

Public Document Pack



To: Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice Convener; Councillors Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Grant, MacGregor, McLellan, McLeod, Radley, one Independent Member to be confirmed and one Partnership Member to be confirmed; and Mrs Frances Cardno (Parent Representative - Primary Schools/ASN), Mr Michael Crawford (Parent Representative - Secondary / ASN), Ms Jacqueline Munro (Teacher Representative - Secondary Schools), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative), Mr Madhav Regmi (Third Religious Representative), Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative).

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 12 February 2024

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, 20 FEBRUARY 2024 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

BUSINESS

NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1.1 There are no items of urgent business at this time

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2.1 There are no items of exempt business

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3.1 Members are requested to intimate any declarations of interest

DEPUTATIONS

4.1 There are no requests for deputation at this time

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 Minute of Meeting of 21 November 2023 - for approval (Pages 5 - 16)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

6.1 Committee Business Planner (Pages 17 - 24)

NOTICES OF MOTION

7.1 There are no Notices of Motion at this time

REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES

8.1 There are no referrals at this time

PERFORMANCE AND RISK

9.1 Performance Management/National Improvement Framework Progress Report - Children's and Family Services - COM/24/052 (Pages 25 - 82)

9.2 Children's Services Board Annual Report April 2023 - March 2024 - CFS/24/046 (Pages 83 - 162)

9.3 Inspection Reporting - CFS/24/050 (Pages 163 - 244)

9.4 Collaborative Improvement Report - CFS/24/048 (Pages 245 - 258)

EDUCATION

10.1 Management of RAAC in Schools - RES/24/053 (Pages 259 - 286)

10.2 Northfield Primaries - RES/24/054 (Pages 287 - 300)

10.3 School Estate Plan Timeline - RES/24/055 (Pages 301 - 312)

- 10.4 [Autumn in the City Programme 2023 - CFS/24/047](#) (Pages 313 - 324)
- 10.5 [School Holiday Pattern 2025 - 2030 - CFS/24/044](#) (Pages 325 - 334)
- 10.6 [National Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare and Local Delivery Plans - CFS/24/014](#) (Pages 335 - 370)

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

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

- 11.1 [Social work service provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Young People \(UASYP\) - CFS/24/045](#) (Pages 371 - 380)
- 11.2 [Bairns Hoose - CFS/24/049](#) (Pages 381 - 386)
- 11.3 [Secure Care Pathway Review - CFS/24/051](#) (Pages 387 - 394)

Service Updates for this Committee can be viewed here:- [Education & Children's Services Committee - service updates](#)

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

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

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EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 21 November 2023. Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Allard (as substitute for Councillor Radley for articles 11 to 18), Al-Samarai, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Grant, MacGregor, McLellan, McLeod, Radley (for articles 1 to 10) and Mrs Stewart (as substitute for Councillor Boulton). External Members:- Mrs Frances Cardno (Parent Representative - Primary Schools/ASN) (for articles 1 to 15), Mr Michael Crawford (Parent Representative - Secondary / ASN) (for articles 1 to 15), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative) (for articles 1 to 11), Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools) (for articles 1 to 9) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative) (for articles 10 to 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 Convener proposed that the Committee consider item 11.1 (St Peter's RC School Long Term Education Provision - Exempt Appendices) and item 11.2 (Outline Business Case New Secondary School for Hazlehead and Countesswells – Exempt Appendices) with the press and public excluded from the meeting.

The Committee resolved:-

in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the above items so as to avoid disclosure of information of the class described in paragraph 8 of Schedule 7(A) to the Act.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

2. The following statements of transparency were noted:-

- in relation to item 10.1 (Inspection Reporting), Councillor Grant advised that he had a child who attended ELC provision at Riverbank Primary School, however he did not consider that this amounted to an interest which would require him to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item;
- in relation to items 10.2 (St Peter's RC School Long Term Education Provision) and 11.1 (the exempt appendices for that report), Mr Murray advised that his daughter was a teacher at St Peter's RC School, however he did not consider that this amounted to an interest which would require him to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of those items;

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- Mr Crawford advised for reasons of transparency that he had two children at Cults Academy and one at Airyhall Primary School but that he did not consider this amounted to an interest which would prevent him from participating in the meeting.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF 12 SEPTEMBER 2023

3. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 12 September 2023 for approval.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that Mr Doug Haywood had been in attendance on behalf of Miss Scott; and
- (ii) to otherwise 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 that the Northfield Schools report was to be added to the business planner for the February 2024 meeting;
- (ii) to request that the formatting of the planner be reviewed to ensure there was no cut off text;
- (iii) to note the update provided by the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord on the situation with Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC);
- (iv) to note that there would be further detail provided to Committee on any delays to the school estate reports listed in the planner via the report to be presented to the February 2024 meeting;
- (v) to agree to remove item 16 (Education and Children's Services reforms); and
- (vi) to otherwise note the planner.

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ANNUAL EFFECTIVENESS REPORT - COM/23/348

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which set out the first annual effectiveness report for the Education and Children's Services Committee.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

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- (a) provide comments and observations on the data contained within the annual report; and
- (b) note the annual report of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK REPORT - CHILDREN'S AND FAMILY SERVICE/NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK PROGRESS UPDATE - COM/23/371

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which presented (a) the status of key performance measures relating to the Children's and Family Services function; (b) a progress update in relation to implementation of the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan 2023/24; and (c) an attainment and achievement data briefing summary relating to the August 2023 Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examination diet release.

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 request that officers include information in relation to long-term trends for looked after children in future reports; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the report.

CLUSTER RISK REGISTERS - CFS/23/335

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which presented the cluster risk registers and assurance maps in accordance with the Education and Children's Services Committee Terms of Reference, to provide assurance that risks were being managed effectively within the Education and Integrated Children's Services Clusters.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the Cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Maps set out in appendices A, B, C and D.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would give consideration to whether the two week period for Senior Leadership applications could be reviewed;

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- (ii) to note that officers would share information with Members via service update on the ongoing work in relation to the desktop review of Pupil Equity Funding plans and sustainability of interventions, and
- (iii) to approve the recommendation.

INSPECTION REPORTING - CFS/23/369

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which detailed the outcome of inspection reports published by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) and The Care Inspectorate on the quality of Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings since the last meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

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 Framework agreed at Committee in July 2023.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that there was an error in section 3.8 of the report and Kingsford ELC was moving from intensive to targeted support;
- (ii) to request that officers include information on the location of settings in future reports to ensure Members were aware in which part of the city they were based;
- (iii) to note the improvement that had been achieved in the various settings, and to thank staff for their efforts; and
- (iv) to approve the recommendations.

ST PETER'S RC SCHOOL - LONG TERM EDUCATION PROVISION - RES/23/365

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which presented an updated Outline Business Case (OBC) for the long term education provision for St Peter's RC school, including the outcome of the Old Aberdeen House feasibility study as an alternative option to provide a two stream school.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the recommended option and associated costs to refurbish Old Aberdeen House with the addition of new build provision to deliver a 21st century learning environment for St Peter's RC School and recommend approval of this option at the meeting of Finance and Resources Committee on 22 November 2023; and

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- (b) subject to approval of recommendation 2.4 to the Finance and Resources Committee, note that a progress report would be presented to a future meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee in 2024.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) note that St Peter's RC School was one of two schools in the city whose condition was currently rated lowest as "C", poor; and that the suitability of St Peter's was rated as "C" (poor); and
- (b) approve the recommendations contained in the report.

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

That the Committee:-

- (a) note the contents of the options appraisal and the officer recommendation to proceed with Option C;
- (b) note the Education Scotland report, prepared in April 2019 by the HMIE, titled "Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Aberdeen City Council to relocate St Peter's RC Primary School to the existing Riverbank school building..." concluded that the proposal to relocate St Peter's RC to a refurbished school at the current Riverbank school site, "has clear educational benefits for children who currently attend St Peter's RC Primary School and who would have access to a more flexible, modern and healthy living environment, with improved outdoor learning spaces and early learning and childcare facilities;
- (c) note that the same HMIE report stated, "There will also be improved outdoor learning spaces with opportunities for physical education. There is significantly more outdoor space available around the Riverbank building, with more than ten times the amount of hard landscaping and nearly 80 times more soft landscaping than is available at the St Peter's site.";
- (d) note that the Options Appraisal sets out the significant disparity in the "total site area" of each option where Riverbank is currently 15,816sqm compared with St Peter's RC which is only 7,940sqm and agrees that the additional open space in the former presents a significant opportunity for future generations of St Peter's RC pupils to benefit from significantly better outdoor space;
- (e) note that the Options Appraisal sets out a rationale to develop a school that will accommodate a school roll of up to 434 pupils to cope with possible increased demand and suggests the school roll could be double its current size;
- (f) agree that, if St Peter's RC were to double in size in the coming years, there is not nearly enough outside space on the existing St Peter's RC site in

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- order to create an outdoor learning environment that pupils and staff deserve and that therefore Option C does not offer maximum educational benefit for the school community;
- (g) agree that, in light of the above, Committee recommends to the Finance and Resources Committee that it agrees to continue to progress work on Option B with any remaining preparatory work outstanding to be programmed and progressed as much as practical prior to the decant of Riverbank Primary School into new build which is scheduled to open in summer 2024;
 - (h) recommend to the Finance and Resources Committee that it instructs the Chief Officer – Capital to refer the proposals for the project to the Budget process in 2024; and
 - (i) instruct the Chief Officer – Capital to report back to a future meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in 2024 with a progress update report.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (15) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillors Al-Samarai, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, MacGregor, McLellan, McLeod, Radley and Mrs Stewart; and Mrs Cardno, Mr Crawford, Mr Murray and Miss Scott; for the amendment (2) – Councillors Blake and Grant; absent from the division (1) – Mrs Smith.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would provide an update to Members outwith the meeting on the current situation with the replacement Riverbank School project and the project completion date of Summer 2024; and
- (ii) to adopt the motion.

OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE: NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION FOR HAZLEHEAD AND COUNTESSWELLS - RES/23/366

10. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which presented an Outline Business Case (OBC), setting out the findings of a recent feasibility study, to identify options for delivering new secondary school provision within the Hazlehead and Countesswells Associated Schools Groups (ASGs).

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the recommended option within the OBC and instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new campus on the Hazlehead Academy playing fields and on proposed changes to the existing Countesswells and Hazlehead secondary school catchment areas, to create a new catchment area which would be served by the proposed new school provision; and

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- (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 the conclusion of the consultation process, in July 2024.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved:-

That the Committee:-

- (a) note that Hazlehead Academy was one of two schools in the city whose condition was currently rated lowest as "C", poor; and that the suitability of Hazlehead Academy was rated as "D" bad;
- (b) welcome the award of LEIP3 funding for the Hazlehead Academy rebuild project; and
- (c) approve the recommendations in the report.

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

That the Education and Children's Services Committee:-

- (a) note the recommended option within the OBC and instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out the statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new campus on the Hazlehead Academy playing field;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a separate statutory public consultation to specifically address the option of Kingswells primary remaining zoned for the Bucksburn Academy ASG;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to provide Members of the Education and Children's Services Committee with written confirmation of the terms and scope of the LEIP funding allocation which was confirmed on 30 October 2023;
- (d) note that Committee should maintain its commitment to the decision of Council on 8 October 2014 regarding primary education provision (one two stream and one three stream school) and provide a new secondary school at Countesswells;
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report back to the Committee on the outcomes of the consultation on the Hazlehead Academy proposal at its next available meeting following the conclusion of the consultation process, in July 2024, and to bring forward a report on the provision of a new Secondary School for Countesswells;
- (f) agree that Council must not make the same mistake as the SNP made with the 3Rs Bucksburn Secondary School which was built without taking into consideration the increased capacity required for the area, therefore there is a need for a separate Secondary school for Countesswells.

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That the Finance and Resources Committee:-

- (a) approve in principle the recommended option within the OBC to construct a new campus to provide secondary school provision for Hazlehead subject to the outcome of a statutory consultation and instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to provide an OBC for a new Secondary School at Countesswells;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Capital to refer the proposals for the projects to the budget process in 2024/25;
- (c) note 4.2 of the report that states, “The S75 agreement currently does not allow for the Council to use the ‘Secondary School Contribution’ and agree that failure to build a new school at Countesswells may open up the Council to legal challenge as well as having to pay back developer’s contributions; and
- (d) subject to the outcomes of the statutory consultation and any decision taken at the budget meeting of March 2024 approves in principle the use of resources for the implementation of the project from 2024.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (12) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillors Al-Samarai, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, MacGregor, McLellan, Radley and Mrs Stewart; and Mrs Cardno, Mr Crawford and Mrs Smith; for the amendment (4) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Grant and McLeod; declined to vote (1) – Mr Murray; absent from the division (1) – Miss Scott.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Interim Director of Children’s and Family Services would liaise with the Chief Officer – Data and Insights to clarify when the updated school roll data would be available, and would share that information with Members outwith the meeting; and
- (ii) to adopt the motion.

OPTIONS TO RATIONALISE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE SETTINGS TO MATCH THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT GRANT - CFS/23/301

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children’s and Family Services which presented options to rationalise Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings to match the Scottish Government Grant, as instructed by Council at the Budget meeting on 1 March 2023.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee consider the options presented and approve the amended Early Learning and Childcare delivery models, based on demand.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved:-

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That the Committee:-

- (a) welcome the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to 1140 funded hours since 2021 which had included eighteen new building projects for ELC provision around the city;
- (b) welcome the survey which had seen significantly increased engagement with parents, carers and families and which helped to ensure that ELC provision met the needs of young people and their families; and to give thanks all who took part;
- (c) note that ELC delivery would continue to be monitored to ensure it was adapted to meet local demand; and
- (d) approve the amended Early Learning and Childcare delivery models, based on demand.

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

That the Committee:-

- (a) consider the options presented and approve the amended Early Learning and Childcare delivery models, based on demand, subject to reinstating the 600 hours provision at Bramble Brae;
- (b) agree to refer this report to the next meeting of Finance & Resources Committee to seek approval to fund this decision in 2023/24 (£74,000) through the use uncommitted General Fund reserves, noting that this would reduce the value of uncommitted funds below the recommended minimum; and
- (c) agree to refer the need for continuing funding of £74,000 in 2024/25 (and full year effect of £118,000 in 2025/26) to the budget process as a cost pressure on the budget gap set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, in recognition of the commitment to maintain provision at Bramble Brae.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (15) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillors Allard, Al-Samarai, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, MacGregor, McLellan, McLeod and Mrs Stewart; and Mrs Cardno, Mr Crawford, Mr Murray and Mrs Smith; for the amendment (2) – Councillors Blake and Grant; absent from the division (1) – Miss Scott.

The Committee resolved:-
to adopt the motion.

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MCR PATHWAYS UPDATE - CFS/23/260

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which provided an update on the continuation of the MCR Pathways Programme in Aberdeen City Schools.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note that three schools (Northfield Academy, Lochside Academy and St Machar Academy) would continue with the MCR Pathways programme for the duration of academic year 2023/24 - Lochside Academy and St Machar Academy would fund the programme through their Pupil Equity fund and Northfield Academy would be supported to fund the programme through the Scottish Attainment challenge Care Experienced Fund.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS - AMENDMENT TO 2023/2024 PATTERN - CFS/23/367

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which sought authority for the Interim Chief Officer – Education to make an amendment to the 2023/24 school holiday pattern to ensure all staff received the Good Friday public holiday and children received their statutory entitlement of education.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) approve an amendment to the 2023/24 holiday pattern (set out at Option 1 in the report); and
- (b) instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education to inform staff, parents and young people of the change to the holiday pattern

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

In line with the decision taken at article 1, the following two items were taken with the press and public excluded from the meeting.

ST PETER'S RC SCHOOL - LONG TERM EDUCATION PROVISION - EXEMPT APPENDICES

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14. The Committee had before it exempt appendices relating to the St Peter's RC School Long Term Education Provision report (article 9 of this minute refers).

The Committee resolved:-

to note the information contained within the exempt appendices.

OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE: NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL PROVISION FOR HAZLEHEAD AND COUNTESSWELLS - EXEMPT APPENDICES

15. The Committee had before it exempt appendices relating to the Outline Business Case: New Secondary School Provision for Hazlehead and Countesswells report (article 10 of this minute refers).

The Committee resolved:-

to note the information contained within the exempt appendices.

At this juncture, the External Members departed the meeting. The public part of the meeting resumed.

CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT - CFS/23/341

16. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Social Work Officer which presented the Annual Report for 2022/23. The report informed Members of the role and responsibilities exercised by the Chief Social Work Officer; provided information on the delivery of statutory social work services and decision making in the period; and gave a progress report on key areas of social work provision within Aberdeen City.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the content of the Annual Report, as attached at Appendix 1.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services would circulate information to Members outwith the meeting in relation to adoption placements;
- (ii) to note that officers would arrange a workshop and a site visit around the time of the Bairns Hoose report being presented to Committee in February 2024; and
- (iii) to note the report.

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**ABERDEEN CITY'S CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23
- CFS/23/370**

17. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which presented the Aberdeen City Child Protection Committee (CPC) Annual Report 2022-23 to provide assurance that the work of the CPC was effectively helping reduce risks to children and young people.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the Child Protection Committee's Annual Report 2022-23, including the Child Protection Programme 2021-2024; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services to provide Committee with a further report in November 2024 detailing the continuing impact and effectiveness of partnership work in relation to child protection.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

KEEPING THE PROMISE - YEAR 2 EVALUATION REPORT - CFS/23/264

18. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services which set out progress of the partnership implementation of the Scottish Government's Plan 2021-24 to keep The Promise. Members also received a short presentation from officers on progress made.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the local progress made in Year Two of Plan 21-24 as outlined in the report at Appendix 1; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services to provide a progress report in Autumn 2024 in relation to the partnership's implementation of Plan 21-24 and subsequent Promise plans.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to page 459 of the report and the statement around consideration being given as to how best to make clear the offer to families given the varied range of provisions available through the Pupil Equity Funding resource, to note that officers would provide an update on this in the Integrated Children's Services Plan - Annual Update report due to Committee in April 2024; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

- **COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, Convener**

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.									
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	
20 February 2024									
Autumn 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			
School Holiday Pattern	To seek approval of the school holiday pattern to 2030		Caroline Johnstone	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1			
National Delivery Framework for School Age Children	EC&S 24/01/23 - to instruct the Chief Education Officer to report on the National Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare and local delivery plans in 2023		Louise Beaton	Education	Integrated Children's and Family Services	1.1.1			
Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data and Insights	Commissioning	1.1.3			
Secure Care Pathway Review Inspection	E&CS 08/11/22 - to note the 'Secure Care Pathway Review' thematic inspection currently being undertaken by the Care Inspectorate and instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to report back to committee on the findings of the inspection when it is published in Autumn 2023 and learning for Aberdeen City		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1			
Autism Strategy and Action Plan	ODC 17/01/19 - To instruct that annual reports be submitted on the progress of implementation of the Action Plan. Reported 5 March 2020 and will then be annually, however 2021 was delayed to May due to pandemic impact. Was reported to former Operational Delivery Committee on 31 August 2022, thereafter annually.		Jenny Rae	Health and Social Care Partnership	Health and Social Care Partnership	GD 8.1	D	Updated guidance is still awaited from Scottish Government therefore the report will be presented to a future meeting. A service update will be provided in the interim	
Inspection Reporting	A standing item to report on the outcome of Early Learning and Childcare and school inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies if required		Shona Milne	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.6			
Northfield ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Northfield ASG, in order to minimise excess pupil capacity, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate. E&CS 08/11/22 - to note that the approved motion in September 2022 included an instruction to officers to report on the feasibility study to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools in the Northfield ASG and Oldmachar ASG areas and to agree that officers should fully explore and exhaust all options in order to avoid any such school closures where possible.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.2			
Update on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in School Buildings	Council 11/09/23 - amongst other decisions, (i) agrees that costed proposals will be considered within the ongoing School Estate Plan to address the presence of RAAC in city schools; (ii) instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to issue regular service updates; and (iii) instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to report to the Education and Children's Services Committee on the outcome of inspections and identified risks.		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1			

	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	Collaborative Improvement	To present an update to Committee		Shona Milne	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
13	Bairns Hoose	E&CS 12/09/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services/Chief Social Work Officer to provide a service update in early 2024 on the outcome of the Pathfinder application and progress to develop Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose. E&CS 21/11/23 - to note that officers would arrange a workshop and a site visit around the time of the Bairns Hoose report being presented to Committee in February 2024		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1		
14	School Estate Plan Revised Timeline	To present a report on the re-ordering of the school estate		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resource	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
15	Education and Children's Services reforms	A standing item if required - To provide Committee with an update 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		Eleanor Sheppard	Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1/2.1	R	This is a standing item and there is no report required this cycle
16	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. E&CS 21/11/23 - in relation to page 459 of the report and the statement around consideration being given as to how best to make clear the offer to families given the varied range of provisions available through the Pupil Equity Funding resource, to note that officers would provide an update on this in the Integrated Children's Services Plan - Annual Update report due to Committee in April 2024	Moved from April 2024 meeting	Eleanor Sheppard	Education/ICFS	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
17	Provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Young People (UASYP)	To provide assurance to members on Aberdeen City's response to support and protect UASYP transferred to Aberdeen City via the National Transfer Scheme in addition to UASYP who arrive spontaneously.		Alison McAlpine	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1.1		
18	30 April 2024								
19	Inspection Reporting	A standing item to report on the outcome of Early Learning and Childcare and school inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies if required		Shona Milne	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.6		
20		To include the update on Northfield Academy							

	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 and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data and Insights	Commissioning	1.1.3		
21	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		
22	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		
23	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		
24	Health and Wellbeing	E&CS 23/05/23 - to instruct the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services to consider the findings of the report and plan next steps as part of work being taken forward through the Children's Services Plan and associated National Improvement Framework Plan; and to instruct the Chief Officer – Education to report the findings of the next Health and Wellbeing surveys to Committee within one calendar year. To include the update on the Health and Wellbeing summit		Gael Simpson	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
25	Corporate Parenting Annual Report	To present the Corporate Parenting Annual Report for assurance		Amy Evans	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1		
26	ABZCampus	E&CS 23/05/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Education to report back on progress within one calendar year. E&CS 12/09/23 - to instruct the Interim Director of Children's and Family Services to report back to committee detailing specific deliverables on how Phase 2 of Abz Campus, the expansion of the edge of care pilot to St Machar Academy, and the expansion of Pathways co-ordinators will support a larger group of care experienced young people before any agreement by Committee to support this change in allocation of Attainment Challenge funding. This will be reported as part of the ABZCampus report in April 2024		Mark Jones	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.1		
27									
28	2 July 2024								
29	Spring 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		
30	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data and Insights	Commissioning	1.1.3		
31	Edge of Care Pilots	E&CS 04/07/23 - to 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		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1		

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2	Approaches to Quality Improvement	E&CS 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		
38									
39	17 September 2024								
40	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	Autumn/Winter 2024 - may be November	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
41	Hazlehead / Countesswells Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (Rec HH1)	E&CS 21/11/23 - to note the recommended option within the Outline Business Case and instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new campus on the Hazlehead Academy playing fields and on proposed changes to the existing Countesswells and Hazlehead secondary school catchment areas, to create a new catchment area which would be served by the proposed new school provision; and to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report back to the Committee on the outcomes of the consultation at its next available meeting following the conclusion of the consultation process, in July 2024		Maria Thies	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
42	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data and Insights	Commissioning	1.1.3		
43	Inspection Reporting	A standing item to report on the outcome of Early Learning and Childcare and school inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies if required To include the update on Northfield Academy		Shona Milne	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.6		
44	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.	Autumn/Winter 2024 - may be November	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
45	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	The options appraisal is scheduled to be carried out in Winter 2023/24	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
46	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.	Autumn/Winter 2024	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		

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2									
55	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		
56	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		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Resources	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
57	26 November 2024								
58	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		
59	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Framework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data and Insights	Commissioning	1.1.3		
60	Child Protection Committee Annual Report	E&CS 21/11/23 - to instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to provide Committee with a further report in November 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		
61	Keeping the Promise	E&CS 21/11/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services to provide a progress report in Autumn 2024 in relation to the partnership's implementation of Plan 21-24 and subsequent Promise plans		Amy Evans	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.1		
62	Inspection Reporting	A standing item to report on the outcome of Early Learning and Childcare and school inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies if required		Shona Milne	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.6		
63	Cluster Risk Register - Education / Integrated Children's & Family Services	To report on the cluster risk register		Eleanor Sheppard	Education	Children's and Family Services	1.1.4		
64	Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report	To present the Chief Social Work Officer annual report.		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Children's and Family Services	2.5		
65	DATE TBC / BEYOND 2024								
66	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		

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Performance Management/National Improvement Framework Progress Report – Children's and Family Service
REPORT NUMBER	COM/24/052
DIRECTOR/INTERIM DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie/Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER/ INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER	Martin Murchie/Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Alex Paterson/Shona Milne
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, ((b) summary achievement data relating to the December national data release of Curriculum for Excellence outcomes in 2022/23 and (c) an interim progress update in relation to implementation of the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan 2023/24

2. RECOMMENDATION

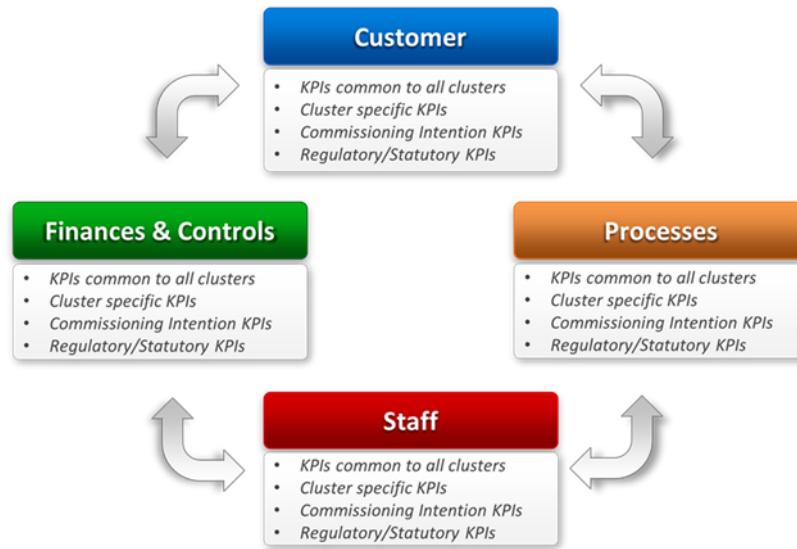
- 2.1 That the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the information contained in the report appendices.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Report Structure and Content

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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.

- 3.4 Where appropriate, data capture against these Standards is directly incorporated within the suite of measures contained within Appendix A and is reported against on either a quarterly or annual basis.
- 3.5 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.



- 3.6 This report, in Appendix A, focuses on (i) year-to date information around operational measures, Service Standards, attendance and school roll profiles and (ii) initial analysis around validated Curriculum for Excellence outcomes from completion of the 2022/23 academic year.
- 3.7 Publication of post-review and leaver data relating to Senior Phase, along with updating of the Insight national evaluation tool, is anticipated at the end of February/beginning of March 2024, and will be reflected on in additional detail in the scheduled Education Improvement Journey data tracker report to this Committee.
- 3.8 Appendix B reflects on progress against implementation of the present National Improvement Framework Plan for the City, agreed at the September meeting of this Committee, as at February 2024.
- 3.9 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

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

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

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) <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 information in the public domain ensures that the Council is meeting its legal obligations in the context of Best value reporting.	L	Yes
Operational	No significant operational risks.	Oversight by 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><u>Aberdeen City Council Partnership Agreement</u></p> <p>Improving Educational Choices</p> <p>Creating Better Learning Environments</p> <p>Caring for Young People</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. - Work to ensure that every school community provides a safe and respectful environment for young people and staff. - Seek to make Aberdeen a UNICEF Child Friendly City. - 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

	<p>autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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.
<p><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></p>	
<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 programmes by 2023</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p>	<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</p>

	<p>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>
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	It was confirmed by Chief Officer, Martin Murchie, on 18 th January 2024 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
Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan 2023/24 – CFS/23/268

11. APPENDICES

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

Appendix B – Progress Update on Implementation of the National Improvement Framework Plan 2023/24

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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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 ** (based on academic year to date)	93.75%	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.

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. This Standard remains unchanged.

The table below reflects the average outcomes from Care Inspectorate evaluation of both Aberdeen City Council and Partner Provider settings over the course of the 2023 calendar year. This timeline aligns directly with the Care Inspectorate annual reporting period, with release of this national benchmark publication expected in Spring of 2024.

Table 1. Percentage of Care Inspectorate Evaluations of Core Quality Indicators receiving an average score of Good or Better (12 month rolling average to December 2023)

	Care Inspectorate Core Quality Indicators				
Core Quality Indicator Scope	How good is our care, play and learning? Score	How good is our setting? Score	How good is our leadership? Score	How good is our staff team? Score	Overall Core Quality Indicator Score
Percentage of assessments achieving National Standard (average score)	88.4%	91.1%	92.0%	92.0%	90.5%

The sample size reflects outcomes from published inspections of 28 publicly funded day care of children establishments over the course of the 2023 calendar year and encompasses the evaluation of 112 Core Quality Indicators. Where an establishment has been subject to more than one inspection over the course of this 12-month period (e.g., as a result of a follow up recommendation in the original inspection) only the most recent outcomes are captured in these metrics.


Data from the forthcoming publication of the 2022/23 Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Report indicates that the City's wider Good or Better outcomes from Care Inspectorate inspections of Day Care of Children are improved year-on-year and in the long term, rising from 83.7% in 2021/22 to 86.4%, a four-year improvement trend. In 2018/19, this figure was 76.1%, This measure relates to all settings where each of the QI were graded Good or Better.

Inspection reporting

There have been two published inspections against the current academic year to date, providing for a Service Standard outcome of 93.75%, and a 12-month rolling outcome of 84.1% The full academic year outcome for the 2022 session offered an average of 80% of Education Scotland evaluations of Quality Indicators being graded as Good or Better. This most recent outcome represents an improving trend but should be considered in the context of the limited number of inspections undertaken. The budget year to date averaged outcome sits at just above 98% (62% of core QI evaluations were graded as Good or better)

All National Standards and Inspections data is based on publications as at 31st December 2023.

Corporate Measures – 2023/24 Cluster Level Indicators

Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	2023/24 Target	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Education	38	33	13	31			↑
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Education	60.5%	78.8%	61.5%	58.1%	75.0%		↓
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Education	7.9%	12.1%	23.1%	16.1%			↓
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Education	3	5	0	3			

Service Commentary

Quarter 3 saw an increase in the number of complaints and a dip in the % of complaints resolved within timescale. This is in line with historical patterns where staff availability during the festive school holiday period, results in slowed response times against December complaints in particular,

The dip is also a consequence of (a) a number of complaints that were received immediately prior to term end and (b) the receipt of several more 'complex complaints' which necessitated multi-service internal and external inputs

The data for the financial year-to-date shows that the number of complaints received (77) is similar to the same period in 2022/23 and the proportion which have at least one point upheld (19.3%) is lower than the 9-month total in the prior year (17.1%) The rolling 12-month data for the % of complaints upheld at Quarter 3 was 19.7% in 2023/24 and 20.6% in 2022/23.

2. Process

National Benchmark Indicator - Interim Participation Measure for 16–19-year-olds (December 2023)

Year	Participating	School Pupil	Higher Education	Further Education	Employment	Training and Development	Unemployed Seeking	Unemployed Not Seeking	Unconfirmed
2023	90.1	31.8	25.3	12.1	18.9	2.0	2.6	2.3	5.0
2022	88.1	33.1	24.0	12.6	14.4	4.0	2.6	2.4	6.9
2021	87.9	33.6	24.3	12.6	15.3	2.1	3.3	2.3	6.4

Service Commentary

The national Interim Participation Measures for 16–19-year-olds, released in December and May of each year since 2021, track progress towards the Annual Participation Measure, against which 2022/23 data was reported to the previous meeting of this Committee.

Summary

Overall, the data as at December 2023 shows an improving picture with a greater proportion of both 16–19-year-olds and 16–17-year-olds in a positive participation destination than in December 2022, with the outcome for the former group showing more statistically significant growth. Although there are still marginal gaps between the outcomes of City residents in both age groups to the Scotland level outcomes, the 2023 data shows a closing of these distances, which had extended during the pandemic and the immediate post-COVID periods.

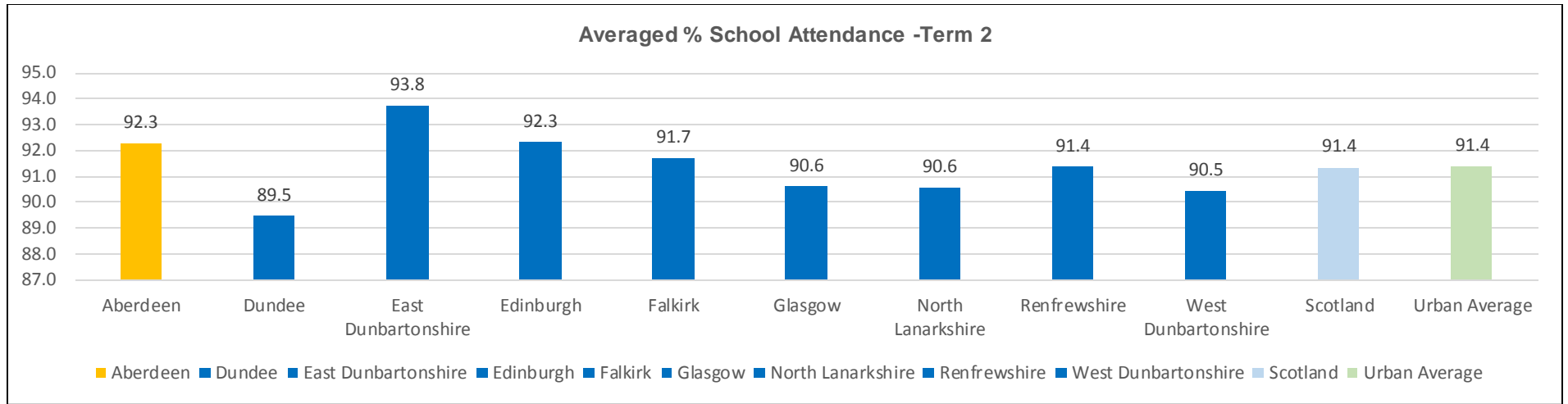
Participation Destinations Breakdown

Continuation in education (school staying on, Higher and Further Education) is the most prevalent positive participation destination for 16–19-year-olds at 69.2% of this age group, which is higher than the national figure of 66.6%. Employment has seen a material increase to 18.4% (+4.5 p.p). This latter outcome is the highest level recorded at the December snapshot for this city level measure.

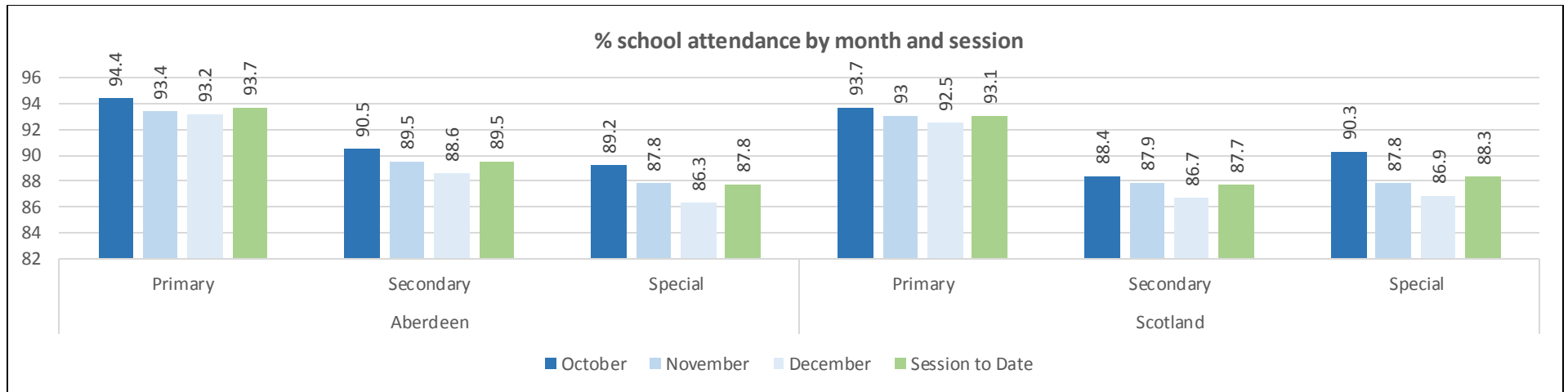
Although improving at a rate beyond the national trend year-on-year and three-year trend, this still falls short of the Scotland level of 23.7%, (albeit with a material closing to the national figure) Employment is the greatest single statistical influence on the differential between City and Scotland participation outcomes.

Source: Skills Development Scotland publication 19th December 2023 [Local Authority Interactive Report](#)

National School Attendance Measure 2023-24



National School Attendance Measure 2023-24: Month and Session Breakdown by School Type (as at 13th December 2023)



Service Commentary

Year-to-date pupil attendance overall for Aberdeen City sat above that of the majority of its natural benchmark authorities, the Urban Geography Average and the National figure with a similar pattern being observed against each of the three Sectors both in term- to date and month by month datasets. Averaged data is presented in the first table as the number of data submissions to the Education Analytics service by each Authority varies and this off-sets any distortion created by this variation.

Term 2 and session year to date attendance levels across each school type closely match those reflected in the previous report to Committee with the comparisons against Scotland levels continuing to be slightly in advance of the national picture.

Official Statistics from national biennial publications of benchmarked attendance and absence statistics, linked to pupil census submissions, are due to be released in full in March of this year and will serve as additional validation of data reported to previous meetings of this Committee during 2022/23.

Advance release data from the Local Government Benchmarking Framework, covering the 2022/23 session year, indicates that Aberdeen City was ranked in the highest quartile of all Scottish Local Authorities performance for the first time, with a trend of sustained improvement at each of the bi-annual national survey points over the past 10-year period.

Source: [Fortnightly School Attendance, Scottish Government Education Analytics](#)

Cluster Level Measures – Averaged Attendance, Absence and Exclusions by Openings - Session Years to Date, 2022 and 2023

2023 Session				
School Type	Attendance % Present Openings	Absence % Authorised Openings	Absence % Unauthorised Openings	% Exclusion Openings
Primary	92.38	5.39	2.22	0.01
Secondary	89.10	7.52	3.32	0.05
Special	93.33	5.56	1.10	0.01
All Phases	92.21	5.53	2.24	0.01
2022 Session				
School Type	Attendance % Present Openings	Absence % Authorised Openings	Absence % Unauthorised Openings	% Exclusion Openings

Primary	91.64	5.99	2.37	0.01
Secondary	89.30	7.38	3.27	0.05
Special	92.57	6.50	0.93	0.00
All Phases	91.27	6.26	2.46	0.01

Service Commentary

In the 2023 session to date, All Phase Attendance levels have risen from 91.27% to 92.21% in comparison session 2022, with levels of Authorised Absence falling from 6.26% to 5.53%, Variations in both of these measures would be considered to have some statistical significance. Unauthorised Absence levels have reduced marginally to 2,24% in comparison with 2.45% in 2022 and Exclusion levels have remained constant year-on-year.

Across the phase levels, the extent of change in Attendance for Primary and Special School phases, from year-to-year, show improvement, also with some statistical validity whilst Secondary Attendances are stable.

Reductions in the levels of Authorised Absence, which are under the more direct control of school management, is the main driver for improvements in Attendance.

National Benchmark Measures – Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) 2022/23

COVID-19 Impact on Learning

The closures of schools between March 2020 and January 2021 because of the pandemic are likely to have had a negative effect on some pupils' progress and attainment. It is therefore likely to have had an impact on the CfE levels some children achieved in 2020/21. The impact of this disruption will also have affected young people covered by the 2021/22 publication and it is possible that the impact of the pandemic will continue to affect the CfE levels some children and young people achieved in 2022/23. Source: Scottish Government ACEL Publication, 12th December 2023

Data Observations

The following offers an initial evaluation of data relating to the Achievement of Curriculum Levels in 2022/23 derived from the publication of this information on 12th December 2023, focusing on the core measures at primary and secondary (S3) Third Level or better stages linking to Aberdeen City's National Improvement Framework Plan 2022/23, and the National Performance Framework measures for education.

With reference to the provisional ACEL data provided to the last meeting of this Committee, the National Benchmark outcomes are, in general marginally ahead of the averaged achievement set out from evaluation of local data due to the validation exercise completed at a national level. The 2022/23 figures are ahead of the forecasts outlined the NIF Evaluation report considered in September 2023, and on validated trajectories towards the aims set out for these Core Curriculum Organisers.

Phase	Core Curriculum Organiser	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Stretch Aims
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Reading	73	77	78	77	78-79
	Writing	68	72	74	73	74-75
	Listening & Talking	82	85	86	85	85-86
	Numeracy	72	77	78	77	78-79

Traffic Light and Trend Visualisation

Across the sections below, covering Curriculum for Excellence datasets, the following 'traffic light' legends are applied to define movement of 2022/23 academic year values in comparison with 2021/22 outcomes. The application of these legends is based on variations in datasets of +/- 1 percentage points, which takes account of purely statistically based influences, such as changes in cohort sizes and proportional levels of deprivation. These aids are offered to visually assist interpretation of the data contained in these sections. Data-based 'traffic lighting' does not necessarily infer change that has material educational impacts.

Legend
Improving Year-on-year
Unchanged year-on-year
Deteriorating year on year

Data Interpretation

A degree of caution in interpretation of achievement levels requires to be exercised when comparing outcomes across years, particularly due to the varying circumstances of each pre and post COVID-19 period,

N.B. ACEL assessments are based on evaluation of four Organisers (Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking and Numeracy) which are classed as Core Curriculum measures. The Literacy measure is a derived national data construct, linked to the National Improvement Framework, which reflects the percentage of pupils who attain expected levels of achievement in each of the three literacy themed Organisers. This provides for ready comparisons of achievement by the two main themes for the purpose of tracking progress and benchmarking and is highlighted blue in the tables below.

1. National Benchmark Measures - Curriculum for Excellence- 2022/23 Achievement Primary 1,4 and 7 Combined

Key Findings

- The percentage of primary school pupils achieving the expected CfE levels for Literacy and Numeracy in 2022/23 was higher than in 2021/22, for all primary school stages and across virtually all the organisers, with increases in the range of one to two percentage points. This is a position similar to that experienced at Scotland level.
- For many organisers and stages, particularly at P7, the proportions of primary school pupils achieving the expected levels are equal to, or beyond 2018/19 (pre-pandemic) levels which, in the majority in instances, represented the previous 'high tide' mark for Aberdeen City.
- There remain some cases where 2022/23 figures are slightly below those of 2018/19. This latter observation is most noticeable at P4 where both Literacy and Numeracy outcomes, despite general year-on-year gains, have yet to return to pre-pandemic levels.
- Improvement rates across each of the three stages (P1,4 and 7) are consistent relative to each other on a year-on-year and long trend basis.
- For P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined, the proportion achieving the expected levels in Literacy and Numeracy are performing equally strongly in terms of improvement trend but with Numeracy achievement being recorded at higher levels overall.

Achievement of CfE Levels at Aberdeen City level - Primary Stages, Aberdeen City

Literacy:

Literacy achievement shows year on year improvement against four or the five SIMD based Quintiles and the Local Authority total, with the outcomes at SIMD Quintile 1 being slightly below that in 2021/22. Underlying these outcomes, of the components contributing to the Literacy theme, 80% of the measures across all SIMD levels and the Local Authority figure overall, are improved with the remainder being equal to that achieved in 2021/22.

The Literacy attainment gap has been reduced or maintained against the majority of the SIMD based organisers with a slight increase in the gap between the Most and Least deprived Quintiles, arising from raised outcomes at SIMD 5.

In terms of Aberdeen City's relative standing for Literacy at P1,4 and 7 Combined, comparing with all 32 Local Authorities, the city sits mid-table, an unchanged position on 2021/22 but ahead of the ranking position in 2020/21

Numeracy:

Achievement in Numeracy is improved at SIMD's 2 and 3, and at Local Authority level, with a stable statistical outcome for each of the remaining Quintiles. Consequently, the attainment gaps for each of these Quintiles are improved year-on-year, while the distances between SIMD 1 and 4 and the Least Deprived Quintile are unchanged.

In terms of Aberdeen City's relative standing for Numeracy at P1,4 and 7 Combined, comparing with all 32 Local Authorities, the city sits mid-table, an unchanged position on 2021/22 and marginally better than 2020/21.

