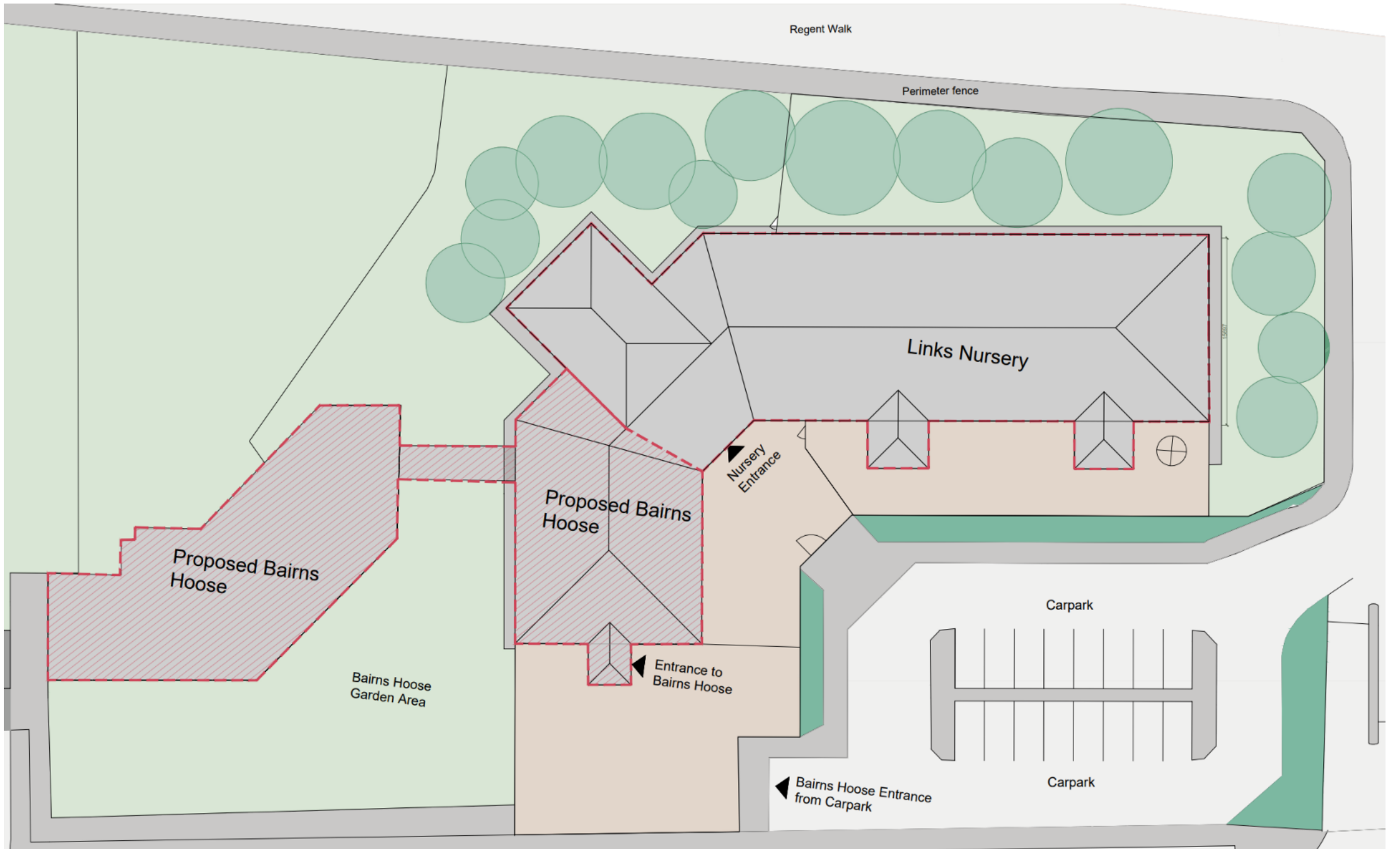
August 2023

Links
Hub –
Bairns
Hoose

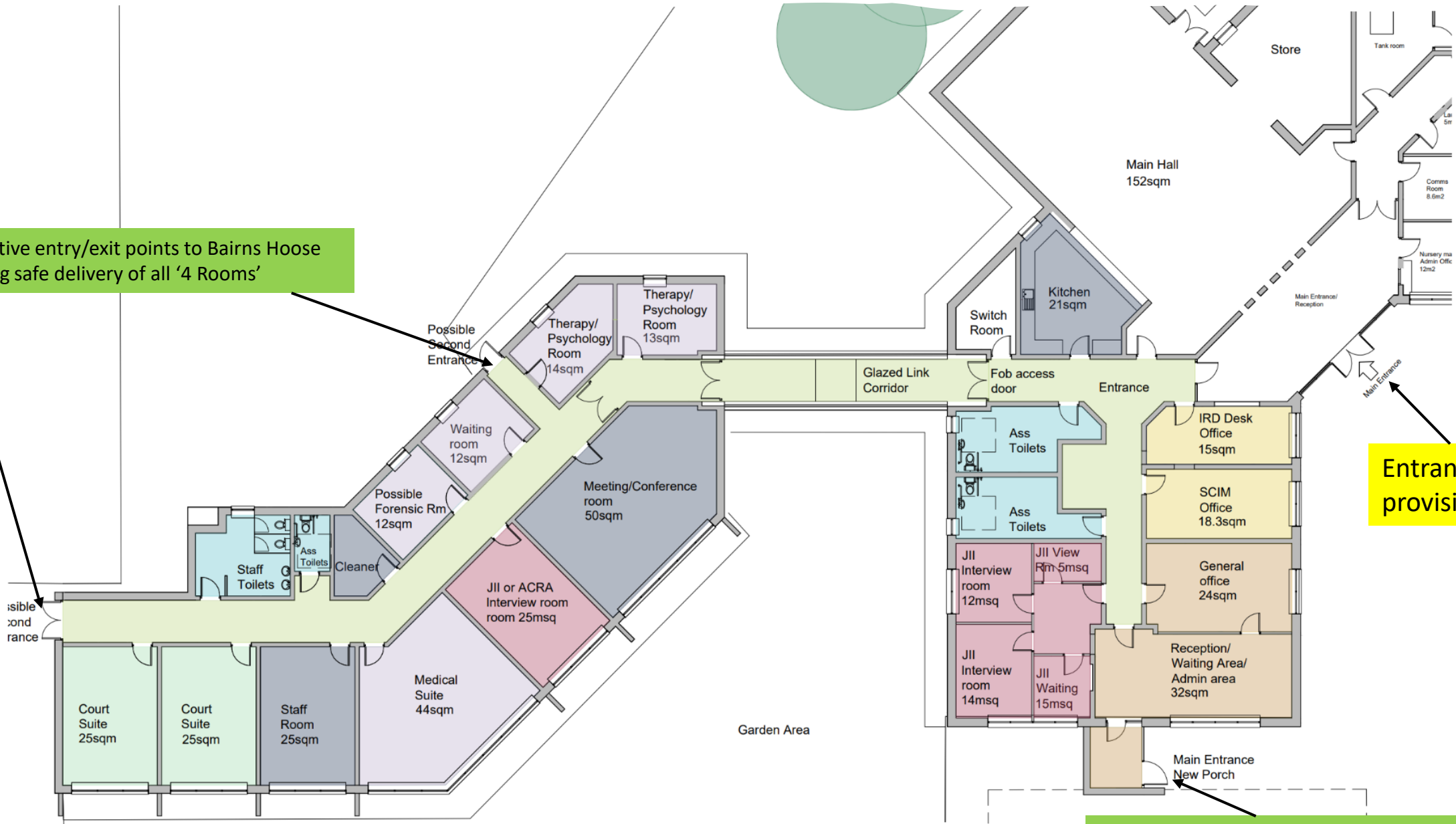


Links Hub ELC





Alternative entry/exit points to Bairns Hoose ensuring safe delivery of all '4 Rooms'



Entrance to ELC provision

Main entrance to Bairns Hoose



Links Hub ELC

The Links Hub ELC was opened in 2022. The Bairns Hoose will be developed to the same standard and finish. Our children and young people are already helping us to think about the design and aesthetic feel of the bairns hoose.

This page is intentionally left blank

April 2022

Children 1st
Smiling face logo

Bairns Hoose



Aberdeen - family session

What have we been up to?

Bairns Hoose Participation Lead paid a visit to one of our Children 1st hubs in Aberdeen on Saturday 2nd April 2022. The session was facilitated within a family drop-in session. Bacon butties, chitchat, and lots of football was involved. Meg had fantastic conversations with 6 parents/ family members who were all particularly interested in the the right place and space activity.

The right place and space

The families enjoyed discussing the house and what they visualised would work well for children, young people & families.



"The house should smell really nice, as it can help change your mood. So nice flowers or fresh laundry can be calming. It's all about the senses."

Mum

Choice

Choice was a key theme that emerged throughout the session. The families felt it is important to have things to choose from, such as which toys to play with, what to sit on, which lights to switch on. They shared every child and young person is different so having choices would be important to make it fit the individual's wants and needs for that day.

The senses

The Senses were discussed in much detail. Families felt the experience of the house should reflect our senses.

Touch: soft, comfortable textures such as cushions, blankets, and rugs.

Sight: Soft colours, with pops of colour, with artwork which represents nature, soft lighting throughout and views to the garden.

Smell: Calming smells such as fresh flowers and wax melts.

Taste: Drinks and snacks available whenever families want.

Hearing: Option to play music, water fountain & sound proofing throughout.

