

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 30 March 2023. Minute of Special Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Crockett (as substitute for Councillor Lawrence), Farquhar (as substitute for Councillor McLeod), Graham (as substitute for Councillor Grant), MacGregor, Nicoll (as substitute for Councillor Al-Samarai), Radley and van Sweeden. External Members:- Mrs Frances Cardno (Parent Representative - Primary Schools/ASN), Mr Mike Paul (Teacher Representative (Secondary Schools)), Mr Madhav Regmi (Third Religious Representative) and Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools).

The agenda and report associated with this minute can be viewed [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.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

1. There were no declarations of interest nor transparency statements made.

NORTHFIELD ACADEMY INSPECTION - CFS/23/115

2. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which shared the outcome of a recent inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) of Northfield Academy and details the work undertaken to secure improvement to date, and proposed improvement activity to support the school to move forward positively.

The Committee heard that a large pool of expertise had been brought together to support the school, known as the Tactical Team. Members then received a presentation from the Tactical Team leads, setting out the direction of travel and the action plan, which had been designed with young people at its heart.

Members asked a number of questions of officers in relation to the plan, including the study visit to XP in Doncaster; the various projects being taken forward with the children and young people of Northfield; the current staffing position at the school; the communication and engagement plan; and the proposed new model for S1 pupils.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) approve the workplan contained in Appendix A as the Council's official response to the HMIE inspection report on Northfield Academy;
- (b) approve the governance framework available in Appendix B;

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
30 March 2023

- (c) instruct the Interim Director Children's and Family Services to implement the governance framework, including the establishment of an Advisory Group, to help drive improvements in the longer term;
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer - Education to oversee the Tactical Team in their support of school improvement at Northfield Academy against the Core Quality Indicators;
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer - Education to provide progress updates every two committee cycles through established Inspection reporting and include the outcome of any on-going engagement with Education Scotland including the conclusions from their return visit in 6 months and 18 months;
- (f) instruct the Head Teacher to routinely report progress to parents/carers and young people; and
- (g) instruct the Chief Officer - Education to amend quality improvement arrangements for secondary schools to mitigate risk.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to acknowledge that there had been failings on multiple levels over a number of years which had contributed to the challenges outlined in the Northfield Academy inspection report;
- (ii) to express thanks to education staff for their dedication to delivering in an often challenging environment; and express the Committee's confidence in the tactical team and staff to deliver sustainable improvements for the school;
- (iii) to underline the Committee's solidarity with the parent council, pupils, and community of Northfield;
- (iv) to acknowledge that delivering the highest quality of education for the children and young people of Northfield was paramount, whilst ensuring that their wellbeing and individual needs were being considered and met consistently through a nurturing and empowering approach; and
- (v) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report.

- COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, Convener