Figure 1: P1, 4 and 7 Combined - Outcomes by Levels achieved and Core Curriculum Organisers – Aberdeen City Timeseries 2020/21- 2022/23

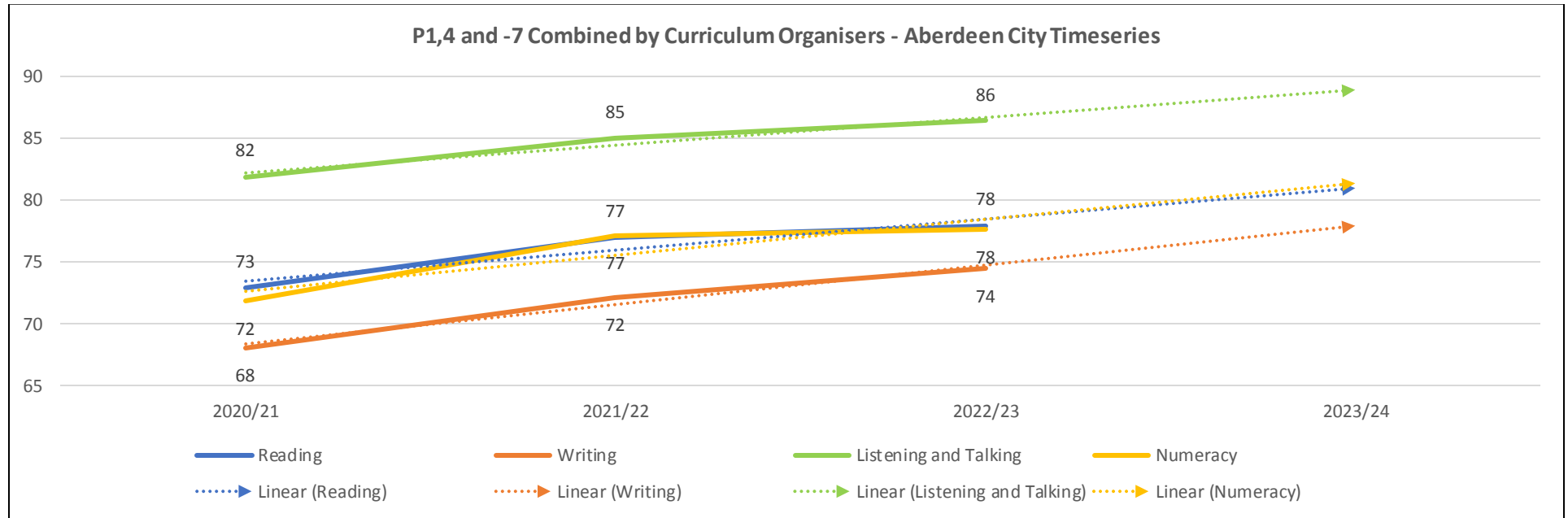
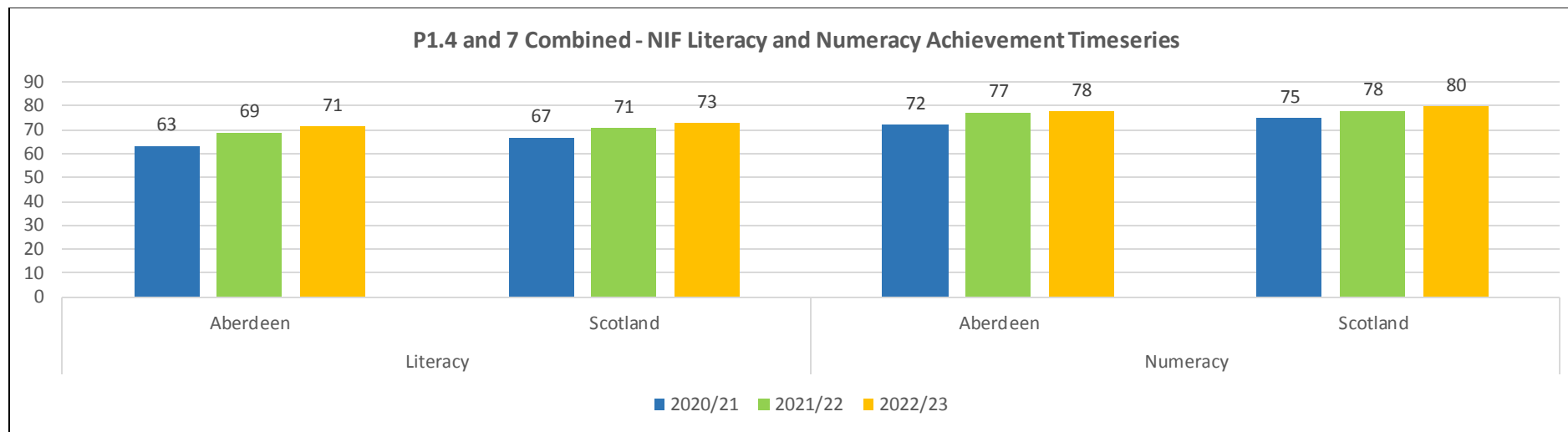


Table 1. P1,4 and 7 Combined Tables by Year and Organiser – Aberdeen City – 2020/21/2022-23

Aberdeen	Organiser	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Short Trend - Annual	Long Trend - Annual
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Reading	73	77	78	↑	↑
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Writing	68	72	74	↑	↑
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Listening & Talking	82	85	86	↑	↑

P1, P4 and P7 combined	Literacy	63	69	71	↑	↑
P1, P4 and P7 combined	Numeracy	72	77	78	↑	↑

Figure 2. P1, 4 and 7 Combined - Outcomes by Levels achieved and NIF Curriculum Organisers – Aberdeen City and Scotland Timeseries



Service Commentary

Short Trend

At P1-7 Combined, the year-on-year improvement rates for Literacy and Numeracy follow the Scotland trend with rising values across each of the organisers, (although this is slightly stronger at Scotland level). The distances to the National figures from 2021/22 are unchanged in 2022/23. These outcomes are closely aligned with those of the 2018/19 baseline in terms of both local values, and in relation to the national benchmark.

Long Trend

The long-term trends show a pattern of improvement that matches of Scotland with some narrowing of the gap that was recorded in 2020/21 against both Literacy and Numeracy with significant improvement across the full suite of Organisers. Closing of the achievement gap in comparison with the Scotland figures is most statistically noticeable across the Literacy themed organisers

2. National Benchmark Measures - Curriculum for Excellence- 2022/23 Achievement in the Context of Deprivation- Aberdeen City P 1,4 and 7 Combined

Key Findings

- The proportion of P1-7 (Combined) pupils achieving the expected levels in both Literacy and Numeracy has risen across the majority of SIMD Quintiles on 2021/22. These outcomes are similar to those in 2018/19, and significantly in advance of those recorded in 2020/21.
- Literacy achievement is demonstrating slightly greater, and more consistent improvement in comparison with Numeracy but overall is showing lower achievement levels across the five Quintiles.

Figure 3. P1.4 and 7 (Combined) Achievement by SIMD Quintile and Core Curriculum Organisers - Aberdeen City 2022/23

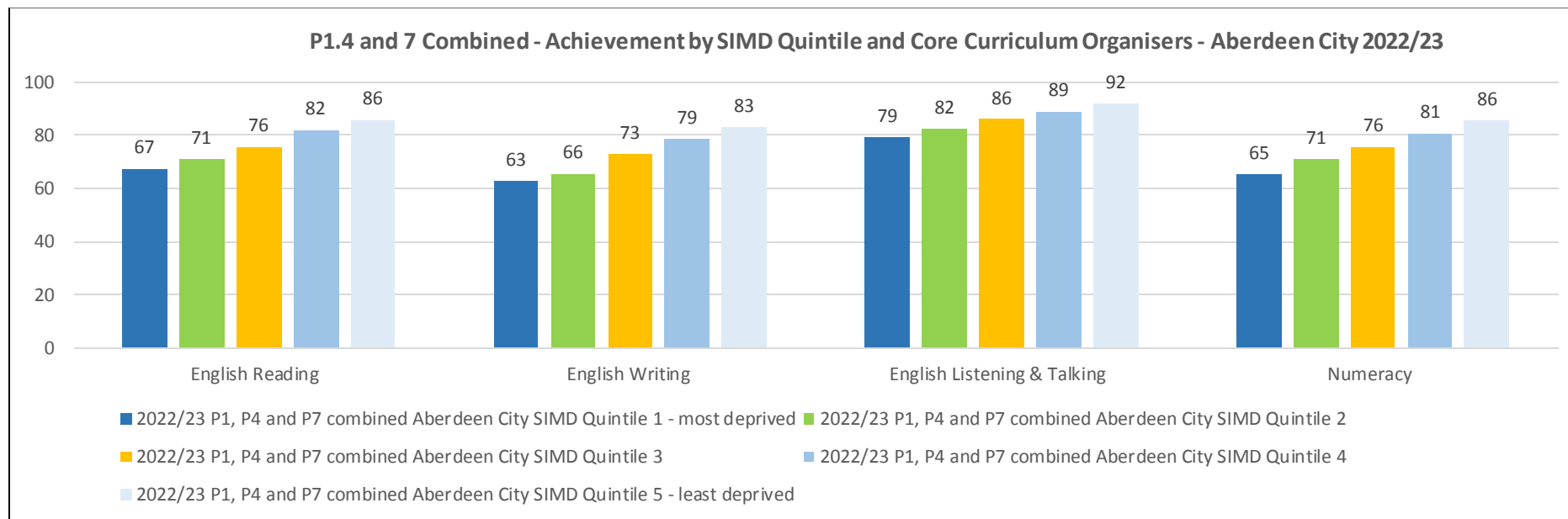


Table 2. P1,4 and 7 Combined outcomes by Levels achieved, Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile – Aberdeen City 2021-23

Year	SIMD	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Literacy	Numeracy
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	67	63	79	57	65
	SIMD Quintile 2	71	66	82	63	71

	SIMD Quintile 3	76	73	86	69	76
	SIMD Quintile 4	82	79	89	76	81
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	86	83	92	81	86
	Local Authority Total	78	74	86	71	78
	2021/22					
	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	65	62	77	58	66
	SIMD Quintile 2	70	65	81	61	69
	SIMD Quintile 3	73	66	82	64	72
	SIMD Quintile 4	82	78	88	74	82
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	86	81	93	79	87
	Local Authority Total	77	72	85	69	77
	2020/21					
	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	57	51	72	47	57
	SIMD Quintile 2	63	57	75	51	60
	SIMD Quintile 3	71	65	83	60	70
	SIMD Quintile 4	78	74	86	69	77
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	85	82	89	78	85
	Local Authority Total	73	68	82	63	72

Service Commentary

Short Trend

Overall, the outcomes for SIMD 3 are the most consistently improved year-on-year across the suite of organisers. Achievement at SIMD 2 has also risen across the two main Organisers, although at a slightly slower rate than SIMD 3. SIMD 1 (Most Deprived), 4 and 5 achievement are unchanged in combined values but with more consistent improvements against the suite of Literacy themed Organisers.

Long Trend

In comparison with the 2020/21 outcomes, 88% of the Organisers demonstrated improvement, with substantive gains in both Literacy and Numeracy themes.

At Quintile level, the greatest gains were made at SIMD's 1 and 2 while Quintiles 3 and 4 also had raised achievement levels, at a slightly lower rate than the more deprived Quintiles. The Least Deprived Quintile (SIMD 5) recorded some limited improvement in Literacy and Numeracy, but this reflects a stable rather than materially rising achievement profile

Figure 4. P1- P7 (Combined) Literacy - % Levels achieved by NIF Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile – Scotland and Aberdeen City Timeseries

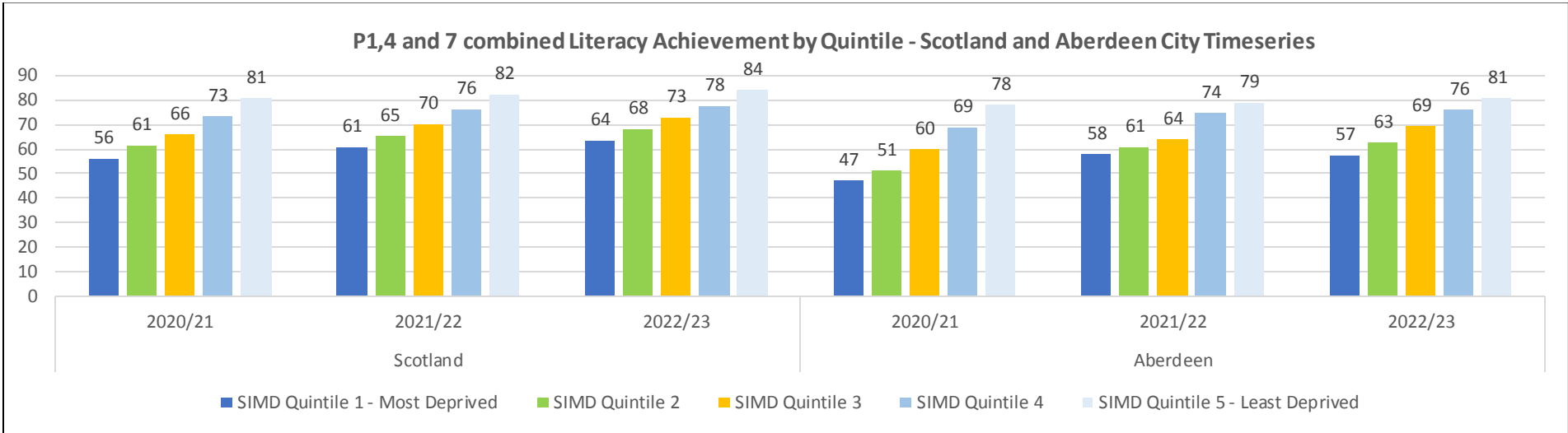
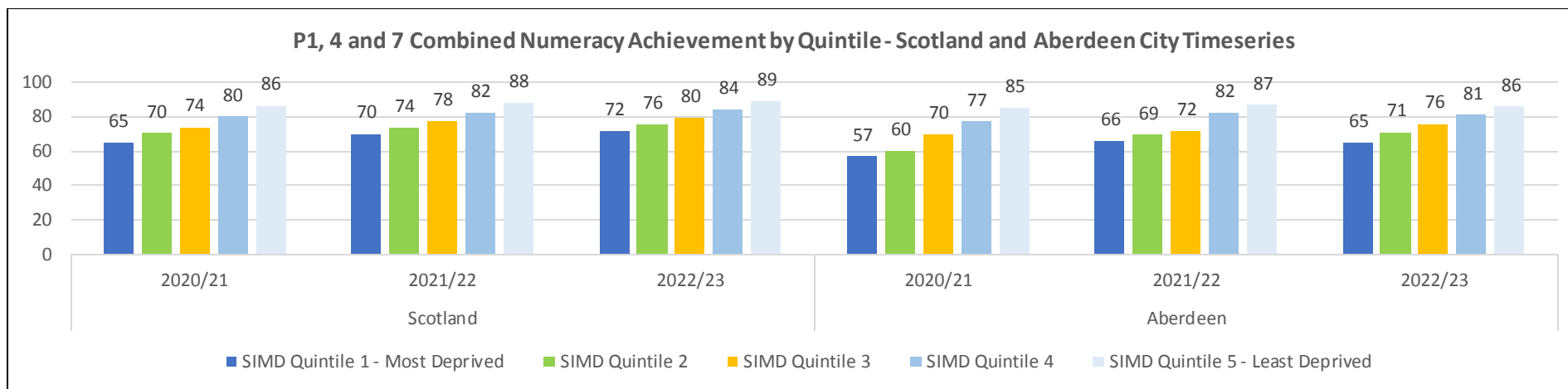


Figure 5 . P1, 4 and P7 (Combined) Numeracy - % Levels achieved by Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile – Scotland and Aberdeen City Timeseries



Service Commentary

Short Trend

Although short term trends in ACC mirror National trends in most quintiles, the slight dip at Quintile 1 in both literacy and numeracy requires to be further explored. Learners in Quintile 3 have improved at a rate better than National progress in both literacy and numeracy.

Long Trend

The long-term trend continues to be positive with improvements across most quintiles being in line with National. Although attainment is still below National levels improvement in SIMD 1 from 2020/21 levels to 2022/23 levels is better than National across both Literacy (National 8% and ACC10%) and Numeracy (National 7% ACC 8%)

3. National Benchmark Measures - Curriculum for Excellence- 2022/23 Closing the Poverty Related Achievement Gap, P1, 4 and 7 Combined

Key Findings

- The gap between the proportion of primary school pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved the expected level in Literacy widened marginally from 21.2 percentage points in 2021/22 to 23.4 percentage points in 2022/23 but is smaller than each the years prior to 2021/22.
-

- The gap between the proportion of primary school pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved their expected level in Numeracy narrowed from 20.9 percentage points in 2021/22 to 20.4 percentage points in 2022/23 – similar to 2018/19 and most previous years.

Figure 6. P1, 4 and 7 Combined - Poverty Related Gap (Most to Least Deprived) – Aberdeen City Timeseries

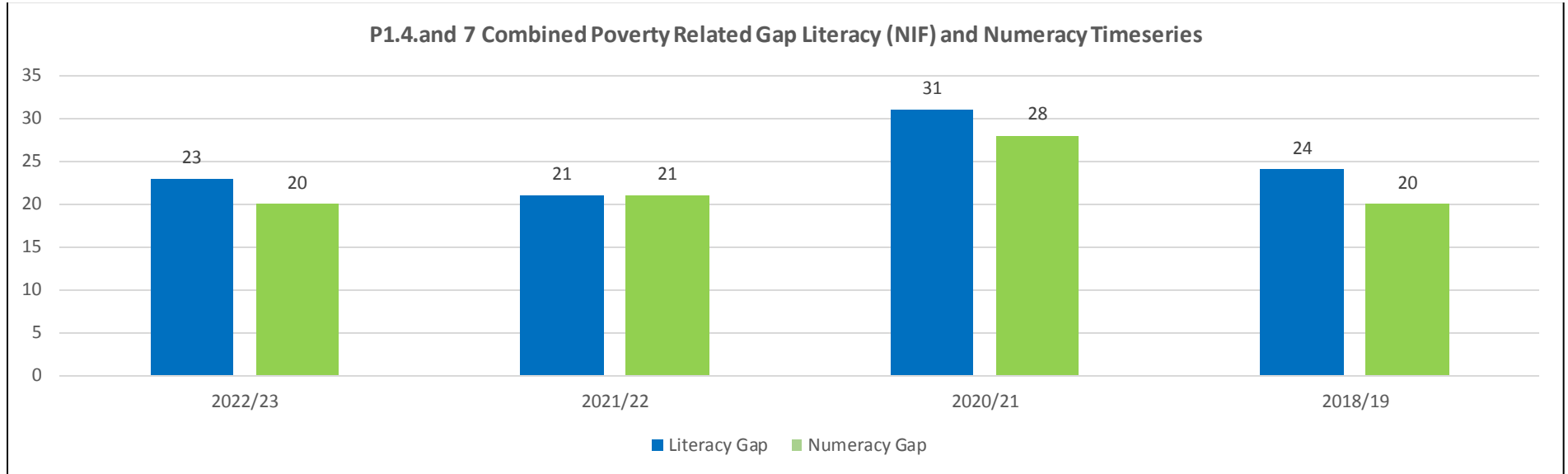


Table 3. P1-7 (Combined) – Percentage Point Distances to Least Deprived Quintile by Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile, Aberdeen City

Year	SIMD	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Literacy	Numeracy
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2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1- Most Deprived	-18	-20	-12	-23	-20
	SIMD Quintile 2	-15	-17	-9	-18	-15
	SIMD Quintile 3	-10	-10	-6	-11	-10
	SIMD Quintile 4	-4	-5	-3	-5	-5
2021/22						
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	-21	-19	-16	-21	-21
	SIMD Quintile 2	-16	-17	-12	-18	-17
	SIMD Quintile 3	-13	-15	-11	-15	-15
	SIMD Quintile 4	-4	-3	-4	-4	-4
2020/21						
2020/21	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	-28	-31	-17	-31	-28
	SIMD Quintile 2	-22	-25	-14	-27	-25
	SIMD Quintile 3	-14	-17	-6	-18	-15
	SIMD Quintile 4	-7	-8	-3	-9	-8

Service Commentary

Short Trend

Across the Organiser suite, Reading and Listening and Talking show the most consistent year-on-year improvement with SIMD Quintiles 1, 2 and 3 making material gains on the outcomes of the Least Deprived. Writing outcomes, and its contribution to overall Literacy achievement, is presently subject to a targeted intervention programme which will see more robust data in 2023/24. Numeracy is recording a general improvement in gap outcomes at SIMD 1,2, and 3 with the performance of the latter two SIMD cohorts being marginally stronger

Long Trend

The poverty related achievement gaps between the Most and Least Deprived, along with those of the remaining SIMD Quintiles have closed materially in the long term and are, in general, lower than in the seven years during which this nationally benchmarked data has been collated. The rates of improvement are similar for both Literacy and Numeracy with slightly larger deprivation related gaps being noted against the combined Literacy measure.

4. P1.4 and 7 Combined, Percentage Point Distances to Least Deprived Quintile, Literacy and Numeracy – Scotland and Aberdeen City

Key Findings

- The distances between Aberdeen City and Scotland’s poverty related attainment gaps at SIMD 1 and 2 are slightly widened year-on-year in Literacy but stable for Numeracy. The proportionate increase in outcomes of the Least Deprived Quintile is an influence in this movement.
- At SIMD 3 the previous distances to Scotland outcomes from 2021/22 have been substantially narrowed in Literacy and are statistically equal to the National figures. Distances between the SIMD 4 and SIMD 5 outcomes for the city are marginally better than, or equal to. the Scotland level gaps in Literacy and Numeracy, respectively.

Table 4. P1,4 and 7 Combined Percentage Point Distances to Least Deprived Quintile, Literacy and Numeracy – Scotland and Aberdeen City

		Scotland				Aberdeen			
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	
	SIMD Quintile	Distance by Percentage Point	Distance by Percentage Point	Distance by Percentage Point	% change on 2020/21 baseline	Distance by Percentage Point	Distance by Percentage Point	Distance by Percentage Point	% change on 2020/21 baseline
Literacy	SIMD Quintile 1	-25	-21	-20	17.1	-31	-21	-23	24.6
	SIMD Quintile 2	-19	-17	-16	18.3	-27	-18	-18	32.5
	SIMD Quintile 3	-15	-12	-11	23.7	-18	-15	-11	36.4
	SIMD Quintile 4	-8	-6	-6	16.7	-9	-4	-5	45.5
Numeracy	SIMD Quintile 1	-21	-18	-17	20.8	-28	-21	-20	27.0
	SIMD Quintile 2	-16	-14	-13	17.8	-25	-17	-15	41.8
	SIMD Quintile 3	-13	-10	-9	26.5	-15	-15	-10	34.5
	SIMD Quintile 4	-6	-5	-5	24.7	-8	-4	-5	39.9

Service Commentary

Short Trend:

In aggregate, the distances in Poverty related gaps between Scotland and Aberdeen City for Literacy are showing some widening at SIMD 1 and 2 as a consequence of the attainment outcomes for these pupils improving at a slightly slower rate than the Least Deprived. Year-on-year Improvement rates for the Least Deprived (SIMD 5) for Aberdeen were higher than those recorded for Scotland. In Numeracy, the distances to Scotland outcomes are improved at SIMD 2 and 3 with both the attainment gaps reducing at a faster rate than Scotland.

Long Trend

Outcomes for the city, across the entire range of Quintiles and for both main Organisers are improving at a faster rate than the Scotland data in comparison with 2020/21. This has resulted in closing of distances to the national figures at SIMD's 3 and 4 and substantive reducing of the gap distances at SIMD's 1 and 2, although these remain slightly above those at Scotland levels.

4. National Benchmark Measures - Curriculum for Excellence- 2022/23 Achievement Secondary (Senior 3 pupils – Third Level or better)

Key Findings

- For S3 pupils, the proportions achieving Third Level or better are higher than in 2021/22 across all organisers typically by around two to three percentage points. They are similar to, or slightly higher than in 2018/19.
- The general rate of improvement trends for both Literacy and Numeracy is equal to, or marginally better than the Scotland levels and show matched performance to the national picture in Numeracy.
 - Despite increases in achievement from 2021/22 across each of the component Literacy organisers, the Literacy outcome is making less ground in comparison with the national outcome with a continued gap in overall achievement. Over the full course of these measures (from 2016/17) however there has been some closing between Aberdeen and Scotland outcomes.

Achievement of CfE Levels for Aberdeen City – Secondary (S3) Third Level or better

Literacy:

At Third Level, there is a noticeable increase in achievement against the Literacy components for those in the two Most Deprived Quintiles with that of the Most Deprived raising overall Literacy achievement at the same pace as the wider pupil cohort, For this Most Deprived quintile, the rate of improvement in both Writing and Listening and Talking were the greatest influences with increases in achievement well above those experienced by other Quintiles. Results for those in SIMD's 3 and 4 are static, and as a consequence of an increase in the outcomes of the Least Deprived quintile (SIMD 5) this has resulted in some extending of the poverty related attainment gap.

Numeracy:

The data around Numeracy offers a less well-defined pattern of value improvement year-on-year. While achievement of the Most and Least Deprived, and at Local Authority level are effectively static, there has been a small drop in both SIMD 3 and 4 achievement, resulting a widening of the attainment gap. SIMD 2 outcomes are the sole area where statistical improvement is identified both in absolute value and a reducing attainment gap.

Figure 7: S3 Achievement at Third Level or better by Core Curriculum Organiser Timeseries – Aberdeen City

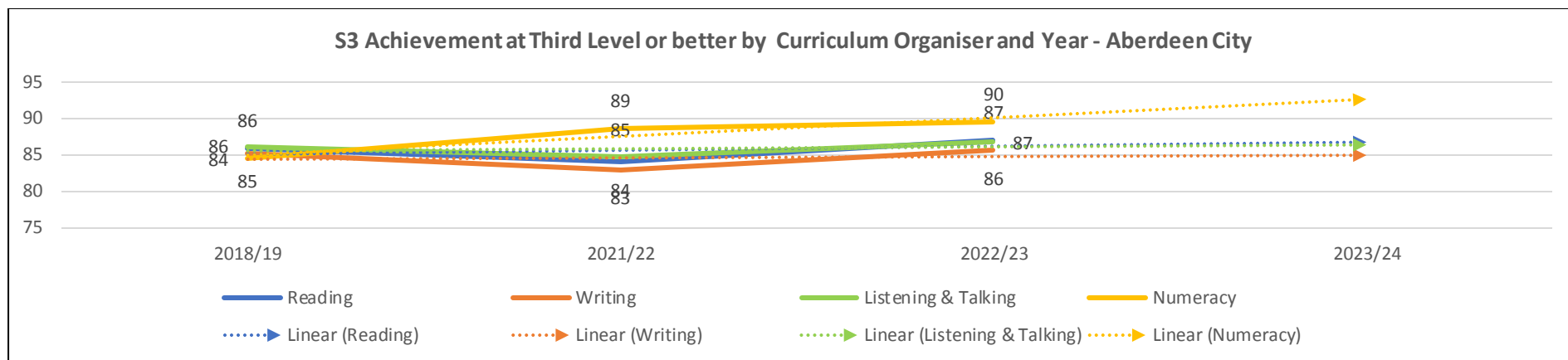
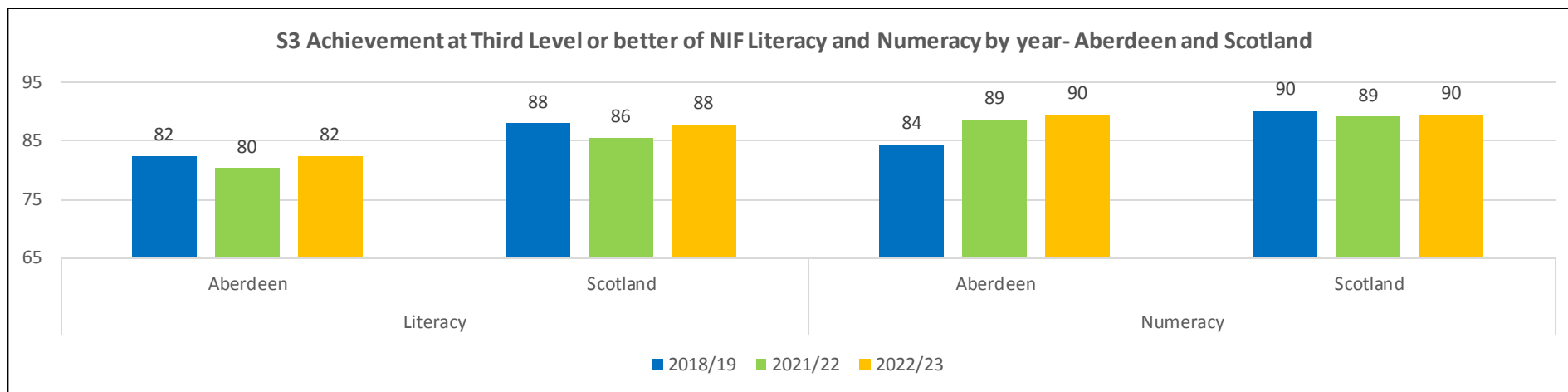


Table 5. S3 (Third Level or better) outcomes by Levels achieved and Curriculum Organisers – Aberdeen City

Aberdeen	Organiser	2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	Short Trend - Annual	Long Trend - Annual
S3 Third Level or Better	Reading	86	84	87	↑	↑
S3 Third Level or Better	Writing	85	83	86	↑	↑
S3 Third Level or Better	Listening & Talking	86	85	87	↑	↑
S3 Third Level or Better	Literacy	83	80	82	↑	-
S3 Third Level or Better	Numeracy	84	89	90	↑	↑

Figure 8. S3 Achievement at Third Level or better – Literacy and Numeracy by Year – Aberdeen and Scotland



Service Commentary

Short Trend:

Year-on-year gains have been made against each of the Organisers, with Reading and Writing being the most improved driving the overall level of achievement in Literacy upwards. Numeracy achievement has experienced a small rise from 2020/21 that is in line with the National data

Long Trend:

In comparison with the 2018-19 baseline year (no national assessments at S3 were conducted in either 2019/20 or 2020/21) and evaluating the long trends, Numeracy has made substantive gains and entirely closed the previous distance to Scotland level achievement while Literacy, as a combined measure, has been static, although there are marginal gains across each of the components over the three-year timeline.

At the same time, the long-term pattern of absolute value improvement, (reflecting increases of 1 or more percentage points) for the majority of Literacy based components and Numeracy overall; is slightly stronger than that reflected at Scotland level.

5. National Benchmark Measures - Curriculum for Excellence- 2022/23 Achievement in the Context of Deprivation – S3 Third Level or better

Key Findings

- Outcomes across the majority of Literacy Organisers and for Literacy overall are higher than in 2021/22. The % of pupils achieving the expected levels within the two most deprived quintiles individually, and in combination, are the highest values to date
- Numeracy achievement in 2022/23 overall was unchanged on 2021/22. The combined outcomes for the two most deprived quintiles are the highest values to date for these Organisers, SIMD 3 and 4 measures saw a slight dip in performance, although this should be viewed in the context of particularly strong performances in 2021/22.
- The outcomes across the suite of Quintiles for Literacy are below that of Scotland level figures but with indications that these distances are reducing over time.

Figure 9. S3 Achievement of Third Level or better by SIMD Quintile and Core Curriculum Organiser 2022/23 – Aberdeen City

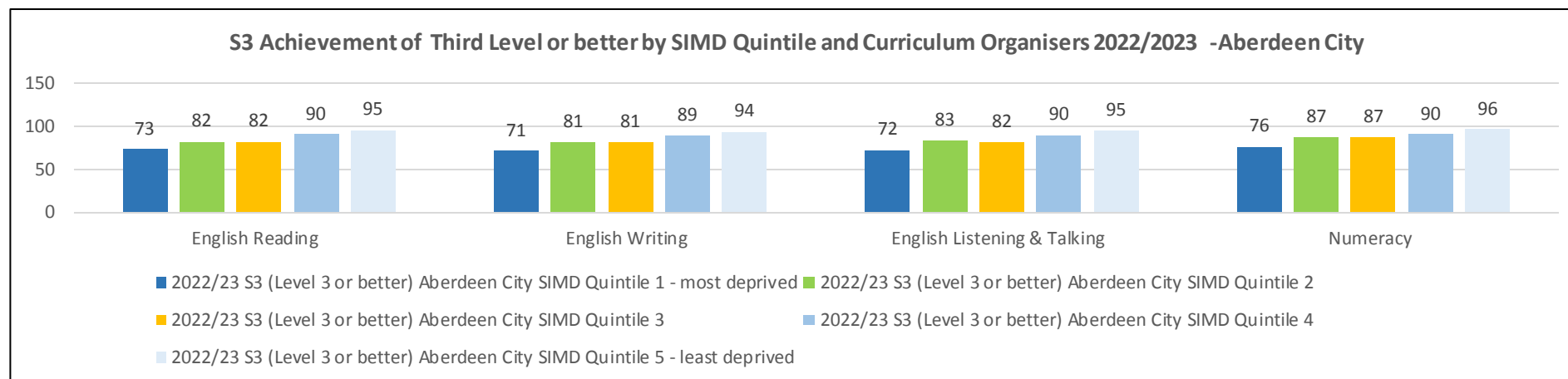


Table 6. S3 (Third Level or Better) by Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile – Aberdeen City – 2021/22-2022/23

Year	SIMD	Reading	Writing	Listening & Talking	Literacy	Numeracy
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	73	71	72	65	76
	SIMD Quintile 2	82	81	83	77	87
	SIMD Quintile 3	82	81	82	78	87
	SIMD Quintile 4	90	89	90	86	90
	SIMD Quintile 5- least deprived	95	94	95	92	96
	Local Authority Total	87	86	87	82	90
2021/22	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	70	65	68	63	77
	SIMD Quintile 2	80	79	81	76	83
	SIMD Quintile 3	82	82	82	79	89
	SIMD Quintile 4	87	87	88	84	93
	SIMD Quintile 5- least deprived	92	92	93	89	95
	Local Authority Total	84	83	85	80	89
2018/19	SIMD Quintile 1- most deprived	66	66	65	63	60
	SIMD Quintile 2	79	76	77	74	75
	SIMD Quintile 3	82	81	83	79	81
	SIMD Quintile 4	88	89	91	87	91
	SIMD Quintile 5- least deprived	95	95	96	94	94
	Local Authority Total	86	85	86	83	84

Figure 10. S3 (Third Level or better) Literacy (NIF) % Levels achieved by Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile - Scotland and Aberdeen City

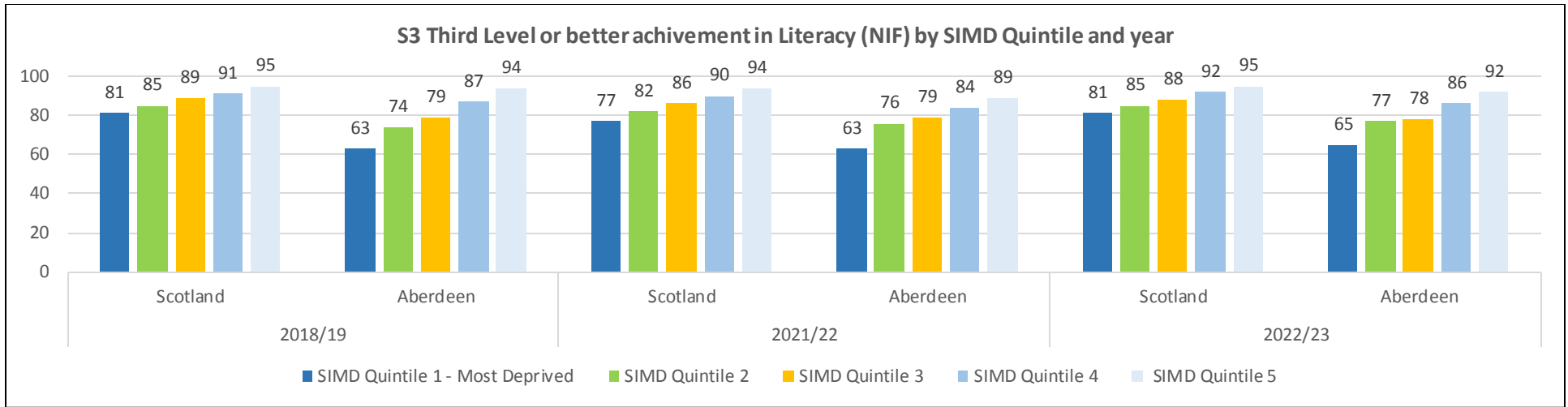
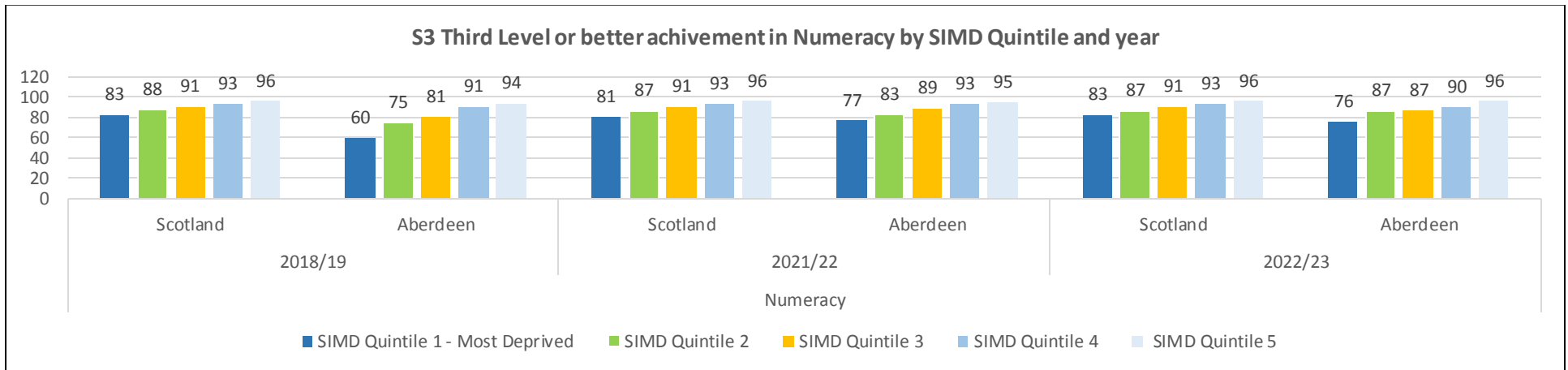


Figure 11. S3 (Third Level or Better) Numeracy, % Levels achieved by Curriculum Organisers and SIMD Quintile - Scotland and Aberdeen City



Service Commentary

Short Trend

Year-on-year gains have been made across the majority of Organisers with a robust performance against those Organisers contributing to the Literacy theme, particularly among the more deprived Quintile cohorts. The trend in improvement in Literacy is also being reflected at the less deprived quintiles which supports the attainment for all national priority. Year-on-year Improvement in Numeracy is performing at a slightly slower pace, generally being similar to that in 2021/22, although overall, achievement in Numeracy is higher than that for Literacy.

Long Trend

The long trend (baselining with 2018/19) shows appreciable improvements in the achievement levels for both Literacy and Numeracy by the more deprived Quintile cohorts (SIMD 1&2) The outcomes at SIMD's 3-5 have made marginally smaller gains, although closing the poverty related gaps, particularly around Numeracy. This latter trend is the main driver behind the continued upwards movement in Numeracy outcomes performing above Literacy achievement.

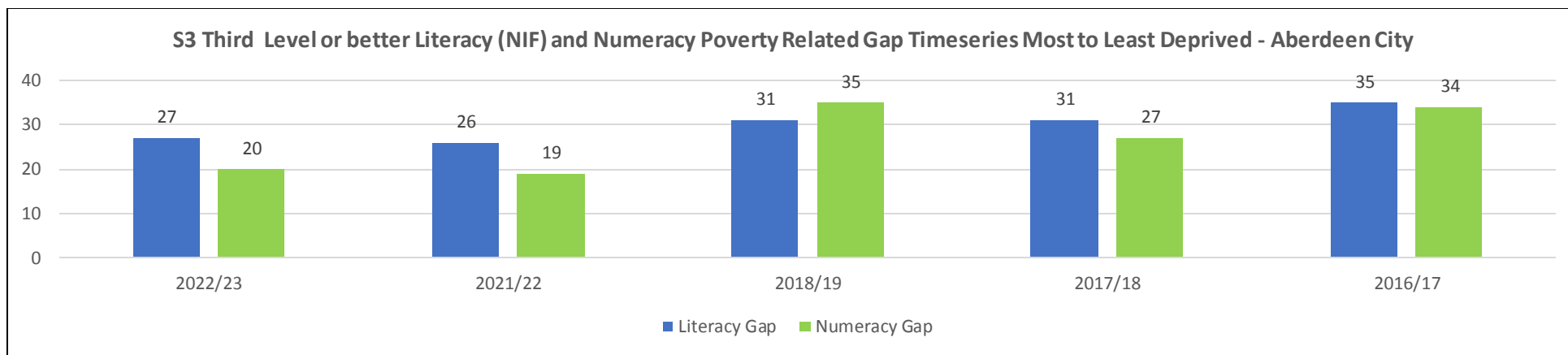
National Benchmark Measures - Curriculum for Excellence- 2022/23 Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap, Secondary (S3 Third Level or better)

The measures below are dynamic metrics where the relationship between quintiles is defined by the performance of each quintile in the context of the outcomes of the Least Deprived cohort. An understanding of the influence of changes in achievement for this latter quintile needs to be given equal consideration to that recorded against each of the lower quintiles.

Key Findings

- The gap between the proportion of S3 pupils from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved Third Level or better in Literacy in 2022/23 was similar to that in 2021/22. The gap between the proportion of S3 pupils from the Most and Least deprived areas who achieved Third Level or better in Numeracy in 2022/23 was similarly unchanged.
- For both Literacy and Numeracy, the 2022/23 gap between the Most and Least Deprived is substantially lower than the 2018/19 baseline, and in any year prior to 2021/22, with some closing of the gaps between the Least Deprived and lower Quintiles over the same timeline. (see Figure 12 below)

Figure 12. S3 Third Level or better – Poverty Related Gap – Most to Least Deprived Quintiles 2016/17- 2022/23



S3 Third Level or better, Percentage Point Distances to Least Deprived Quintile, Literacy and Numeracy – Scotland and Aberdeen City

Key Findings

- The distances between Aberdeen City and Scotland achievement in closing the poverty related gap in Literacy are widened in 2022/23 in comparison with 2021/22, in part as a result of greater proportionate gains made by the Least Deprived cohort at City level than was experienced nationally.
- Both Literacy and Numeracy measures data display a trend of reducing distances to the Scotland outcomes, with Numeracy being the more improved

Table 7. S3 (Third Level or better), Percentage Point Distances to Least Deprived Quintile, Literacy and Numeracy – Scotland and Aberdeen City

		Scotland				Aberdeen			
		2018/19	2021/22	2022/23		2018/19	2021/22	2022/23	
	SIMD Quintile	Distance by Percentage Point	Distance by Percentage Point	Distance by Percentage Point	% change on 2018/19 baseline	Distance by Percentage Point	Distance by Percentage Point	Distance by Percentage Point	% change on 2018/19 baseline
Literacy	SIMD Quintile 1	-14	-16	-14	0.0	-31	-26	-27	12.9
	SIMD Quintile 2	-10	-11	-10	0.0	-20	-13	-15	25.4
	SIMD Quintile 3	-6	-7	-6	0.0	-15	-10	-14	6.6
	SIMD Quintile 4	-4	-4	-3	25.0	-7	-5	-6	-14.2
Numeracy	SIMD Quintile 1	-13	-15	-14	-7.7	-35	-19	-20	43.0
	SIMD Quintile 2	-8	-9	-9	-12.5	-19	-13	-9	51.6
	SIMD Quintile 3	-5	-5	-6	-20.0	-14	-6	-9	30.9
	SIMD Quintile 4	-3	-3	-3	0.0	-4	-3	-6	-47.5

Service Commentary

Short Trend

The poverty related gaps in 2022/23 showed a slight lengthening in both Literacy and Numeracy when compared to the Scottish outcomes. A sizeable proportion of this extended distance is generated by continuous improvement in the achievement, particularly in Numeracy, of the city's Least Deprived cohort (SIMD 5) in comparison with the national figures.

Long Trend

In comparison with the 2018/19 baseline year, the rates of improvement, and the city's position relative to the national data are materially improving, with the poverty related gaps themselves and the distances to Scotland outcomes being substantially reduced in both Literacy and Numeracy. This trend is stronger in Numeracy but with gains being made across the board at SIMD levels 1,2 and 3

S3 Third Level or better. Achievement by NIF Curriculum Organiser and SIMD Quintile – Three Year Averaged Trend

Taking account of the two-year gap in assessments at Secondary level, (2019/20 and 2020/21) there is added value in evaluating year-by-year achievement in the context of three-year averaged outcomes for each session. The table below outlines both achievement and poverty related gap data covering each of the years covered in this Appendix at Third Level or better.

Key Findings

- Levels of achievement in 2022/23 are, in the majority, ahead of or equal to the 3-year averages with a robust performance in Numeracy
- The poverty related attainment gaps are smaller in comparison with the 3-year averages against almost all of the SIMD Quintiles with this pattern being shown more consistently against the two Most Deprived Quintiles (SIMD 1 and 2)

Table 8. S3 Third Level or better. Achievement by NIF Curriculum Organiser and SIMD Quintile – Three Year Averaged Trends

Year	S3 Third Level or better	Literacy				Numeracy			
		Level Achieved	3-year averaged value	2022/23 Poverty related Gap	3-year averaged gap	Level Achieved	3-year averaged value	2022/23 Poverty related Gap	3-year averaged gap
2022/23	SIMD Quintile 1 - most deprived	65%	64%	-27	-28	76%	71%	-20	-24
	SIMD Quintile 2	77%	76%	-15	-16	87%	82%	-9	-14
	SIMD Quintile 3	78%	79%	-15	-13	87%	86%	-9	-10
	SIMD Quintile 4	86%	86%	-6	-6	90%	91%	-6	-4
	SIMD Quintile 5 - least deprived	92%	92%			96%	95%		

Better than 3-year average

Below 3-year average

Unchanged on 3-year average

Corporate Measure – 2023/24 Service Level Indicators



Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022-23	Quarter 1 2023-24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Education	3,122	3,103	3,078	3,147		

Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022-23	Quarter 1 2023-24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
H&S Employee Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education	2	1	3	3		
H&S Employee Non-Reportable Accidents by Cluster – Education	281	145	127	256		

Service Commentary

In Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 there were some issues with the system used to report incidents. There were also concerns that not all staff knew how to report. Both of these issues have been addressed and the increase in quarter 3 demonstrates higher staff awareness of how to report and will include some of the under reporting from the previous 2 quarters.

Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24*	Quarter 3 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)	6.25	6.9	7.7	7.0	9.4		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Primary and Secondary Schools (12-month rolling figure at quarter end)	6	7.1	7.8	7.1	9.4		

Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24*	Quarter 3 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 – Early Learning and Childcare (12-month rolling figure at quarter end)	6.8	7.7	9.8	8.2	9.4		

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.

Traditionally, Quarter 3 levels of absence are impacted by higher incidences of respiratory infections towards the end of the calendar year. The levels of close and sustained physical contact within education settings, particularly within Early Learning Centres, are also significant drivers in terms of absences linked to this aspect.





The Service is keenly aware of the increase in the average number of working days lost and, in line with the application of P&OD corporate policy measures, has been working closely with ELC/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. Some data quality issues have also been identified and addressed.

As reflected in the report to the Staff Governance Committee in November 2023, there are currently two distinct corporate improvement streams that are designed to gain a better understanding of the influences behind rising levels of local government absence which mirror the experience at a national level. It is anticipated that these workstreams will enable some reduction in absence levels in the medium term where the influences are within the control of the Council's policies.

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, and is fully engaged with the corporate projects noted above

* These data sets are influenced by a data cleansing and Cluster re- allocation exercise currently being undertaken to increase the accuracy of service level Education absence reporting, Comparisons with previous Quarter outcomes should be treated with an element of caution but the relationship to the corporate figure and Trend directions remain unaffected.

4. Finance & Controls

Performance Indicator	Quarter 4 2022/23		Quarter 1 2023/24		Quarter 2 2023/24		Quarter 3 2023/24	
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to full year budget profile – Education *	102.35%		26.7%		50.0%		79.8%	

Service Commentary

Detailed budgetary and financial information relating to each Cluster by quarter is captured in reporting to the Finance and Resources Committee. Data covering Quarter 3 was reported to the meeting of that Committee on 30th January 2024. The Management, Commentary noted the financial pressures relating to school roll inflation, leading to the employment of additional teaching and pupil support staffing as the main driver of 'out with profile' expenditure.

The non-teaching staff pay award was agreed in late 2023 and was paid to staff in December. The budgets, actuals, and forecasts in regards to this expenditure has now been applied but was not directly reflected in the original Period 9 budget profile.







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 year-end 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 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 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	13	6	10	11			
% of Complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work/Child Protection	92.3%	83.3%	40%	63.6%		75%	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	15.4%	16.7%	0%	9.1%			

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




Service Commentary

Performance in relation to complaints response times has increased in Quarter 3, although still below the corporate target. This is in large part due to the festive period which, traditionally, has an impact on response times for this quarterly period.

The year-to-date comparisons as at Quarter 3 show a consistent low volume of complaints received, with 11 complaints in the quarter. The YTD outcome for complaint resolution within timescale has dropped to 62.3% from 79% in 2022/23, this is primarily due to performance within Quarter 2 which as explained in the previous report, was due to resource limitations at the time.

A single complaint submitted in Quarter 3 had any points of the complaint upheld, maintaining the long-term improvement quarterly performance suggesting that the year-end forecast for this measure will be lower than the 25% recorded in 2022/23.

Service Level Standards 2023/24

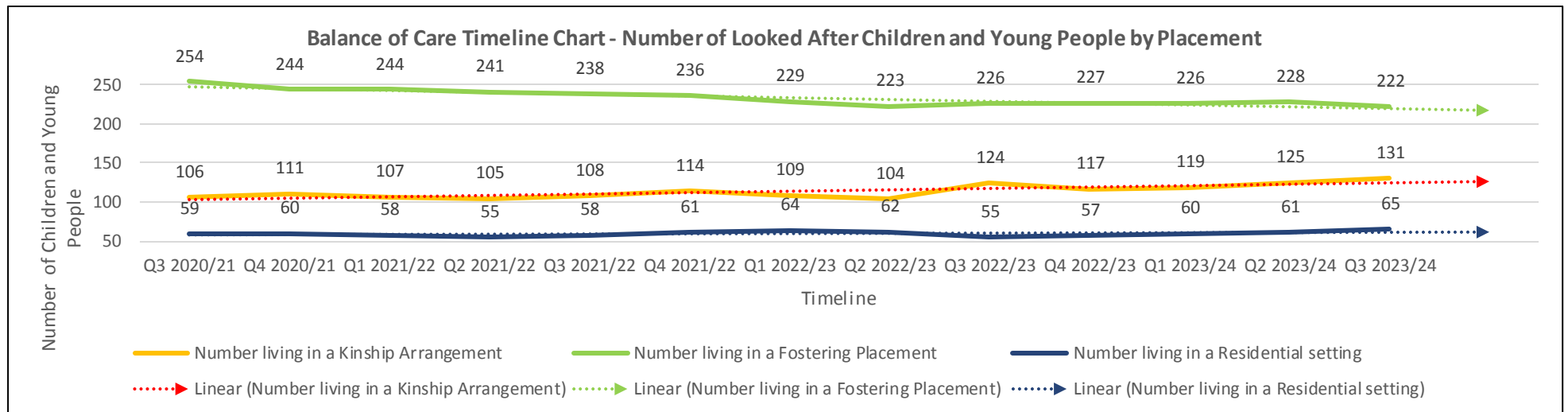
Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Status	2023/24 Target	Long Trend Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
% of care provided in Council children's homes, fostering and adoption services achieve a care standard of Good or better	100%	100%	100%	100%		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	75.5%	75%	75%		75%	
% of Looked After Children looked after in a residential setting where living at home is not appropriate	12%	12%	12%	12%		10%	
% of Looked After Children looked after in Kinship where living at home is not appropriate	24%	24%	24%	24%		31%	
% of Looked After Children looked after in Foster Care where living at home is not appropriate	46%	45%	44%	41%		33%	

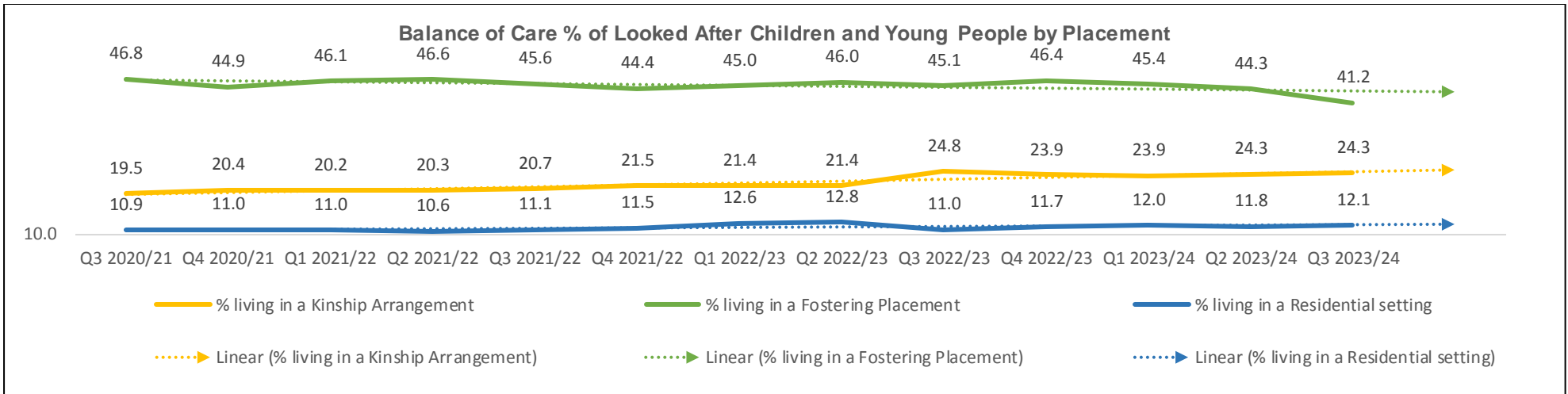
Service Commentary

In Quarter 3, there is third consecutive quarterly period of a reduction in the proportion of Looked After Children being looked after in a Foster Care placement. The proportion of Looked After Children being cared for in either Kinship or in a Residential setting is unchanged from Quarter 2.

This is in part a consequence of a marginally higher overall number of Looked After Children with the additional capacity needed being delivered through Residential and Kinship placements.

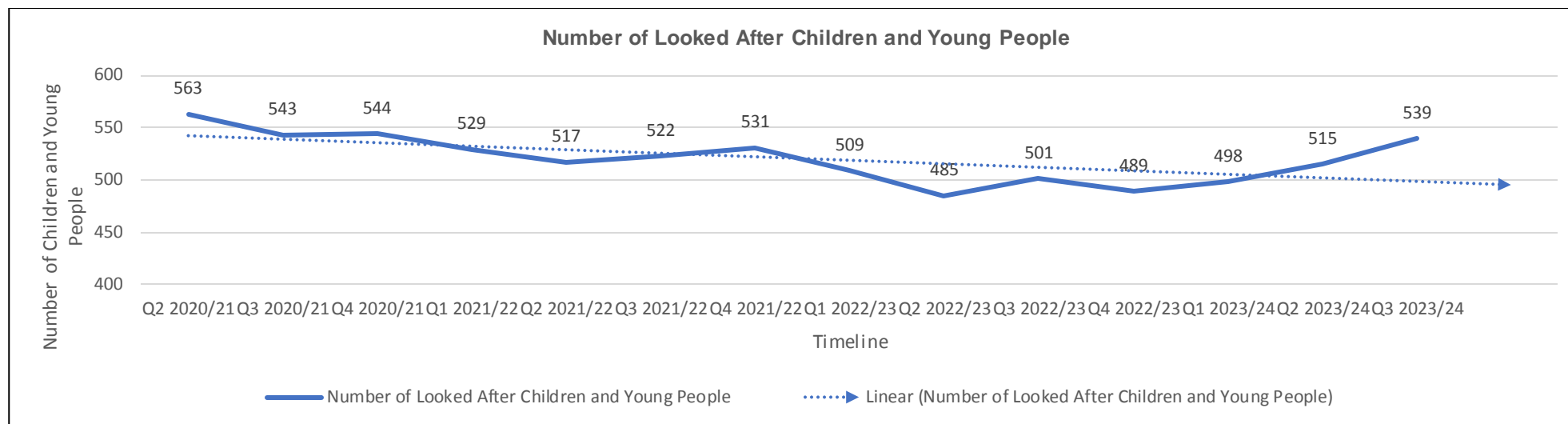
Service Level Measures – Balance of Care Timeline Charts





Balance of Care -% of Looked After Children by Placement (Rolling 12-month period by Quarter)

Period	% living in a Kinship Arrangement	% living in a Fostering Placement	% living in a Residential setting
Q3 2021/22	20.4%	45.8%	10.9%
Q3 2022/23	22.3%	45.1%	12.0%
Q3 2023/24	24.1%	44.3%	11.9%



Service Commentary








Resetting our 'balance of care' remains 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 in 2023. The Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland 2021-22, provided to this Committee in September 2023 offered an extended timeseries and summary of the direction of travel for these measures.

Overall, the trends in numbers and proportion of Looked After Children in the respective placements are aligned with the aims of the Plan's set out above, with an increasing pattern of Looked After Children being cared for in Kinship placements and falls in the placements of Looked After Children in Fostering settings. Both of these trends indicate positive movement towards the dynamic targets, which are to match the National data more closely for Balance of Care placements.

The trends in numbers and % of Looked After Children being looked after in Residential Care are more variable as the circumstances of individual cases can dictate that placement in a Residential setting is the more appropriate approach, with the interests of the child being foremost. Although the % of young people in residential care has remained stable the actual number has increased given the increase in the total number of looked after children. This stable long-term trend follows the National picture with the consequence that there is more limited movement towards the target figure, against what is a comparatively small number of placements.

There are a few reasons for the increase in the number of looked after children. i) the impact of asylum-seeking young people arriving in the city; ii) reflecting the impact of the restrictions imposed during COVID a number of children and young people are presenting with needs and behaviours that are beyond the capacity of family-based care and which can only be met within a residential setting (this picture reflects the national picture); iii) the recruitment of foster carers is a local and national challenge particularly for children aged 10+.

6. Process

Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 2 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	95%	97%	97%		80%	
% of Child Protection interviews completed within 5 working days	N/A	91%	70%	51%		90%	
% initial Child Protection Case Conferences held within 28 days	45%	71%	65%	71%		80%	
% Care experienced children and young people with three or more placements in 12 months	3%	2%	2%	1%		10%	
% Care Experienced Children and Young People with a pathway plan by the age of 15 years	N/A	73%	67%	68%		95%	

Service Commentary



The numbers of new referrals to CSW continue to be higher than in previous years. This work will continue to be prioritised to ensure all urgent referrals are identified and responded to in a timeous manner.





The implementation of the Scottish Child Interview Model has moved practice to ensuring that child interviews are scheduled in accordance with the child's needs not to a particular timeline. This change will be reflected in revised service standards in the coming year.



Work to understand the % of Care Experienced Young People without a plan has identified that this is predominantly a recording issue as opposed to the absence of plans. Work to address this and update the D365 system has been taken forwards.

7. Staff

Corporate Measure – 2023/24 Service Level Indicators

Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022-23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Establishment actual FTE – Children’s Social Work	338.4	341.4	344.1	342.0		

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

Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022/23	Quarter 1 2023/24	Quarter 2 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24	Quarter 3 2023/24 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Quarterly
	Value	Value	Value	Value			
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Children’s Social Work (average number at quarter end)	5.8	6.9	8.2	8.3	9.4		

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 similar to that in Education with a rising level of average days absence through illness, but with a stable quarter to quarter position 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 from face-to-face contacts are prevalent.

As reflected in the report to the [Staff Governance Committee](#) in November 2023, there are currently two distinct corporate improvement streams that are designed to gain a better understanding of the influences behind rising levels of local government absence which mirror the experience at a national level. It is anticipated that these workstreams will enable some reduction in absence levels in the medium term where the influences are within the control of the Council’s policies.

8. Finance & Controls

Performance Measure	Quarter 4 2022/23		Quarter 1 2023/24		Quarter 2 2023/24		Quarter 3 2023/24	
	Value	Status	Value	Value	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to full year budget profile – Children’s Social Work *	100.1%		30.9%		54.5%		98.4%	

Service Commentary

Detailed budgetary and financial information relating to each Cluster by quarter is captured in reporting to the Finance and Resources Committee. Data covering Quarter 3 was reported to the meeting of that Committee on 30th January 2024.

The Management, Commentary from that report noted the financial pressures on the service relating to increasing levels of vulnerability incurring additional support needs for pre-school and school aged children, and the overall rise in the number of Care Experienced Young People over 21 year olds under the overview of the Service as contributors to staff spend,

The paper around Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, being considered at this Committee, is an example of an area of the additional operational pressures being faced by the Service(s) at this point in time. It is known that these pressures are being experienced across a number of Scottish Local Authorities as a consequence of UK level decision-making around this issue.

The non-teaching staff pay award was agreed in late 2023 and was paid to staff in December. The budgets, actuals, and forecasts in regards to this expenditure has now been applied but were not directly reflected in the original Period 9 budget profile.






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 year-end 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	
	Alert (figure more than 20% out with target)
	Warning (figure between 5% and 20% out with target)
	OK (figure within target or better)
	Unknown
	Data Only

Long Term Trends	
	Improving/Increasing
	No or Limited Change
	Getting Worse/Decreasing

Short Term Trends	
	Improving/Increasing
	No or Limited Change
	Getting Worse/Decreasing

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Appendix B - National Improvement Framework Update

Programme/projects	Update February 2023	RAG
Leadership of Change in schools		
Continue to respond positively to the education reforms and strengthen locality working	<p>Headteachers consulted with school communities on the Education Reform consultation on provisions of the Education Bill. All responses were collated and shared as a local authority response.</p> <p>Our approaches to quality improvement continue to develop and seeking opportunities for locality working with other services to ensure families have the support they require.</p>	
Increase opportunities for leadership collaboration with particular focus on Secondary settings	<p>Quality improvement visits are now including DHTs to build capacity in the system. Five QI visits, either focusing on all four core Quality Indicators or specifically on QI 2.3 (Learning, Teaching and Assessment) took place across the secondary sector between August and December. A further five QI visits are scheduled for March – June. To date, five peer Head Teachers, eighteen Deputy Head Teachers and two middle leaders have participated in the visit teams with a similar number to be involved during the second half of the session.</p> <p>Planned professional learning events involving staff from all schools are positively received. Sixty staff members were involved in morning and afternoon sessions on curriculum design and pathways planning. Evaluation from both of these sessions suggested that they were well-received. A first running of a three-day introduction to timetabling course was delivered at the beginning of December, with ten participants. This responded to a pressing need identified by secondary Head Teachers. Further professional learning events are planned for the second half of the session.</p>	
Improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in schools		
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 (RIC)	<p>The service participated in the ADES/education Improvement Collaborative event in November. There is a separate paper with the details. The focus was ELC and challenge, feedback and professional dialogue during this event has supported our evaluation of our quality improvement processes and support offered to our settings.</p> <p>Work done in the last year with the RIC has ensured the work of the RIC has a single focus on Learning Teaching and assessment meaning recent announcements to reduce RIC funding will have less impact for us.</p>	
Work with Microsoft to pilot an increase in the use of Microsoft tools to support learning and teaching	<p>All staff and learners in St Machar Academy and Woodside now have access to Microsoft Devices. They all have a single sign on to access all applications and training on the new learning environment and the benefits to learning has begun with our training partners Hable.</p> <p>The education team and Microsoft have regular meetings to ensure the programme remains on track and any issues are resolved quickly.</p> <p>Plans for Wi-Fi and white board upgrades have begun, and schools have sight of the implementation programme which has been designed to have minimum disruption for schools</p> <p>Early adopters are positive about the changes and can see the benefits for learning.</p>	
Maintain work on the national improvement in writing programme – new cohort	<p>Cohort 3 schools (an additional 5) have completed the Children and Young People Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC) programme and are now implementing the programme .</p> <p>To ensure successful spread and scale within the 11 schools within cohorts 1 & 2, additional Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) will be offered to those schools, for school staff working with P3- P7 young people and any senior leadership team staff. This is to address the movement of staff and to ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of writing is shared with practitioners within these schools.</p>	

	The 2 Associated Schools Groups (ASGs) working on a skills progression framework for writing with the Northern Alliance, Education Scotland and central officers continue to receive CLPL for all staff with built in moderation activities. The group have also looked outwards to other local authorities and are working closely with them to produce a progressive framework for writing. There has been consultation with schools across the city to ensure continuity across our schools and across sectors.	
Improve learning transitions from primary to secondary including a focus on numeracy	At a face-to-face Head Teacher meeting, ASGs shared their transition planning and programmes. All information was collated, and common themes identified. The Learning and Teaching National Improvement Framework group will use the information gathered to develop best practice in Numeracy transition activities and share this with all schools.	
Continue to support engagement with Excelerate to increase innovative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in Secondary Schools	Six Aberdeen City secondary schools have a relationship with <i>Excelerate</i> and are following an individualised programme to develop approaches to learning & teaching and the curriculum. For example, a bespoke community visit to XP School in Doncaster by the Northfield Academy school community supported their plans to change curriculum structure by introducing a pilot <i>crew</i> approach to S1 including 'home' rooms and a residential experience to start the session. Other schools have focused on building <i>oracy</i> skills as part of the curriculum, developed approaches to project-based learning or worked on the creation of a <i>school leaver profile</i> .	
Continue to improve the quality of universal health and wellbeing supports in response to changes in need		
Continue to monitor wellbeing data and the impact of interventions in place including the provision of counselling	Children and young people across Aberdeen City have participated in the annual SHINE (Mental Health) and ACC wellbeing surveys to assist schools and localities the opportunity to respond to local needs. The QI Team will review this data at city level and provide and update on data trends over the past 3 years. Senior Leader meetings (Magpie Meets) have been established this session and the first focus for this, was supporting school staff to understand their data and plan appropriately based on the outcome of this.	
Maintain our focus on encouraging children and young people to be more physically active including those with sensory and other identified needs	The Aberdeen PEPAS group (Physical Education Physical Activity and Sport) continue to work to address 3 key areas that are covered within the Children's Services Plan. A restructure of this group has provided the team an opportunity to reset and develop 3 key working groups to improve extracurricular activity, considering sensory needs and increased opportunities for girls. There is a focus on further development of Active Travel and a planned Magpie Meet with senior leaders to ensure schools have confidence in developing their Active Travel Plans. A final focus is on Body Image and Confidence, with a pilot established in 6 Primary Schools running from October in partnership with Active Schools Assistants and a Sports Psychologist.	
Increase the voice of children and young people in the design and delivery of services		
Undertake a rapid review of our readiness for the incorporation of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) following publication of the statutory guidance	Work continues across all schools to increase learner voice and embed children's rights across school policy and practice. We are still awaiting the publication of the statutory guidance on the UNCRC and will undertake a rapid review of readiness when published. Non statutory guidance was published on 8 January and the plan we currently have in place aligns with the guidance.	
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	All young people should have a voice in how they learn, and this is being explored through our focus on learning, teaching and assessment. Best practice is being identified through our quality improvement processes and through HMIE inspections. Pupil voice is included in school improvement plans and we continue to share good practice across all sectors. Our schools offer a range of pupil voice groups to give our children and young people an active voice in shaping both their school experience and to support school improvement. These routinely include school councils, eco groups, health and wellbeing groups, digital (champions), library groups etc. A high number of our schools (46) are actively engaged in the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award. This award places children's rights at the centre of	

	<p>school life and supports schools to develop a range of approaches to ensure that children and young people are better able to learn about, access and enjoy a broad range of rights.</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council is currently involved in piloting the 'One Good Adult' resource developed in partnership with NES, Scottish Government and Children in Scotland. Senior Leaders and Service Managers are encouraged to make reference to this as part of the application and interview process and a series of engagement sessions were held in schools across the city to gather feedback and to inform our approach to implementing this within our recruitment processes for adults working in our schools. The children and young people involved in these engagement sessions developed a range of questions about the areas that they felt were important linked to the themes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health • Be(ing) Kind • Open-mindedness • Equality and Inclusion • Reliability and, • Encouraging Success. <p>These questions have been shared with senior leaders to support interviewing candidates as part of the recruitment process and this has provided children and young people with an opportunity to influence decision-making and support the appointment of staff in our schools.</p> <p>Further to this, we routinely engage children and young people as part of a children and young people's panel as part of the Head Teacher recruitment process.</p>	
<p>Review the impact of mentoring programmes for children and young people to determine our long term approach</p>	<p>MCR Pathways full evaluation was submitted to committee on 12.9.23 with an updated report on 21.9.23. 3 schools (Northfield Academy, Lochside Academy and St Machar Academy) will continue with the MCR Pathways programme for the duration of academic year 2023/24. Lochside Academy and St Machar Academy will fund the programme through their Pupil Equity fund and Northfield Academy will be supported to fund the programme through the Scottish Attainment challenge Care Experienced Fund. The Virtual School Head Teacher will continue to have oversight of the data centrally working alongside the analytics and insight team. A further evaluation will be brought to committee in July 2024.</p>	
<p>Continue to work in collaboration with the Youth Climate Group to work towards Net Zero</p>	<p>S5 pupil Saanvi Kumar of Cults Academy was named as the new Youth Climate Change President for Aberdeen, following interviews which took place across several schools, in June 2023.</p> <p>Four vice-presidents: Finlay Robinson (S4 Dyce Academy), Anna Thompson (S6 Cults Academy), Yujin An (S4 Cults Academy), and Vinuth Wijemanne (S4 Cults Academy) were also appointed in June to support Saanvi in this role for school session 23-24.</p> <p>Saanvi has chaired monthly meetings with the group where they discuss climate change activities and the ideas that they wish to action for the coming year. The group have also been supporting the wider work of the council, for example with recent work around how we tackle disposable vapes. They have also represented the pupil voice of the young people of Aberdeen at national forums and events.</p> <p>In November the group contacted all Primary and Secondary school Headteachers to introduce themselves and gain an insight into the climate change initiatives taking place in schools. They also want to offer their support and offer to collaborate with any activities. They are keen to support other young people in their efforts to combat climate change. The group are also keen to make direct links with every school's Eco and Climate Change group to expand the network and offer to support their future plans and initiatives. There is also the opportunity for schools to inform them about any energy saving initiatives or</p>	

	environmentally conscious practices that they have already implemented. This can then be promoted more broadly across the city so that schools and the wider public can learn of the positive eco work that is taking place in schools. The next step will be to collate the feedback they have received and create a plan to support schools.	
Deliver a broader range of senior phase learner pathways aligned to growth areas		
Continued curriculum alignment and expansion of learning pathways through delivery of Phase 2 of ABZ Campus	<p>Work has continued across a range of development areas to progress Phase 2 of ABZ Campus.</p> <p>Discussions have continued with delivery partners of Foundation Apprenticeships and existing courses to ensure further progression of a wider range of courses.</p> <p>An exciting partnership has commenced alongside Aberdeenshire Council for a series of <i>anytime</i> courses for young people out with the confines of the column structure and school week. Delivery partners for a range of <i>anytime</i> courses are SRUC, University of Aberdeen, RGU and RGC Online.</p> <p>Plans for a pilot employability experience for young people with additional needs are progressing and will be included in Phase 2.</p> <p>Finally, work continues to ensure that the voice of young people is included to ensure a quality ABZ Campus experience.</p>	
Focus on developing pathways to support those with a range of additional support needs	The ABZ #WHATif (Inspiring Futures) pilot is under development and progressing well. The CIRCLE Participation Scale has been used to develop a preliminary method of profiling potential candidates. This profile is completed using knowledge of and thoughts from, the young person, supported by a relevant member of staff. These profiles are feeding into sourcing appropriate employers to 'match' with a cohort of young people who attend the city's special schools and enhanced provisions. Education and City Growth colleagues are working closely to identify meaningful and fit for purpose opportunities with partners out with the authority.	
Improve the delivery of Computer Science from 3-18 and beyond		
Continue to improve computer science skills through on-going delivery of Aberdeen Computing Collaborative	Digital event held for 1000 teaching and support staff which included workshops from RGU and representation from Aberdeen University. Event had computing science inputs for Early Stages and Upper Stages Primary focused on growing interest in the subject. Project charter approved and Aberdeen Computing Collaborative members consulted on project board. Esports established at St Machar Academy and discussions progressing on adding Bucksburn Academy as a second esports hub.	
Improve the quality of environments/supports for those with additional support needs		
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	CIRCLE training was well attended (over 200 education staff) from ELC, Primary and Secondary settings. The training feedback highlights the aspirational future plans and impact the framework is predicted to have. Valuing participants' views, Speech and Language therapy, alongside education, are committed to providing continual support with future events planned in February, focussing on targeted support. There will also be virtual sessions and sharing events prior to the February in-person offers. The staged intervention approach will be promoted through these and other methods to upskill and empower staff and progress towards consistent quality support provision in setting across the city.	
Continue to build a responsive Educational Psychology Service (EPS) delivery plan to meet the changing needs of the school population	<p>We have recently recruited 2 new Deputes to the service and alongside the newly appointed Principal, there is increased capacity to continue to drive forward improvement within the service. The staffing levels have stabilised, and this is impacting positively on the support schools and families are being offered. Each EPS locality continues to work responsively to the needs of school communities and continue to build programmes of support and training that address these.</p> <p>Each school was offered a systemic consultation by their EPS Locality to explore needs and available supports.</p> <p>Three new flexible training packages are due to be launched in term three: Emotional Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) Executive Function</p>	

	<p>Teenage Brain Development</p> <p>These flexible digital training packages allow schools to engage with the work on a timescale that fits their staffing capacity, and follow-up EPS coaching and facilitation takes place to ensure implementation and embedding of the training. Supplementary and additional resources, including information for Parents and Carers will be posted on the EPS digital resource hub.</p> <p>The successful (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) ELSA programme has been extended for 2023/24 to an ASN & Complex Needs ELSA, specifically for support staff working in our specialist provisions with our most severe and complex populations. Ongoing EPS supervision (six times a year) for all trained mainstream ELSAs continues.</p> <p>The EPS coaching offer continues to be available for short term-focused and targeted work with practitioners wishing to enhance their practice.</p>	
<p>Reshape the Virtual School to ensure that those on the edge of care and the care experienced achieve at the highest levels in keeping with The Promise</p>		
Increase scrutiny of the progress of our pupils on the edge of care	<p>The 2 edge of care pilots continue to run in both Northfield and Lochside Academy. However, there has not been a full complement of staff in the Lochside pilot. Challenges with retention of staff due to the nature of fixed term contracts was shared. Staff have now been recruited for Lochside with the hope that they will be in post early in the new year. A final evaluative report will be brought to committee in early 2024 which will include recommendations of how to scale up the Edge of Care pilots in a sustainable manner subject to positive final evaluation</p>	
On-going roll out of our Edge of Care pilots to help shape our model of Family Support	<p>There has been a recent review of the operational teams supporting the Edge of Care Pilot with the team agreeing to revisit their operational guidance. Staffing has been a challenge within the Lochside pilot, however recruitment is currently underway to address this.</p>	
Review and implementation of a refreshed Minimising Exclusion Policy	<p>Consultation was held with learners, staff and parents. Key themes have emerged to include: actions to prevent violence to staff and learners, alternative provisions, simple charts to follow/ key messages summary, schools being proactive in their approaches, dealing with situations, learners have requested that they are involved in discussions.</p> <p>The Minimising Exclusion Policy remains in statutory form, the guidance and procedure will now be refreshed after consideration of feedback. A short-term working group with school leaders will engage in the new year to consider refresh in relation to consultation responses.</p>	
<p>Close the poverty related attainment gap</p>		
Improve access to wider child poverty data at community level	<p>We continue to work with other services across the Council and other agencies to share data and information on child poverty appropriately, and to work together to try to identify and mitigate the root causes of child poverty. Closer collaboration and joined up working means children and families are able to be signposted to the most appropriate source of support and interventions are more timely and effective.</p>	
Work with HTs to monitor the impact of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) interventions as part of our Quality Improvement Activity	<p>The introduction of an Equity Tracker has helped ensure all schools plan to spend their PEF allocation within the financial year and that outcomes and measures are clearly identified within the planning process. This information can be collated centrally to provide baseline data to inform more robust discussions on the impact of interventions as part of the Quality Improvement visits to schools. Schools report that this is proving a useful tool for their own evaluation of interventions as well as informing the wider evaluation.</p>	
Work with the Scottish Government to increase provision of ELC to those who are 1 and 2 from low-income households	<p>We are awaiting guidance to move this forward. The data pipeline will support us in identifying eligible 2-year-olds and this will be extended to 1 year olds when required.</p>	
Work with Head Teachers to review attendance levels and guidance.	<p>A working group of central officers and headteachers reviewed the attendance guidelines in light of Scottish government guidance and these have been issued to all staff and parents.</p>	
<p>Prevent families from experiencing poverty wherever possible</p>		

Continue to work in collaboration with others to address the root cause of poverty. This will see targeted promotions of support available through: • Money advisors • Partnership with Cfine	Schools continue to work in partnership with other agencies, charities and the voluntary sector to provide support to children and families in need. Over the festive period families were signposted to sources of support for presents for children and young people, food, warm clothing and sources of additional financial support. Schools continue to develop their approaches to providing necessary supports to families in a non-stigmatising way, with some providing in-house foodbanks and others working closely with established providers. There is a clear focus on people being able to self-direct or access goods independently without having to identify that they are in need of help, which can sometimes be a barrier.	
Partnership Delivery of the Family Support Model in keeping with the Promise		
Use request for assistance data to align Scottish Attainment Challenge resource to our emerging model of Family Support	Version 2 of the Request for Assistance platform is ready to share with partners. This will allow us to have a better understanding of the interventions young people and families have accessed and enable us to identify trends allowing for better targeting of resource.	
Continue to work with community planning partners to shape a model of family support	Multiagency work has begun to identify how family support could be reimaged to remove duplication of support and improve access to services. The working group includes representation from education, health, social work and early intervention.	
Review the Anti-bullying policy (suggest alter to review approaches to equality)		
Implement the revised anti bullying policy	The revised anti-bullying policy was shared at a Head Teachers meeting in September with a follow up Magpie Meet with senior leaders planned for January. This will provide an opportunity for colleagues to share practice, develop and review their own policies and ensure time is provided to focus on this. Our data indicates that schools have improved their monitoring and recording of bullying incidents through the Bullying and Equalities Module on SEEMIS. Auditing activity with schools is planned to ensure that strategies and approaches are embedded in schools.	
Continue to support all secondary schools to establish effective systems to support LGBTQIA+ community in school	We have been advancing LGBT inclusive education in our schools through the one stop lgbteducation.scot Platform which provides teachers with access to quality materials, resources and professional learning linked to Scotland's Curriculum. 21 Schools have enrolled and 238 staff have completed Stage 1 of the E-Learning module. TIE (Time for Inclusion) will deliver a presentation to Head teachers in February 2024 focusing on engagement with the national professional learning.	
High quality professional learning for all		
Maintain an agile programme for all ELC and school staff to include opportunities for: - Probationers, - Early-stage teachers, - Middle leaders - Senior leaders - Supply staff - ELC Staff at all levels	A series of training/practice sharing sessions for ELC Managers and SEND Early Years Panels (SEYP) took place between August and October. These sessions were very well attended and received very positive feedback. This was also highlighted as a positive step during a Collaborative Improvement (CI) Event which took place in November 2023. Following the Collaborative Improvement advice, further sessions will be coordinated and an induction course for new ELC Managers will be designed and delivered. The CI team also recommended that visits to other settings to share good practice would be beneficial as well as setting up networking opportunities for staff at all levels. An ELC Learning Festival will take place in February, and this will give us the opportunity to set up networking groups/focus groups for staff and other agencies to drive improvement.	
Explore increasing opportunities for collaboration at subject level	Planned professional learning events involving staff from all schools are positively received. Sixty staff members were involved in morning and afternoon sessions on curriculum design and pathways planning. Further sessions are planned	

	throughout the session and digital sites will be established to increase collaboration at subject level.	
Where possible, support staff to gain qualifications in order to realise career progression and promotion	<p>This academic session, we continue to have a number of colleagues furthering their professional development through national Education Scotland professional learning programmes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellence in Headship: 1 • Middle Leaders Leading Change: 23 • Aspiring Middle Leaders: 17 • Into Headship: 14 • Excellence in Headship Stretch: 1 • Educator Leadership Programme: 8 • Building Racial Literacy: 3 • In Headship: 2 • Connected and Collaborative Systems Leadership: 1 <p>Due to the withdrawal of Masters level funding by the Scottish Government, we currently have no Education colleagues undergoing Northern Alliance Partnership funded Masters level learning programmes at this time.</p>	
Senior and Middle Leadership development		
Continue to deliver a programme for Middle Leaders to enhance leadership skills	<p>A new cohort of Middle Leaders are undertaking a year long programme to enhance leadership skills. They are currently undertaking 360-degree feedback with mentoring from Head Teachers to create individual leadership action plans. Three further Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) sessions are planned between now and February.</p> <p>The previous cohort of experienced Middle Leaders have newly completed their programme. Some of them have furthered their leadership learning through Into Headship, whilst the skills of others are being used to develop current initiatives and coach others. They evaluate the strength of the programme was learning about leadership pedagogy whilst networking with colleagues. They have chosen to meet informally to continue to share practice.</p>	
Build on the network for Middle Leaders to continue to:- - Share practice, - Learn from and with each other - Engage with professional learning opportunities to improve leadership capacity	<p>Working in collaboration with Education Scotland an excellent professional learning opportunity has been created for Head Teachers and Middle Leaders to participate in training to improve leadership of professional learning. 27 of our settings have currently signed up to participate. Training will take place in Term 3 and schools will be supported to create action plans to impact on next session's School Improvement Plans. Schools will form part of a national collaborative to support networking and sharing of practice.</p> <p>There is a great interest in leadership training for aspiring and early phase Middle Leaders with around 40 signing up for each twilight training session. Evaluations commend the mix of leadership pedagogy with the opportunity to network with Middle Leaders across the city. A further 2 sessions will take place between now and February.</p>	
Continue to support staff health and wellbeing		
Undertake regular staff wellbeing surveys to understand the needs of staff across the system and support a timely response to this.	All staff across the Education Service were provided the opportunity to participate in the annual wellbeing survey in November. The results of this are currently being reviewed to support future planning across the service.	
Monitor workforce to ensure our capacity to deliver for children and families		
Monitor recruitment to ensure swift identification of any issues to be addressed.	We continue to work closely with colleagues in schools and People and Organisational Development (P&OD) to monitor the staffing requirements for our schools. There continue to be subject areas which are difficult to recruit to in secondary schools and we work with our P&O colleagues to navigate the current recruitment processes in a timely manner and ensure schools are appropriately staffed. The recruitment process for our current probationer teachers begins in January and the Quality Improvement Manager with responsibility for staffing has	

	ensured that the Establishment Control Board are informed of the need for this process to begin early in the year and that the necessary permissions are in place to enable this to happen.	
Continue to develop School Profiles		
Continue to evaluate the use of school profiles and ensure access for all	School profiles continue to evolve through discussion with school staff to ensure information is providing them with the data they require to support interventions and improvements across the school.	
Implement improved tracking and reporting		
Improved understanding and accountability of data at all levels	Practical training sessions are planned for all staff this session. The face to face HT event in February will focus on data analysis at all levels in the system.	
Improved tracking and scrutiny of impact data related to the 6 groups identified in the Child Poverty Action Plan and those with protected characteristics	A form (excel) with key headings to support tracking and monitoring of care experienced children and young people was developed in partnership with a small group of Primary HT's and Secondary Depute Heads. This has been piloted with feedback to be given in December. The feedback will be reviewed and then a final tracking document produced for use in all schools. In order to capture data centrally and accurately making use of Power BI, consistency of use will be required.	
Review current tracking systems for BGE (Broad General Education) and beyond to ensure accurate tracking of attainment for all children and young people including those on the edge of care	A tracking system has been developed as part of the edge of care pilots at Northfield and Lochside. This is being used to measure impact of the interventions both qualitatively and quantitatively and supports the review processes already established in schools and with social work for each child and family.	
Collaborate with partners to join data sets when beneficial to do so		
Improve data sharing processes to ensure that all relevant data can be shared to support planning and implementation of interventions e.g. PEPAS (Physical Education Physical Activity and Sport), Health	Discussions are taking place with all partners to look at how data can be shared more effectively. Work with Microsoft will help support this. Power BI dashboards gathering health data are supporting the identification of	
Increase central oversight of tracking data and PEF impact measures		
Roll out the Pupil Equity Fund tracker and share best practice	In November 2023, our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor supported the delivery of the first ACC virtual Equity Network meeting, which was attended by over 40 head teachers. At this first meeting of the network head teachers had an overview of the national picture relating to the equity agenda and cost of the school day. This included sharing case studies and supporting materials and links to a wealth of additional information and resources. There was an opportunity to share experiences of using the Equity tracker and for head teachers to ask any questions or clarify any issues around this. The Equity toolkit for Scotland was also shared and links provided. There is now an established ACC Equity Network Teams channel which has been designed to be a place for practitioners involved in improving outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty to access information, guidance and support to promote equity. All headteachers are members of this channel and can request access for relevant members of their staff teams. The next meeting of the Equity Network is scheduled for February 2024.	
Clear expectations around the Core Quality Indicators		
Implement the refreshed Quality Improvement Framework to help improve	The Quality Improvement Framework is supporting visits to schools and there is evidence that there is improvement based on grade comparisons between session 18/19 and session 22/23. There continues to be a focus on improving	

standards against the core Quality Indicators	Learning, teaching and assessment and the visits to schools are allowing us to identify and signpost schools to good practice across the city	
Continually improve central Quality Improvement approaches		
Development of a quality improvement calendar which provides well planned, focused quality improvement activity	Our quality assurance calendar has been shared with schools and is being updated regularly to capture all improvement activity being led by the central team. Each term is focusing on a specific quality indicator to allow schools to align their own school development and provide clear and focused support from the central team.	
Evaluate the impact of each programme of quality improvement to determine next steps	Following quality improvement visits and HMle visits key strengths and areas for development are collated to allow us to plan future improvement activity. Head teachers are given the opportunity to share their experience following inspection in order to further support colleagues.	
Maintain approaches to collaborative improvement across the city		
Implement actions associated with the Armed Forces Covenant	Presentation to HTs in January on revised admissions and annual data capture for UK Armed Forces children. Funding opportunities for projects for Armed Forces children shared with all schools with Armed Forces children.	
Review Partnership Forums to maximise their impact	Partnership Forum guidance has been updated and reissued to ensure all head teachers are aware of the purpose of the partnership forum and their role within that. There is clear guidance around which partners should be included, election of office bearers and frequency of meetings. The underpinning principle is that Partnership Forums should discuss the issues being faced across their community to determine priorities, agree how to allocate resources and identify where gaps in provision remain. Once priorities for improvement have been identified, Forums should consider how each individual service represented can support improvement by targeting their own resources.	
Delivery of Parental Involvement and Engagement Plan		
Work with the parent forum to improve communication between schools and parents and increase parental engagement	The Aberdeen Parent Council Forum (APCF) have managed to identify office bearers and continue to meet in advance of Education and Children's Services committee meetings.	
Review and update the Parental involvement & Engagement Plan	The strategy is due for renewal for the beginning of the 24/25 academic session. A consultation with parents and other stakeholders will be launched in early spring 2024.	
Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway		
This is now being addressed within the Children's Services plan and led by the Children's Services Board	Work here has been highlighted as best practice and plans are in place to share learning from Woodside across schools in the Northfield ASG.	
More closely align the universal services of health and education		
Design and capitalise on opportunities for co-location and co-delivery of services for children and families	The format of a test of change has been discussed and agreed upon at Northfield Academy which involves collaboration between school staff and pupils, Health Visitor Team and the Minister Associate at Sheddocksley Baptist Church. S2 year group has been identified by the Senior Leadership Team – specifically those young people who are on the edge of disengagement from learning. The project will link together young parents in the area (identified by Health Visitor Team), S2 learners and Health/Education professionals in a non-threatening, supportive space. Activities will centre on play and art/craft. The intention is first to create an environment of mutual trust and co-operation. Focus topics around health and wellbeing will be driven by the group. The test of change idea has been amended from the original to better suit the needs of the setting and the learners.	
Accessibility Plan Updates		

Augmentative and alternative signage at learner appropriate height Toilets signposted as accessible	A review is being undertaken by Corporate Landlord as advised at September committee. This will ensure all signage is at an appropriate height and accessible to all. Magpie meet arranged, all school leaders invited – 7 th March 2024 to identify progress and actions related to the review	
Consider suitability, accessibility and capacity within Victorian schools through feasibility study and options appraisal	A review is being undertaken by Corporate Landlord as advised at September committee.	
CIRCLE framework training delivered with partners across settings including use of Up and Away to support understanding of environments to meet needs.	Multiagency training was delivered during the November Inset day for staff in Primaries and ELC settings. All sessions offered were fully subscribed to and positive attendance and feedback received. Meetings have been held with individual Head Teachers and Senior Leadership Teams where requested. Package of supports is available and dedicated MS Teams channel enables sharing of information, problem solving and an immediate support network following the successful use of this for our middle leadership programme. February input will focus on early years and secondary settings and uptake of places is positive.	
Develop guidance to meet a range of sensory needs	Draft guidance created by Educational Psychology team and is being piloted in selected primary settings.	
Child's planning format which is accessible for learners	Child's planning format continues to be discussed through GIRFE group. Pilots ongoing.	
Empower children and young people to have their voice heard when experiencing child protection processes through effective use of alternative communication systems	Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) project underway.	
Access to information through a single digital source of information for parents, carers and disabled young people	Under development: https://sites.google.com/ab-ed.org/asn outreachservice/useful-links	
Implement "One Good Adult" programme	The One Good Adult profile has been further developed by learners with key questions written to support interview processes. These will be used to help pupil groups and interview panels to scaffold their questions for interview. There has also been a rewrite of the One Good Adult – as the core principles for how those in education should be with respect to others. This aligns with the Guiding Principles of Aberdeen City.	
Ensure summary information regarding additional support needs is accessible and available in a variety of formats in accordance with legislation	Meeting TBC in new year with parent group/charity	

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	20th February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan Annual Report 2023/24
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/046
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne and Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1 and 2.4

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This Annual Report outlines work undertaken by the Children's Services Board over 2023/24. The report also proposes changes to the agreed Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan to support Community Planning Partners to positively respond to changes in published data and national policy intent.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the progress made in delivering the Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan from April 2023 to date;
- 2.2 note the changes evident in data sets released over the reporting period;
- 2.3 approve the Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Strategic Plan Annual Report 2023/24;
- 2.4 delegate authority to the Interim Director Children's and Family Services to submit the Annual Report to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee for further review and thereafter to the Community Planning Management Board for ratification;
- 2.5 delegate authority to the Interim Director Children's and Family Services to submit the Annual Report to Scottish Government.
- 2.6 Instruct the Interim Director Children's and Family Services to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee within 2 committee cycles on proposed approaches to progressing:

- more family centric approaches to support families facing complex challenges living in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation(SIMD) 1; and
- a whole system approach to addressing obesity.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1. Part 3 (Children’s Services Planning) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires every local authority and its relevant health board to jointly prepare an Integrated Children’s Services Strategic Plan in respect of a three-year period. The current Aberdeen City Integrated Children’s Services Strategic Plan was approved by the Education and Children’s Services Committee in March 2023.
- 3.2 The legislation also requires every local authority and its relevant health board to jointly prepare a report on the impact of plans on an annual basis, and to submit these Annual Reports to the Scottish Government for review.
- 3.3 The agreed Aberdeen City Integrated Children’s Services Strategic Plan is one of a suite of Statutory Plans which support delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. In preparing the Plan in March 2023, considerable work was undertaken to align reporting arrangements in order to better integrate the full range of statutory Plans. Better integration of Plans is supporting delivery of more integrated services, helping make the best use of time and resources and providing a clearer insight into the needs of children and families.
- 3.4 As a result of this integration, this Annual Report includes the annual Child Poverty Plan Action Report (LCPAR) which is required to comply with the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.
- 3.5 In addition, this Annual Report responds to the Committee’s request (formerly Public Protection Committee) for an annual report on the progress of our Corporate Parenting responsibilities outlined in Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. It also helps deliver our duty to report to Scottish Government Ministers every three years on how the Local Authority is meeting its corporate parenting responsibilities as detailed in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 3.6 More integrated evaluation and reporting is helping Officers identify the issues to be addressed more clearly than is possible when looking at policies in an isolated way.

Approach taken to developing the Annual Report

- 3.7 In preparing this annual report we have reviewed data published since March 2023 to identify any emerging changes from the data reviewed comprehensively a year ago. The Board has also reviewed the current Community Planning Population Needs Assessment and benefited from reviewing the themes emerging from the extensive engagement undertaken to inform the refresh of our Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP). Reviewing both data and insights has helped us draw firmer conclusions on the activity

most likely to realise improved outcomes over the final two years of the Plan and therefore assess the adequacy of the current Plan.

- 3.8 Although undertaking the annual review has broadly confirmed the appropriateness of the current plan, some new risks are evident which will require additional action to be taken.

Internal evaluation of the work of the Board

- 3.9 In addition to our planned improvement work and work supporting delivery of national policy, the Children's Services Board has continued to keep abreast of impending legislative changes to ensure readiness for what lies ahead. This has seen the Children's Services Board participate in planning for The National Care Service (NCS) through our local Programme Board, be selected as a Bairns Hoose Pathfinder to help us build on the existing co-located Police Scotland and Children's Social work Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) team and monitor the progress of the anticipated Children's Care and Justice Bill. The Board has extensively engaged in education reform consultations and currently awaits the publication of the Statutory Guidance on the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to ensure our work aligns with expectations. The Board also continues to give consideration to the findings of the Secure Care Review to ensure readiness for delivery.
- 3.10 The Children's Services Board has invested time in considering how best to track progress against our ambitious plan. This has led to the implementation of an agreed tracker to help improve transparent tracking of progress and is helping to highlight emerging risks and issues. This greater visibility is enabling the Board to take swifter action when required. These changes are helping to build a culture of collective responsibility and candour amongst Board members. The current approach will be maintained.
- 3.11 In addition to providing leadership to our Sub Groups, the Children's Services Board has collaborated to evaluate progress on a number of key policies. This has included our evaluation of progress towards delivery of Plan 21-24 in October 2023. Our discipline of on-going evaluation on key policies is helping improve our collective understanding of the challenges facing our children and families and helping us take a more holistic and agile approach. As we move forward, more annual reports will be embedded into this Annual Report so that the connections across different policies are fully aligned. This approach reflects the best practice described in recent national non statutory guidance issued to support delivery of the UNCRC.
- 3.12 The Board has benefited from closer working with the Child Protection Committee (CPC) this year and now works in collaboration to deliver shared audits and quality assurance activity. This has seen the Board review the effectiveness of arrangements to support children and young people who have experienced harmful sexual behaviour and to review the circumstances which trigger a referral to services under the category of physical abuse. The Board also collaborated with the CPC to plan delivery of our Bairns Hoose as part of a national pathfinder. We look forward to working with the national Bairns Hoose team over the coming year as the capital works get underway

and the team starts to be established. This alignment will be maintained and likely develop further over the next reporting cycle.

- 3.13 A refreshed Request for Assistance (RfA) process has been developed and will soon be delivered to help us monitor demand and the impact of services in real time. This second version of the system will enable us to look at how effectively different interventions support the mitigation of risk and help inform our future commissioning, data from this second version will inform the next Annual Report.
- 3.14 The quality of our evaluation is improving. Further development of a robust evaluation framework which helps assess the strength of all three tiers of our Tiered Intervention Framework (Family Support Model) as outlined in the Annual Report will help us decommission services which are not aligned to The Promise and facilitate the shift of resources towards prevention and early intervention. We continue to benefit from close collaboration with our local Health Determinates Research Collaborative (HDRC). The HDRC have also committed to working in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh to help us evaluate the impact of our local Bairns Hoose.
- 3.15 Those represented on the Board continue to support a high proportion of displaced children and young people including those fleeing conflict and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. After Glasgow, the city welcomes the highest proportion of displaced people. Services continue to respond with agility although this has placed considerable pressure on local services.
- 3.16 The Board successfully implemented updated GIRFEC Operational Guidance over the reporting period. Unfortunately there was no appetite to develop a more regional approach to support colleagues working across the Health Board. Work is ongoing to secure greater alignment between GIRFEC and GIRFE for those who have a disability. Revisions have been proposed to our agreed Child's Planning format based on feedback from children and young people and this feedback will be retained as we await an updated national position.
- 3.17 Over the course of the year, the impact of poverty on children and families has become even more evident. The Children's Services Board has agreed content for a child poverty training course to ensure practitioners remain alert. Station House Media Unit (SHMU) has been commissioned to help develop the training course to ensure consistent messaging and understanding of the issues facing our families.

Internal evaluation of the work of our Sub Groups

- 3.18 Considerable time has been invested in the development of Improvement Project Charters. This has supported new groups of staff from across the Community Planning Partnership to join forces to work on shared projects aligned with our Plan, the progress of each charter is routinely reported to the Community Planning Aberdeen Board. A total of 34 Improvement Projects have been agreed and all are now making good progress, we expect to see the benefits of this collaboration clearly over the next 12 months.
- 3.19 With the exception of one Sub Group, all Groups have benefited from a consistent Chair who has overseen work within agreed timescales and

ensured delivery of the agreed Plan. Discussions are on-going with NHS Grampian to identify a replacement Chair for Stretch Outcome 9 with short term additional capacity being provided by Aberdeen City Council.

Learning from the data review

- 3.20 There are considerable differences in trend data at ward level. It is therefore important to consider how to better utilise locality based staff to ensure that our approaches reflect the unique context of each community and the complexity of individual families rather than presume the centrally designed supports will meet needs.
- 3.21 It is proposed that a new approach to support families with complex and multi-faceted challenges be designed and tested across a small number of communities to establish how best to address the considerable variation in outcomes.
- 3.22 Given the clear disparity in outcomes for those living in SIMD 1 evident from the data review, it is proposed that resource from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund be used to secure a data analyst to better support our identification and tracking of outcomes for those in SIMD 1. This will help inform our evaluation of new approaches outlined in paragraphs 3.20 and 3.21.
- 3.23 There is also a need to consider how best to address obesity given that obesity impacts on long term health outcomes. Concerning trends are becoming apparent in both children and expectant mothers and it is important to address these timeously. Discussions with partners, including Public Health, will be important in shaping a strategic approach to addressing obesity. It is suggested that a clear proposal of how to address obesity be presented to Committee for approval within 2 committee cycles.

Learning for future planning

- 3.24 There is a need to consider how we could better align the work of the Children's Services Board with Locality Plans to maximise all integration opportunities as we move forward. This will help fully utilise the knowledge of community assets who help shape Locality plans. This should be progressed as far as possible this session and in future planning cycles.

Next steps

- 3.25 The Plan put in place a year ago continues to be relevant. A number of key areas have been identified for further work. They are to:
- Re-design how we support families with complex and multi-faceted challenges in a family centric way and continue to develop our use of data (with a particular focus on SIMD 1)
 - To work with Community Planning Partners to develop a whole system approach to addressing obesity.
 - Review arrangements in light of anticipated Statutory Guidance on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
 - Implement the recommendations of the Secure Care Review.
- 3.26 The Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services high level plan has been amended to take account of these additions (changes shown in red).

Strategic Stretch Outcomes					
Increase the number of 0-5s who meet developmental milestones by 2026	Improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and families by 2026	Improve the attainment, health and wellbeing and positive destinations of our care experienced by 2026	Improve the attainment and positive destinations of our children and young people by 2026	Reduce the number of young people charged with an SCRA by 2026	Increase the number of children with ASN or disability who secure a positive destination by 2026
Strategic Priorities					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Improve the health outcomes of expectant and new mothers ➢ Improve uptake of benefits ➢ Improve access to emergency formula and food for infants ➢ Address early speech and language needs ➢ Increase the uptake of immunisations ➢ Improve the quality of ELC provision and maintain uptake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Focus on prevention and early intervention ➢ Provide access to joined up services and bereavement support • Respond quickly in a stigma free, needs and rights led way • Increase levels of physical activity • Increase the provision of child friendly environments within local communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a Balms Hoose • Delivery The Promise • Increase the provision of health assessments for the care experienced • Continue to close the gap between those who have care experience and their peers • Increase the no. of foster carers available locally • Keep brothers and sisters together • Ensure adequate provision of legal advice and advocacy • Implement the recommendations of the Secure Care Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Implement refreshed guidance on the use of restraint ➢ Better track those who are in or on the edge of the care system ➢ Improve learning transitions from P7 to S1 ➢ Deliver ABZ Campus to widen the range of courses ➢ Deliver Aberdeen Computing Collaborative to ensure long term employability ➢ Delivery of Tier 2 services to close the gap through SAC funding ➢ Continue to address the cost of the school day and child poverty in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Reduce levels of anti-social behaviour. ➢ Deliver Mentors in Violence Prevention across all secondary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway ➢ Establish better assurance systems ➢ Increase the number of Young Carers receiving support ➢ Improve transition planning from child to adult services ➢ Ensure that the voices of children (including those who use alternative communication systems) are central to processes and Plans ➢ Decrease the number of children not accessing full time education
Enabling Priorities					
Access to services	Increase integration	Reduce risks	Commissioning	Data	Workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Implement a single Request for Assistance process ➢ reduce the number of access points to information and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Build on the integration models including that at ELC Links ➢ Establish an assurance system to test the strength of the system ➢ Improve alignment between children and adult services ➢ Develop a Target Operating Model for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Better understand why children are placed OOA ➢ Understand the long term impact of ELC on outcomes for families ➢ Agree and implement a whole system approach to addressing obesity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Aligned to the 10 principles of family support ➢ Jointly respond to the needs of those displaced ➢ Evaluate readiness for implementation of the UNCRC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Improve knowledge of the 6 groups by co-designing with service users and children ➢ Improve data matching ➢ Improve the tracking of the outcomes of those most vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Increase knowledge poverty agenda and of benefits ➢ Increase knowledge of trauma and risk ➢ Develop ways of working (SIMD1) to better support the provision of rights

3.27 With Committee approval, plans of how to address obesity and to developing different ways of working to support those living in SIMD 1/improved tracking of the outcomes of those living in SIMD 1 will be considered in greater depth with proposals presented to Committee for approval within two committee cycles.

3.28 It is proposed that this Annual Report be presented to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee for further review in March 2024, and to Community Planning Aberdeen for formal ratification in April 2024. The Annual Report will be submitted to Scottish Government thereafter.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Closer alignment of services could help realise efficiency in the longer term.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 8 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires the Council and NHS Grampian to prepare a Children's Services Plan every 3 years and to keep that Plan under review under section 11. Section 13 of the Act provides that as soon as practicable after the end of each 1 year period, a local authority and the relevant health board must publish (in such manner as they consider appropriate) a report on the extent to which children's services and related services have in that period been provided in the area of the local authority in accordance with the children's services plan. This Report and Appendix satisfies these duties.
- 5.2 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 (the Act) fully entered into force on the 1st July 2019. The Act sets out steps required to be taken by the Scottish Government, Local Authorities and Health Boards to tackle child poverty. The Act creates a requirement for Local Authorities and Local Health Boards to annually agree and publish a Child Poverty Action Report. Following ratification the Report must be submitted to Scottish Ministers.
- 5.3 The Corporate Parenting duties included in Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 are designed to ensure that the attention and resources of various organisations are explicitly focussed on the task of safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of looked after children and young people, and care leavers. This part extends the duties of corporate parents and the reporting responsibilities of local authorities.
- 5.4 Aberdeen City Council has a duty to report to Scottish Government Ministers every three years on how it is meeting its corporate parenting responsibilities as detailed in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 5.5 Section 59 of the 2014 Act provides that corporate parents must prepare a plan for how they propose exercising their corporate parenting responsibilities and must keep this plan under review; corporate parents must consult with one another before preparing or revising the plan and must publish the plan or revised plan.

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	*Does Target Risk Level Match
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			controls/control actions	Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not changing our local system to reflect changes in national policy.	Delivery of the Children's Services Plan and regular review of the appropriateness of the Plan to ensure maximum impact.	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with legislation	This Annual Report complies with the Statutory Guidance and legislative requirements.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that we make a lesser impact by working to a high number of strategic plans	The Plan pulls all strategic Plans together to help maximise impact.	L	Yes
Financial	Risk that we don't have sufficient resource to meet the needs of priority groups	The Plan will help us make best use of available resource by ensuring partners work to a common purpose.	L	Yes
Reputational	Risk that we don't prioritise those in greatest need.	Mitigated by undertaking a detailed strategic needs assessment and looking at the data by group before drawing conclusions.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p style="text-align: center;">Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p>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,</p>	<p>The needs of children and young people most often require a strong multi-agency</p>

<p>going onto positive destinations, including further and higher education, vocational training and apprenticeships.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p> <p>Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices.</p>	<p>response. This Plan will support the further integration and collaboration across services supporting children and families to help realise improved outcomes.</p>
<p><u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u></p>	
<p>LOIP stretch outcome 4: <i>95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026</i></p> <p>LOIP stretch outcome 5: 90% of children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to by 2026</p> <p>LOIP stretch outcome 6: As corporate parents we will ensure 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.</p> <p>LOIP stretch outcome 7: 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026</p> <p>LOIP stretch outcome 8: 30% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026</p> <p>LOIP stretch outcome 9: 95% of our children with disabilities will experience a positive transition to adult services by 2026</p>	<p>This Plan details how Stretch Outcomes 4 – 9 will be realised over the next 2 years and will help to coordinate our work across the Community Planning Partnership.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p>	
<p>Regional Cultural Strategy</p>	<p>The Children's Services Plan</p>

Prevention Strategy Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	prioritises prevention and is closely aligned with the National Improvement Framework. The Plan is designed to bring all statutory Plans for children into one Plan to improve service delivery.
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Aberdeen City Integrated Children's Services Plan 2023-26](#)

[Aberdeen City Child Poverty Action Report 2022/23](#)

[Aberdeen City Corporate Parenting Plan](#)

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Annual Report April 2023 – March 2024

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Community Planning
Aberdeen



Aberdeen City's **CHILDREN'S SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN**

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INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR



Our published Plan for children, young people and families 2023-26 articulates the outcomes Community Planning Partners are currently working to realise for children, young people and families across Aberdeen. As we reflect on progress made in the first year of the Plan, we continue to be thoughtful of how the needs of our families continues to change. This yearly review of progress therefore presents an opportunity to check that our planned improvement projects are prioritising the right things and help determine if we need to make amendments to our agreed Plan.

In preparing this annual report we have reviewed data published since March 2023 to identify any changes in data trends at different life stages. We have also benefited from reviewing the themes emerging from the extensive engagement undertaken to inform the refresh of our Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP). Reviewing both data and insights has helped us draw firm conclusions on the activity most likely to realise improved outcomes over the final two years of the Plan and therefore the adequacy of the current Plan.

In developing Aberdeen City's Children's Services Strategic Plan for 2023-26, we worked to integrate the full range of statutory Plans and reports in an attempt to better align reporting, reduce duplication and free up time for direct work. As a result, this Annual Report covering 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, details the progress the Community Planning Partnership has made in delivering against several key national policies including:

- addressing child poverty;
- delivering The Promise; and our
- Corporate Parenting Plan

In addition to our planned improvement work and work supporting delivery of national policy, the Children's Services Board has continued to keep abreast of impending legislative changes to ensure our readiness for what lies ahead. This has seen the Children's Services Board participate in planning for The National Care Service (NCS) through our local Programme Board, be selected as a Bairns Hoose Pathfinder to help us build on the existing co-located Police Scotland and Children's Social Work Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) team and monitor the progress of the anticipated Children's Care and Justice Bill. The Board has extensively engaged in education reform consultations and continues to actively consider the implications of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024.

This report provides a flavour of how partners are working together to improve outcomes for children, young people and families in Aberdeen City. I continue to be humbled by the collaboration and increasing sense of shared accountability demonstrated by members of the Children's Services Board.

Eleanor Sheppard

Interim Director Children and Family Services (Chair of the Children's Services Board)

ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE REPORTING PERIOD



34 multi-agency Improvement Projects have been initiated and testing is now well underway.

Some other key achievements over the reporting period are listed below.

- Securing pathfinder status for our Bairns Hoose
- Improving outcomes for those living in some communities (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2 and 3)
- Realising a 50% increase in the number of eligible 2s placed in ELC provision
- Increasing the uptake of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) from 91.22% in 2021/22 to 94.74% in 2022/23
- Increased the % of funded ELC settings achieving good or better during inspection from 82.4% in 2021/22 to 86.4% in 2022/23.
- Realising an improvement in the annual participation measure from 91.2% in 2022 to 92.8% in 2023.
- Realising a reduction in the attainment gap (literacy and numeracy) between those living in areas of deprivation and their peers
- 82% of our communities are now performing better than could be expected in child poverty compared to only 78% a year ago
- No One Left Behind (NOLB) funding of £1,344,000 has helped deliver all-age, all-stage employability support (up from £675,202.58 last year) and 308 young people aged 16-24 benefiting
- Seed funding of £11,218.89 has been invested so far to support the creation of seven businesses (up from £3,995.79 supporting the start-up of one business last year)
- 75 young people aged 16 and 17 have engaged in at least 10 hours of employability activity weekly, each receiving a training allowance of up to £55 per week, totaling £38,931 to date this year.
- A Parental Employability Support Fund of £1,202,000 (up from £263,197.73 last year) has supported eligible parents with dependent children who are unemployed and experiencing poverty or who are experiencing in-work poverty. Seed funding of £35,756.80 has been invested so far this year, helping support the creation of ten businesses by eligible parents (up from £6,418.39 supporting the start-up of three businesses last year).
- Since the Scottish Attainment Challenge funding for youth work was made available in August 2021, a total of 893 activities have been delivered to 2,246 participants, a total of 22,626 learner hours.

We are proud of our achievements, but there is clearly more to be done.

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WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR PRE AND POST-NATAL SERVICES?

What does the data published since March 2023 tell us?



Between 2002 and 2022, the 0 to 19 age group has seen the largest percentage decrease in births (-86.0%). The 40 and over age group has seen the largest percentage increase in births (+115.0%).

What is getting better?

There has been a notable reduction in premature births across SIMD 2 and 3. Levels in SIMD 1 remain highest and levels across SIMD 5 have risen.



Smoking during pregnancy has reduced from 13.01% (2018/19) to 12.06% (2020/2021) and is broadly in line with national averages. Poverty continues to be a factor although reductions are evident at SIMD 2 and 3.



Babies exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks has increased from 39.9% in 2020 to 40.87% in 2021. Levels are above the national average but continue to be impacted by poverty with variation at community level.



It is encouraging to see early reductions in premature births and in smoking during pregnancy across SIMD 2 and 3. There is now a need to look at how we can better support improvements in the smaller number of families most impacted by poverty (SIMD 1).

What has stayed the same?

In 2022, the most common age group of mothers in Aberdeen City was 30 to 34 (698 births), the same as in 2002. The least common age group of mothers in Aberdeen City was 0 to 19 (25 births), which is a change from the 40 and over age group in 2002.



The number of pre-birth children subject to child protection planning meetings remains consistent. This suggests that we are not yet providing adequate levels of community support to prevent risk.



The number of children (pre-birth and 0-4) on the child protection register remains consistent. This suggests that we are not yet fully mitigating risk for our youngest citizens.



There is clear evidence of a reduction in the number of younger mothers in the city. The number of pre-birth children subject to child protection planning meetings and the number of those aged 0-4 and on the child protection register remains consistent. This indicates that we don't have the level of support required to support some families at community level and that our approaches to offering support may require to be more adaptive within our model of Family Support.

What is worsening?

Exposure to second hand smoke at 6-8 weeks has increased from 7.3% in the 3 years ending 2021 to 7.56% in the 3 years ending 2022.



Maternal obesity increased from 21.04% in the three years ending 2021 to 22.55% in the three years ending 2022. Poverty continues to heavily impact levels of maternal obesity with those living in SIMD 1&2 having higher than average levels.



There has been a rise in the % of premature births from 8.07% in 2021 to 8.31 in 2022. Levels are in keeping with the national average. Reductions in the % are evident across SIMD 2 and 3.



The total fertility rate in Aberdeen City decreased from 1.11 % in 2021 to 1.04% in 2022.



There has been a slight drop in the % of babies born at a healthy birth weight from 85.5% in 2021 to 85.1% in 2022. This is slightly better than the national average.



In Aberdeen City, the standardised birth rate decreased from 7.2 per 1,000 population in 2021 to 7.0 per 1,000 population in 2022. In comparison, the rate in Scotland overall decreased from 8.7 to 8.6.



The reduction in fertility and associated decrease in birth rate is thought to be attributable to both environmental and social factors. Addressing environmental factors and focussing on the determinates of good health alongside Community Planning Partners will continue to be important. There may also be a need to think more explicitly about how the built environment can influence behaviours by continuing to focus on prevention, particularly around obesity levels which can dramatically impact longer term health outcomes for children and families. There are clear signs that action on obesity should be added to our Plan.

Recent improvements are evident across Quintiles 2 and 3. Although these gains are welcomed and thought partially attributable to the work of the Children's Services Board, there is a need to work differently to address the needs of families across SIMD 1. It could be reasonably concluded that the established 2023-26 Plan has had a limited impact on families living in Quintile 1 and that these families are proving harder to support within our current system. There is a need for partners to collectively identify those families so that we can more rigorously track progress, better understand the issues they face and work with them to support positive outcomes in a person centred and family led way.

So, what next?

The improvement projects outlined in the current Plan are still thought to be appropriate. In addition, it is proposed that the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund be used to secure a data analyst to support our identification and tracking of outcomes for those in SIMD 1 and consider how we could better support families to maximise outcomes.

There is also a need to consider how best to address obesity given how obesity impacts on long term health outcomes and add this work to our Plan.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR UNDER 5s?

What does the data published since March 2023 tell us?



The ethnicity of our under 5s is more diverse now than in March 2023. The number of under 5s accessing health and education services has risen over the last year with considerable pressure being felt across health and education services.

What is getting better?

The percentage of funded ELC settings achieving good or better during inspection has risen from 82.4% in 2021/22 to 86.4% in 2022/23. Despite the improvement trend, local results remain 4% lower than the national average.



There has also been a 50% increase in the number of eligible 2s placed in ELC provision. Work with the DWP to align data sets is positively impacting uptake.



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.



The increase in uptake of ELC placements and gradual improvement in quality is welcomed. There is a need to continue with current approaches to address the variation in quality still seen across the city.

What has stayed the same?

Coverage of 27-30 month assessment and uptake of immunisations.



Children aged 0-4 remain the largest group on the child protection register.



School records suggest there has been a 1% rise in the % of P1 children recorded as having a speech disorder from 3.22% to 4.22%. However, a reduction in those recorded as having communication support needs from 2.62% to 1.75% in 2023.

Uptake of immunisations in some communities is significantly lower than the city average and there is a need to target those communities better. Health Visitors have worked hard to undertake assessments of children at 27-30 months and coverage is improving across the city. This fuller coverage is now highlighting the number of children who are not meeting developmental milestones. There is a need to look at how we could work together to support childhood development of the under 5s more fully at community level.

What is worsening?

Deaths in children (1-15 years) have risen from 12.2 per 100,000 in 2020 to 13.3 per 100,000 in 2021. This is lower than the national average



Recruiting Health Visitors is even more challenging now than a year ago. 6 less (41) Health Visitors are now in post compared to last year, this is 30 below complement.



Uptake of the 6 in 1 immunisation at 24 months is lowest in Tillydrone and George Street at 90%. Uptake in Ashgrove and Cummings Park is reducing. Similar patterns are evident with the MMR



There has been a drop in the percentage of children identified as meeting developmental milestones at the 27-30 month review from 97.1% in 2021 to 87.3% in 2022. However, this is a better than the national average of 82.1% and will have been impacted by more widespread assessments.



The current shortage of Health Visitors is impacting on work for this age group. Despite the considerable challenges, there is evidence of improvement in some key measures due to resources being used flexibly to address the recruitment challenge.

So, what next?

The improvement projects outlined in the current Plan are still thought to be appropriate, but the need to reflect on the needs of families living in different communities is again evident in this age group. There is therefore a need to consider how best to utilise community based staff to ensure that our approaches reflect the unique context of each community and take account of the increasingly complex and unpredictable circumstances our families face. Planned work to base Health Visitors within ELC provisions should progress as a first step to encouraging closer locality working.

There is a need to consider how we could better align the work of the Children's Services Board with Locality Plans in future planning cycles to ensure that the Children's Services Board benefits from the insights of community assets.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR PRIMARY PUPILS?

What does the data published since March 2023 tell us?



There has been a rise in primary pupil numbers from 14,573 in September 2022 to 15,210 in September 2023 with far greater diversity now evident. In 2019/20, 503 learners within our schools were recorded as being disabled, this has now risen by 34% to 676. 3.76% of school pupils are recorded as having Autistic Spectrum Disorder, compared to 3.53% last year.

What is getting better?

School attendance in term 1 of 2023/24 is sitting at 94.8% (primary) compared to 94.33 in 2020/21. This is slightly better than national levels.



There has been a rise in the % of adults who are satisfied with local schools from 70.1% (2018-21) to 71.3% (19-22). Levels now look positive compared to other urban Local Authorities



The attainment gap between those living in areas of deprivation and their peers in literacy and numeracy has reduced. The position is now better than the family group average and in line with national average.



There has been a rise in the % of P1, 4 and 7 pupils achieving expected levels in literacy and numeracy . however there is variation with Tullos and Sunnybank having the lowest ACEL levels in the city. There is evidence however, that variation is reducing

The % of schools achieving good or better during inspection at the end of 22/23 was 78.1% compared to the baseline data of 68.75% in 19/20.



The proportion of LAC with more than one placement has reduced from 21.2% in 2021 to 18.8% in 2022. This is however above the family group and national average.



There has been a reduction in the % of children identified with communication and support needs from 4.39% in 2022 to 2.42% in 2023. The number of children with a speech and language disorder remains consistent however (4.44% in 2022 and 4.63% in 2023)



There is early evidence of some recovery from the pandemic with 82% of pupils in P6 and 7 reporting excellent or good health which is 2% higher than last year and better than the national average. However, levels of dysregulation remain high and are thought attributable to poorer levels of parental mental health resulting in part from the various societal shocks experienced over the last few years. The situation locally is similar to the situation reported through national research. The Children's Services Board will take a keen interest in the local arrangements being put in place to address the Cabinet Secretary's 5 point plan. Progress is being made in addressing the attainment gap, but this needs continued focus.

What has stayed the same?

Active travel to school has reduced from 60.7% in 2022 to 58.3% in 2023. Levels of active travel remain very high compared to other Health Board areas.



The percentage of primary 1 children with poor dental health remains largely unchanged. Around 30% of children continue to have poor dental health at the Primary 1 stage.



38% of children in our primary schools have an additional support need compared to 36.8% a year ago. This is thought to be largely consistent.



The drop in active travel, albeit disappointing, is thought to have more or less stayed the same as before the pandemic. Levels of active travel remain high compared to other Local Authorities.

This age group again highlights the considerable variation in patterns of behaviour and outcomes across communities which can be masked by looking at city wide data sets.

What is worsening?

There has been a drop in the proportion of Primary 1 children being of healthy weight from 83.19% in 2020 to just under 70% in 2021. This is slightly above the national average.



There has been a 2.2% increase in the number of children living in poverty (after housing costs) from 2021 to 2022. 1 in 5 children now live in poverty. The Local Authority sits above the family group average but below the national average.



The % of children with a Coordinated Support Plans and Child's Plan remains consistent. The percentage of those with Individual Education Plans has dropped from 9.88% to 8.21%.



There has been a slight drop in the number of children being cared for within their community from 88.9% in 2021 to 88.5% in 2022. This is above the family group average but below the national average.



The number of children aged 5 – 9 admitted to hospital with an unintentional injury has more than doubled since 2018/19.



The percentage of children entering Primary 1 with at least one developmental concern has increased from 2.5% in 2019/20 to 3.1% in 2021/22.



World events continue to impact children and families with more families experiencing poverty than before. 1 in 5 children across Aberdeen City are now experiencing poverty. The impact of the cost of living crisis is evident in the mental health of parents and carers and this is impacting on children and young people. Our continued focus on these areas, already outlined in the current Plan, will be important.

So, what next?

Planned work to increase alignment with adult services should be accelerated and a more adaptive approach to supporting children at community level should be considered. Obesity levels appear to be increasing and if not addressed, could impact negatively on health outcomes in the longer term. As outlined previously, there is a need to consider how best to address this.

There is a need to finalise and implement the planned evaluation framework detailed in the current Plan to help monitor the impact of the Tiered Intervention Framework as there continues to be evidence of rapid escalation from Tier 1 to 3. Consideration should be given to building community level data into this work given the variation in outcomes at community level.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR SECONDARY AGED PUPILS?

What does the data published since March 2023 tell us?



There has been a rise in secondary pupils numbers from 10,430 in September 2022 to 10,977 in 2023. The pupil population has become increasingly diverse. Recent Scottish Census data identified that our city population has grown by 0.5% since 2011.

What is getting better?

Drug related hospital admissions (young people) have reduced from 115 per 100,000 in 2021 to 100 per 100,000 in 2022.



The employment rate for young people has increased from 42% in 2021 to nearer 51% in 2022.



The annual participation measure has increased from 91.2% in 2022 to 92.8% in 2023. This is still below the Family Group and National average.



There has been a drop in alcohol related hospital admissions for those aged 11-25 from 270 per 100,000 in 2021 to 255 per 100,000 in 2022. This is below the national average



There has been a rise in the % of all pupils gaining 5+ awards at Level 6 from 36% in 2021 to 39% in 2022. This bucked the reducing national trend. 4 schools sit above their VC, but 7 sit below.



There has been a rise in the % of all pupils gaining 5+ awards at Level 5 from 63% in 2021 to 70% in 2022. The improvement rate is faster than the national rate. 5 schools now sit above their VC, but 6 sit below.



There has been a rise in the overall average total tariff score from 866 in 2021 to 957 in 2022. This is slightly below national and well below the family group average.



There has been a rise in the % of pupils from the most deprived areas achieving 5+ awards at Level 5 from 43% in 2021 to 48% in 2022.



Although seeing a reduction in those who have reported self-harming, 4:10 young people who did not disclose their gender had reported self-harming at least once and the variation between the number of boys and girls reporting this, showed a greater number of girls.



There are encouraging signs in some health and education outcomes with a 4% increase in those who felt positive about their body image and nearly 11% more reporting good levels of physical activity compared to six months ago. 5% less children now report loneliness than 6 months ago.

Despite the gains, some groups of children continue to do less well than others with clear signs of less positive movement in those living in SIMD 1. This again, guides us to look at those living in SIMD 1 at a more granular level and maintain our focus on more vulnerable groups.

What has stayed the same?

42% of children in our secondary schools have an additional support need compared to 44% a year ago



A consistent % of referrals to SCRA are made as a result of care and protection concerns. This continues to be lower than the national average.



The overall average total tariff score for those living in SIMD 1 remains largely unchanged (566 to 2020/21 compared with 567 to 2021/22). Gains are evident in all other quintiles.



The % of young people with communication and language needs (1.26% in 2022 and 1.55% in 2023) and speech and communication disorder (2.41% in 2022 and 1.55% in 2023) remains consistent.



Requests for support as a result of poor emotional regulation, support for parents and mental health concerns remain highest within our request for assistance process.



We are still some way from the virtual comparator in terms of education outcomes and must maintain our focus in this area and work to address the variation from school to school. The number of children who are dysregulated and in need of additional support remains higher than pre-pandemic levels, this is in keeping with national research. Reported levels of sleep in young people continues to be an area of concern.

What has worsened?

There has been an increase in the % of referrals to SCRA due to offences (5.7% in 2021 to 7.6% in 2022. This is higher than the national average.



There has been a rise in 5 year death by suicide in 11-25 year olds rates from 6.68 per 100,000 in 2020 to 7.86 per 100,000 in 2021.



School leaver destinations have dropped slightly from 95.59% in 2021 to 93.82% in 2022. This is below both the family group and national average



Drop in the % of pupil from the most deprived areas achieving 5+awards at Level 6 from 17% in 2021 to 13% in 2022.



School attendance for term 1 of 2023/24 sat at 90.5% This is better than national levels however still of concern.



Pupils from P6 to S6 who did not disclose their gender were 6 times more likely to be negative about life as a whole and 5 times more likely to report poor health.



Those in the low family affluence group and those young people who did not disclose their gender, were more likely to report a range of negative outcomes across nearly all measures within the survey which is similar to the national picture.



205 learners reported self harming more than 10 times,. More children report feeling lonely locally than nationally Loneliness Nationally 15.6% -12.1% & ACC 29%-17%



The proportion of all S1-S6 pupils who express that they always or often feel confident has risen, with a current 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%.

There is a need to consider the health led National Self Harm Plan when published to ensure that the Plan is implemented timeously.

The disparity in outcomes across communities is considerable. There is a need to rethink how we support some communities to better address the variation in outcomes.

So, what next?

There is a need to maintain our Plans around the senior phase curriculum and also continue to give close attention to personal and social education programmes to ensure that our young people know how to keep themselves safe, programmes may be influenced by the local plans to implement the National Self Harm Plan. Work to improve school attendance should continue.

The impact of family affluence on our young people is more marked than the national average. There is a need for us to think carefully about how best to support those living in SIMD 1 in order to address this.

The disparity in outcomes suggests that the wider family supports currently in place are not making a difference to some groups, triggering a need to think quite differently about how we work with and for families in need of our help and support.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT CHILD POVERTY IN THE CITY?

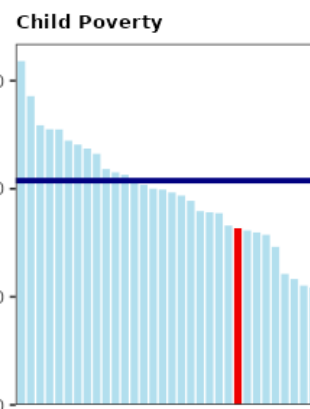
What does the data published since March 2023 tell us?



The cost of living crisis continues to impact on the resilience and mental health of families. Families are facing exceptionally difficult decisions on a daily basis and the impact of these challenging circumstances is evident in all datasets published over the last year. This clearly highlights how poverty is an overarching factor in outcomes for children and families.

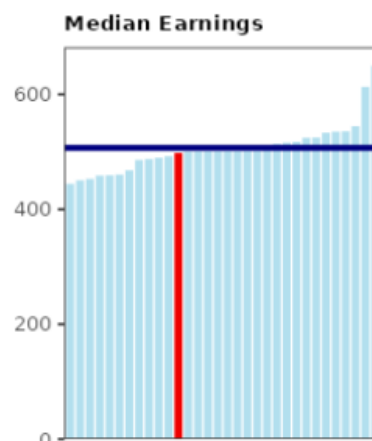
The number of children living in poverty

Official statistics detailing the exact number of children living in poverty across the city varies according to the methodology used. However, it is thought that there are 7,000 children living in households where the household income is below 60% of median income after housing costs (1 in every 5 children). This number has risen over recent years. Almost two thirds of children in low-income families are in working households. The Improvement Service Community Planning Tool shows that the Local Authority area currently sits 23 out of 32 Local Authorities for levels of child poverty which is below the national average.



The working age population

In the year from April 2022-March 2023, 24% of Aberdeen's working age population (over the age of 16) were economically inactive, up from 19% in the previous year. Of those who were economically inactive, 39.4% were students, 23.9 % were long-term sick, 15.6% were looking after home/family and 8.1% were retired (prior to national retirement age). Of those who were of working age and not working, 24.7% wanted to be working and were actively seeking employment.



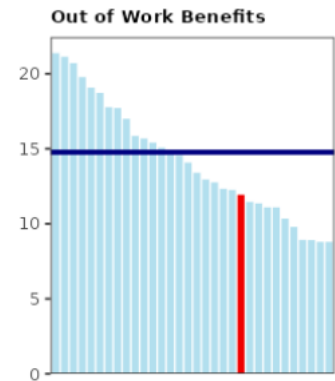
In the 2022 calendar year, there were an estimated 15,200 workless households in Aberdeen, a rise of 4,500 on 2021, to levels similar to the Scotland level of 18%. The Improvement Service Community Planning Tool shows that the Local Authority area currently sits 12 out of 32 Local Authorities for levels of Median Earnings which is in line with the national average.

Rise in homelessness

In 2022-23, there were 1,762 homelessness presentations to the council, an increase of 25% on the previous year. In March 2023, 399 households were in temporary accommodation (up from 264 in March 2022), 45 of these households had either pregnant women or children in them. It will be important for the Children's Services Board to remain closely aligned to work being undertaken to address homelessness.

Claimant count

Despite the rise in number in those thought to be living in poverty, the city level claimant count fell by 3.6% over the 6 months between March 2023 to November 2023 (from 5,020 to 4,840) 2023, this is 5% lower than in November 2022. This is the lowest number of claimants recorded in the past 3 years. However, the claimant count for young people aged 16-17 and 18-21 at November 2023 had both risen slightly from March 2023 (combined 460 to 480 claimants).



In November 2023, there were 1,530 Claimants in our priority localities, around the same as in March 2023 (1,510). This represents 31.7% of all claimants in the city, a marginal increase on the position at both March 2023 and November 2022.

The claimant count rate varies across the city by zone, from a low rate of 0.3% seen in West End North to a high of 6.5% seen in Tillydrone.

The Improvement Service Community Planning Tool shows that the Local Authority area currently sits 21 out of 32 Local Authorities for levels of Out of Work Benefits which is below the national average.

Spread of poverty across the city

Poverty is not spread equally across our city. The number of children living in relative low-income families, based on the End Child Poverty research, varies across the city by ward zones.

There is a high of 1,050 in Northfield/Mastrick, (30.4%), 719 in Torry/Ferryhill (24.0%) with Hilton/Woodside/Stockethill (25.5%) and Tillydrone/Seaton/Old Aberdeen sitting at around 650 children living in relative low-income families. Tillydrone/Seaton/Old Aberdeen has the city's highest proportion of children living in relative low-income families at 31.8%.

The George Street/Harbour ward has a relatively lower number of children in this category than these zones at 399 children but, despite falling out with the priority locality structure, levels closely match the % figure for Torry/Ferryhill. The proportion of all city claimants in George Street/Harbour is second only to Tillydrone at 5.3%.

The impact of this is seen across a range of outcome measures as shown in the following grid based on 2021/22 data from the Community Planning Outcome Tool. This disparity has been evidenced through the review of data by life stage outlined earlier in this Annual Report.

		Average Highest Attainment - 2020/21	Child Poverty (%) - 2021/22	Crime Rate, per 10,000 - 2021/22	Depopulation Index - 2021/22	Early Mortality, per 100,000 - 2021/22	Emergency Admissions, per 100,000 - 2021/22	Out of Work Benefits (%) - 2021/22	Participation Rate - 2021/22
Aberdeen City	Least deprived	6.1	3.9	717.8	91.8	250.3	18298.6	3.4	96.5
Aberdeen City	Most deprived	5.0	35.0	2057.2	101.6	787.2	29916.6	26.8	83.8
Scotland	Least deprived	6.1	6.0	519.3	94.2	243.6	18309.4	4.3	96.2
Scotland	Most deprived	5.1	37.3	1882.5	100.3	794.7	32122.0	31.4	87.2

Grant applications and Advice Services

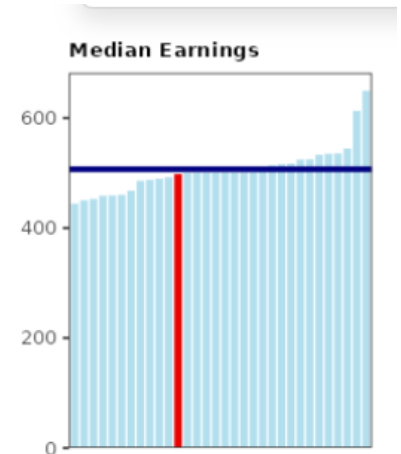
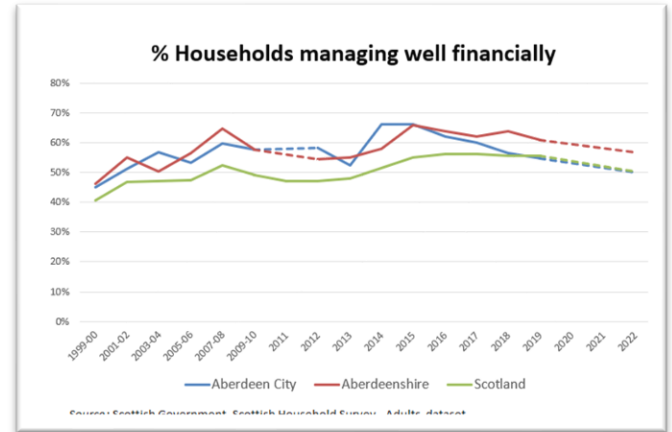
The number of Best Start and Best Start Foods grant applications received from city residents as at September 2023 was 3,145, compared to 2,735 in the same period the prior year. This represents an increase in the proportion of all applications from 3% to 4% of Scotland level awards and could partially indicate that families are now better aware of supports available.

Over 2022/23, the city's Council funded Common Advice services offered client financial advice and support to 547 Young People, (0-24 years) representing 8.6% of all clients. This number is higher than in each of the three prior years but a smaller proportion of all clients as result of a pattern of growth in clients across all age groups.

Of those households, where information around compositions were provided, 1,247 comprised households with children (23.3% of all clients compared to 20% in the previous year) with 62.9% of these households consisting of lone parent households, a rise of over 3% on the previous year. This latter cohort represents 14.6% of all households recorded as clients of the Common Advice services and has risen by 3% since 2021/22.

Overall, in 2022/23 the number and proportions of clients in a household with children showed an increasing trend on the 2019/20 baseline with the growth in single parent family clients being the more significant influence. Source: Common Advice Performance Management Reporting Framework submissions.

The Improvement Service Community Planning Tool shows that the Local Authority area currently sits 12 out of 32 Local Authorities for Median Earnings, more or less in line with the national average.

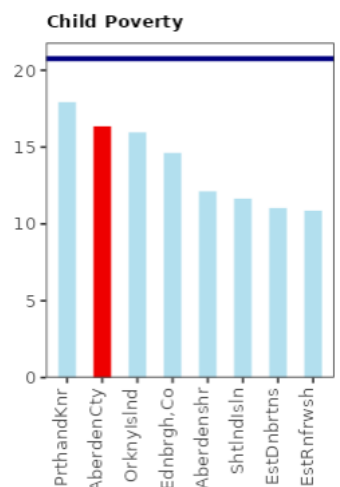


Benchmarking performance

Levels of child poverty in the city are slightly below the national average.

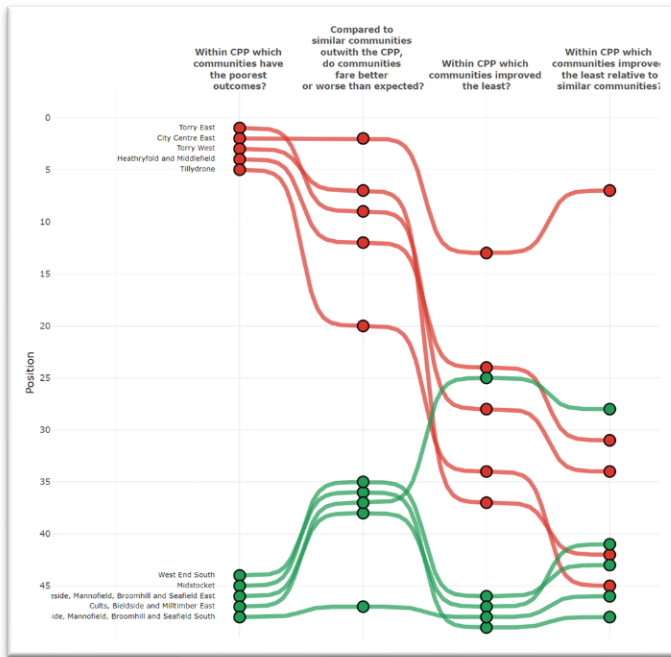
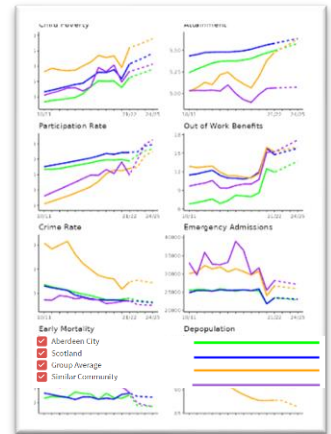
However, levels are relatively high when compared with our SIMD based comparators although progress has been made in closing the gap over the last year with our performance moving up one place compared to our family group.

A review of the Improvement Service Community Planning Outcomes Tool shows that 82% of our communities were performing better than expected as of 2021/22 which is 4% higher than the prior year.



Projections from the same Tool indicates that child poverty (before housing costs) will rise over the next 3 years to around 19%, (from the 2021/22 baseline of 16%) but this this will likely be at a rate below that of most comparators and the national pattern, which will retain the City's performance ranking in the upper third of Scottish Local Authorities.

The visual from the Improvement Service Community Planning Tool below shows how communities performed against their virtual comparators.



A detailed review of the Tool clearly evidences the disparity in outcomes from ward to ward.

Variation in circumstances and concerns by adult group

This disparity is equally clear from the responses to our recent Local Outcome Improvement Plan engagement which used a Place Standard tool to explore 14 themes about the physical and social elements of life in Aberdeen City in order to shape the refresh of our Local Outcome Improvement Plan. The Children's Services Board has a key role in delivering against the People Outcomes relating to children and their families.



It's really important that the Children's Services Board understand the needs of families given the influence of parental wellbeing on children and young people. As a result, the Board needs to consider the needs of families holistically as we develop our model of Family Support.

The whole population responses provide a clear picture of what matters to our residents. At first glance this would guide the Children's Services Board to conclude that there is a role only to continue to capture the lived experience of service users in the design of changed services.

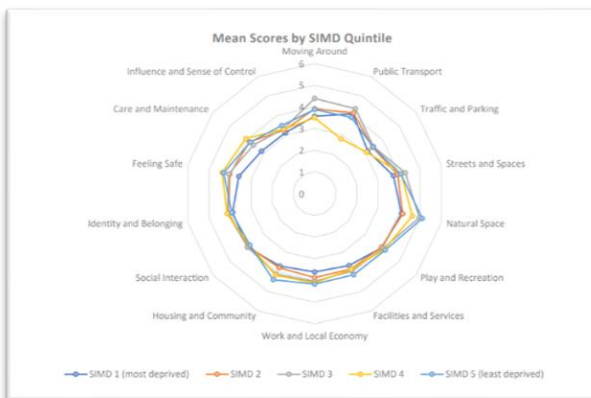
However, the responses to the engagement have been broken down in different ways to allow us to gain further insight into the needs of distinct groups.

- | | |
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| <p>The five highest ranking themes were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Natural space (4.7) 2. Identity and belonging (4.1) 3. Feeling safe (4.1) 4. Play and recreation (4.1) 5. Housing and community (4.0) | <p>The five lowest ranking themes were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influence and sense of control (3.3) 2. Traffic and parking (3.4) 3. Care and maintenance (3.6) 4. Facilities and services (3.9) 5. Work and Local Economy (3.9) |
|--|--|

A review of the data by locality (North, South and Central) shows that there are differences being reported by our citizens depending upon which part of the city they reside in. As a result, there is variation in the themes ranked highest and lowest.



A review of the data by SIMD Quintile, highlights variation quite differently.



	SIMD 1 (most deprived)	SIMD 2	SIMD 3	SIMD 4	SIMD 5 (least deprived)
Lowest	Influence and Sense of Control	Influence and Sense of Control	Influence and Sense of Control	Public Transport	Traffic and Parking
	Traffic and Parking	Traffic and Parking	Traffic and Parking	Traffic and Parking	Influence and Sense of Control
	Care and Maintenance	Housing and Community	Care and Maintenance	Influence and Sense of Control	Care and Maintenance
	Moving Around	Care and Maintenance	Facilities and Services	Moving Around	Social Interaction
	Feeling Safe	Facilities and Services	Social Interaction	Social Interaction	Moving Around
Highest	Natural Space	Natural Space	Natural Space	Natural Space	Natural Space
	Public Transport	Public Transport	Moving Around	Feeling Safe	Housing and Community
	Play and Recreation	Identity and Belonging	Public Transport	Housing and Community	Feeling Safe
	Social Interaction	Feeling Safe	Streets and Spaces	Identity and Belonging	Play and Recreation
	Identity and Belonging	Play and Recreation	Identity and Belonging	Play and Recreation	Work and Local Economy

It is of particular concern that those living in SIMD 1 raise concerns about their sense of influence and control and also express concerns about feeling unsafe.

	SIMD 1 (n=49)		SIMD 2 (n=70)		SIMD 3 (n=47)		SIMD 4 (n=30)		SIMD 5 (n=65)		All (n=364)		
Column1	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Base
Influence and Sense of Control	3.12	1	3.25	1	3.32	1	3.3	3	3.49	2	3.27	1	266

Scores around identify & belonging and social interaction in particular at SIMD 1, provide an insight into the sense of community evident across some communities with a higher proportion of citizens living in SIMD 1. The Children's Services Board needs to consider how to better capitalise on community to help support improving outcomes.

When responses from those living in Priority Areas is compared with the Locality data, we benefit from further insight. Scores from those living in Priority Areas were generally lower.

	Central		North		South	
	Theme	Mean	Theme	Mean	Theme	Mean
Lowest	Traffic and Parking	3.1	Influence and Sense of Control	3.3	Influence and Sense of Control	3.4
	Influence and Sense of Control	3.1	Traffic and Parking	3.6	Traffic and Parking	3.5
	Care and Maintenance	3.4	Facilities and Services	3.7	Care and Maintenance	3.6
	Work and Local Economy	3.7	Moving Around	3.8	Public Transport	3.9
	Moving Around	3.8	Public Transport	3.9	Streets and Spaces	4.0
Highest	Natural Space	4.6	Natural Space	4.9	Natural Space	4.7
	Play and Recreation	4.2	Identity and Belonging	4.2	Feeling Safe	4.3
	Identity and Belonging	4.1	Streets and Spaces	4.2	Work and Local Economy	4.2
	Social Interaction	4.1	Housing and Community	4.2	Moving Around	4.1
	Public Transport	4.0	Feeling Safe	4.1	Identity and Belonging	4.0

	Central PNs		North PNs		South PNs	
	Theme	Mean	Theme	Mean	Theme	Mean
Lowest	Care and Maintenance	2.9	Influence and Sense of Control	3.0	Influence and Sense of Control	3.1
	Traffic and Parking	3.1	Traffic and Parking	3.3	Traffic and Parking	3.2
	Influence and Sense of Control	3.1	Facilities and Services	3.4	Housing and Community	3.2
	Work and Local Economy	3.4	Housing and Community	3.4	Care and Maintenance	3.4
	Facilities and Services	3.6	Feeling Safe	3.5	Streets and Spaces	3.7
Highest	Natural Space	4.4	Natural Space	4.1	Natural Space	4.3
	Public Transport	4.3	Public Transport	4.0	Work and Local Economy	4.1
	Play and Recreation	4.1	Play and Recreation	4.0	Public Transport	4.0
	Social Interaction	4.0	Identity and Belonging	3.9	Play and Recreation	4.0
	Moving Around	3.9	Social Interaction	3.9	Feeling Safe	4.0

We can see that the feelings of being unsafe are most keenly felt in the North Priority Area.

A review of the data by age and ethnicity, shows considerable further variation.

Column1	0-24 (n=18)		25-34 (n=33)		35-44 (n=46)		45-54 (n=41)		55-64 (n=44)		65+ (n=74)		All (n=364)		Base
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	
Influence and Sense of Control	3.3	1	3.1	2	3.2	2	3.0	1	3.2	1	3.6	2	3.3	1	226
Housing and Community	3.4	2	3.7	5	3.6	5	4.0	12	4.1	13	4.5	13	4.0	10	225
Traffic and Parking	3.5	3	3.1	1	3.1	1	3.3	2	3.3	2	3.5	1	3.4	2	236
Identity and Belonging	3.8	4	3.9	9	3.8	10	3.7	6	4.1	12	4.4	12	4.1	13	233
Care and Maintenance	3.8	5	3.5	3	3.4	3	3.4	3	3.4	4	4.1	5	3.6	3	231
Feeling Safe	3.8	6	3.9	11	4.0	13	3.7	7	3.7	7	4.4	11	4.1	12	237
Social Interaction	3.9	7	4.0	12	3.6	7	3.8	9	3.8	9	4.2	8	4.0	8	230
Play and Recreation	3.9	8	3.9	8	3.6	6	4.1	13	3.9	11	4.2	9	4.1	11	232
Streets and Spaces	4.2	9	4.1	13	3.9	11	3.9	11	3.8	10	4.0	4	4.0	9	236
Facilities and Services	4.3	10	3.8	7	3.7	8	3.8	10	3.3	3	4.2	7	3.9	4	235
Work and Local Economy	4.4	11	3.7	6	3.9	12	3.8	8	3.8	8	4.1	6	3.9	6	218
Moving Around	4.5	12	3.7	4	3.7	9	3.6	5	3.6	6	4.0	3	3.9	5	249
Natural Space	4.5	13	4.7	14	4.2	14	4.9	14	4.5	14	4.7	14	4.7	14	243
Public Transport	4.8	14	3.9	10	3.5	4	3.6	4	3.6	5	4.2	10	3.9	7	244



It's interesting that those under 24 also have concerns about their influence and control but have greater concerns about housing and community than other age groups. Influence and control is also flagged by looking at the mean scores by ethnicity. This highlights the critical importance of working with communities to empower and enable.

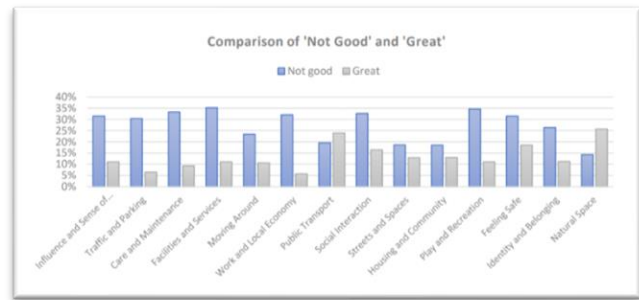
Having access to data that enables more granular analysis by group is invaluable and will enable the improved targeting of our work.

What do our young people tell us?






A similar survey for children and young asked about the same 14 themes. The 106 children and young people who responded were asked if things were, 'Not Good and needs to be improved', were 'Okay' or 'Great, as good as it could be'.

The most common response for all themes was 'Okay' with at least half of all respondents choosing this option for all of the themes. Comparing other responses, for almost all of the themes a higher proportion of respondents choose 'Not Good' for each themes. The exceptions to this were Natural Space and Public Transport – these also had the highest proportion of respondents (25.7% and 23.9% respectively) who chose 'Great'.

The themes with the highest proportion of 'Not Good' responses were Facilities and Services (35.2%), Play and Recreation (34.7%) and Care and Maintenance (33.7%) which each had over a third of respondents choosing this option.



The summarised output of what children and young people said on the People themes is outlined below.

Theme	What is good now?	What would make it better?
Facilities and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good shops (22.6%) • School (22.6%) • Doctors (12.3%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubs (22.6%) • Doctors (20.8%) • School (16%)
Feeling safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling safe during the day (38.7%) • Lighting (16%) • Play spaces (15.1%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less anti-social behaviour (34%) • Feeling safe at night (32.1%) • Brighter/more lighting (22.6%)
Identity and belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food (18.9%) • The people (17.9%) • Local museums (14.2%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festivals (29.3%) • Music (16%) • Culture (15.1%)
Social interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are child friendly spaces (30.2%) • Meeting friends (19.8%) • Cafes (17%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places to hang out (29.3%) • Child friendly spaces (24.5%) • Places to meet friends (23.6%)
Play and recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play parks (29.3%) • Easy to find spaces (19.8%) • Making your own fun (19.8%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of activities (32.1%) • Sports areas (30.2%) • Organised fun stuff (27.4%)

It is thought that this feedback reinforces the legitimacy of the actions already outlined in the Children's Services Plan.

The feedback on work, the local economy and influence and control are also important as we continue to work with other LOIP Outcome Groups and consider how we ensure that children and young people have voice and influence.

What do datasets tell us about those most likely to experience poverty?

Data on child poverty sits across a number of organisations and isn't currently coordinated into one single data set to allow real time monitoring of child poverty, however work is underway to improve this. Additional funding has been secured from the national Child Poverty Fund to start aligning data across the Council and DWP and this should help provide a more holistic picture of the situation in future. The funding will allow improved development of baseline information across the actions under the three drivers of poverty described below, along with improved baselines and understanding of requirements to tackle poverty among those with protected characteristics, the six priority family groups and care experienced young people. NHS Grampian is also working on a Child Health dataset that includes specific indicators for child poverty aligned to the drivers and priority families.

The groups identified as being most at risk of poverty continue to face particular challenges locally:

Half of all children living in **single parent families** are experiencing poverty. In 2022/23 there were 646 (+46 on 2021/22) applications to the Scottish Welfare Fund managed by Aberdeen City Council, which were from single parent families. This was 13% of all applications, up by one percentage point on the previous year. These families, by far, represent the single largest group of applicants in the Child Poverty Priority category. In August 2023, the number of single parent family claimants aged under 25 in receipt of Housing Benefit has remained stable in comparison with March 2023, comprising 14 applicants, down from 22 in August 2022

Minority Ethnic Families: 63% of those who are in ethnic minority families are employed compared to 72% of those who are white in Aberdeen City. There is presently no consistently reliable data around the influences behind this differential at national or local levels.

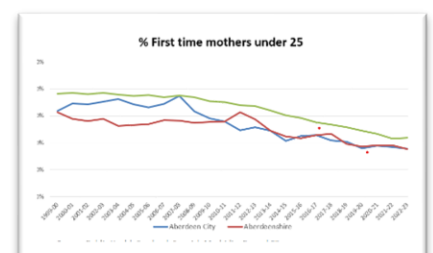
Disability: As of 30th September 2023, Aberdeen City Council had received 1,260 applications against the Child Disability Payment funding stream, in comparison with 610 applications at the same point in 2022. The number of payments made to families through the Child Winter Heating Assistance grants in 2022/23 was 670, a rise of 155 (+30%) on the previous year. This represented 5.2% of all Winter Heating awards.

Youngest child less than one year old: In August 2023, there were 492 households in Aberdeen City on Universal Credit with a child under 1, with more than half being lone parent families. Around a third (34%) of families with a child under the age of 1 experience relative poverty (individuals living in households where equalised income is below 60% of the UK median income in the same year) compared to just less than a quarter (24%) of children overall.

Larger families (3+ children): There were 132 households with 3 or more children who were in receipt of Housing Benefit in August 2023. This is a 28% increase from 103 in March 2023, and 102 in August 2022. There were 1,769 households with 3 or more children who were in receipt of Universal Credit in August 2023, substantially above the positions in both March 2023 and August 2022.

Younger mother: The number of first time mothers under 25 has dropped slightly.

There is a need to continue to think about how we collect and align data to ensure that we continue to build an understanding of the challenges facing our residents.



What is getting better?

According to Improvement Service data, 82% of our communities are performing better than could be expected compared to only 78% a year ago.



Levels of child poverty compared to other similar Council areas have improved by one place when comparing our performance to our family group.



In November 2023, the city level claimant count had fallen from 5,020 in March 2023 to 4,840 (- 3.6%) -5% lower than in November 2022. This is amongst the lowest number of claimants recorded in the past 3 years.



The number of Best Start and Best Start Foods grant applications received from city residents (as at September 2023) was 3,145, compared to 2,735 in the same period the prior year. This represents an increase in the proportion of all applications to this stream from 3% to 4% of Scotland level awards.



The new 'Infant Feeding in a Crisis' pathway is being delivered in full. All referrals have resulted in a voucher for feeding supplies, a full benefits check and a food pantry application if applicable.



It is really encouraging that 82% of our communities are performing better than could be expected based on outcomes in other similar communities across the country and that the percentage of those doing better than expected is increasing. However, this also means that 18% are not doing as well as they could be. This provides further evidence of the need to look at community data in a far more granular way.

Although the city has improved its relative Local Authority position against child poverty measures by one place, there is more to do.

What has stayed the same?

Young single parent families in receipt of housing benefits was unchanged between March and August 2023.



Levels of child poverty in the city are slightly below the national average but relatively high when compared with our SIMD based comparators. Progress has been made in closing the gap over the last year.



In November 2023, there were 1,530 Claimants in our priority localities, around the same as in in March 2023 (1,510). This represents 31.7% of all claimants in the city.



63% of those who are in ethnic minority families are employed compared to 72% of those who are white in Aberdeen City. There is presently no consistently reliable data around the influences behind this differential at national or local levels.

Although our overall breastfeeding figures are increasing, by the time of first health visitor visit 20% less mothers living in SIMD1 are continuing to breastfeed compared to mothers living in SIMD 5.

In August 2023, there were 492 households in Aberdeen City on Universal Credit with a child under 1, with more than half being lone parent families.



The lack of real time data makes determining changes over relatively short time periods challenging. It is hoped that a recent award of resource as part of the Child Poverty Fund will help improve the quality of real time data and that this will help the Children’s Services Board to identify live trends to support agile improvement work.

What is getting worse?

The trend data and projections around increasing relative child poverty for the city are negative



In the year from April 2022- March 2023, 24% of Aberdeen’s working age population (over the age of 16) were economically inactive, up from 19% in the previous year.



There has been a significant rise in the numbers of families with 3 or more children claiming Universal Credit



The claimant counts for young people aged 16-17 and 18-21 at November 2023 had both risen since March 2023, from a combined 460 to 480 claimants.



In 2022/23 there were 646 (+46 on 2021/22) applications to the Scottish Welfare Fund managed by Aberdeen City Council, which were from single parent families. This was 13% of all applications, up by one percentage point on the previous year.



As of 30th September 2023, Aberdeen City Council had received 1,260 applications against the Child Disability Payment funding stream, in comparison with 610 applications at the same point in 2022



Lengthy waiting lists for some child health services are negatively impacting on the health and wellbeing of children and families, and in some situations, the ability of parent’s to take up employment.



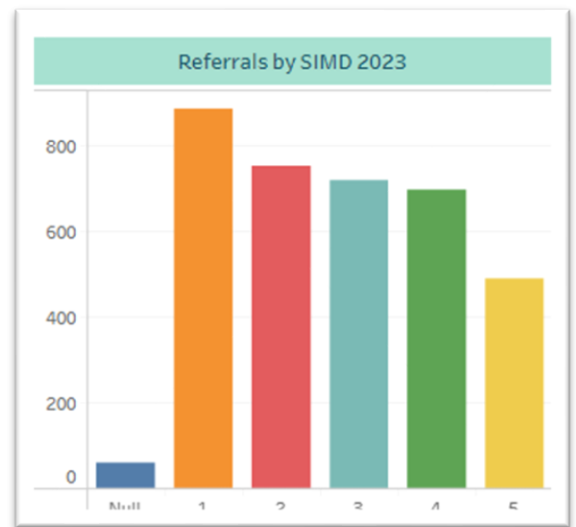
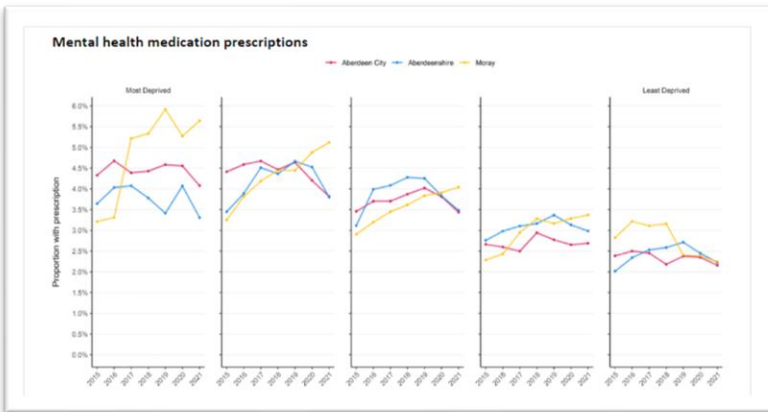
The data shows that poverty continues to impact on our families and that this is likely to continue. There is emerging evidence that families are increasingly accessing their entitlements and this is encouraging, but does highlight the number of those who need our help at this challenging time. There is a need to continue to carefully target those groups most likely to be impacted by poverty wherever possible and continue to increase our knowledge and support of them.

The recent engagement to inform the development of the LOIP has suggested that there is better awareness of, and access to Council Officers and elected Officials now. Citizens seek more opportunities to get involved in decision making and ways of knowing “where to raise my voice for my community”. Participation continues to be important.

The disparity in outcomes, largely determined by SIMD quintile is of concern. Despite some evidence of progress across SIMD 2 and 3, outcomes for those in SIMD 1 are by far the poorest as evident in this heat map showing the number of developmental concerns for children at aged

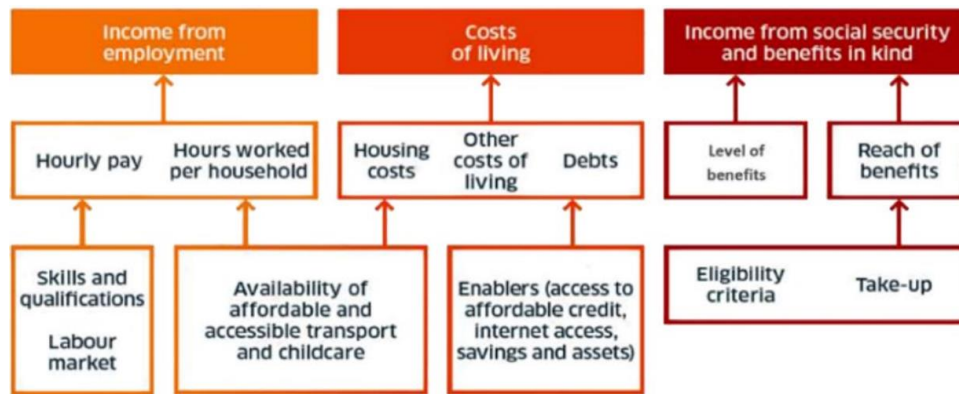
4/5 (the darker the colour the greater the level of concern). There is a risk that the gap between those living in SIMD 1 and their neighbours increases.

The direct link with poverty and mental health outcomes is clear as shown by the medication prescriptions by SIMD quintile and referrals for children and young people. There is a need for targeted work to address the needs of those living in SIMD 1, We have to accept that current arrangements are not realising improvement.



Best Start, Bright Futures

Best Start, Bright Futures tells us that the three drivers of poverty are income from employment, cost of living, and income from social security and benefits in kind. We know that impacting these drivers will positively impact levels of child poverty and so have structured our report under these three headings whilst recognising how interrelated they are.



Income from employment

Ensuring that our young people and families gain the skills required to secure employment is central to our work. All of the actions outlined in the last Child Poverty Action Plan Report are well progressed with progress outlined below.

The employment rate across Aberdeen City rate currently sits slightly above the national average. Less citizens are employed in lower paid occupations compared to the national average.



Employment in 'lower paid' occupations (% of all in employment)

Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Scotland
23%	19%	27%

Source : ONS Annual Population Survey, year to Jun 2023

ABZ Campus update

Work has continued to progress Phase 2 of ABZ Campus in order to ensure our young people have the skills required to secure employment in the longer term. Discussions have continued with delivery partners of Foundation Apprenticeships and existing courses to ensure the delivery of a wider range of courses.

An exciting partnership has commenced alongside Aberdeenshire Council for a series of *anytime* courses for young people outwith the confines of the column structure and school week. Delivery partners for a range of *anytime* courses are SRUC, University of Aberdeen, RGU and RGC Online.



Plans for a pilot employability experience for young people with additional support needs is also included in Phase 2 plans.

We remain ready to evaluate the impact of the 37 courses being offered as part of Phase 1 of ABZ Campus 23-24 to determine the impact of the approach on the young people registered.

Aberdeen Computing Collaborative

A digital event was held for 1000 teaching and support staff which included workshops from RGU and representation from Aberdeen University. The event had computing science inputs for Early Stages and Upper Stages Primary staff focused on growing interest in the subject. Esports has now been established at St Machar Academy and discussions are progressing to add Bucksburn Academy as a second Esports hub.



Discussions continue with ABZ Works team to review the Computing Science offer. RGC Online is being explored as a means to supporting more young people to secure Higher Computing within the ABZ Campus offer. Developing communications for parents/carers/young people to promote the opportunities in the sector and the range of pathways available will now be progressed.

National and local extra-curricular opportunities, with a Computing Science or Digital focus, continue to be shared with schools. A young person survey of uptake and attitudes to Computing Science more widely is in draft. A city-wide meeting of Computing Science staff is planned for February to identify opportunities for further collaboration on resource development and the identification of training needs to allow staff to support a broader curriculum.

ABZ Works update

Significant strides have been made by the Council's ABZWorks employability service, which continues to see rising numbers of referrals for employability support from a steadily widening pool of referral routes. We are increasingly receiving referrals for people with significant barriers to employment. The appointment of a Child Poverty Coordinator, designed to focus on employability, is currently in the recruitment process, with the successful candidate anticipated to be in post in early Spring.

A series of pilot projects has been developed by the ABZWorks keyworkers, delivering activities in regeneration areas for target groups identified by the Local Employability Partnership. Some of these pilots have now been mainstreamed and contracted out, while others continue to be delivered in-house with support from industry partners and training providers – this includes a project designed with and for care experienced young people, and Fit Next, which was created at short notice for school leavers without a positive destination when funding delays meant there was no contracted provision available.



The service ran Scotland's first jobs fair for refugees, displaced people, and asylum seekers, in

partnership with the Refugee Employer Network, attracting more than 500 job seekers. A [report](#) detailing the work undertaken to support the community, and detailing their broad skill sets and barriers to employment was published.

The inaugural ABZWorks Conference took place, paving the way for closer partnership working with agencies across the city, services gap analysis, areas of emerging need, and co-design of services.

A dynamic purchasing system for the procurement of employability services was co-designed with providers, launched and is now being well-used. All employability provision is being procured via the framework, which has attracted more providers to engage with us and provide a broader range of services to city residents at all stages of the pipeline. Our approach is being used as an example of best practice by the Scottish Government's Improvement Service.

We continue to see the impacts of the cost of living crisis on employability programme participants and provide funding to remove the financial barriers to participation in services and employment. More detail on individual projects is included below.

The ABZWorks team has secured several local and national awards in recognition of the quality of their work.

Employability Programmes

Aberdeen City Council receives funding annually from Scottish Government to deliver a range of employability interventions through both the No One Left Behind and Parental Employability Support Fund streams. The main purpose of employability funds is to pay for employability interventions and the vast majority of these monies goes towards covering training and engagement costs, delivered either in-house or via contracted provision. Referrals for employability support continue to rise.

Thirty-nine employability services contracts have been awarded in 2023/24, worth more than £650,000, providing a broad range of support and training opportunities across the city, and we anticipate offering more tendering opportunities when we receive grant funding for 2024/25. This is in addition to grant-funded activities such as Employer Recruitment Incentives and paid work experience schemes.

ABZWorks Development Grant

An ABZWorks Development Grant has been launched to support grass roots organisations, particularly those in the priority areas, to build their capacity to develop and deliver employability activities and build links with hard-to-reach groups. Up to £10,000 is available per organisation. Fourteen applications have been received in the first round.

The service is in the process of commissioning research into local barriers to parental employment/engagement with employability activities, with a particular focus on single parents, minority ethnic parents, and parents with a disability and/or a disabled child. Recommendations on how to address those barriers at an Aberdeen and community level will be provided as part of this work.

Work experience programmes

Paid work experience programmes with guaranteed interviews for those who complete have been established and aligned to sectors where we know there are skills shortages (we have one underway currently for care experienced young people, and another for eligible city residents of all working ages in the health and social care sector).

Two newly launched schemes got underway in November 2023 – one with third sector employers for unemployed parents of dependent children, and another scheme in early learning and childcare settings, with a primary focus on parents. 23 paid work experience placements have been provided to date.

The team has also supported the creation of a training kitchen in HMP Grampian to support people to learn industry skills, gain accredited qualifications and secure employment on release with hospitality industry partner Greene King.

ABZWorks has created the Fit Next programme for school leavers without a positive destination, removing barriers to employability participation, building confidence, social circles, employability skills, introductions to training providers and employers, and work experience.

The education team, with support from the Wood Excelerate Programme and NHS Grampian, has supported the establishment of an in-school healthcare classroom at St Machar Academy. A year of collaborative planning has resulted in an inspirational space with industry standard equipment to empower young people and teachers to learn and teach through the lens of health, social and community care.

Employer Engagement

The Employer Recruitment Incentive scheme, which provides up to £6,000 to employers to offset the costs of taking on new members of staff, has been diversified to incentivise the recruitment of not only young people, but also eligible parents, refugees and displaced people. We anticipate an increase in the funding amount in the next financial year in line with the rise in the Real Living Wage.

A series of employer engagement sessions to promote inclusive employment in the city for key groups is underway. These aim to increase employer confidence and increase the number of opportunities for groups including parents, young people, displaced people and refugees, disabled people, and people with convictions.

Supporting residents into Fair Work

Increasing training and reskilling opportunities as well as business creation is key to both developing new fair work employment opportunities; reducing the number of people in receipt of Universal Credit and to diversifying the economy. We are taking forward a number of initiatives to support people who will be coming off (or significantly reducing) their benefits. In the past year, 730 people have received employability support via ABZWorks and the number continues to rise.

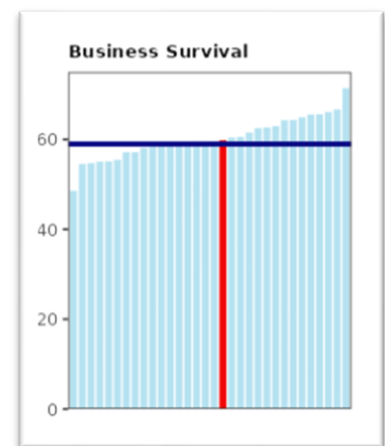
We continue to provide Aberdeen Gift Cards to employability programme participants to remove some of the financial barriers to employment. This money is spent locally, boosting the economy and supporting jobs, while equipping individuals with essentials for interviews and starting work, such as interview clothes, transport costs, hair cuts, etc. To date, £1,395 has been distributed via Aberdeen Gift Cards.

Employability Transition Grant

An employability transition grant, provided through the Council's Cost of Living Funding in 2022/23, providing £1,000 paid over three months to lone parents who meet eligibility criteria, is helping them transition into employment by removing the financial barriers to work. It is hoped that we will be able to continue to provide this through the Parental Employability Support Funds. To date, £50,000 has been committed to parents via this grant, which continues to be paid. The Local Employability Partnership has identified parents and young people as key target groups for employability support. United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Funds (UKSPF) are being leveraged to provide a range of employability support to eligible individuals, including those who are economically inactive, this includes a series of test and learn pilots for a broad range of people, including parents with dependent children, young people, disabled people, people with long-term health conditions, and minority ethnic people aged 16+.

Supporting citizens to start a business and reduce their universal credits

In order to take advantage of all policy levers, work has been undertaken to increase the number of people starting a business. The ABZWorks seed fund, set up in November 2021 to support all those meeting the funding eligibility criteria to start a business by providing start-up monies, has supported 34 people to start their own business to date, with growing interest in the funding. ABZWorks has partnered with Business Gateway to deliver this activity, with business adviser and employability keyworker support in place for all entrepreneurs accessing the fund. We now have a dedicated Business Gateway Adviser to help increase the number of direct referrals. As a result of these improvements, there have been 104 referrals of individuals in receipt of universal credits who are considering starting a business since the start of the programme, with 39 individuals starting a business which either takes them off universal credits or significantly reduces their universal credits.



ABZWorks has introduced a salary payment for eligible parents setting up their own business, paid at Real Living Wage rate for hours worked on their business, to support their progression and mitigate the risk of financial hardship as individuals build up their business.

We have partnered with the Scottish Childminding Association to provide seed funding to eligible city residents who wish to become registered childminders, removing the financial barriers which often prevent people from taking up this career opportunity.

Supporting care experienced young people into sustained employment.

Many care experienced young people face significant barriers to employment and the majority will need additional support to help them achieve and sustain employment. The range of barriers faced is broad and can seem overwhelming. Positive and early work experience or employment helps with a smoother transition to life beyond care and minimises the risk of homelessness and offending.

Through our employability support for care experienced young people project we've put in place a range of initiatives to help remove those barriers and provide support and opportunities to help them feel confident and ready for employment. Initiatives have included guaranteed interview scheme, RiteWorks and Kickstart to name a few. Latest data available for 2023/24 shows that our tailored employability support programmes have supported 59 care experienced young people this year alone, compared to 63 over the past three years combined. The programmes have been very

successful to date across a number of outcomes, including: sustained engagement; achieving qualifications; engaging in work experience; progressing into a positive destination; sustaining that destination.

Aberdeen City Council's ABZWorks employability service secured the national SURF Removing Barriers to Employability Award in December for its work to support care experienced young people.

Focus on Growth and Volume Sectors

We are working closely with partner agencies and have developed a working group with the Health and Social Care partnership to support parents and other employability participants into roles where the Partnership has gaps, and which suit the needs and aspirations of participants. In-work support is provided for up to 26 weeks to ensure as far as possible that employment outcomes are sustained. It is standard procedure to refer employability participants, and particularly parents, to the Financial Inclusion Team for support, a benefits check, and advice.

A paid work experience scheme has been created to support employability participants, particularly parents, into early learning and childcare roles within the authority, with a guaranteed interview on completion.

The ABZ Pipeline will see the Council work with employers in the energy sector to strengthen educational links and help pupils learn about the industry, careers, and the various routes into them. It will create a programme of linked opportunities with multiple employers to establish a planned and targeted pipeline of activities across the secondary school phase.

This will introduce young people to a range of insider insights into the industry, support their understanding and career aspirations, link to the curriculum, and support education staff. This work, led by staff from the City Growth and Education services, will be replicated for other key sectors and will support pathway planning by increasing young people's understanding of the sectors, opportunities within them, and the routes in, including qualification and skills needs.

Sector specific training courses have been, and at the time of writing, are being commissioned to ensure Aberdeen has a skilled workforce. Commissioning activities are linked to a number of sectors including construction, renewables, early learning and childcare, health and social care, and digital.

Planning for the future

Phase 3 of the Scottish Government's No One Left Behind strategy will come into effect on 1 April 2024, placing an increasing focus on employability support for people with disabilities and long term health challenges, alongside those currently supported and parents experiencing poverty. This will result in a significant increase in the amount of employability support provided by the Council and contracted providers. Planning for that is ongoing, and a series of test and learn pilot projects are being commissioned meantime for delivery in the final quarter of 2023/24 ahead of the introduction of phase 3.

Of the 121 parents registered for support with ABZWorks since April 2023:

- 24 have secured employment, 13 of whom we know are being paid Real Living Wage, though we believe the actual number to be higher;
- Six have accessed seed funds to set up their own business and are now self-employed, with a further six in the business development stage.

The recent engagement work to help shape the refresh of the LOIP showed us that our citizens acknowledge that training opportunities, volunteering opportunities and availability of jobs was good. Suggestions for improvement included improving the type and range of job opportunities available, in particular through having “more jobs around the area [as] usually have to travel far just for a part time job” and by having “more decent jobs” and “less reliance on service industries such as nail bars, and betting shops.”

Improving employment support, especially locally, was stated, so too was increasing opportunities for those with a criminal record, or by providing “more help for people with disabilities” or providing “job clubs for young school leavers [with] help to do CV’s and apply for jobs.”

Increasing volunteering opportunities and also communication around volunteering opportunities were stated as other main suggestions of improvement. These suggestions will be considered as part of the LOIP refresh.

Scottish Attainment Challenge funding supporting pupil and family wellbeing.

For 2023-24, Strategic Equity funding of £638,079 has allowed the continued provision of youth workers, family learning workers and Financial Inclusion Team support to schools across the city.

With a clear remit for early intervention and targeting those children, young people and families most at risk of disengaging from education, this resource is helping to prevent escalation of need. Collaborating with school staff in a multi-agency approach, focus areas include; improving attendance, reducing exclusions, increasing engagement and raising attainment and achievement. Transition has been a significant focus and there are many examples of effective transition programmes to support primary-secondary transition, providing young people opportunities for social development through meeting up with peers from different schools while developing their skills in various activities and building confidence in working with new people.

The Family Learning Team works in partnership with schools, local community groups and other agencies. The primary focus is to engage with parents, carers and their children to deliver learning activities that positively impact the whole family, such as outdoor learning, cooking classes, parenting workshops and to foster and nurture positive attitudes to lifelong learning. Individual and targeted support can also be provided for support with behaviour, school attendance or additional support needs. The team has 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.

Families are signposted to the Financial Inclusion Team who can provide a range of confidential services including benefit checks, help to claim benefits or challenge decisions; provide debt management advice and speak to creditors on behalf of clients. Next steps around Scottish Attainment Challenge funding will be detailed in the Education National Improvement Framework Plan for 2024/25.

Youth Work achievements

Since the Scottish Attainment Challenge funding for youth work was made available in August 2021, a total of 893 activities have been delivered to 2,246 participants, a total of 22.626 learner hours. Most of the referrals are for one to one or small group work with a focus on improving confidence and resilience. Bespoke support for children in P7 making the transition to S1 is also part of the youth work team’s offer.

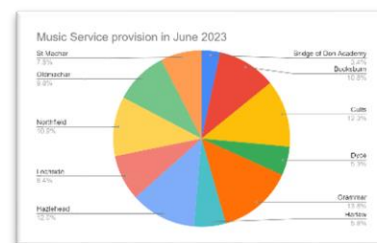
There has been an increase in the number of wider achievement awards being offered to children and young people, in particular the Hi5 award. Awareness raising of these awards has led some partners such as Children 1st and Craigelea also offering them to the young people they work with.

The CLD Youth Work team continues to change its approach to Youth Participation, moving away from more formal structures to a more inclusive and young people-friendly way of engagement. Aberdeen Youth Movement (AYM) has been invited to take part in a number of local and national events to offer a young person's perspective on issues that affect them and a schedule of meetings with Partnership Leaders is now underway.

AYM also acts as the Youth Activities Funding group and since 2022 they have assessed and approved over £91,000 of funding for activities that help young people develop skills, improve their confidence and access opportunities that can be life changing. Over financial year 2023/24, 1409 young people have benefitted from a Youth Activities Grant.

Removal of the costs of the school day

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. There is evidence that increasing numbers of young people from areas of deprivation are now accessing free instrumental music instruction from The Aberdeen City Music Service. Uptake across Associated Schools Groups in 2020 varied from 1% (in areas of deprivation) to 25% (in more affluent areas). The range currently sits at between 5.3% and 13.8% and is more balanced across areas.



Data will continue to be closely monitored as we continue to address the equity agenda.

Request for Assistance

Work to develop a Family Support Model Following analysis of the effectiveness of Additional Support Need (ASN) and Outreach services, the education service began transforming the management and delivery models around 3 years ago. A generic request for assistance form was developed to function as a single access point for all services including the School Nursing Service, Children's Social Work, Autism Outreach, and the virtual school. 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. This approach is proving helpful in identifying emerging risks. This live data helps us target groups more easily to help mitigate risk.

The system has helped transform working practices, resource allocation and our commissioning of internal services and is now being extended to include all services for children as we design our model of Family Support. Version 2 of the Request for Assistance system will be launched soon.

Wider achievement in schools

Since the end of COVID-19 related restrictions in 2022, schools have very quickly reintroduced all aspects of wider achievement awards.

Day visits, which include all curricular and outdoor activities have returned to pre-pandemic levels, however there is now less reliance on privately booked coach travel due to increased costs. P7 residential continue to have to be planned and booked well in advance due to increased demand and the closure of some outdoor centres.

The numbers of pupils participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's award programme has seen an increase in numbers compared to pre pandemic levels, this is due to delayed completions still being undertaken along with increased interest from new groups including Orchard Brae, the Virtual School and Oldmachar Academy. The Aberdeen Open Award Centre which offers DofE opportunities to any young people in the City is now based at Northfield Academy. There are currently 1040 young people active in DofE across the city, this is nearly 50 more than last year..

Aberdeen City has the 3rd highest level of pupils in Scotland achieving a John Muir Award with 443 young people achieving the award with 83 of these being inclusion awards. Other awards being undertaken in the city are: Saltire awards, Dynamic youth awards, Hi5 awards and Youth achievement awards. An Automotive project based at Northfield Academy is now delivering Automotive courses to Northfield Academy pupils and their peers from across the city.

The Evolve system for the approval and management of educational visits, sports fixtures, and extracurricular activities is now established and has been running for 1 year. It has been praised by staff who prefer the web based digital system. Training and familiarisation sessions are regularly offered to new teachers along with the Youth Work Team who have also been introduced to the platform.

Within the first year of using Evolve there was:

- 2287 active users
- 3505 Visits recorded
- 57,367 participant days recorded.

Access to Health Services

Tackling child poverty is a priority within NHS Grampian Health Inequalities Action Plan. In addition to the integrated pathways described above, health services are mitigating the cost of attending appointments or hospital stays by designing a cash first approach to food and travel subsidies for patients and parents or carers. Families have told us that they have missed appointments because they cannot afford the cost of travel and being able to claim costs back after the effect is not a solution. There is a new work stream underway to poverty proof discharge processes. This will include routine financial enquiry and onward referral where appropriate.

So, what next?

Considerable work continues to increase income from employment with our ABZWorks team achieving national recognition for their work. This work will continue. The ABZWorks team will take account of the Regional Economic Strategy and associated Skills Plan when published and reflect next steps within the refreshed LOIP.

Costs of living

The wider challenges created by the current Cost of Living crisis around fuel costs and high levels of inflation create a greater risk of families falling into poverty. Levels of fuel poverty in the city are currently far higher than the national average and 10 out of 32 for fuel poverty which places the Local Authority area in the top third of all Local Authority areas.

Free period products

Access to Free period products has continued to improve with a focus on the promotion and availability of reusable products, as we begin to see the impact of the refreshed marketing campaign: *Free products for all. Period.*

This has included the pilot introduction of period pants of which 276 units have been provided, requested mainly by primary schools. In our academies, workshops by Unicorn Cup took place in November to develop understanding of menstruation and the use of reusable cups. Staff reported that 'The feedback from young people has been incredibly positive. They have really enjoyed taking home the products to try and very much enjoyed the delivery of the workshop.'

215 boxes of menstrual cups have also been provided since April 2023. When combined with re-usable pads and disposable products 1291 boxes have been provided to schools between April 2023 and November 2023.

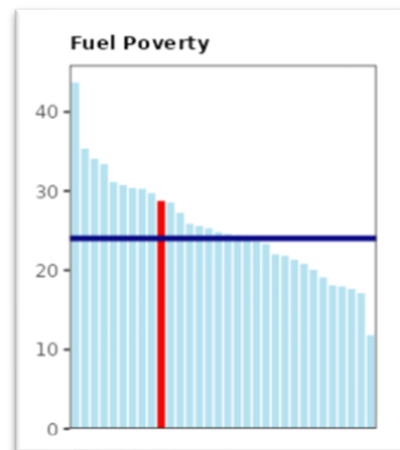
Aberdeen Gift Card

Households entitled to Council Tax Reduction (CTR) as of 21 June 2022, were awarded Scotland Loves Local Aberdeen Gift Card by the Council with £125 of credit on each card. Between 07/12/22 and 15/09/2023 total Aberdeen Gift Card spend was £1,385,492.39 (out of £1,788,250 of activated card) and 14,306 cards had been issued. Over 50,000 transactions have been made. After March 2024, any unspent funds from activated cards and inactivated ones will come back to ACC to be re-purposed.

Addressing food insecurity

The Fairer Aberdeen Fund supported the distribution of 554 tonnes of free food (the equivalent of 1.3M meals), and 1306 food bank users were referred to other support services. 3 Community Pantries and 21 Community Food Outlets were supported as a more dignified and sustainable alternative to emergency food provision. Updated data will be available from June 2024.

4651 people received money and income maximisation advice, with 1230 of them receiving a total financial gain of £2,323,811 the equivalent of £1,889 per person.



Community support

Community Flats are supported in Cummings Park, Tillydrone and Seaton, to support people with a range of issues. Over the last year they supported people with welfare reform issues and have helped to address isolation.

The Fairer Aberdeen Programme supported 444 parents and families with complex needs and 203 young people accessed 2,033 counselling sessions.

There were 590 contacts with older people to develop digital skills to help them keep in touch with their families and to access online services.

5,099 people saved with a credit union which provided £1.9m affordable loans, helping people avoid pay day loans and doorstep lenders.

369 households of older people and people with disabilities were supported with income maximisation and sourcing charitable funding, achieving a financial gain of over £440,000 and 489 households in priority areas received assistance with repairs, adaptations, and handyman services.

Access to free Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)

Increased access to ELC is positively impacting parents and carers. The expansion of ELC focused in part on making provision more accessible. The accessibility of services and broader range of delivery models has helped realise a significant increase in uptake and this increase has been sustained. Over 95% parents and carers who responded to the last Parent and Carer Consultation (June 2023) identified ELC as having a positive impact on their child's development. We asked parents and carers what impact the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (from 600 hours to 1140 hours) has had on them and their family:

- 39.8% of respondents stated that they had more time for other responsibilities as a result of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare.
- 29.2% of respondents indicated that they had more money/disposable income as a positive impact on their family.
- 24.1% stated improved wellbeing /respite as a positive impact from the expansion of ELC, with 18.9% of respondents finding they now have more time to themselves.
- 24.1% are now considering a return to work or study. 73% of parents and carers are aware that Aberdeen City Council offers Eligible 2's ELC placements.

The service continues to review demand for provision on an annual basis to ensure that the delivery models are designed around the needs of children and families.

The Scottish Government are currently undertaking some pilots to determine how best to further roll out School Age Childcare. The Authority has recently reported to Education and Children's Services Committee on the National Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare and remains well positioned to react positively to when more detailed delivery plans are developed in 2025/26. This will set out what a targeted School Age Childcare offer will look like for families within communities and providing a clear timescale for delivery.

In preparation for this, the Local Authority has managed to secure additional funding from Scottish Government to support preparations for the expansion.

The purpose of the Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces (ISACS) Fund is to improve indoor and outdoor spaces in school estates for the purposes of supporting provision of School Age Childcare. Aberdeen City Council submitted four project funding proposals to Scottish Government / Scottish Futures Fund in May 2023, in relation to this Programme. We are delighted to confirm the projects listed below were considered to have met all the qualifying criteria at the time the assessment workshop took place and have been identified by Ministers to be included as part of ISACS Programme.

Project Name:	Maximum award approved:
Cornhill School Community Wing	£100,000
Orchard Brae School	£56,420
Kirkhill Primary School	£59,431
Muirfield Primary School	£93,610
Total Funding Awarded	£309,461

Fairer Aberdeen

Over 2022/23 the Fairer Aberdeen Programme funded 36 initiatives designed to tackle poverty and a total of 44,228 people have benefitted. The reach of the funding is wide with projects funded to support the development of pathways into work, family support, money advice and affordable loans and early intervention programmes designed to address gender based violence.

The Fairer Aberdeen Programme supported 739 volunteers, providing 144,869 hours of volunteering time, with a value of £2.2m. 5 Community Projects or Flats were funded in priority neighbourhoods to support community capacity building as well as providing a range of services and support.

There is now a need to ensure that the totality of offers available to families is more clearly mapped and aligned to ensure that we maximise the impact of all available resource.

Provision of free breakfast clubs

There are an increasing range of breakfast clubs/wrap around supports for families. We have a mixed model of Breakfast Provision in the city which can broadly be divided into the following three categories:

1. Registered provision – A Breakfast Club registered as childcare with Care Inspectorate and for which a fee is paid by parents / carers. (23 primary schools)
2. Unregistered provision – A free Breakfast service provided directly by the school. Often funded via Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) to give children and young people a nutritional start to the day. (7 primary schools & 2 secondary schools)
3. ACC Catering service – A Breakfast service provided directly by Aberdeen City Council Catering Service at no or low cost to families, again to ensure children and young people start the day with some breakfast. (7 primary & 7 secondary schools)

Nationally, there are planned developments to extend wrap around care for school age children and to deliver this free for low-income families. Breakfast Club provision will be considered as part of this programme. We await further guidance and look forward to working with partners across the city to deliver this. Meantime we have a good supply of Breakfast Provision to meet the different needs of families in the city.

Provision of IT

Children have access to IT provision, through the investments made during lock-down and subsequently, and we are now entering a new phase of transformation. Partnering with Microsoft to deploy services and devices for children across the city, investing in connectivity infrastructure for schools and supporting parents to gain greater insight into their child's learning. This deployment of devices and services has begun with two test of change schools, Woodside Primary School and St Machar Academy, with additional schools being on-boarded from August 2024 to September 2025.

This investment will ensure that almost all children and young people from P4 – S6 continue to have access to a digital device. The Scottish Government commitment to a device for every child will help increase the number of children and young people who have access to a suitable device from the 41% of the school population to 100%. 86% of young people recently reported that they are supported to know how to feel safe online with 10% stating that they didn't know.

Improvement Service data shows that 97.8% of all city properties can now access superfast broadband, up from 95.6% in 2022/23.

Warm Spaces

Warm Spaces have continued across the city, with a mix of Council premises and community and third sector organisations providing support.

There are 41 venues across community centres, libraries, churches, and public spaces. Support provided through Warm Spaces includes a range of activities and opportunities, from offering a welcoming warm space, signposting to information, access to internet, a hot drink, hot meal, access to participate in centre programmes or specific warm space activities such as reading newspapers, sustainable crafting, yoga, reading corners and board games. From a community perspective each Warm Space developed its own unique offer. Examples of this have been free warm drinks, spaces to read newspapers, enjoy games or participate in community centre programmes.



Provision of free bus passes

The provision of free buses passes for children and young people has been promoted since the launch of the Under 22 Free Bus Travel Scheme. All 5-21 year olds resident in Scotland are eligible for Young Persons' Free Bus Travel, using a National Entitlement Card with the free bus travel product on it. The scheme has been promoted through multiple channels nationally and locally including through schools in order to increase awareness and to maximise uptake. 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, by early November this figure has increased to 29,621.

Emergency formula

The Best Start in Life Group has led work to ensure that appropriate infant formula is available for new mothers. This saw the Group work in collaboration with CFINE and Abernecessities to develop a formula/'cash first' approach.

The Infant Feeding in a Crisis pathway is currently being tested, and has already begun to see referrals to CFine through the Family Nurse Partnership, full support being given to those who have been referred. The project continues to work with providers and families to raise better awareness of the offer.

The project enhances the already established Early Years Financial Inclusion pathway. Both pathways have been well received by Midwives, Health Visitors, the Family Nurse Partnership and Allied Health Professionals. The Financial Inclusion pathway is a universal pathway that asks and offers all women and families if they require financial support

Food vouchers for holiday periods

Vouchers have been distributed to families who are eligible due to low income during holiday periods. The voucher, with a value of £25 for each two week period, continues to be welcomed.

Summer Holidays, 2023 – 4925 learners

Autumn Holiday, 2023 – 5154 learners

Winter Holiday, 2023 – 5153 learners

Best Start Food Grant

The number of Best Start and Best Start Foods grant applications received from city residents as at September 2023 was 3,145, compared to 2,735 in the same period the prior year. This represents an increase in the proportion of all applications from 3% to 4% of Scotland level awards and could partially indicate that families are now better aware of supports available.

School Clothing Grants

As of November 2023, 4500 free school clothing grants have been approved over the year. This equates to grants for 3008 Primary pupils and 1,498 secondary pupils and constitutes an increase of over 1100 grants being awarded compared to the last reporting period.

Access to Out of School Care (SAC)

549 parents and carers responded to the 2023 consultation on School Age Childcare in the city. Responses were gleaned from all 11 of the Aberdeen City's ASGs from parents and carers accessing School Age Childcare through all available services. Local Authority and private providers, both registered and unregistered.

The consultation findings demonstrate that 43% of all respondents who currently access School Age Childcare do so to support the working day with only 3% to enable them to attend College or University. 10% of all respondents use School Age Childcare to enable their children to play and/or socialise with other children, with only 1 (0.18%) respondent sighting respite as reason to access childcare.

The majority, 36% of all respondents currently require the services of an After School Club, with 22.8% requiring a Breakfast Club term time. Of those respondents accessing term time care, 16% required both a Breakfast and After School provision. There was also an increase from 2021 of 8% to our 2021 of service users accessing childcare for In-service days during 2023.

Various registered and unregistered holiday childcare services are currently available across the city during the Spring, Summer and Autumn school holidays with 37.89% of respondents requiring care during all three holiday periods. Interestingly there was 10% more respondent's children attended an unregistered Sports/Activity Camp compared to those accessing a

registered Holiday Club. A fifth of respondents of all respondents (20.03%) accessed both registered Holiday Clubs and unregistered Sports/Activity Camps. 10.93% of respondents accessed the Spring/Summer/Autumn 'In the City' programme 2023 with 25% of those respondents accessing a mix of registered, unregistered and In The City programme services. Evidence suggests that many parents and carers are currently accessing a mixed model of child care during the holidays to meet their needs.

While we have good coverage of SAC in Aberdeen there is still a demand for more places. Therefore it is important that we work with our partners to continually assess supply and demand across the city, and when and where possible either expand on existing provisions and/or create new services. As SAC is a paid for service, it is important that any new services are viable and sustainable. Expansion also has to take account of space available and the maximum number of registered places according to Care Inspectorate registration.

With almost a quarter of respondents (24%) saying they will require School Age Childcare for their preschool children currently attending an ELC nursery and/or childminder it is important that we also look ahead and consider future coverage. Therefore we must continue to facilitate communication between parents, carers currently accessing ELC Nursery provisions and childminders and all SAC providers regarding future supply and demand.

Affordability continues to be a concern for many families with almost 17% saying they do not access SAC due to cost. We are also increasingly aware that cost can be an ongoing concern for many families who are currently in work but facing cost of living challenges. 46% of families saying they were not aware of any available financial support and only 28% of respondents currently receiving support it is essential that this information is made more readily available. We will work with the Financial Inclusion Team and all SAC providers to ensure that all parents and carers are made aware of what financial support is potentially available to assist with the costs of SAC. We will also link with the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN) to ensure that all information shared is current and in line with their of their existing drive to promote potentially available childcare financial support and benefits.

In order to respond positively to the findings of this survey, the Early Years team will now:

- establish a focus group with our School Age Childcare partners to help develop and inform the refresh of the Aberdeen City School Age Childcare Policy;
- engage and communicate with parents, and carers whose children are currently attending ELC nursery and childminder settings to monitor future projections of potential supply and demand. At this time we will also communicate the importance of planning ahead with regards to wrap around care once children transition to primary school;
- continue to promote the availability of potential financial support and benefits available to assist in the cost of childcare; and
- develop a more detailed understanding of our own SAC services we will continue to consult and engage with Aberdeen City Council service users directly to ensure that we are continuing to meet their needs within our services.

So, what next?

There is considerable work being undertaken in this area and this will continue in line with current plans. The education service remains ready to progress an expansion of out of school care in line with national policy when known.

Income from social security and benefits in kind

Money Advisors in schools

The Council has attached Money Advisors to schools to help support families within their own communities through Scottish Attainment Challenge funding.

As the Advisors have become established they have become more familiar with the scenarios facing families and as awareness of the service has grown the added value has increased. The reduction in gains made as a result of attaching Money Advisors to schools suggests that more families are now making use of the On-line calculator or accessing the Financial Inclusion Service through alternative routes. This should be considered carefully as the use of Scottish Attainment Challenge funding is considered for 2024/25.

Over the last year the 2 Money Advisors who are attached to the Financial Inclusion Services have helped families achieve:

- Financial Gains of £273,159.16
- Assisted/Assisting 56 households with debt issues.
- Helping with total debts of £256,688.75
- 108 households were given full benefit checks.
- Assisted 39 households to claim benefits.
- Assisting 8 households to challenge being turned down for benefits.

Families who have accessed the Financial Inclusion Service independently of the school Money Advisors have been helped to achieve further:

- Financial Gains - £360,894.71
- Assisted/assisting 120 household with debt issues
- Helping with debts of £908,660.99
- 207 households given full benefit checks.
- Assisted 38 households to claim benefits.
- Assisted 6 households to challenge being turned down for benefits.

Data from the online benefits calculator shows that 894 families have used the online benefit calculator. Of the completed calculation, 679 families had £194,046.60** per week of new benefits identified.

**This does not confirm if they went onto claim the benefit as this is anonymised and could be people doing several calculations.

Maximising the update of benefits

We continue to work on maximising the uptake of benefits. There has been a proactive promotion of new benefit entitlements including promotion of the increased child payment through the universal services and through social media channels. We have been distributing the Support for Families booklet which gives information on entitlement at different life stages of children (Early Years, Primary School, Secondary School and staying on at School) which commenced in 2021 and is updated each year. We continue to monitor to help determine the effectiveness of approaches. Targeted communications to those in priority groups have been tested over the last year. Cost of Living support continues to support household costs with additional funding for Scottish Welfare Fund to support medium priority applications. This also includes provision of benefit and financial advice, as well as further support to ensure the provision of adequate

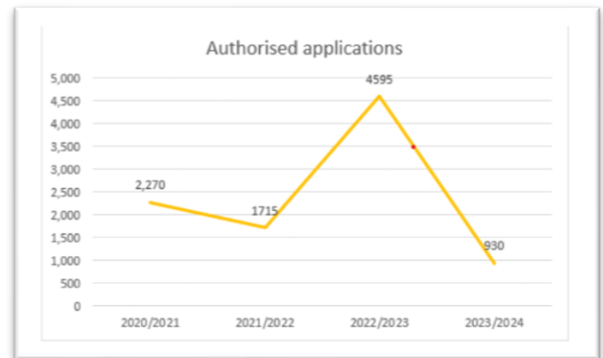
emergency food.

In addition, support is being provided through the Lone Parent support fund to help lone parents with the costs of transitioning to employment. There has been an increase in the number of discretionary housing payments awarded and effective systems are in place to allocate community care and crisis grants to those who need them.

Scottish Child Payment

The Scottish Child Payment was fully rolled out to all children aged under 16 from the 14 Nov 2022. Data up to 30 September 2023 shows that since its introduction in February 2021, there have been 11,885 applications made, with 9,510 applications approved.

This new benefit has provided an additional £14,745,270 of new money into Aberdeen City for families.



Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund

The Council applied for funding from Scottish Government and was successful in a bid to work with a preferred partner organisation to create a dashboard which will allow Aberdeen City Council to identify families who would benefit financially from targeted pro-active engagement, for vulnerable families in crisis, or those at risk of falling into crisis. This would enable the Council to do targeted prevention work rather than reacting to people who contact us. The dashboard is created by bringing together indicators of poverty from data held by Aberdeen City Council, The Department for Works Pension and other publicly available data.

By combining data sources, we will be able to identify levels of financial exclusion and risk at an individual and household level, allowing us to follow up on those experiencing childhood poverty of the following priority families.

- Minority ethnic families
- Lone parent families
- Families with a disabled person
- Families with three or more children
- Families with children under one
- Families with mothers aged 25 or under

Family Wellbeing Fund

The Family Wellbeing Fund approach was developed by the Financial Inclusion Team (FIT) to support families affected by the DWP two child limit, through the development of a support plan linked to topics such as money advice, fuel payments and employability. The plan was to provide an initial payment of £100 to the household, with a second payment of £150 as an incentive to engage with services to maximise their income, with the aim being to support 100 families by March 2023 with a cost of £25,000.

While the overall number of families affected in Aberdeen is known to be around 1200, engaging with them has proved to be very difficult. Work has been undertaken with key agencies supporting families to try and increase referrals, with a session with providers taking place on 20 June 2023 involving Citizen's Advice, Homestart, Children 1st, CFINE advice team and ACC Children's and Families service. While there was recognition of the value of the approach due to low level of uptake it was agreed that this funding would change to provide fuel vouchers to continue the provision due to likely demand due to the cost-of-living crisis.

Based on data up to 31 Dec 2023, 979 households have received fuel vouchers to the value of £9953.

Free school meals

Free school meal registrations have increased but uptake is too low. 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 is 3617 based on low income and 9569 based on P1-5 entitlement. The increase in entitlement makes annual comparison difficult and entitlement is expected to be extended to P6 and P7, within the lifetime of the current parliament.

While there have been increases at schools in priority neighbourhoods, increases have been seen across schools in the city, including those in areas outwith 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 72.3% and 56.5% 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 outwith the main school building and provide 'grab and go' food provision, allowing pupils to be outwith school to meet their friends but still uptake their free school meal entitlement. The installation of the pod is expected in early 2024, coinciding with other works taking place in the school playground including external dining facilities. Learning from this trial will be used to determine next steps.

Data taken from the annual Healthy Living Survey saw free school meal uptake in Primary Schools rise from 69.6% in 2022 to 72.3% in 2023. Uptake in Secondary Schools also rose from 47.7% in 2022, to 56.5% in 2023.

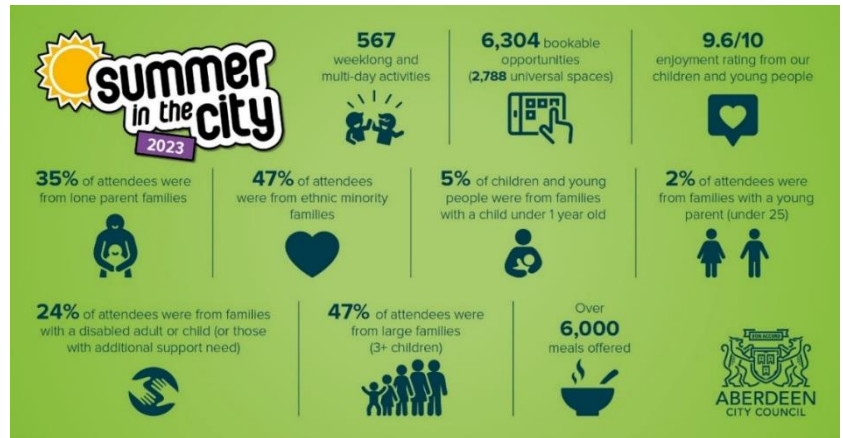
Update of Early Learning and Childcare for Eligible 2s

183 Eligible 2 year old children were placed in ELC in 2022/23, representing approximately 31.66% of the eligible population. The introduction of a new Data Pipeline Project with the DWP will help increase this percentage through better targeting of those who are eligible for school session 2023/24. The team continue to work to increase uptake further.

In the City Programmes

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 continues to engage with the widest demographics, providing free opportunities for both priority families and those who do not identify as part of a priority group to take part. The programme targets 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 have taken the form of short, family, half-day and full-day sessions.



Since summer 2021, the programmes have provided more than 49,000 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.



The enjoyability rating as provided by children and young people for the Summer 2023 programme was 9.6 out of 10. This rating was consistent with the previous programme.

On-going funding of the programme will be considered as part of the Council budget setting process.

So, what next?

In addition to the work already in place and being progressed through the Children’s Services Plan, the Council and its Community Planning Partners remain committed to using all available tools to enable young people and families to access financial support and the benefits for which they are eligible. This includes the development of intelligence led insights from the Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund project detailed above. The Childrens Services Board will collaborate with Community Planning Aberdeen’s Anti-Poverty Outcome Improvement Group to prioritise use cases from this insight.

Having delivered significant improvement in benefits uptake, Community Planning Aberdeen have reset targets for the city to increase this by a further 10% by 2025.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROMISE



Central to the work of the Children’s Services Board is delivery of The Promise.

The Children’s Services Board reviewed progress in delivering Plan 21-24 in October 2023. The [evaluation](#) highlighted that good progress is being made in a number of areas but that the partnership is not on track to fully deliver on all areas of Plan 21-24. This position is reflected nationally.

This draft evaluation framework has been developed to help us measure our progress towards delivery of an effective Family Support model aligned to the Promise. It is anticipated that this framework will have to be revisited when the next Promise Plan and associated evaluation framework is published in June 2024. The final evaluation framework will be used to monitor the impact of our Family Support Model on a yearly basis and over time. Readers should note that in looking at trend data, quite different groups of children and young people are often being compared and these differences need to be taken into consideration.

5 year trend data (where available) has been aligned to the actions in Plan 21-24 that can be measured locally, the RAG rating reflects the evaluated position outlined in our October evaluation.

Plan 21-24 action	RAG rating	5 year trend
Priority 1 – A Good Childhood		
Support		<p>Increasing trend in the no. of Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) engaging in Active Schools activity.</p> <p>Increasing trend in the no. of CEYP accessing free leisure from 294 in 2019 to 647 in 2024 (the number includes adult members who enable engagement)</p> <p>Decreasing trend in the percentage of young people who started treatment in CAMHS within 18 weeks of referral from 93% in 2018 to 46% in 2023</p> <p>Increasing trend in the no. of families accessing financial support from 295 in 2018 to 1040 in 2022/23</p> <p>Stable trend in the no. of children and young people supported universally by the Educational Psychology (EP) Service (407 over 2022/23)</p>

		<p>Increasing trend in the no. of children and young people who were supported through specialist Educational Psychology involvement or assessment throughout the year (206 in 2022/23).</p> <p>Stable trend in the no. children and young people looked after in residential care from 10% (51) in 2018/19 to 12% (67) in 2022/23.</p>
A right to education		<p>Improving trend in reducing levels of unauthorised school absence from 6.93% in 2017/18 to 4.35% in 2021/2022 for all Looked After Children and Young People.</p> <p>Stable trend in the attendance rates of Looked After Children and Young People from 86.91% in 2017/2018 to 86.59% in 2021/22.</p> <p>Improving trend in reducing the exclusion rates of Looked After Children and Young People from 174 temporary exclusions in 2017/2018 to 55 in 2021/22.</p> <p>Stable trend in the attainment of Looked After Children and Young People in Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) (combined P1,4 and 7).</p> <p>Improving trend in the % of Looked After Children and Young People achieving Early Level Numeracy by the end of P1 from 61.54% in 2017/18 to 77.27% in 2021/22.</p> <p>Improving trend in the % of Looked After Children and Young People achieving First Level Numeracy by the end of P4 from 30% in 2017/18 to 50% in 2021/22.</p> <p>Stable trend in the % of Looked After Children and Young People achieving Second Level Numeracy by the end of P7 from 33.33% in 2017/18 to 33.33% in 2021/22.</p> <p>Stable trend in the % of Looked After Children and Young People achieving Third Level or better Numeracy by the end of S3 from 56.25% in 2017/18 to 52.63% in 2021/22.</p> <p>Improving trend in the % of Looked After Children with 1 or more qualification at SCQF Level 3 from 81.82% in 2018/2019 to 88.24% in 2021/2022.</p> <p>Stable trend in the % of Looked After Children with 1 or more qualification at SCQF level 4 from 72.73% in 2018/2019 to 70.59% in 2021/2022.</p> <p>Decreasing trend in the % of Looked After Children achieving a literacy qualification at Level 4 from 72.73% in 2018/2019 to 64.71% in 2021/2022.</p>

Increasing gap between % of Looked After Children leavers and the local authority average attaining a Level 4 qualification in literacy from 19.4% in 2018/2019 and 29.44% in 2021/2022.

Increasing gap between % of Looked After Children leavers and the local authority average attaining a Level 4 qualification in numeracy from 20.26% in 2018/2019 to 36.75% in 2021/2022.

Decreasing trend in the % of Looked After Children achieving a literacy qualification at Level 5 from 36.36% in 2018/2019 to 17.65% in 2021/2022.

Decreasing trend in the % of Looked After Children with 1 or more qualification at SCQF Level 5 or better from 40.91% in 2018/2019 to 29.41% in 2021/2022.

Decreasing trend in the % of Percentage of Looked After Children with 1 or more qualification at SCQF Level 6 or better from 18.18% in 2018/2019 to 11.76% in 2021/2022.

Decreasing trend in the % of Looked After Children with 1 or more qualification at SCQF Level 7 or better from 4.55% in 2018/2019 to 0% in 2021/2022.

Decreasing trend in the average tariff points achieved by Looked After Children and **increasing gap** between those who have experienced care and their peers.

Stable trend in the % of school leavers who were Looked After away from home in positive initial destinations from 81.82% in 2018/2019 to 80% in 2021/22.

Decreasing trend in the % of school leavers who were Looked After at home in positive initial destinations from 63.64% in 2018/19 to 57.14% in 2021/2022.

Increasing trend in the % of Looked After Children and Young People considered for a Coordinated Support Plan from 3% in 2019 to 49% in 2023 in the city.

Increasing trend in the staying on rates of those who are cared for compared to their peers for S4, S5 and S6

S4/S5 Staying on Rates		
	2016/17	2022/23
All	83.34%	87.02%
All Looked After	44.8%	62.5%

		S5/S6 Staying on Rates		
		2016/17	2022/23	
		All	65.54%	62.43%
		All Looked After	14.3%	30%
Relationships		<p>We will commence annual reporting of the no. of children who were not placed with their brothers and sisters at the point of placement start date</p> <p>Decreasing trend in the no. of children placed with ACC Foster Carers from 15% (81) in 2018/19, to 14% (73) in 2022/23.</p>		
Brothers and sisters		<p>87% (467) of looked after children and young people are placed with siblings (2023 new measure)</p> <p>13% of looked after children and young people are separated from a sibling (2023 new measure)</p> <p>Stable trend in the no. of foster carers who take sibling placements</p> <p>Improving trend in the no. of Kinship Carers receiving multi-agency support</p>		
Youth justice		<p>Decreasing trend in the no. and % of young people in secure accommodation due to criminality (2023: 1/<1%)</p> <p>Increasing trend in the no. and % of complex young people in secure accommodation due to SCRA decisions</p> <p>Improving trend in the no. of offences linked to young people in local children's homes (nil over reporting period)</p> <p>Improving trend in the % of young people charged with an offence</p>		
Advocacy		<p>Increasing trend in the % of CEYP accessing independent advocacy</p> <p>Increasing trend in the no. of children and young people accessing Young Person's Rights Service who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care experienced (Jun 2023: 14) Involved in child protection processes (Jun 2023, Legal Status = Promotion of welfare of children in need: 4) 		
Moving on		<p>Improving trend in the no. of CEYP working with a mentor from 0 in 2019 to 52 meeting mentors (MCR) and 4 supported by the Pathways Co-Ordinator (MCR) in Jan 2024.</p> <p>Consistently high trend in the no. of care leavers with a pathway plan from 100% in 2018/19 to 100% in 2021/22.</p> <p>Increasing trend in the no. of young people in continuing care</p>		

		<p>placements from 16 in 2018/19 to 31 in 2022/23.</p> <p>Stable trend in the provision of pathway plans. 92% of all young people eligible for a pathway plan have one (2023)</p> <p>Decreasing trend in the no. of youth homelessness applications from care leavers (0 in 2023)</p> <p>Increasing trend in the no. of young people not paying Council Tax up to 26 years due to Council decisions</p>
Physical intervention		<p>Reducing trend in the no. of restraints used in local children's homes (1 in 2023)</p> <p>Reducing trend in the no. of restraints used in education</p> <p>CSW will implement guidance on recording of the use of restraint for all CEYP placed in out of authority placements and other community settings in 2024.</p>
Priority 2 – Whole Family Support		
Family Support		<p>Stable trend in the no. of care experienced 2–5-year-olds attending ELC:</p> <p>2020/21 - 74 (31 – 3-5s and 49 Eligible 2's) 2021/22 - 70 (25 – 3-5s and 45 Eligible 2's) 2022/23 - 42 (19 – 3-5s and 29 Eligible 2's) 2023/24 - 26 (19 – 3-5s and 6 Eligible 2's to date – January 2024)</p> <p>Stable trend in the no. of care experienced parents applying for Eligible 2's ELC place for their child(ren):</p> <p>2021/22 - 2 2022/23 - 4 2023/24 - 2</p> <p>Stable trend in the no. of % of care experienced parents engaging with the Family Nurse Partnership</p> <p>Improving trend in the no. of CEYP living with Foster Carers on continuing care arrangement from 8 in 2018 to 24 in 2023.</p> <p>Stable trend in the no. of families accessing the Fit Like Family Wellbeing Service (585 referrals in 2022 of these 335 (57%) new families accessed support; 599 in 2023 of these 378 (63%) new families accessed support.</p> <p>Stable trend in the number of families who identified that their circumstances/risks had improved as a result of support provided by Includem - 15 in 2022, 12 in 2023.</p>

		<p>Increasing trend in the number of kinship care breakdowns from 4 in 2018/19 to 8 in 2022/23</p> <p>Increasing trend in the No. of kinship carers accessing multi-agency support.</p> <p>Stable trend in the recruitment of new foster carers with a steady average of around 10 per year (in 2023 12 new foster carers were approved from 6 households).</p> <p>Stable trend in the no. of kinship care assessments undertaken, the average for the preceding three years is 22 kinship assessments per year.</p> <p>Increasing trend in the no of families supported through the Links Hub. In Year 1 of Links Hub opening, 2022/23, 33 families were identified as in need of intensive support, and 45 families are currently being supported in Year 2, 2023/24. Issues include poverty, domestic violence and alcohol and drug misuse.</p>
Peer and community support		<p>Increasing trend in the no. of families being support by Community Learning</p> <p>Increasing trend in the no. of families the Family Learning Team are engaging with from 236 in 2017/19 to 621 in 2022/23.</p> <p>Increasing trend in the impact of Family Learning. In 2018/2019 88% of respondents reported an improvement in confidence and 90% improvement in skills & knowledge. In 2022/2023 91% of respondents reported an improvement in confidence and 98% an improvement in knowledge & skills.</p> <p>Stable trend in the no. of families being supported by Barnardo's young carers service. (2022 - 144 young people/123 families; 2023 152 young people/131 families).</p> <p>The average length of engagement with the Young Carers Service is stable at 2-3 years.</p> <p>444 parents and families with complex needs were supported by organisations accessing grants from the Fairer Aberdeen Fund. 70% of families agreed risk had been reduced and 4 families no longer required Social Work support.</p>
Service integration		<p>Evidence from multi-agency thematic audits undertaken highlight a positive and stable trend. In 2022 63% of cases audited were evaluated as good or better in 2023 this was 80%. (Not directly comparable due to audit sample, focus and questions.)</p> <p>Increasing trend in the no. of shared services delivered (7 on-going collaborations with Children's Social Work)</p>

Family therapies		<p>Stable trend in the length of engagement with the Fit Like Family Wellbeing Service: less than 6 months 24%; 6-12 months 28%; 12-18months 19% and 18+ months 18%.</p> <p>Stable trend in those moving on from the Fit Like Service. In 2023 of the 113 families who moved on from the Fit Like Wellbeing Service 76% were supported by universal services; 12% were supported by CSW and 11% were supported by CAMHS.</p> <p>Stable trend in the no. of families accessing support from Includem. In 2022 Includem engaged with 42 young people, in 2023 this was 45.</p> <p>Stable trend in the average length of engagement Includem had with young people. 49 weeks in 2022, 43 weeks in 2023.</p>
Priority 3 – Supporting the Workforce		
Workforce values		Increasing trend in the % of the children’s workforce, chief officers, elected members and all corporate parents who complete Corporate Parenting training aligned to The Promise
Trauma informed		Increasing trend in the % of children’s workforce has undertaken trauma awareness training (100% for ACC), 80% of frontline children’s social work practitioners have completed the 4 TURAS Trauma Skills modules
On-going relationships		There are no local policies which prevent on-going relationships
Workforce support		Increasing availability of staff wellbeing supports.
Priority 4 - Planning		
Planning		<p>A reducing trend in the % of care experienced children with 3 or more placements from 6% in 2017/18 to 5% in 2021/22</p> <p>A reducing trend in the % of care experienced children with more than 1 placement in the past year from 21.7% in 2017/18 to 18.8% in 2021/22.</p>
Investment		<p>An increasing trend in the number of households experiencing poverty (1 in 5 children now live in poverty)</p> <p>An increasing trend in the number of families supported to claim all benefit entitlements</p>
Information sharing		<p>A stable trend in the number of IRDs held from 417 in 2018/19 to 350 in 2021/22.</p> <p>A declining trend in the % of IRD leading to Child Protection Planning Meetings from 64% in 2018/19 to 24% in 2022/23</p>

		Evidence from multi-agency thematic audits undertaken highlight a positive and stable trend in relation to information sharing to protect children from harm. In 2022 80% of cases audited were evaluated as good or better in 2023 this was 75%. (Not directly comparable due to audit sample and focus.)
Priority 5 – Building Capacity		
Legislation		
Children’s Hearing System		
Inspection and regulation		
Policy coherence		Improved alignment of national policy (local arrangements)
Data mapping and collection		Improved access to data through D365
Governance structures		Sound local governance arrangements

The evaluation framework will be revisited when the second Promise Plan is published. Thereafter data trends will be reported annually through this Annual Report.

Whole Family Wellbeing Funding

[The Whole Family Wellbeing Funding \(WFWF\)](#) is a £500 million investment over the current Scottish Parliament (2022 to 2026). As part of Element 1, £32 million has been provided in each of the financial years 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024 to support Children’s Services Planning Partnerships across Scotland to scale up and drive the delivery of whole family support services in their areas and build capacity for transformational change.

In Aberdeen City we have invested our WFWF in a variety of areas to support our children, young people and their families to improve our holistic whole family wellbeing offer, including:

Scaling up Youth and Family Support

Scaling up our investment in Youth Workers, Family Learning and Financial Inclusion attached to schools to ensure that children, young people and families can access support more readily.

Request for Assistance

Developing the second version of our Request for Assistance system in order to create a single pathway for families to access support services.

Co-Located Multidisciplinary Teams

Piloting co-located multidisciplinary teams in Northfield and Lochside Academies to ensure more effective and holistic planning for the children and families most in need of our support.

Supporting Kinship Carers

Building the capacity of kinship carers to enable them to feel better supported and have their own needs recognised more effectively.

Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM)

Rolling out SCIM in order to ensure that every child who has experienced abuse or neglect has access to a [Bairn's Hoose](#) model of support including access to a trauma recovery service.

Place2Be

Supporting the development the Place2Be project, focussing on the mental health of children under the age of 10.

Parent Support – Children with Disabilities

Improving the peer and community support available for children with disabilities within Aberdeen City.

This Annual report, and current discussions around the resourcing of our Bairn's Hoose, are helping to inform our use of the fund.

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES BOARD

What do we need to change in the second year of the Plan?



The working arrangements of the Children's Services Board

The Children's Services Board has invested time in considering how best to track progress against our ambitious plan. This has led to the implementation of an agreed tracker to help improve transparent tracking of progress. Taking this approach is helping to highlight emerging risks and issues. This greater visibility is enabling the Board to take swifter action when required. These changes are helping to build a culture of collective responsibility and candour amongst Board members.

In addition to providing leadership to our Sub Groups, the Children's Services Board has collaborated to evaluate progress on a number of key policies. This has included evaluating our approach to the development of our Plan to ensure that we are well prepared to undertake the next wholesale review in 2026, development of our [Child Poverty Action Report](#) in June 2023 and our evaluation of progress towards delivery of [Plan 21-24](#) in October 2023. Our discipline of on-going evaluation on key policies is helping improve our collective understanding of the challenges facing our children and families and helping us take a more holistic and agile approach. As we move forward, all of our annual reports will be built into the Children's Services Plan Annual Report so that the connections across different policies are fully taken into account.

The quality of our evaluation is improving. The finalisation of a robust evaluation framework aligned to The Promise will help us assess the strength of all three tiers of our Tiered Intervention Framework and help us facilitate the shift of resources towards preventative and early intervention. The framework will be finalised when the second national Promise Plan and associated evaluation framework are published in 2024. We continue to benefit from close collaboration with our local Health Determinates Research Collaborative (HDRC) and have commissioned a long term study on the impact of expanded ELC provision to inform next steps in our developing model of Family Support. The HDRC have also committed to working in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh to help us evaluate the impact of our local Bairn's Hoose.

The Board has benefited from closer working with the Child Protection Committee (CPC) this year and now works in collaboration to deliver shared audits and quality assurance activity. This has seen the Board review the effectiveness of arrangements to support children and young people who have experienced harmful sexual behaviour and to review the circumstances which trigger a referral to services under the category of physical abuse. The Board also collaborated with the CPC to plan delivery of our Bairns Hoose as part of a national pathfinder. We look forward to working with the national Bairns Hoose team over the coming year as the capital works get underway and the team starts to be established.

A refreshed Request for Assistance (RfA) process has been developed and will soon be delivered to help us monitor demand and the impact of services in real time. This second version of the system will enable us to look at how effectively different interventions support the mitigation of risk and help inform our future commissioning.

As well as commissioning Children 1st to deliver a Bairns Hoose Trauma Recovery Service aligned to our Fit Like Hubs, we have recommissioned Family Support Services that fully embed the 10 principles of Family Support outlined in The Promise. We hope that our Bairns Hoose will provide opportunities to work regionally and with the Island Local Authorities.

We recognise that there is more to do to improve the quality of data collection, matching and processing to enable more accurate and timely analysis of needs by group and at community level. A recent successful bid to the Child Poverty Action fund is helping us move this work forward further.

Those represented on the Board continue to support a high proportion of displaced children and young people including those fleeing conflict and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. After Glasgow, the city welcomes the highest proportion of displaced people and services continue to respond with agility although this has placed considerable pressure on local services. Mitigating the risk to service provision will require our on-going attention.

The Board successfully implemented updated GIRFEC Operational Guidance over the reporting period. Unfortunately there was no appetite to develop a more regional approach to support colleagues working across the health board. Work is ongoing to secure greater alignment between GIRFEC and GIRFE for those who have a disability but this work requires to be accelerated. Revisions have been proposed to our agreed Child's Planning format based on feedback from children and young people and this feedback will be retained as we await an updated national position.

Over the course of the year, the impact of poverty on children and families has become more evident. The Children's Services Board has agreed content for a child poverty training course. SHMU has been commissioned to develop the training film by using local voices and case studies. Taking this approach will ensure that our workforce access consistent messaging and understanding of the issues facing the families we collectively serve.

Considerable time has been invested by our Sub groups in the development of Improvement Project Charters with examples of on-going work shown in the appendices. Taking this approach has supported new groups of staff from across the Community Planning Partnership to join forces on shared projects aligned with our Plan. The progress of each charter is routinely reported to the Community Planning Aberdeen Board. A total of 34 Improvement Projects have been agreed and all are now making good progress.

Best Start in life Group Projects

The focus this year has been on supporting infants and their families in a number of key areas of early health, including working with staff throughout the partnership to help build their confidence in recognising early signs of neglect and poverty to ensure we can support the needs of those children and their families at the earliest possible opportunity. As a result, the Group has worked closely with partners such as Women's Aid and Alcohol and Drugs Action to offer opportunities to support families who may otherwise have been referred to Children's Social Work.

Over the course of the year we have been working to expand our Peep offer by establishing a number of new groups including at Tullos, Muirfield and Greyhope among others and have also worked with Childsmile, ELC settings and Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership to promote whole family dental health support at these sessions. Links with local dental practices have been strengthened to further promote dental health to children and families.

The Group has made significant progress in establishing a 'Cash First' approach to offering financial support to those who need it as well as improved emergency access to infant formula in collaboration with Cfine and Abernecessities. This is showing important signs of success to date with all those referred currently receiving full support. Further details of this work can be found in the case studies in the appendices

Mental Health and Wellbeing Group Projects

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Collaborative Subgroup have focused this year on developing a number of projects tackling various aspects of support for Children and Young People.

The Group is working to reduce demand on CAMHS by improving the way we refer to the service. This has involved raising awareness among staff across the partnership of the various tier 2 supports available as well as working to expand the Tier 2 offer of support. We now plan to refine the referral process to make sure that children and young people can be referred to the right service and so that once they have, they can receive that service as soon as possible.

The group continues to prioritise the mental health and health care needs of Care Experienced young people and are working to make sure that 100% of children who leave care receive mental health support within 4 weeks of being referred.

In our communities, particularly in our priority areas, we are working with our children and young people to make them feel safe in their communities and we are now seeing an increase in confidence reported by young people. This work is on-going.

Corporate Parenting Sub Group

The Corporate Parenting Subgroup continues to lead our focus on supporting our Care Experienced Children, Young People and their Families. Driven through our Aberdeen City Corporate Parenting Plan and providing a leading role in ensuring our Partnership Keeps the Promise. The improvement projects being led by the Group reflect this focus.

The Group are working to maximise the number of our eligible Care Experienced young people receiving multiagency/throughcare support, and linking to the related project from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Collaborative, ensuring that all Care Leavers are offered a comprehensive health needs assessment.

In to 2023 we have seen a 6% rise in the number of young people receiving multiagency/throughcare support with good indications that this has further increased into 2024. We have significant success in supporting our Kinship Carers. Our programme of support has expanded significantly, with a 900% increase in the number of partners offering supports and we have doubled the number of carers we now support. Further information can be found in the case studies below.

Working upstream we also have projects focussing on supporting Care Experienced young people to be confident parents and providing improved holistic whole family support to reduce the number of children entering the care system.

The Group are considering how best to implement the recommendations for Corporate Parents from the Secure Care Pathways report:

- A clear plan for the provision of consistent mental and emotional health support for young people in and on the edges of secure care
- Health boards should lead work with other corporate parents to ensure that young people receive consistent support to address emotional distress including self-harm and suicide risks
- Work with community-based services and secure care providers to ensure the suitable provision of substance misuse support for young people in and on the edges of secure care
- Ensure that young people who have left secure care don't experience a drop off in support and that all relevant multi-agency partners are involved in the planning and delivery of support at this stage

Attainment and Transitions to Adulthood Sub Group

This subgroup ensures that we take a partnership approach to supporting our children and young people to have the best possible educational experience and improve post school opportunities into further/higher education, employment and training.

This year we have worked to expand our curriculum offer through the delivery of ABZ Campus which made a further 37 courses available to our young people. We have responded positively to future growth sectors, such as digital, by increasing the number of pupils undertaking digital and technology courses. A similar approach has been taken to volume sectors, such as healthcare, with increased opportunities for young people to secure a qualification. On-going work on ABZ campus has increased the rate of those completing National Progression Awards/Foundation Apprenticeships and HNC courses. More information can be found in the appendices.

The group works closely with colleagues in the ASN/Disabilities and Corporate Parenting Subgroups to support our more vulnerable children and young people to achieve. For instance introducing and embedding a Pathways Advocate into each secondary school to support those who are care experienced and creating a consistent template for monitoring, tracking and supporting care experienced or vulnerable young people.

The Group are in the process of testing a training tool to support staff to recognise and feel confident when responding to signs of harm in our children, young people and their families.

Youth Justice Sub Group

The Youth Justice Subgroup supports those young people experiencing or at risk of entering the justice system. The Group are keenly aware that this cohort of young people will have a number of needs and may have been impacted upon by adverse childhood experiences. As a result, improvement projects take a trauma informed approach.

This year the group has been working closely with partners to provide comprehensive trauma training, with a view to destigmatising relationships between young people and key agencies such as Police and Children Social Work.

Another key focus has been early work to establish youth clubs and working in communities to reduce instances of Anti-Social behaviour. As of December 2023 there has been a 50% reduction in recorded instances of ASB.

The number of Looked After and Accommodated Children cautioned and charged with an offence has now reduced to 0. We are now seeking to expand this success to the wider care experienced cohort as well as other young people at risk of entering the justice system by supporting our police and community services to take a more trauma informed approach to cautioning and charging young people; expanding opportunity to divert them from prosecution and ensuring that their community support needs can be met.

Additional Support needs and disabilities Sub Group

The ASN & Disabilities Subgroup projects reflect our need to give the best possible opportunities for our young people with additional support needs and disabilities to achieve positive outcomes.

A number of partnership improvement projects have been progressed to provide community, peer and educational support for this cohort in order to help ensure that children and young people with ASN remain in full time education and are well supported when transitioning into post school education employment and training.

This year we have successfully piloted a Neurodevelopmental Pathway model aimed at increasing the number of families of children with a neurodevelopmental concern or awaiting diagnosis accessing support prior to diagnosis. The pilot has shown a promising increase in the number of families accessing support, and we are now looking to expand this offer.

We have also been successfully supporting our young carers, We have increased the total number of registered young carers accessing support by 14% since April 2023 from 116 -135, more information about this particular project can be found in our case studies section below.

This Group is currently without a formal Chair and work is on-going to address this.

What next for the Children's Services Board?

Reviewing our progress has confirmed the suitability of the Children's Services Plan 2023-2026. As a result, we propose to continue to deliver on our agreed Plan for 2023-26 but to also invest our time and energy in some additional areas:

- Develop further our use of data to be able to access more granular data at community/group level to enable a more bespoke response based on community need. There will be a need for this work to be closely aligned to Locality Plans as we move forwards. Time will also be invested in more fully understanding and tracking the outcomes for those living in SIMD1.

- Linked to the first, is the need to review how services engage with our most vulnerable in SIMD1 given the clear evidence that current arrangements are not realising improved outcomes. Taking an approach that promotes human rights and is family led will be important.
- There is a need to look at how to prevent childhood obesity through a coordinated preventative strategy that is not limited to children
- Respond positively to the Statutory Guidance on the UNCRC when published.
- Implement the recommendations for Corporate Parents from the Secure Care Pathways report:
 - A clear plan for the provision of consistent mental and emotional health support for young people in and on the edges of secure care
 - Health boards should lead work with other corporate parents to ensure that young people receive consistent support to address emotional distress including self-harm and suicide risks
 - Work with community-based services and secure care providers to ensure the suitable provision of substance misuse support for young people in and on the edges of secure care
 - Ensure that young people who have left secure care don't experience a drop off in support and that all relevant multi-agency partners are involved in the planning and delivery of support at this stage

What are we trying to achieve?

To create a universal Early Years Financial Inclusion Pathway (EYFIP) to prevent pregnant women and families with children under 5 years falling into financial crisis

And to create a targeted Infant Feeding in a Crisis Pathway (IFCP) to ensure that mothers and families with children aged under 5 years at risk of food insecurity, have access to first stage formula and income maximisation support

How are we doing this?

We are testing the pathway with priority neighbourhoods health professionals and CFINE initially with the potential to expand throughout other charity food providers.

- Adapt the “Pathways to Support” live document to include an infant feeding early years section where urgent first stage formula support, nutritional support and early years income maximisation can be added
- Establish a pathway where health professionals & emergency food providers can access a cash first approach
- for urgent first stage formula for the baby, nutritional support for the whole family and income maximisation support
- Develop a reporting system that collates amount of referrals and repeat referrals for emergency first stage formula and nutritional support

What have we achieved?

Working in partnership with CFine & their SAFE team to support families, through our **Early Years Financial Inclusion Pathway we have:**

- Developed a universal pathway that asks all pregnant women and families if they require financial health checks.
- Ensured a feedback loop to the HCPs from the Service Provider are supporting the family

And for the **Infant Feeding in a Crisis Pathway we have:**

- Built on a pathway being tested in Aberdeenshire, developing an Aberdeen City specific IFC Pathway.
- We have created a multiagency team to work on the pathway and test the Cash-First Approach
- IFCP training has been provided to Aberdeen City based Family Nurses. Who began testing the pathway in November

What impact have we had?

The project is still in its early stages of development but our early testing has already begun to see referrals to CFine through our testing with the Family Nurse Partnership, **full support being given to those who have been referred**

What do we plan to do next?

- We will continue to meet regularly as a multi-agency working group to monitor both pathways, continuing to collect data and feedback on the referral process and number of families that have benefited
- We will continue to test the IFCP for four months with Family Nurse Partnership
- In early 2024 we will expand IFCP to Health Visitors
- We intend to further expand this to Midwifery services by Spring/summer 2024
- We will continue ongoing awareness raising/training on the pathways with relevant staff. To ensure both staff and families potentially in need of support are better aware of the offer

Appendix 2. Supporting Our Kinship Carers: Improving our Partnership Offer

What are we trying to achieve?

To ensure that we can provide holistic family support tailored to the needs of our Kinship Carers we aim to increase the number of partners supporting kinship carers by 100%. Conscious that their diversity of need cannot be provided by social work alone, this will help both expand the offer and number of Kinship Carers that can be supported.

How are we doing this?

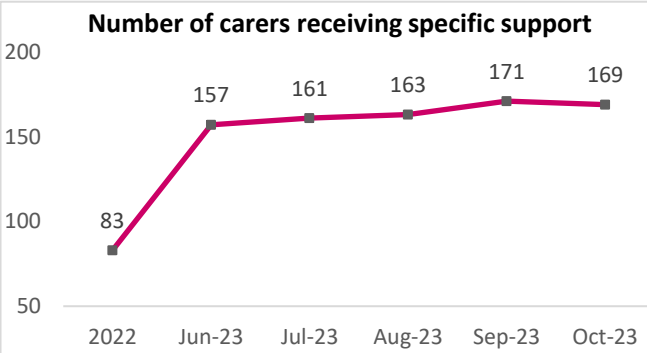
Through our multi agency project we have:

- Established a number of information events for Kinship Carers. Inviting carers and our Partners to connect and provide details of services and supports available to them.
- Developed a comprehensive directory of supports for those seeking to refer Kinship Carers. Our most current guidance can be found [here](#)
- Improved and expanded knowledge of our referral processes
- Employing a Community Development Worker to support and promote kinship support within Family Learning, Fit Like Hubs and wider agencies pertinent to kinship family support.

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What have we achieved?

- To date the project has achieved a **900%** increase in the number of partners supporting Kinship Carers.
- We have **more than doubled** the number of Kinship Carers receiving specific support an 89% from **83- 169** supported



We have formalised links now made with a number of key support agencies including:

- CAHMS;
- Family Learning;
- Kinship Blether;
- Fit Like Hubs;
- Families Outside;
- Be-friend A Child;
- Grec;
- Financial Inclusion Team;
- Housing Team;
- Adoption Team.

What impact have we had?

Feedback from our Kinship Carers and Partners has been very positive. They have highlighted a number of areas where they feel the project has made a key difference including:

- The increased support and links with different agencies*
- The improved communication about changes affecting them*
- The opportunity to capture the positive momentum*
- The improved recognition of role of Kinship Carers among partners*
- Increased participation from partners in the provision of services and supports*



What do we plan to do next?

We will review our support directory to ensure that we have clear referral pathways highlighted. Continue to link with partners to extend our offer. Planning further engagement events for Kinship Carers.

Appendix 3. Breadth of Courses: Expanding our Curricular Offer

What are we trying to achieve?

To increase by 10% the rate of completion of National Progression Awards (NPA)/Foundation Apprenticeships (FA)/Higher National Certificate (HNC) courses available to young people across the city by 2026, by increasing the breaths and quality of courses available to our Senior Phase Secondary pupils.

How are we doing this?

- By developing and introduce Phase 1 of ABZ Campus, increasing the number of collectively offered courses (including NPA, FA and HNC) compared to the City Campus offer in 2022-23 to young people in Aberdeen City.
- Creating a termly professional learning offer for staff in curriculum development to encourage a continuation in the broadening of pathway options for young people in Aberdeen City.
- Developing and offer programme of support (informed by young people) (including induction) for young people taking ABZ Campus courses that will enhance their experience and reduce withdrawals.

What have we achieved?

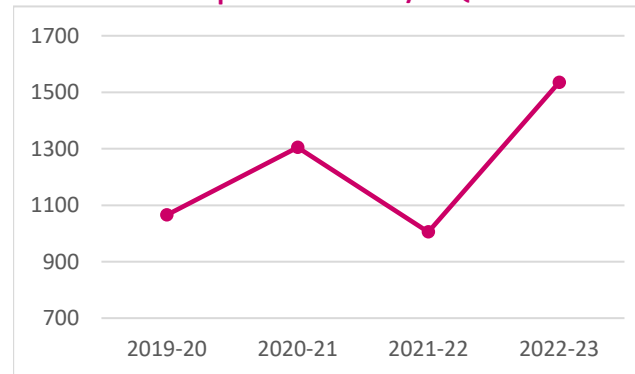
In Academic Year 2023/24 to date, there have been **65** participants in Curriculum Development Sessions

Between 2020/21 and 2023/24 the number of completions of Level 7 HNC courses has **increased from 0 -17**

The number of completion of foundation apprenticeships has **increased from 124 -208** between 2022/23 and 2023/24

The total number of completions of NPA/SCQF Courses is at its highest in the 4 years recorded with a **53% increase** from 2022 -2023

No. Completions of NPA/SCQF Courses



What impact have we had?

Training Sessions on Timetabling, Pathway and Curriculum Development have had very positive feedback with a significant proportion of participants indicating that the training had been **'invaluable in helping my thinking'**

What do we plan to do next?

- Attainment reviews have taken place in schools to identify where courses offered could be widened for session 24/25
- ABZ Campus will continue to be delivered across multiple sites and a range of different SCQF courses.
- Further training sessions will be undertaken
- Feedback from Focus Groups on views of the ABZ campus will be collected, analysed and used to inform changes to the curriculum offer

What are we trying to achieve?

We aim to decrease the number of 13 to 15 year olds who have reported using substances in Aberdeen to below the national average by 2023, through curriculum delivery and a whole population approach.

How are we doing this?

- Developing a new procedure for reporting substance use incidences in school, streamlining and improving the processes for accessing information, support and referral
- Development of a Programme of Substance Use Resources to ensure that all children and young people are offered consistent support and appropriate interventions in relation to their understanding of and use of substances
- Pilot test event and programme 2023 in conjunction with the Daniel Spargo Mabbs foundation on substance use prevention and harm reduction for pupils
- Deliver a Substance awareness workshop for parents/carers of P5-S6 pupils

What have we achieved?

There has been a **5% decrease** from 28% to 23% of 13-15year olds having had a drink and a **0.9% decrease** from 4.6% to 3.7% of 13-15year olds who have tried drugs between academic years 21/22 and 22/23. When compared to the closest available national data, this shows that Aberdeen is 5.9% lower than the national average.

There was a **24% reduction** (31 to 25) in 2022 for requests for assistance for children and young people with factors relating to substance misuse.

Increased access to counselling for substance use has seen a **rise of 29%** in 2022 compared to 2021 and by 200% when comparing Jan-June 2023 and Jan-June.

Positive impact was also seen from the substance awareness workshop for parents/carers. 151 parents expressed interest in attending the workshop held in September 2023, although only **59 attended** in live time. In the feedback survey **88%** of attendees stated they were **somewhat or extremely confident in discussing substance use with their child** after attending the event

One Parent commented : '**Excellent workshop**. *Even as a former youth worker I feel it was such a valuable workshop to refresh my memory and as a reminder to remain vigilant. We like to think it will never be our children but I think being informed can only be a good thing either way in case the worse happens'*

What impact have we had?

Feedback on the new reporting procedure and resources has been very positive:

'We found the DUST tool really helpful in determining the threshold for referral and sourcing the right support...'

What do we plan to do next?

- The substances use guidance for schools will be revised every 3 years to ensure it is providing the best support for schools.
- Quality improvement visits by education officers will continue to monitor the impact of the curriculum.
- Data for the overall aim, as well as the requests for assistance will continue to be collected on annual basis and reported to the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership.
- The ongoing test of the year-long education programme on substance use prevention and harm reduction in three schools will be reviewed at the end of the year and impact reported on accordingly.

Whilst we are comfortable that improvement will continue there is a proposal for more targeted improvement activity to reduce cannabis and polydrug use in 13-15 year olds within the LOIP being refreshed for 2024.

Appendix 5. Registered Young Carers: Providing Improved Support

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What are we trying to achieve?

Young carers are one of the biggest single groups of children in need. Estimates suggest that in a city the size of Aberdeen, there may be up to 2,000 children and young people aged between 5 to 18 years who undertake caring responsibilities. We aim to increase by 20% the number of registered young carers accessing support from the Young Carers service by 2025

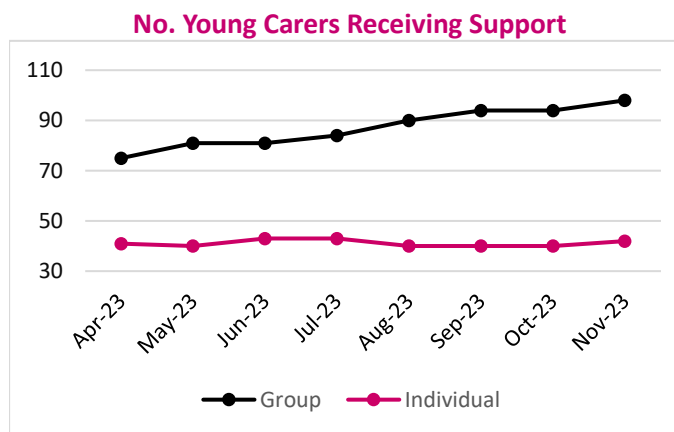
How are we doing this?

- Developing a direct referral route from key agencies such as CAMHS/ADA/Charlies House/Roxburgh House, Fit Like Hub
- Co-design with young carers information provided at drop-in sessions, PSE classes and assemblies for young people to raise their awareness for young carers to self-refer
- Co-design/ co-deliver with young carers and communities/third and private sector groups a wider range of choice/opportunities that meet our young carers interests
- Developing a promotional campaign to raise awareness of the opportunity to volunteer/befriend young carers
- Developing a directory of partnership/ community-based groups/support (e.g. 1-1 sessions), to be promoted to young carers to increase the choice of support available

What have we achieved?

The total number of registered young carers accessing support has **increased by 14%** since April 2023 from 116 -135

The number of you carers receiving group based support has **increased from 75 – 98**



80 staff have now been trained and feel confident that they are fully aware of the young carers support referral process

We have seen a significant **increase of 7– 71** referrals from education

What impact have we had?

Feedback from young carers, families and staff:

“[They] had a fantastic time on the residential trip and it was good for her confidence. Barnardos are the best!”

“Her confidence within young carers has grown so much and she’s really quite involved now and has made some really good friends. It’s been so nice seeing her with the groups because outside of young carers she struggles so much.”

“As a former young carer [I found the training] really beneficial for understanding what makes someone a young carer and the different areas that are affected (that I experienced and didn’t even realise are likely due to being a former young carer), I will 100% be sharing this information with others AND the youths we work with. Thank you so much!”

What do we plan to do next?

Working in partnership with SHMU radio and our young carers to write, develop and deliver a short film to raise awareness of young carers/ their needs and challenges

Providing further multi agency training and awareness raising with staff, children and young people

What are we trying to achieve?

Aberdeen City Council Education team have partnered with a network of professionals to develop a Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) team to increase opportunities for children and young people to engage in physical activity and sport.

Representatives from Sport Aberdeen, Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust (AFCCT), Russel Anderson Development School (RADS), Grampian Disability Trust, Sport Scotland and Club Scotland were keen to support this area of development.

How are we doing this?

Through our multi agency project we have:

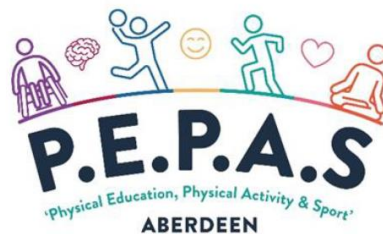
- Developed and supported priority areas for the city across PEPAS, such as positive mental health and outdoor activity
- Utilised city-wide Data to inform decisions, including full engagement with all stakeholders
- Inputted into discussions on future PE Delivery / Staffing Structure in Aberdeen (linking PE delivery across Primary and Secondary)
- Developed and supported stronger links between PE and community sport
- Engaged with partner organisations / National Governing Bodies to further the PEPAS agenda

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What have we achieved?

All of our children and young people now have access to free physical activity increasing the number of schools offering this from 82% to 100%

All schools now have Active Schools Assistants one day per week increasing physical activity throughout break times, to work with staff, increasing confidence of engagement in physical activity and supporting targeted groups of children, using physical activity to improve outcomes, including mental health and wellbeing.



Our Extracurricular programme now has:

- 180 clubs city wide involved
- Over 250 volunteers delivering the activities
- Over 2,500 children participating

What do we plan to do next?

Increase the percentage of young people participating in physical activity outwith the curriculum from 22% in 2022 to 35% in 2026.

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.

Ensure that priority is given to meeting the physical wellbeing needs of CEYP in a manner compliant with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill (as enacted).

Develop a culture of body positivity/ positive self-esteem through PEPAS opportunities

Develop an inclusive and strategic approach to Active Travel



Our LOIP Projects

Stretch Outcome 3: 95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27-30 month review by 2026

[Reduce by 5% the no. of children aged 0-4 who are referred to Children's Social Work as a result of neglect arising from parental mental health, addiction and domestic abuse 2026.](#)

[Increase by 40% the number of Peep programmes delivered by multi-agency partners by 2025.](#)

[100% of urgent requests for first stage infant formula and nutritional support for pre-school children are met by 2024.](#)

[Increase by 10% the no. of parents with children under 5 who are completing a full benefits check by 2024.](#)

[Improve dental health at primary 1 to the national average by reducing the levels of dental health in areas of deprivation to 50% by 2025.](#)

Stretch Outcome 4: 90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026

[Reduce demand on Tier 3 services by 5% by 2026.](#)

[Reduce waiting time for interventions starting, by each tier 2/3 service by 5% by 2026.](#)

[100% of children leaving care are referred to services that can meet assessed mental health needs within 4 weeks of the health assessment being completed by 2024.](#)

[Increase by 5% the number of S1-S6 pupils who report that they feel confident by 2025.](#)

[Increase by 10% the % of children living in areas of deprivation who feel safe in their communities by 2025.](#)

Stretch Outcome 5: 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

[Reduce by 5% the number of children entering the care system by 2024.](#)

[100% of children and young people leaving care are offered a health assessment to identify gaps in their health provision and needs by 2024.](#)

[Increase the number of care experienced young people by 10% receiving multiagency throughcare/aftercare support by 2024.](#)

[80% of care experienced parents will report that they believed they were sufficiently prepared for parenthood by 2026.](#)

[80% of the identified multi-agency workforce successfully complete Corporate Parenting training aligned to the Promise by 2025.](#)

Stretch Outcome 6: 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2), will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026

[75% of identified multi-agency staff reporting confidence in identifying and taking action on harm by 2026.](#)

[Increase to 3 the delivery of co-located and delivered services by health and education by 2024.](#)

[Increase by 10% the rate of completion of NPA/FA/HNC courses available to young people across the city by June 2024.](#)

[Increase the % of learners entering a positive and sustained destination to be ahead of the Virtual Comparator for all groups by 2025.](#)

[Increase by 20% the number of young people completing courses aligned to support the digital and tech sector by 2026.](#)

[Increase to 50 the no. of people completing more integrated health and care courses by 2025.](#)

Stretch Outcome 7: 83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.

[Reduce by 20% the number of care experienced young people charged with an offence by 2025.](#)

<u>Reduce by 15% the number of care experienced young people reported missing from Children's homes to Police Scotland by 2024.</u>
<u>90% of 16/17 year olds appearing at Sherriff Court in relation to Lord Advocate's guidance will have had an assessment of their community support needs by 2025.</u>
<u>Increase by 5% the no. of 16/17 year olds who are diverted from prosecution by 2025.</u>
<u>Reduce by 15% the number of instances of youth anti-social behaviour calls to Police Scotland by 2025.</u>
Stretch Outcome 8: 100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/ Disabilities will experience a positive destination by 2026.
<u>Increase by 10%, the percentage of children and young people with additional support needs (ASN) and/or a disability accessing full time education by 2026.</u>
<u>Increase by 5%, the percentage of young people with additional support needs/disability entering a positive destination by 2025.</u>
<u>Increase by 20% the number of registered young carers accessing support from the Young Carers service by 2025.</u>
<u>By 2025, 90% of families with children with an additional support need or disability will indicate that they have access to peer and community support that meets their needs.</u>
<u>90% of identified multi-agency staff working with children and young people with disabilities will report confidence in identifying and taking action on how harm presents in children with additional support needs/disabilities by 2026.</u>
<u>Increase by 20% the number of families of children with autism or awaiting diagnosis accessing support prior to diagnosis and reduce the interval between referral and diagnosis by 2024.</u>

Strategic Stretch Outcomes					
Increase the number of 0-5s who meet developmental milestones by 2026	Improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and families by 2026	Improve the attainment, health and wellbeing and positive destinations of our care experienced by 2026	Improve the attainment and positive destinations of our children and young people by 2026	Reduce the number of young people charged with an SCRA by 2026	Increase the number of children with ASN or disability who secure a positive destination by 2026
Strategic Priorities					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improve the health outcomes of expectant and new mothers ➤ Improve uptake of benefits ➤ Improve access to emergency formula and food for infants ➤ Address early speech and language needs ➤ Increase the uptake of immunisations ➤ Improve the quality of ELC provision and maintain uptake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on prevention and early intervention ➤ Provide access to joined up services and bereavement support • Respond quickly in a stigma free, needs and rights led way • Increase levels of physical activity • Increase the provision of child friendly environments within local communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a Bairns Hoose • Delivery The Promise • Increase the provision of health assessments for the care experienced • Continue to close the gap between those who have care experience and their peers • Increase the no. of foster carers available locally • Keep brothers and sisters together • Ensure adequate provision of legal advice and advocacy • Implement the recommendations of the Secure Care Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement refreshed guidance on the use of restraint ➤ Better track those who are in or on the edge of the care system ➤ Improve learning transitions from P7 to S1 ➤ Deliver ABZ Campus to widen the range of courses ➤ Deliver Aberdeen Computing Collaborative to ensure long term employability ➤ Delivery of Tier 2 services to close the gap through SAC funding ➤ Continue to address the cost of the school day and child poverty in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reduce levels of anti-social behaviour ➤ Deliver Mentors in Violence Prevention across all secondary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Delivery of neurodevelopmental pathway ➤ Establish better assurance systems ➤ Increase the number of Young Carers receiving support ➤ Improve transition planning from child to adult services ➤ Ensure that the voices of children (including those who use alternative communication systems) are central to processes and Plans ➤ Decrease the number of children not accessing full time education
Enabling Priorities					
Access to services	Increase integration	Reduce risks	Commissioning	Data	Workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implement a single Request for Assistance process ➤ reduce the number of access points to information and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build on the integration models including that at ELC Links ➤ Establish an assurance system to test the strength of the system ➤ Improve alignment between children and adult services ➤ Develop a Target Operating Model for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Better understand why children are placed OOA ➤ Understand the long term impact of ELC on outcomes for families ➤ Agree and implement a whole system approach to addressing obesity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aligned to the 10 principles of family support ➤ Jointly respond to the needs of those displaced ➤ Evaluate readiness for implementation of the UNCRC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improve knowledge of the 6 groups by co-designing with service users and children ➤ Improve data matching ➤ Improve the tracking of the outcomes of those most vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase knowledge poverty agenda and of benefits ➤ Increase knowledge of trauma and risk ➤ Develop ways of working (SIMD1) to better support the provision of rights

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Inspection Reporting
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/050
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne/ Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne / Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1., 1.1.6

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report details the outcome of inspection reports published by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and The Care Inspectorate on the quality of Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare settings since the last meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

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 The Education Service utilise a Quality Improvement Framework (QIF) to support schools and ELC settings to achieve the standards expected by external inspection agencies. The current QIF, agreed at the Education and Children's Services Committee in July 2023, has been in place since August 2023. The QIF categorises schools/ELC settings as being in need of different levels of support based on internal self-evaluation and external scrutiny from the central team:

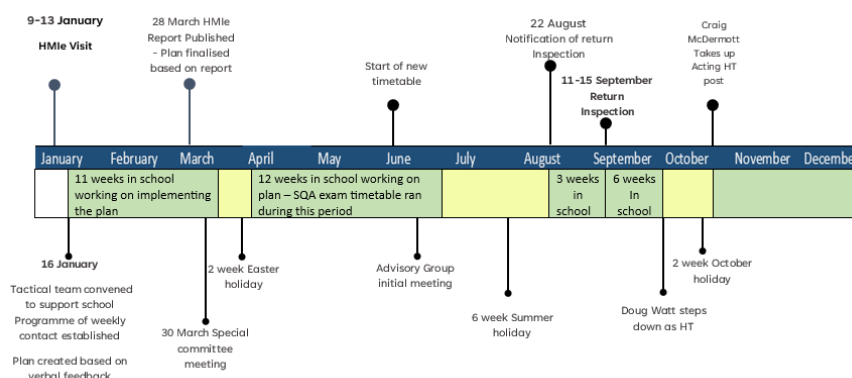
- Category 1/Universal includes schools/settings who have self and external evaluation identifying all core Quality Indicators (Qis) as good or better.
- Category 2 /Targeted includes schools/settings with external and or self-evaluation which has identified one or more of the core QI as *satisfactory* or *below*.

- Category 3/Intensive includes schools/settings with external and or self-evaluation which has identified one or more of the core Quality Indicators as *weak* or *unsatisfactory*.

3.2 Education Scotland return visit to Northfield Academy

A team of 7 inspectors returned to Northfield Academy week beginning 18 September 2023. During the visit, they talked to young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The graphic below shows a high level timeline.



Inspectors noted that staff are beginning to work together, and this signifies a considerable cultural shift. This was particularly evident in the work being undertaken to improve learning and teaching.

Inspectors noted that work to develop communication with families and utilising pupil voice requires to be developed further and ongoing work to embed the school vision, values and aims will provide an opportunity to progress this further.

Inspectors asked the school to consider the transition from S1 into S2 for session 2024/25 and work is ongoing with support from colleagues with subject specialisms from the support arm of Education Scotland.

The Acting Head Teacher has undertaken a thorough review of the application of support systems in place to ensure data is being properly recorded, managed and used to inform next steps. Considerable progress has been made.

Work to address the pace of learning is being progressed through the on-going development and establishment of an improved tracking system which will be ready for launch in early 2024. An effective and embedded tracking system will help ensure that young people, parents and carers have a better understanding of what the young person needs to do to improve.

Given the scale of necessary improvement identified when the school was first inspected in January 2023, it is unsurprising that HMle has noted that insufficient progress has been made against the original recommendations and work progresses at pace. The Tactical Team continue to be available to the Northfield Team with the level of support afforded by the Tactical Team being

determined by the Acting Head Teacher in collaboration with the Chief Education Officer.

Following a discussion with HMIE and the Acting Head Teacher, it has been agreed that an Inspector will be made available to the Acting Head Teacher to act as a 'critical friend'. This support has been welcomed by the Authority and the Acting Head Teacher as it provides a mechanism to learn from national best practice. Given the scale of improvement ahead, it has been agreed that a formal return visit within 3 months to share progress would be more helpful than a more traditional 'return' inspection. The outcome of the progress visit will be reported to Committee.

Northfield Academy will remain in **Category 3** of our agreed Quality Assurance Framework. A link to the report can be found [here](#)

3.3 **Education Scotland inspection of Glashieburn School**

Glashieburn school was inspected week beginning 4 October. During the visit, Inspectors talked to parents/carers and children, worked closely with the headteacher and staff and visited classrooms and the enhanced provision to see how children were being supported. Taking this approach enabled them to triangulate evidence to support their evaluations.

This was a full week inspection and inspectors evaluated the school against the four key quality indicators. The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work including the enhanced provision/Dolphin Room:

- Staff across the school and Dolphin Room who promote positive relationships and create an inclusive learning environment. As a result, children are happy, well-behaved and engaged in their learning.
- The strong and supportive leadership provided by the senior leadership team, who create a collaborative approach to supporting improvement.
- The whole staff team's approach to supporting children with barriers to learning. This enables children to make good progress, improve their wellbeing and achieve well.
- The positive start to developing learning through play in the early stages.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from the central team:

- Continue to develop approaches to high-quality learning and teaching across the school. This includes using assessment information more clearly to inform teaching and learning to ensure learning is planned at the right level of difficulty for all learners.
- Continue to raise attainment and achievement for learners across the school.
- Continue to extend opportunities for children and encourage parents and families to be more involved in planning, leading and reviewing aspects of school improvement.

The school received positive gradings.

Primary school Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	Good (4)
Learning, teaching and assessment	Good (4)
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Very Good (5)
Raising attainment and achievement	Good (4)

The staff team were very pleased their hard work was recognised. Inspectors noted that all staff were committed to high standards and successes for their learners. Glashieburn will move up from Category 2 to **Category 1** of the School Quality Improvement Framework and share examples of the good work identified during the inspection with others. The link to the full report is available [here](#).

The ELC at Glashieburn was not visited as part of this HMle inspection as it had been inspected in the last 18 months by the Care Inspectorate.

3.4 **Education Scotland inspection of Heathryburn School and Nursery Class**

Heathryburn school and Nursery Class was inspected week beginning 11 September. During the visit, Inspectors talked to parents/carers and children, worked closely with the headteacher and staff and visited classrooms in the school and ELC to see how children were being supported. Taking this approach enabled them to triangulate evidence to support their evaluations.

This was also a full week inspection and inspectors evaluated the school against the four key quality indicators. The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work:

- The headteacher's leadership of the primary school is providing much needed stability and direction following recent periods of significant challenge. She has supported children and staff well during the recovery period following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Staff's commitment to fostering positive, nurturing relationships with children. Children are respectful, welcoming and proud of their school. They demonstrate the values of the school very well in their interactions with others.
- Senior leaders monitoring and tracking approaches record accurately children's progress and levels of attainment. This approach is helping staff to predict how well children will achieve in their learning.

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

- Staff need to improve the quality and consistency of learning and teaching across the school and nursery. This will support children's improved progress and attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- The headteacher, senior leaders, and staff should improve the quality of play-based learning across the early level. This will support children to experience learning that promotes creativity, curiosity and investigate play.

- The headteacher needs to make significant improvement to the leadership of change in the nursery. Senior leaders and staff, supported by the local authority, should work together to develop approaches to evaluating, monitoring and tracking the work of the nursery and improve children's progress in learning.
- Senior leaders and practitioners should improve the planning of the nursery curriculum to ensure children receive a broad range of learning experiences appropriate to their needs. Practitioners should plan learning taking account of children who require additional support, as well those who require increasing challenge.

The school secured satisfactory or better gradings against the Quality Indicators across the Primary School.

Primary school Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	Satisfactory (3)
Learning, teaching and assessment	Satisfactory (3)
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	good (4)
Raising attainment and achievement	Satisfactory (3)

The school will remain in **Category 2** of the school Quality Improvement Framework for primary school provision in recognition that there is still improvement to be realised.

The Nursery Class was inspected by both HMle and Care Inspectorate as part of the joint inspection model. Inspectors from both agencies agreed that although staff were caring, welcoming and supportive towards children they were not providing activities which would challenge and support children in their learning. The quality of the learning experiences did not allow children to achieve, resulting in children disengaging with the learning. Although children were safe and happy there were insufficient systems in place to track their progress. Personal plans were in place but not updated regularly enough with families in order to capture children's achievements and successes at home.

As a result, HMle made the following evaluations of the Nursery class.

Nursery Class Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	Unsatisfactory(1)
Learning, teaching and assessment	Unsatisfactory(1)
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Weak (2)
Securing children's progress	Unsatisfactory (1)

The Care Inspectorate awarded the following Grades.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation February '23	Recent Evaluation September 23
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Weak (2)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)

How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Weak (2)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Weak(2)

Changes in the senior leadership team have considerably impacted on the quality of ELC provision due to a lack of robust senior management oversight. Since the inspection in September the headteacher has taken on direct line management of the setting and has been working directly with staff to address the action points raised during the inspection.

Immediately following the inspection, a tactical team of central officers and experienced managers was put in place to support improvements across ELC. This team, along with the headteacher and DHT, have worked alongside the staff in the setting providing support and challenge weekly in order to improve the learning environment and quality of experiences for children and families and good progress is being made.

The link to the full report is available [here](#). HMle feel that the school require additional support and time to make the improvements in the ELC and as such will return within 6 months to ensure improvements have been made. Central officers will continue to work closely with school leaders to help ensure that the necessary improvements are made before the HMle return. The action plan can be found at appendix A.

Following this inspection, the ELC will remain in **Category 3** of the ELC Quality Improvement Framework

3.5 **Education Scotland Inspection of Harlaw Academy**

In February 2020, HMle published a letter, following an inspection of Harlaw Academy. The letter set out a number of areas for improvement which were agreed with the school and Aberdeen City Council.

In December 2023 the local authority provided HMle with a report outlining the schools progress towards meeting the areas for improvement.

After reviewing the evidence and engaging in an on-line meeting, inspectors have not been able to gain sufficient assurance that all areas have been fully addressed. HMle has committed to carrying out a further inspection of the school within the next 6 months. The school will remain in **Category 3** and will be subject to increased scrutiny and support from the central team. A quality improvement officer will meet weekly with the headteacher to provide support/challenge and monitor progress.

3.6 **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.

3.7 Where a setting has been subject to a return visit from the Care Inspectorate, we have included the date of their previous visit and the gradings for reference.

3.8 **The Bruce Nursery** is a Funded Provider situated in a residential area in the west end of Aberdeen. The Bruce was inspected in October 2023. Inspectors noted that children experienced warm, caring and nurturing support from staff. Children were happy, confident and actively involved in leading their play and learning. Positive relationships with families supported continuity of care and effective partnerships. The manager and staff were committed to the ongoing development of the service; however, quality assurance processes need to be embedded to secure sustained improvements across the service. It was noted that work was required to upgrade the toilet and nappy changing facilities. Care Inspectorate also acknowledged that there had been a number of changes within the staffing and management of the nursery. At the time of the inspection, there was an acting manager who had only been in post for three months.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation March '23	Recent Evaluation October 23
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)	Adequate (3)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Good (4)	Good (4)

The staff team are pleased that the warm, caring relationships have been recognised. The setting will sit within the targeted support category of the Quality Improvement Framework. The Grade for how good is our setting dropped to adequate as the setting had not implemented a robust system for quality assurance and improvement set as an area for improvement in March 2023. This has now been incorporated as a requirement for the setting. Locality leads will work with the setting to ensure this is in place timeously.

Bruce Nursery will remain in **Category 2** category of the Quality Improvement Framework. The manager will be linked with settings who have proven good practice in quality assurance in order to address this area for improvement.

A link to the full report can be found [here](#)

3.9 **Greyhope ELC** is a Local Authority setting in the new Greyhope School in Torry (formerly Walker Road). The setting received an unannounced follow up inspection in October 2023, prior to the move to the new building. The team noted positive changes to the outdoor and indoor environment and development of staff practice ensured a safe and secure environment for children. Staff had developed their knowledge, skills and confidence in relation positive behaviour strategies and were using this to effectively support children's individual needs. The team had continued to work on how they supported children's play and learning and plans were in place to develop this further. Effective leadership within the setting was leading to positive outcomes for the children. The service had been building on how they effectively involve children and families in the evaluation and improvement of the service. This continues to be a key area for improvement for the setting.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation June 2023	Recent Evaluation Oct 2023
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)

Staff were pleased that the work undertaken has been recognised and will continue with further planned improvements. The setting will continue to sit within **Category 2** of the Quality Improvement Framework. The action plan can be found at Appendix B.

A link to the full inspection report can be found [here](#)

- 3.10 **Hanover Street ELC**, a Local Authority run setting, was inspected in November 2023. Inspectors reported that children and their families were cared for in an inclusive and welcoming setting. Ongoing improvements to mealtimes meant most children enjoyed a positive snack and lunch experience. Staff morale had improved significantly since the previous inspection and everyone wanted to do their best for the families and children in their care. The managers of the service demonstrated a commitment to initiating change involving all stakeholders. Quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans, were in place and beginning to impact on improvement outcomes for children.

Inspectors noted that whilst children had fun and were engaged in their play, staff did not always demonstrate the knowledge and skills in providing high quality learning experiences. Some areas of the nursery were in need of care and attention to ensure children were able to play in a well maintained environment. These areas have been raised with Corporate Landlord and all recommended repairs have been made. Planned work to further improve the environment is due to take place during the Easter Holidays.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation November 2022	Recent Evaluation November 2023
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)

Staff were pleased that improvements had been recognised and will work on the areas for improvement identified by inspectors. The setting will continue to sit within **Category 2** of the Quality Improvement Framework. The action plan can be found at appendix C.

A link to the full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.11 **Kittybrewster ELC** received a visit from Care Inspectorate in October 2023 to follow up on the two requirements made in May 2023. The requirements were:

Requirement 1: By 10 July 2023, the provider must make the proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of children. To do this they must, at a

minimum: a) Ensure all staff caring for children are knowledgeable about any health and/or personal needs a child may have. b) Ensure that suitable plans are in place so that children’s health, welfare and safety needs are met.

This requirement was met and inspectors noted that children were better supported by staff who confidently knew their needs well.

Requirement 2: By 10 July 2023, the provider must support the health, wellbeing and safety needs of children. To do this the provider must, at a minimum: a) Provide a robust plan to ensure that staff have the appropriate skills and experience to meet the health, wellbeing and safety needs of children.

This requirement was met and inspectors noted that a robust improvement plan was in place. This clearly set out areas for development, along with actions required to ensure staff have the appropriate skills and experience to meet the needs of the children.

This setting will remain in **Category 2** of the quality improvement framework. The action plan can be found at Appendix D.

The full report can be accessed [here](#)

- 3.12 **Gilcomstoun ELC**, a Local Authority setting, was inspected in November 2023. Inspectors noted that children were very well supported by staff who were consistently responsive to their needs. Children benefitted from a variety of positive play and learning experiences which they could access freely throughout the day. The manager led the service very well and was committed to developing the service by empowering the staff team and building further opportunities for families to be involved. The staff team had established very good connections with the wider community which reflected its cultural diversity. Children and families were supported by a motivated and skilled staff team who worked closely with each other to provide high quality, inclusive experiences for all children.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation March 2023	Recent Evaluation November 2023
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Very Good (5)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Good (4)	Very Good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Good (4)	Very Good (5)

The team were delighted that the positive changes had been identified. And Gilcomstoun ELC will move up to **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework. There will be opportunities to share the good practice identified with those in the Category 2 and Category 3.

The full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.13 **Forehill ELC**, a Local Authority setting, was inspected in August 2023. Inspectors noted that Children had fun in nursery, enjoying play with their friends and exploring the activities available to them. Many children were cared

for in a way that met their own personal needs and traits, however some children would benefit from a more consistent approach. Staff had continued to improve the lunch time experience for children which had led to a happy, calm social time to spend together. The team should now continue to develop ways to meet the learning and development needs of children. The environment should be further maintained and developed to provide a high quality environment for children. The team should continue to develop their self-evaluation and quality assurance work in a way that meaningfully involves staff, children and parents and leads to high quality practice. Most parents told inspectors that staff were kind, friendly, lovely, supportive and that they were happy or very happy with the care provided for their child.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation March 2023	Recent Evaluation August 2023
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)

Staff have an action plan in place and will continue to drive improvements. Care inspectorate would normally return to a setting within 12 months however in this case there was only 5 months between the visits, and this included the summer holiday period. Care inspectors in section year runs from April to April which often results in them carrying out return visits to 52 week settings earlier as they are open during the school summer holiday. Although the setting had made some improvements, they had not overtaken the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. The action plan provides evidence that the setting has now made significant progress in addressing these areas.

The setting will remain in **Category 3** of the Quality Improvement Framework to ensure the areas for improvement are addressed and maintained. Locality leads will increase the frequency of their visits and ensure staff have opportunities to visit other settings. The action plan can be found at Appendix E.

The full report can be found [here](#)

3.14 **Riverbank ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received a visit from Care Inspectorate in October 2023 to follow up on the two requirements made in April 2023. The requirements were:

Requirement 1: By 14 June 2023, the provider must provide a safe environment for children. To do this the provider must at a minimum: a) Ensure all areas for children maintain children's safety at all times b) Ensure all areas for children are clean and well-maintained c) Ensure staff at all levels are trained and knowledgeable in good hygiene practices and carry this out as per relevant guidance.

This requirement was met, and the nursery was observed to be clean and provide a safe environment for children. Inspectors noted that at the time of inspection, maintenance work had been carried out by the provider. This

included painting and repair work to walls, windowsills and children's toilet areas. This now allowed for easier cleaning and ongoing maintenance.

Requirement 2: By 14 June 2023, the provider must ensure that staff have the skills and are deployed in a way that keeps children safe.

This requirement was met, and inspectors noted that staff had improved their practice and how they work as a team. Staff shared with inspectors that they felt more skilled and supported by the changes that had been made. They felt proud of their work and were keen to continue with improvements.

Riverbank will move up to **Category 2** of the quality improvement framework in order to support the maintenance of the improvements.

The full report can be found [here](#)

3.15 **Woodend Nursery** is a funded provider setting situated in the grounds of Woodend Hospital. Care Inspectorate visited in December 2023 to carry out an unannounced visit over 2 days. Inspectors noted that children were very well supported by staff who were consistently responsive to their needs. The staff approach was very caring and nurturing which helped the children to feel loved, safe and secure. The manager and staff had developed positive working relationships with external professionals to support children's additional support needs and children had flourished as a result. Children benefitted from a variety of positive play and learning opportunities supported by skilled staff and a rich learning environment. They were well supported in their individual learning through clearly defined next steps and regular review. Regular opportunities to explore the local and wider community supported children to have a wide range of experiences, stimulated their interests and enhanced their play and learning opportunities. Strong leadership had enabled the team to make continued improvements to the service which impacted positively on children's wellbeing, play and learning. Children benefitted from a motivated and committed staff team who demonstrated high quality engagement with children throughout the sessions.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation November 2022	Recent Evaluation December 2023
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Very Good (5)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)	Very Good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Very Good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Very Good (5)

Staff are delighted with the very positive report which recognises their hard work and commitment to continuous improvement. Woodend will move up to **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

The full report can be found [here](#)

3.16 **Muirfield ELC**, a Local Authority setting, was inspected by Care Inspectorate in November 2023. Care inspectorate visited the settings over 2 days. During the visit they spoke to staff, children and families as well as observing children's

experiences. Inspectors noted children were supported by kind and caring staff. and interactions between staff and children were inconsistent. Whilst learning experiences were being planned for, they did not always meet children's needs. Parents were positive about the setting and felt well informed about their children's progress and next steps. Inspectors noted that whilst the environment was safe overall, some safety and cleanliness aspects needed to be addressed and these were addressed immediately following contact with the facilities team.

It was noted that there had been a number of changes in management and difficulties securing permanent staff over the past year and this had impacted on the quality assurance and self-evaluation undertaken within the setting.

Aspect being inspected	Previous Evaluation November 2022	Recent Evaluation November 2023
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Weak (2)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)	Weak (2)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)

Inspectors acknowledged the approaches being taken by the recently appointed headteacher would facilitate improvement however these were in the early stages and not yet fully embedded so unable to demonstrate impact at the time of inspection.

The setting will remain in **Category 3** of the Quality Improvement Framework and coordinated support will be provided to ensure the approaches are implemented fully. The action plan can be found at Appendix F.

The full report can be found [here](#)

- 3.17 **Culter After School Club** is a local authority School Age Childcare provision, registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 40 school age children. It was inspected in December 2023. Inspectors highlighted that children had fun and were engaged in interesting activities. Children benefitted from positive relationships with staff who knew them well. Children had a variety of play spaces available to them. Staff reviewed procedures for children moving between areas during the inspection to help ensure all children's safety at all times. Children enjoyed sociable, relaxed snack times. Positive experiences for children were promoted through quality assurance measures. These will be further developed, however, to ensure positive outcomes in all areas. Staff worked well together to meet children's needs throughout the day.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Very Good (5)
How good is our setting?	Very Good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Very Good (5)

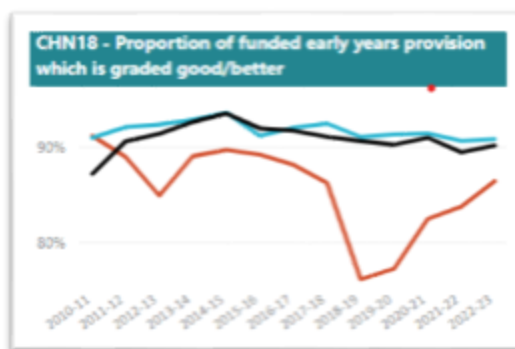
The staff team at Culter are delighted that inspectors found significant strengths

in aspects of the care they provide and how these supported positive outcomes for children and recognised that they had embraced recent changes, which provided opportunities for them to work together to build a strong team. The report also acknowledged that the recently appointed manager had worked hard to implement performance monitoring, and this was beginning to have a positive impact on outcomes for children.

The full report can be found [here](#)

3.18 What do the inspections tell us about our quality improvement arrangements across ELC?

The education service continues to have action plans in place to drive improvement where settings have been categorised as in need of additional support (Categories 2 and 3). External evaluations are now validating our own self-evaluation, this is critical and helps us ensure that we effectively utilise resource where most needed. There is evidence that arrangements put in place through the QIF categorisations are supporting settings to improve as exemplified by the positive movement through the support categories outlined earlier.



3.19 Local Government Benchmarking data evidences that there is now a stable long term improvement trend evident across ELC provision (the red line shows ACC performance against family group data in blue and national averages in black.)

The service has identified the need to more closely align professional learning opportunities to the core Quality Indicators and increase opportunities to share best practice to accelerate this trend further. This work is underway.

3.20 There is an emerging pattern of a change in leadership and management leading to poorer inspection outcomes. The service plan to mitigate this through the creation of a mandatory course developed in partnership with practitioners and inspectorate bodies for all Head Teachers and senior leaders responsible for ELC. Taking this approach will ensure that leaders have a clear understanding of expectations. The course will be developed this term and be ready to implement from April 2024.

3.21 What do the inspections tell us about our quality improvement arrangements across schools?

The service routinely compare current HMIE evaluations of Core Quality Indicators against those achieved over school session 2018/19 to help review the impact of approaches. Although Inspection outcomes have only been routinely reported to Committee since March 2020, the 2018/19 baseline is thought helpful to determine the longer term impact of approaches.

In **Leadership of Change**, 66% of schools inspected in 22/23 received a grade of good or very good compared to 33% in session 2018/19.

In **Learning, Teaching and Assessment**, 57% of schools inspected in 22/23 received a grade of good or very good compared to 29% in session 18/19.

In **Raising Attainment and Achievement**, 43% of schools in session 22/23 received a grade of good or very good compared with 28% in session 18/19.

Evaluations of **Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion** have been maintained with 33% over session 18/19 and 34% over session 22/23. However, evaluations over 23/24 to date are sitting at 100%. This will be monitored closely over the coming months.

It is important to note that there are short and full models of inspection. In the short model Education Scotland only inspect the Quality of Learning teaching and assessment and Raising attainment. The full model inspects all four quality indicators. This session we have only had 2 full inspections, and both were graded good for Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion.

- 3.21 The improvement in school grades from session 2018/19 to session 2022/23 suggests improvement is being realised in the longer term. There is clear evidence that our self-evaluation is now more accurate. However, there is still considerable variation across schools.
- 3.22 There are indications that schools being supported at Category 1 and 2 are making better progress than those being supported at Category 3. The quality Improvement team have reviewed the level and type of support required to move schools from Category 3 to 2 and have agreed that more frequent visits and monitoring of progress is required. Officers are currently looking at how best to realise this increased schedule of visits.
- 3.23 **Children's Social Work**
The Care Inspectorate **Secure Pathway Review** report was published in October 2023 and is presented to Members as a standalone report at this Committee.
- 3.24 The Care Inspectorates yearlong thematic review in respect of **Disabled Children and Young People** continues. This will involve all 32 local authority areas. As previously advised Aberdeen City is one of four local authority areas where the Care Inspectorate are undertaking a "deeper dive". This will involve a range of inspection activities including file reading; meeting with children, young people, and families in receipt of support/services as well as meeting with relevant staff. It is the intention of the Care Inspectorate to publish their Review report in the summer of 2024.
- 3.25 A report on the findings of the thematic review will be presented to Committee in the autumn of 2024.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from 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	
<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 provides helpful assurance that there is sufficient focus on helping young people recover from the pandemic and that the school self-evaluation and improvement plan is well positioned to support a closing of the poverty related attainment gap.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
<p>Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p>	<p>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 Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No DPIA is required.
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Heathryburn ELC Action Plan
Appendix B - Greyhope ELC Action Plan
Appendix C – Hanover Street ELC Action Plan
Appendix D – Kittybrewster ELC Action Plan
Appendix E – Forehill ELC Action Plan
Appendix F – Muirfield ELC Action Plan
Appendix G – Riverbank ELC Action Plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Heathryburn ELC Only					RAG			
Improvement Outcomes	Measures of Success	Actions Required	Timescales	Resources	T1	T2	T3	T4
What do we hope to achieve?	How will we know this has been achieved? What evidence will we have?	What do we need to do?		Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)				
Improve quality of leadership through high aspirations and shared vision and values, in line with the wider school community Q1.3, HSCS Q13.1	All stakeholders will have a shared understanding of the ELC vision and will demonstrate improved ownership through shared and consistent language Observations and data will indicate increased awareness of core values	Implement the vision values and aims of the school in ELC	By Nov 23	All ELC Staff Head Teacher DHT Copies of V,V A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		Place visuals in ELC and model language and behaviours around this, linked to the wellbeing indicators.	By Dec 2023		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		Plan and deliver a parental engagement event to further develop the ELC vision, values and aims, to capture their views on what they feel this should look like.	By Mar 24		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		Create an aspirational vision bespoke to ELC but aligned to the wider vision for the school community	By Mar 24		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		Create opportunities for parents and carers to show how school based values are being demonstrated at home and the local community, and have celebrations and recognition linked to this	Ongoing		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		Create REACH character stories and ensure all learners have a knowledge and understanding about what this means for them.	By Dec 23		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		Create miniature REACH characters to bring these to life supporting everyday behaviours and interactions			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Promote and embed the whole school "REACH" song in ELC		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Embed the whole school promoting positive relationships policy within the ELC setting.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Promoting Positive Relationships Policy				
Create an ELC class charter that is visible, referred to and then fully embedded in the setting.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Improve visibility of leaders at all levels and	Increased engagement and participation of staff in the self-	Create ELC parent and child friendly improvement priorities visual, bespoke to improvements needed in ELC	By Nov 23	All ELC Staff Head Teacher DHT		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

<p>their knowledge, understanding and skills as lead practitioners to motivate others, whilst guiding and managing effective pace of change to improve children's experiences</p> <p><i>Q1.3, HSCS 3.1, 4.1</i></p>	<p>evaluation and decision making of the setting.</p> <p>Increased staff accountability</p> <p>Increased confidence of staff</p>	<p>Develop a clear and well planned self-evaluation calendar where the voices of all stakeholders, including children's voices, are sought and acted upon.</p> <p>Review remits and expectations to ensure clear roles and responsibilities of all.</p> <p>Complete a baseline understanding survey of roles and create regular opportunities for reflection leading to improved practice of all.</p> <p>Review of all policies and practices in the setting.</p>	<p>By Dec 23</p> <p>By Nov 23</p> <p>By Dec 23/Jan 24</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>By Dec 23</p>	<p>ACC Support Team</p> <p>HGIOELC</p> <p>Realising the Ambition</p> <p>SSSC codes of practice</p>	<p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p> <p>█</p>			
	<p>All staff engage positive with professional learning and observations evidence impact of learning in practice</p>	<p>Plan and deliver staff CLPL around frameworks to support self-evaluation and Realising the Ambition to empower all stakeholders</p> <p>Ensure consistent standards and expectations through developing and embedding robust quality assurance processes</p> <p>Create a system for regular auditing and sampling of operational expectations, completed by SEYPS, with further systems in place by HT/ELC</p> <p>Manager to review the quality of audits in place.</p> <p>Complete internal audit of staff development needs.</p> <p>Create an ELC Staff Development overview and plan for CLPL sessions</p> <p>Plan and deliver staff CLPL session linked to professional code of conduct from registration bodies Ensure well planned and regular SLT/SEYP meetings and learning walks</p> <p>Head Teacher and DHT will use a coaching and modelling approach to increase the pace of change within the setting</p> <p>Develop a system for termly coaching sessions with all ELC</p>						

		<p>Create a robust tracking system for monitoring of personal plan targets and outcomes for each key group.</p> <p>Create an observation format and observation guidance paper with clear expectations as well as adopting a focused child approach.</p> <p>Plan and deliver staff CLPL sessions which include: The rights of the child and the wellbeing indicators Understanding of core features of successful observation practice and how these are used to improve and extend learning.</p>	<p>By Mar 24</p> <p>By Mar 24</p> <p>By Mar 24</p>			<p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p>		
<p>Improve the knowledge and understanding of staff to provide quality learning environments that are literacy rich and well planned to enhance spontaneous and purposeful play to support learning and development across all areas of the curriculum enabling learners to reach their full potential</p> <p>Q2.3, 2.3 HSCS 1.1, 1.3, 2.2, 4.1</p>	<p>Data and professional dialogue will indicate increased confidence of staff in planning and resourcing environments to support development.</p> <p>Observations, quality assurance processes and data will show increased engagement and participation of learners in learning environment</p> <p>Learner voice will show improved sense of belonging and that spaces reflect their interests</p> <p>All staff engage positive with professional learning and observations evidence impact of learning in practice</p>	<p>Increase quality and choice of learning experiences including opportunities for creative and investigative play</p> <p>Evaluate play areas through an environment audit and agree minimum expectations including planning for real life experiences e.g. warm and homely spaces.</p> <p>Create visuals to model this and encourage all children to be involved in this experiences.</p> <p>Ensure continuous provision of resource is accessible and well-managed, enabling development of new skills, challenge thinking and to embed concepts.</p> <p>Create spaces within the learning environment that have clear purposes linked to learning and where resources are well stocked and regularly refreshed.</p> <p>Increase quality and choice of learning experiences including opportunities for creative and investigative play</p> <p>Create child friendly visuals for each learning area. Link expectations to values characters and wellbeing indicators.</p> <p>Create clear systems and expectation for replenishment and maintenance of areas that is lead and driven by SEYPS. Ensure</p>	<p>By Sept 23</p> <p>By Nov 23</p> <p>By Dec 23</p> <p>By Mar 24</p>	<p>DHT</p> <p>Head Teacher</p> <p>All ELC Staff</p> <p>Per Capita funding for continuous provision resources and updating current play resources and furniture (£1500)</p>		<p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p>		

		<p>systems to monitor maintenance of this.</p> <p>Plan and deliver staff CLPL linked to enabling high quality environments and Curriculum for Excellence</p> <p>Enable all staff within the setting to visit high quality settings and have at least one take away they will improve and embed in their practice.</p> <p>Continue to ensure there is a balance between adult supported and child initiated experiences within high quality environments and areas in the setting to enable young people to develop their early literacy and communication skills.</p> <p>Extended Leadership Team in ELC, supported by the DHT, to engage in regular dialogue with Group Leads supporting understanding and awareness of numeracy and literacy skill development.</p>	<p>By Mar 24</p> <p>By Mar 24</p> <p>By Mar 24</p>			<p>□</p> <p>■</p> <p>□</p> <p>□</p>		
<p>Improve understanding of play pedagogy focusing on delivery of the curriculum</p> <p><i>Q2.3, 2.3 and 3.2 HSCS 1.1, 1.3, 2.2, 4.1</i></p>	<p>Increased staff confidence and knowledge and understanding of Early level curriculum</p> <p>Observations will indicate support and challenge is leading to meeting of learners needs</p> <p>Increased confidence of parents and careers engaging with child's learning journey</p> <p>All staff engage positive with professional learning and observations evidence impact of learning in practice</p>	<p>Assess staff confidence levels and knowledge and understanding of the curriculum</p> <p>Establish practitioner/ teacher style Learning Leads / Planning Partners to improve planning for learning across the curriculum.</p> <p>Develop approaches to planning that lead to learning experiences that are meaningful and purposeful by: Plan and deliver staff CLPL linked to Realising the Ambition, responsive and intentional learning, role of the adult and principles of curriculum design Create clear and consistent expectations for planning and assessment – create an ELC Planning Paper.</p> <p>Ensure continuity and progression in CFE is evident in planning and that observations and assessments are used to inform and plan next steps in learning.</p> <p>Increase opportunities for literacy and numeracy engagement through high quality play</p>	<p>By Nov 23</p> <p>By Nov 23</p> <p>By Nov 23</p> <p>By Dec 23</p> <p>By Dec 23</p>	<p>All ELC Staff SEYPs</p> <p>Seconded Class Teacher DHT</p> <p>Head Teacher</p> <p>ACC Support Team Learning and Teaching Lead</p> <p>Realising the Ambition</p> <p>Up, Up & Away</p>		<p>□</p> <p>□</p> <p>□</p> <p>□</p> <p>□</p> <p>□</p>		

		<p>experiences both indoors and outdoors. Create opportunities for protected key group planning time.</p> <p>Build on partnership with Family Learning Worker to develop positive relationships with parents and careers and develop a shared understanding of learning</p> <p>Ensure targeted interventions are in place for individual learners, particularly those with ASN</p> <p>Provide CLPL focusing on CIRCLE, Up and Away. Develop and embed the use of CIRCLE in ELC</p> <p>Connect with schools modelling good practice beyond local authority level.</p> <p>Develop a curriculum that is relevant, support the development of skills and that enables progression by: Establish a peer play network for ELC at ASG level Plan and deliver parental curriculum workshop around Early level curriculum.</p> <p>Family Learning Worker to support the planning, creation and development of school garden and sensory area Develop an ELC curriculum rationale</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>By Mar 24</p> <p>By June 24</p> <p>By June 24</p> <p>By June 24</p>			<p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p>		
<p>Ensure the quality of interactions and support from staff promotes wellbeing and enables children to make progress and reach their full potential</p> <p>Q2.1, 3.1 HSCS 1.1, 1.3, 2.2, 4.1</p>	<p>Observations and professional dialogue with learners and staff will show consistent, positive and warm interactions supporting children's independence skills development.</p> <p>Observations and quality assurance processes will evidence children being fully involved</p>	<p>Review expectations, understanding and confidence of SEYPs linked to their role and responsibility for Child Protection.</p> <p>Ensure robust policies and procedures linked to health, wellbeing, safety and infection control are carefully completed and monitored</p> <p>Ensure toothbrushing is in place and that this is regularly monitored. Complete medication audit and review of Medication Policy. Audit of medication procedures to be embedded into quality assurance processes.</p>	<p>By Nov 23</p> <p>By Dec 23</p> <p>By Dec 23</p>	<p>All ELC Staff ELC Medication Lead</p> <p>SEYPS DHT Head Teacher</p> <p>ACC Medication Policy/ Guidance</p>		<p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p>		

	<p>in planning of experiences.</p> <p>Increased staff awareness and confidence in using daily routines as rich opportunities to promote attachment and support skills development and progression</p> <p>Feedback from learners and parents will demonstrate learners feeling valued, independent and responsible</p>	<p>Embed the use of new Nappy Guidance and create a visual linked to expectations.</p> <p>Create and build in opportunities for rest time to the routine of the ELC day.</p> <p>Improve staff engagement and interactions during meal times</p> <p>Create a shared understanding for meal time routines and expectation and fully embed these in the setting and monitor through robust quality assurance processes.</p> <p>Create a Meal Time visual linked to expectations.</p> <p>Improve opportunities for meal times to be used as experiences to develop skills and learnings.</p> <p>Ensure opportunities for modelling good interactions during meal times.</p> <p>Create a guidance script for staff linked to questioning to extend and promote learning</p> <p>Develop an understanding of rights based approach to learning in ELC</p> <p>Create regular opportunities for play and stay sessions for parents and carers</p> <p>Plan and deliver parental engagement session linked to wellbeing indicators and rights of the child.</p> <p>Create opportunities for peer monitoring of interactions with learners</p>	<p>By Mar 24</p> <p>By March 24</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>By March 24</p> <p>By June 24</p>	<p>Toothbrushing support</p> <p>Setting the Table</p>	<p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p> <p>■</p>			
<p>Improve the environment to be numeracy and literacy rich where progress across the curriculum is effectively monitored,</p>	<p>Engagement and participation data will improve</p> <p>Data will indicate improved levels of staff confidence in their responsibility of developing early numeracy and literacy skills across the curriculum</p>	<p>Improve the ELC environment with print, signs and labels and encourage positive interactions around these to develop early language and literacy skills by: Plan and deliver staff CLPL around taking a developmental approach to literacy, language and communication Teacher led literacy support and development in the setting two days a week to model good</p>	<p>By Dec 23</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>DHT</p> <p>ELC Support Teacher</p> <p>SEYPS</p> <p>All ELC Staff</p> <p>ACC Support Team</p> <p>Curriculum Lead</p>	<p>■</p> <p>■</p>			

<p>tracked and evaluated</p> <p>Q2.2, 2.3 and 3.2 HSCS 1.1, 1.3, 2.2, 4.1</p>	<p>Observations and quality assurance processes will show increased experiences linked to numeracy and literacy through a well-planned curriculum that enriches learning.</p> <p>Data will indicate progress of learners throughout the curriculum</p>	<p>practice and support planning for continually progression through the curriculum</p>	Ongoing	Up, Up & Away	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<p>Create a library area that is resourced with rich books and toys to support positive engagement. Encourage regular opportunities for mark making and name writing through the provision of multi-sensory resources and experiences.</p>	By Mar 24	Realising the Ambition	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<p>Develop Story of the Fortnight and fully embed in the setting, linked to parental engagement opportunities.</p>	By Dec 23	Information relating to Schemas	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<p>Create daily adult-initiated activities linked to story, songs and rhymes that are well planned for and assessed.</p>	By Dev 23		<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<p>Weekly key group visits to the school library to be embedded into weekly routines.</p>	By Dec 23		<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<p>Create key words of the week / fortnight to support early language development and link to parental engagement opportunities.</p>	By Mar 24		<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<p>Implement Early Talk Boost Plan a package of support to enhance the universal offer, supported by SALT</p>			<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<p>Create opportunities for experiences in numeracy and progression beyond number by: Ensure staff are encouraging number development in their interactions.</p>	By Mar 24		<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<p>Create a literacy / numeracy skill of the week or fortnight as a parental engagement activity linked to personal planning/ group planning targets.</p>	By March 2024		<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<p>Create clear and robust systems for tracking and monitoring of curriculum and developmental progress in ELC through:</p> <p>Ensure focussed dialogue between Key Group Leads and SLT linked to progress, development and achievement as part of quality assurance processes.</p>			<input type="checkbox"/>		

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Greyhope School ELC Setting

Care Inspectorate Action Plan – November 2023

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
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:				
Provide more challenge to children in their learning Extend and deepen children's learning further.	1) Staff will follow newly introduced learning and observation guidance when completing the planning cycle for learning contexts. This will provide: <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 SEYPs and DHT to support staff and quality assure on an ongoing basis.	By end Sept 23 then ongoing	Children have opportunities to lead their play and learning through a balance of spontaneous and planned experiences.	Ongoing display within setting to be updated as a working document followed by digital recording of planning in action.
	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.	By end Aug 23	Children gain strong connections to their own and wider communities through their play and learning opportunities.	Yearly plan introduced to team for new school year. Ongoing digital recording of planning in action.

	<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 into 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 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
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 and improvement of the service.	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.	09/11/2023 – Stay & play dates was held with families before / after move to new setting. A short question & answer was organised with both SEYs. Families was asked to vote for what further involvement they would like from nursery.
	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.	09/11/2023 – QA interactive display to be made in the clock room to encourage more parental involvement with improvement plans.

	<p>3. Staff will seek children's views about the nursery and their experience in the setting during keyworker and small group time.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Children's feedback will influence the day-to-date life and work of the setting.</p>	
	<p>4. Parents and other family members will spend time in the setting learning with children through scheduled opportunities such as 'stay and play'.</p>	<p>By end Aug 23 then ongoing</p>	<p>Children will benefit from their family members having a greater understanding of their learning and being more involved in this.</p>	<p>09/11/2023 – Further stay & play, peep sessions to be added to ELC calendar.</p>

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Care Inspectorate Action Plan and Evidence

Hanover Street School ELC



Inspection Date: 6th – 8th November 2023
Action Plan Update : February 2024

Contents:

How good is our care, play and learning? *(1 Improvement)*


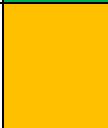
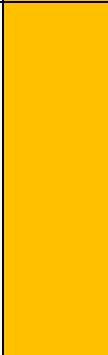
How good is our setting? *(1 Requirement , 2 Improvements)*

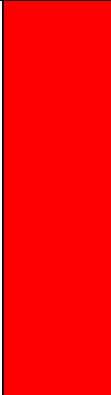
How good is our leadership?

How good is our staff team?

Completed actions will be highlighted Green.

How good is our care, play and learning?			
<p>AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT 1 OF 1: To ensure children experience high quality play, learning and development opportunities that are safe and meet their individual needs, the manager should ensure staff are skilled, knowledgeable, and competent in providing high quality play and learning experiences.</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: “As a child, I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me” (HSCS 1.27); and “I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice, and follow their professional and organisational codes” (HSCS 3.14)</p>			
Action	Responsible Person	Timescale	RAG
Create document identifying toxins and risk factors in play –share and discuss scenario examples with staff in professional development meeting.	Nursery Manager DS	By January end 2024	
<p><u>Review structure of day to incorporate the following:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional planned learning experiences AM/ Responsive and individual target based learning opportunities PM • Planned activity time with key groups • Quiet/ Soothing time after lunch 	Nursery managers DS/NS Led by SEYP in Playroom	Term 3 - By end of March 2024	

<p><u>Planning for learning:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise weekly planning grid to bundle CfE Es and Os from intentional planning Learning Worlds overview grid. Focus on the learning benchmarks when preparing experiences. • Nursery Managers to model bundling of Es and Os and planning learning with benchmarks, to SEYP • SEYP to attend weekly planning support meetings with DS to continue to develop this skill and build confidence • Friday team meetings to discuss focus of learning for week ahead with ELC team, led by SEYP and monitored by nursery managers. • ELC team to prepare their areas with learning benchmarks in mind to support staff understanding of learning opportunities and what they need to do to support/extend learning for individual learners 	<p>Nursery managers DS/NS SEYP</p>	<p>Established Term 3 (Jan to Mar 2024) Ongoing development Term 4 (April – July 2024)</p>	
<p>Early level personal planner to be developed and used by all ELC key workers for each individual child in their key group to track individual learner progress and next steps – this will feed into tracking and monitoring meetings.</p>	<p>Nursery Manager DS Used by ELC team</p>	<p>By March end 2024 Focus of February INSET days</p>	
<p><u>Observation of Learning:</u> Continue to develop observation system in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued SLT monitoring and feed back to ELC team to ensure consistency of observation quality, quantity and frequency for individual children. • Focus given to developing and extending identified next steps within the afternoon responsive/targeted slot of the nursery day. • Follow-up comments with date to be added to Seesaw learning journeys to evidence learner progress and development. 	<p>All ELC team led by Nursery Managers DS/NS</p>	<p>Term 3 – By March end 2024 Focus of February Inset days</p>	

<p><u>Professional Development Training for Staff:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible learning based training session exploring feedback and effective questioning. (INSET Day May 2024) • Reviewing training videos of effective and ineffective practice (nursery managers to be videoed, not ELC team) and engaging in professional discussion. • Follow up –action task for all ELC staff to experiment, practise and develop skills competence and confidence- results to be shared with each other at later staff development meeting. • Peer observation sessions between team members • SLT observations in term 4 to focus on ELC staff interactions. (Before and after training inputs.) 	<p>ELC Team led by Nursery Managers DS/NS</p>	<p>January – June 2024 Training Focus of INSET day May 2024</p>	
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How good is our setting?			
<p>REQUIREMENT: By <u>12th April 2024</u>, the provider must ensure children experience a well maintained, comfortable, and homely environment. The provider, manager, and staff should ensure that actions are taken to repair some areas of the nursery.</p> <p>This includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walls and painted surfaces are in good order • All doors and surfaces are clean • Any holes in walls repaired • Furniture, walls and radiators clean and well presented for children • Worktop areas around sinks are in full working order • Kitchen units and cupboard doors are repaired <p>This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI2022/210)</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: “I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy, and well maintained premises, furnishings, and equipment.” (HSCS 5.24)</p>			
Action	Responsible Person	Timescale	RAG
Holes in the nappy area walls to be filled and area painted.	ACC	By April 12 th 2024	Green
Kitchen units and cupboard doors repaired.	ACC	By April 12 th 2024	Green
Worktop areas around sinks to be repaired.	ACC	By April 12 th 2024	Red
Deep clean sessions focusing on walls, radiators, surfaces, furniture and toys.	ELC team led by ELC managers DS/NS	18.12.23, 11.01.24 and 18.01.24	Green
Quiet room emptied. All surfaces disinfected. New soft furnishings purchased and room re-established for purpose.	ELC managers – DS/NS	By January end 2024	Green

Cleaning Rota established - detailing daily, weekly, monthly and termly cleaning tasks with rota of responsibility.	Nursery Manager - DS	By January end 2024	
New furniture purchased for story corner and house corner.	Nursery Managers NS/DS	By 12 th April 2024	

How good is our setting?			
AREA OF IMPROVEMENT 1 OF 2: To ensure children have fun and experience high quality play and learning, the manager and staff should ensure all areas of the learning environment are well resourced, clean and attractive.			
This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: “ I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings, and equipment.” (HSCS 5.24)			
Action	Responsible Person	Timescale	RAG
New furniture purchased for story corner and house corner.	Nursery Managers NS/DS	December 2023 - July 2024	
Resource audit to establish what to remove, refresh or replace. Visit charity shops to acquire “new” resources. Purchase resources where necessary and when funds allow. Introduce consistent storage and labelling system within the playroom.	ELC team led by Nursery Managers NS/DS	Ongoing (Dec 2023 – June 2024)	
Redesign of playroom layout to create better flow	Nursery Managers NS/DS	By 12 th April 2024	
Cleaning Rota established - detailing daily, weekly, monthly and termly cleaning tasks with rota of responsibility.	Nursery Manager DS.	By January end 2024	
Quiet room emptied. All surfaces disinfected. New soft furnishings purchased and room re-established for purpose.	Nursery Managers DS/NS	By January end 2024	

How good is our setting?			
AREA OF IMPROVEMENT 2 OF 2:			
<p>To help keep children safe and well, the manager should ensure children’s health and safety in relation to effective infection prevention and control. This should include, but not limited to, effective supervision when handwashing.</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: “I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings, and equipment.” (HSCS 5.24); and “I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice, and follow their professional and organisational codes.</p>			
Action	Responsible Person	Timescale	RAG
Key group leader to monitor, model and support handwashing for their group in the playroom, before and after lunch.	All ELC Key group leaders led by SEYP	Immediate	
Disinfect touch points and stair case bannisters prior to children walking to the dining hall.	ELC staff (lunch time duties rota) led by SEYP	Immediate	
Raise awareness and improve process: Handwashing learning focus area for children as part of the “Scotland: Our Food” learning world.	ELC Team led by SEYP	January 2024	
Cleaning Rota established - detailing daily, weekly, monthly and termly cleaning tasks with rota of responsibility.	Nursery Manager DS.	By January end 2024	
Adjust timings of cleaning checks in toilet area to accommodate high frequency times e.g. before and after lunch.	Nursery Manager DS. Maintained by SEYP and completed by all ELC Team	Immediate	
Create and follow Kitchen cleaning procedure to be used by all staff.	Created by Nursery Manager DS All ELC team to adhere to procedure SEYP to monitor	By January end 2024	

How good is our leadership?		
<p>No specific Improvements or requirements.</p> <p>Findings of the report stated: “ Areas for development were recognised in the service improvement plan, such as developing the environment, self-evaluation skills, staff skills and knowledge, and parental engagement. Changes were ongoing and beginning to lead to improved outcomes for children.”</p> <p>For Specific development actions as part of ongoing ELC improvement, please see Service Improvement plan, which sits alongside this document.</p>		

How good is our staffing?		
<p>No specific Improvements or requirements.</p> <p>The actions below are based on findings within the report. Further development actions as part ongoing ELC improvement are detailed on the Service Improvement Plan which sits alongside this document.</p>		
Action	Responsible Person	Timescale
Leadership support:	Nursery Managers DS/NS SEYP	Term 3 (January to March 2024)
		RAG

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nursery Managers to model bundling of Es and Os and planning learning for benchmarks to SEYP SEYP to attend weekly planning support meetings with DS to continue to develop this skill and build confidence Friday meetings to discuss focus of learning for week ahead with ELC team, led by SEYP and monitored by nursery managers. ELC team to prepare their areas with learning benchmarks in mind to support staff understanding of learning opportunities and what they need to do to support learners. SEYP to provide support to team for this, guided by nursery managers. 	<p>ELC Team</p>		
<p><u>Professional Development Training for Staff:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visible learning based training session exploring feedback and effective questioning. Reviewing training videos of effective and ineffective practice (nursery managers to be videoed, not ELC team) and engaging in professional discussion. Follow up –action task for all ELC staff to experiment, practise and develop skills competence and confidence- results to be shared with each other at later staff development meeting. Peer observations within ELC Team SLT observations in term 4 to focus on ELC staff interactions. 	<p>ELC Team led by Nursery Managers DS/NS</p>	<p>Terms 3&4 (January – June 2024)</p>	

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Kittybrewster School Improvement Plan

Areas for improvement	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG
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.	Overview of Personal Plans is printed and shared with all staff. In the back of this document there is a recording sheet which staff sign and date once accessed. Relief staff and students are also given access to this.	
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.	This can be observed in setting. The new drop off and collection is running smoothly as shared by all staff. Parents have also shared verbal feedback on how positive this has been.	
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 & SEYP to observe staff interactions and give feedback and next steps to staff. SEYP's 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 All staff by Friday 16 th June	Children feel loved and respected and receive consistent, high-quality personalised care. Interactions will support their development and emotional well being.	We have had some staffing issues recently but our new SEYP's and ASEP have been modelling interactions and we have relief staff whose interactions have been discussed with this team to ensure they are acting in a way that promotes respect and care. An overview of personal plans is regularly updated and accessible to relief staff to ensure staff now how to meet the needs of all children.	

Appendix D - Kittybrewster

<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT and SEYP to role model using restorative approaches to dealing with behaviour. SEYP to introduce and develop use of ABC charts to look at behaviour and address this. Staff to have training on Emotion Works. New SEYP to be the lead in Circle training. 	<p>Starting May 29th – ongoing Starting June 27th – ongoing Starting August 23</p>	<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.</p>	<p>Senior staff have been supporting dealing with behaviour. Our SEYP has introduced ABC with some children and has planned targeted nurture and support. Autism outreach have supplied visuals to support conversations with children.</p>	<p>Emotion works to be fully established in the setting.</p>
<p>How good is our setting? 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities</p>					
<p>Staff need to enhance the learning environment on offer through their positive interactions with children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHT to observe staff interactions and give feedback and next steps to staff. New SEYP and Acting SEYP to model positive interactions with children and support staff. Areas of responsibility to be allocated to staff, pro-rata on a monthly basis, focus will be to replenish and enhance to offer the children curiosity, challenge, depth and progression, Children should be consulted and their views and ideas valued and represented within their learning environment both indoors and outdoors 	<p>May 29th - ongoing Starting June 13th – ongoing 3/7/23 – Ongoing Starting Mid-end July and ongoing Start Mid-end July and ongoing</p>	<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.</p>	<p>SEYP's are role modelling to staff and supporting staff enhance their interactions with children. We have a new EYP who is also an excellent role model. Our modern apprentice is being mentored by SEYP and has weekly meetings.</p>	<p>Consistency with areas of responsibility needs established.</p>
<p>Use of Wild Garden at drop off and pick up to be considered.</p>	<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 23rd May</p>	<p>Children will benefit from relaxed, uninterrupted play experiences</p>	<p>This can be seen through observation of the setting. Parents, children and staff have all commented positively on this.</p>	
<p>Ensure staff are communicating and following all safety procedures that are in place</p>	<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 	<p>DHT 22nd May or 24th May</p>	<p>All children will feel and be safe at all times.</p>	<p>Communication has greatly improved and staff are working well as a team and supporting each other. The addition of our new SEYP and other staff has helped to create this ethos.</p>	
<p>Nappy changing areas to be made more attractive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nappy changing areas to be developed. 	<p>Starting July 10th – ongoing</p>	<p>Children accessing this area will enjoy the experience more</p>	<p>Small changes have been made to this area to further enhance it.</p>	

Appendix D - Kittybrewster

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. 	<p>DHT Friday 2nd June</p> <p>All staff by Friday 9th June</p>	Children will not be exposed to germs that may cause them to be unwell.	This can be evidenced in setting. Staff are supporting this at important hand washing times.	
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. 	<p>DHT – by 31st May</p> <p>All staff by June 30th</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Children should have improved experiences in ELC.	All staff have seen this document and are aware of its importance. Staff used this in November Inservice to self-evaluate some Quality indicators.	Continued use of the QF framework
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. 	<p>DHT – by 1st June</p> <p>SEYP Dec-ongoing</p>	Children will be accessing an environment that is child centred and everyone is working towards the same goal. Interactions with staff will be improved.	Staff are aware of the vision values and aims and these are more clear in the setting. SEYP's are going to use these as a focus each term and staff can peer evaluate these in action.	Vision, values and aims to be displayed and discussed in the setting with children.
Self Evaluation needs to improve the quality of interactions and staff to focus on the children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-evaluation will become a key feature in every in service day with 1-2 QI's looked at and next steps formed. In term 3 SEYP's will look at ways to self-evaluate over the term in a meaningful way. 	<p>August 23 - ongoing</p>	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.	Self-evaluation is taking place but we need to look at a more meaningful way to do this.	
How good is our staff team? – 4.3 Staff deployment					
Staff are competent in and knowledgeable about national, local, and the service's own child protection procedures and GIRFEC.	<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. Continue to ensure yearly Child Protection Training. 	<p>DHT – by Friday 2nd June</p> <p>HT/DHT every August.</p> <p>DHT By Friday 9th June</p>	Children will be well protected from harm and any information required to support them to do so will be shared appropriately to ensure that their welfare is paramount at all times.	Child protection info is on display and Senior staff have been briefed on Child Protection policies. Staff have been following the child protection policy in setting.	

Appendix D - Kittybrewster

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure up to date guidance is displayed on the wall and ELC LocalityLead numbers are on this. 				
Staff have the skills necessary to support all children and meet their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEYP's to model positive interactions. Staff to have a good understanding of children's personal plans and supporting information to know how to support children. 	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.	Overview of personal plans have a record of staff who have read them. Staff can be seen daily meeting the needs to children in the setting. Staff have also been working collaboratively when new children come into setting to ensure needs are being met.	
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.	This can be seen in the standard rota. When staff are absent or on holiday key times are looked at when making new rotas. Staff are flexible when required.	
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.	Overview of Personal Plans is printed and shared with all staff. In the back of this document there is a recording sheet which staff sign and date once accessed. Relief staff are also given access to this. PCRA's are also printed for relief staff to read. We are managing to limit the use of relief staff by using current part time staff to cover and holidays or absences. Inductions are carried out and a copy uploaded to Teams.	

Key

DHT – Depute Head Teacher & Registered Manager

LLO – Locality Lead Officer

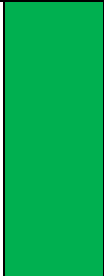
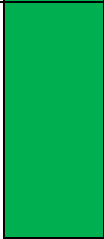
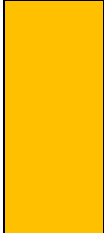
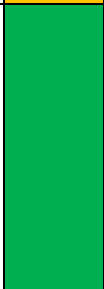
SEYP – Senior Early Years Practitioner

Forehill ELC

How Good is our Care Play and Learning

Quality Indicator 1.1 – Nurture, Care and Support

<p>Improvement Action Point: The provider, manager and staff should ensure that children are nurtured and supported throughout their daily experience in a way that is suitable to them as an individual.</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: ‘My care and support meets my needs and is right for me’ (HSCS 1.19) and ‘As a child or young person I feel valued, loved and secure’ (HSCS 3.10).</p>				
Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	Actions Required What do we need to do?	Timescales	Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	R A G
Staff have better knowledge of all children not just their own key children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will be supported to develop relationships with children beyond their key children. Staff to record children’s interests as they are demonstrated in all learning areas to support staff to value children as individuals and extend their learning using areas of interest. 	Immediate	<p>All Staff</p> <p>Staff to have time out to read all the children’s care Plans and overviews.</p> <p>A4 laminated posters in various areas of nursery for recording (on post its) children’s interests.</p>	

<p>All staff have a firm understanding of what nurturing care and support looks like at Forehill ELC reflecting on the 6 principles of nurture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff to take part in in-service training opportunity around what is nurture, understanding the 6 principles of nurture and agreeing what this will look, feel and sound like for children in the setting. ● Staff to reflect on their own practice to ensure that the care they are providing is nurturing 	<p>August Inservice day</p>	<p>All staff</p>	
<p>Staff respond to children's own individual needs creating a more nurturing and settled environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify children daily who would benefit from using a quiet space e.g using the nurture room, cosy nook or outdoor den. ● Help all adults in the setting to have quality time to develop nurturing, caring and loving relationships with learners that demonstrate understanding of the child as an individual and their needs. These relationships should enable staff to offer better quality support and challenge for learners. 	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>All staff</p> <p>Staff are more familiar with all children through spending time with everyone and reading every child's plan.</p>	 
<p>Increased lunchtime interactions, more care shown to children and their individual needs. More 1-1 time given to children in a non task orientated way.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a quiet area for lunch to improve lunchtime interactions with children ● Create a home away from home feeling to offer children warm and welcoming interactions Relaxing, quiet area with sofa and soft furnishing – 	<p>Immediate</p>	<p>All staff involved</p> <p>Old cloakroom area redeveloped as a relaxing area for lunch - parents have been involved in providing 'kitchen/dining' area items.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop table talking points to remove the feeling of lunch being a task that needs to be completed and improve table conversation with children - this will also improve relationships 			
<p>All staff can be seen following the protocol and establishing the same secure routines for children</p> <p>Clean hands, less bugs/germs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work as a team to create a lunch protocol that will give all children consistency in their routines ● Snack protocol to be developed to ensure that children can expect a consistent experience. <p>Lunch protocol devised and shared with staff and displayed in kitchen area</p> <p>Purchase new vegetable serving bowls for table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children to be closely supported when hand washing ● Look to extend learning opportunities by working with the health protection team to borrow the glitter bug hand washing lesson to support children in their learning 	<p>Immediate</p> <p>ongoing</p>	<p>All staff to follow Lunch Protocol was created by all staff and is on the wall for all everyone to follow.</p> <p>New bowls, jugs and spoons have been ordered.</p> <p>A member of staff will be asked to support specifically with handwashing before and after meal times</p>	

Improvement Action Point: The provider, manager and staff should ensure children's overall wellbeing is supported through effective use of personal planning. This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'My needs as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected' (HSCS 1.23).				
Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	Actions Required What do we need to do?	Timescales	Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	R A G
All Ante-pre children and new starts will have an extra page in their personal plans with their own voices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are to be more involved in their own personal care plans Plans will have a child friendly page to collect children's views and this will be frequently reviewed with children 	Using this format for all new starts from Aug 23 and updated for continuing children	Implement a child friendly page with relevant questions. MG and FPa to create and implement a template for all children to utilise. Including spaces for children to review.	
Template has been adapted and ready for staff to complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More relevant information to be included within the individual child overview Adapt current overview template to include dietary requirements which will free up 'other relevant information'. A box for reviewing has been added so staff are updating regularly. 	Completed on 2/5/23		

<p>Staff and parent/carer signatures will be evident on personal plans to indicate review.</p> <p>SOFIE Observations carried out will show consistent approaches being used by staff in line with the personal plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff will have termly time out to ensure the children's personal plans are up to date with all relevant information and reviewed by parents/carers. ● Staff will ensure they are familiar with all children not key child specific personal plans through the overview ● After time has been given to update plans further time will be timetabled to allow staff to read and understand updates to child plans. ● Staff will sign on updates record sheet to confirm that they have read and understood updates. ● SEYPs and management will carry out regular observations of individual children to ensure that interactions with staff reflect the child's personal plan. 	<p>ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required by all staff ● Planning time to read all children's personal care plans and spend time with all children 	
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Improvement Action Point: 3. To ensure children's safety all staff should be aware of how to access medication in case of an emergency.

This is to ensure that the care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	Actions Required What do we need to do?	Timescales	Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	R A G
<p>All staff will read, understand and follow protocol. Staff will sign protocol to ensure they have read it and understood.</p> <p>All staff involved in creating and implement protocol.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update medical Protocol and share with all staff 	2 weeks	<p>All Staff</p> <p>Sara McGrevey/Rachel Clayton to create.</p> <p>Purchase Storage boxes for medication only - SEYP to arrange purchase.</p>	
<p>Medication will be audited monthly by Sara McGrevey/Rachel Clayton to ensure protocol is being understood and followed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly checks - designated member of staff to check medication cabinet to ensure there is consistency and protocol is being adhered to. Termly checks by SEYP (Anne-Marie Gove) 	Ongoing	<p>Sara McGrevey as medication coordinator</p> <p>Rachel Clayton to devise Medication Monthly Check sheet.</p> <p>Sara/Rachel to check on alternate weeks</p> <p>Anne-Marie to complete monthly medication check</p>	

<p>If anything needs amended, keyworker will be informed.</p> <p>Liaise with all staff to ensure they are aware of medication monthly check sheet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 times yearly checks by member of SLT to ensure that all medication is being stored correctly and that all protocol is being followed correctly. 			
<p>This will be included within medical protocol so all staff will be aware of how these products are stored correctly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create safe Storage for NON prescribed skincare - (lip balms, hand soap, moisturiser) 	2 weeks	<p>Sara McGrevey/Rachel Clayton</p> <p>Purchase Storage box, safe space and name labels - SEYP to arrange purchase.</p>	
<p>All staff have been shown how to use the padlock correctly and staff are aware where</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Padlock and code. Code is situated in quiet room on a pink post-it above Fiona Potts desk. 	Immediate	All Staff	

<p>to find the code if it is ever forgotten.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to know how to use the padlock correctly (push padlock up so ensure the numbers turn) All staff have demonstrated they know the padlock number and can open it easily. • Training for all staff and instructions are recorded as part of medical protocol so that it is understood by any members of staff who are new to the setting or covering in the setting 			
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Quality Indicator 1.3 – Play and Learning

<p>Improvement Action Point: 4. The provider, manager and staff should ensure that children have fun and experience high quality play, learning and development opportunities.</p> <p>This is in to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'I am supported to achieve my potential in my education and employment if this is right for me' (HSCS 1.27).</p>				
<p>Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i></p>	<p>Actions Required What do we need to do?</p>	<p>Timescales</p>	<p>Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)</p>	<p>RAG</p>
<p>Observations to contain evidence of schemas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to upskill themselves and their knowledge of schemas 	<p>Immediate and ongoing</p>	<p>All staff to complete training and implement Meeting with Carol Main on 21/3/23</p>	

Observe staff extending a child's individual schematic play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise meeting with Carol Main to help staff upskill their knowledge on schemas 			
Evidence by written developmental milestones.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the developmental milestones from Highland literacy to better track children in their learning 	Ante Pre school to complete and then ongoing from August starts. Review termly for each child	SEYP to distribute developmental milestones to all staff for completion June 2023. All staff to complete developmental overviews for antepre key children.	
Agreed standards for quality observations and snapshots shared on Seesaw.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively to agree on standards for observations of learning and also snapshots of learning that are being shared on seesaw to ensure consistency. Working with moderation partner to ensure observations are meetings agreed standards 	Jan – April	All Staff	
Planning boards will be up and used to follow on children's learning and development. Recorded on the planning sheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend play opportunities by recording spontaneous learning in individual areas Create a space in each area for responsive planning ideas and examples 	ongoing	All staff	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a floor book for each area of ELC to document the evolution of the planning and evaluation cycle 			
Staff are working with a 2 weekly cycle to take ownerships of a directed activity with a focus area of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff plan core activities linked to the learning of the week which children will be encouraged to undertake ● Staff will evaluate this activity with each child to ensure next steps are child led ● Staff will write up the quality observations of learning following the agreed standards for observations of learning 	Ongoing	All Staff	

How Good is Our Setting?

	<p>Improvement Action Point: 1. To ensure children experience quality facilities the provider, manager and staff should ensure that the indoor environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is sensitively structured and considers all children’s stages of development, • reflects children’s current interests, • is well resourced with materials to support children’s learning, • has well maintained furniture and resources. <p>This is in to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'The premises has been adapted, equipped and furnished to meet my needs and wishes' (HSCS</p>
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5.18)				
Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	Actions Required What do we need to do?	Timescales	Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	R A G
Rotten sink area to be fixed and updated so that it no longer poses a risk to users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLT to contact Andrew Jones in the estates team to have this area looked at and improved in line with recommendations. 	ASAP	Email sent to A Jones and reply states we will receive contact from Claire Cowan to look at this area.	
Children will choose to use the quiet area/cosy area to play, explore, read and rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a quiet area of nursery which will allow children to have down time/rest time in nursery. Further create a book nook/cosy corner and have this reflect a more homely environment to support downtime/rest opportunities 	April 2023	Sofa, mantle piece, rug and other home items used to create a cosy corner	
Children will have learning opportunities Areas will be moved and constantly reflected on to ensure they are located in a place that supports children's play and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove the computers and instead use the table to develop a "den" and utilise the table top at other times Re-evaluate the whole ELC environment to ensure as much of the learning space as possible is being used to support learning opportunities 	April 2023	All staff involved Dark den, materials, tinker table items Broken computer removed. Playdough area moved	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner table to be used in the quiet space to create more learning space in the wet area to further develop table top play opportunities. 		Dinner table is now in old cloakroom area and is popular with the children who are enjoying a quiet area.	
<p>Evidence of children's work displayed on the walls</p> <p>Examples of children being involved in creating wall displays</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Displays refreshed 2/3 weekly in line with the planning overview for nursery. It will reflect current themes and the focus E's and O's – linked to planning ● These displays will have evidence of pupil voice and will be a way to record responsive planning ● More examples of children's work to be displayed to show pupil development and creativity over the term ● Examples of children's work and experiences displayed on walls to encourage children to reflect on their developing literacy and numeracy skills. 	Ongoing	All staff	
<p>Completed audits</p> <p>Children more engaged in a range of play and learning opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environmental audits used to complete 2/3 weekly environmental audits to ensure that there is plentiful resources to support the children to learn and develop through their play. 	Ongoing	All staff	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the environmental audits to ensure that opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy at all times. • Audits used to ensure that children have opportunities to develop across the curriculum through their play and have a range of resources that will extend learning 			
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How Good is Our Leadership?

<p>Improvement Action Point: 1. To ensure quality care and experiences for children quality assurance and self-evaluation should be embedded into practice.</p> <p>This should mean that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and families are meaningfully involved and influence changes within the setting. • Quality assurance, including self-evaluation and improvement plans lead to high quality care and support. 				
<p>Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i></p>	<p>Actions Required What do we need to do?</p>	<p>Timescales</p>	<p>Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)</p>	<p>R A G</p>

<p>Children's views are recorded and used to inform planning. Planning and experiences for children are more responsive to their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a template for children to share their nursery experience. (thumbs up or down.) Seek daily evaluations from children ● Look to include children's thoughts and opinions on planning sheets and in environmental audits of the setting and learning areas 	Weekly	MM to create a template and share with all staff.	
<p>Parents views are recorded and used to inform planning. Staff are knowledgeable and informed about the questions. Feedback results in meaningful change that</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compile monthly google form questionnaire for parents and carers with questions relevant to improvements within the setting. ● Ensure feedback is valued and results in improvements within the setting, make sure that we 	Termly	AG to show staff how to create a google form. All staff to take turns to create a questionnaire on agreed themes.	

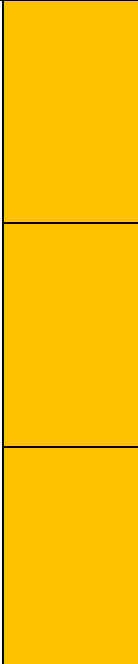
<p>is communicated with parents</p>	<p>communicate this more effectively with parents so that they can see what has changed as a result of feedback</p>			
<p>Feedback is acted upon to improve outcomes for learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff have used a SOFIE format for observations which allows them to work in pairs to reflect on practice and plan next steps collegiately. ● Peer monitoring among staff is timetabled for consistency ● Key themes coming from observations are reflected upon as a team in staff meetings to drive improvements 	<p>Termly</p>	<p>SEYP to create peer monitoring time table.</p>	
<p>Parents are confident of what is being taught in the setting and why, they understand what they can do at home to extend their child's learning and how they</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All self evaluation opportunities are shared with parents so that they better understand the decision making within the setting 			

can support/become involved at the setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning documents are shared with parents so that they know what their child is learning in the setting, how they can support at home and how they can get involved and support within the setting 			
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How Good is Our Staff Team?

<p>Improvement Action Point: 2. To meet the care and learning needs of all children leaders and staff should work together to ensure effective supervision and quality engagement with children across the day.</p> <p>This is in to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'People have time to support and care of me and to speak with me' (HCSC 3.16).</p>				
Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	Actions Required What do we need to do?	Timescales	Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	R A G
Children will become more engaged, noise levels will be lower.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEYP to deploy staff to different areas during busy times of the day. • SEYP to be responsive to the needs of the children by being available on the floor throughout the day 	On going	SEYP	

	and directing staff to areas that need further support			
Children will continue to play and concentration levels will remain high as there will be limited disruption.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage time more effectively – rota times do not have to be followed rigidly, use common sense eg when nappy changing so that these times do not feel task driven and take children’s needs into consideration. • Consistently carry out environmental audits to ensure that learning areas are correctly set up to develop children’s learning opportunities 	On going	Rotas More focus on where resources are best placed. Nothing new required.	
Staff will know what is happening in all areas of nursery when asked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication between everyone in the team • Continue the effective use of the communication diary to support all staff to know what is going on in nursery and where extra support may be required • More detailed record keeping of what children have eaten at lunch so that this is consistently fed back to parents 	From now and on going	All staff to be made aware of what is happening in nursery. Separate lunch form created from 08/23	

<p>Children will all have access to the same opportunities and experiences regardless on when they attend nursery.</p> <p>Staff will be more engaged with the children and will ask more leading questions to extend children's learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff need to be consistent throughout the day with a good knowledge of child development and the children's varying needs throughout the session. ● Whole staff focus on schemas and how the nursery environment reflects the varying interests of learners. ● All staff to engage in further CPD on questioning ● Staff who are skilled in this area to model good quality questioning and ensure that less experienced staff have the opportunity to shadow more experienced staff in this area. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Support from Locality Lead to extend staff understanding of schemas</p> <p>AG to share 'blanks level questioning' information</p>	
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<p>How good is our care, play and learning? (Requirement 1)</p> <p>By 31 December 2023, the provider must ensure that children receive care and support that meets their needs. To achieve this, the provider must, as a minimum:</p> <p>a) Ensure all staff are aware of and understand the information within the personal plans and use this to effectively to meet each child’s health, welfare, and safety needs.</p> <p>b) Ensure all staff understand and follow all procedures for the safe storage, recording and administration of medication.</p> <p>This is to comply with Regulation 5 (1)(2) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, (SSI 2011/210).</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15); and 'My needs, as agreed in my personal plan, are fully met, and my wishes and choices are respected' (HSCS 1.23).</p>	<p>Improvement Action Point:</p> <p>ELC Team will identify promptly, children who have barriers to learning and require additional support.</p> <p>Increase the provision of high-quality personalised support through effective staged intervention processes to meet learners needs.</p>
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Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	Actions Required What do we need to do?	Timescales	Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	R A G
<p>IEPs will be created to identify specific targets that will be tracked.</p> <p>Attainment data and QA discussions will evidence impact of interventions</p>	<p>All key workers to complete personal plan audit detailing how strategies for individual children will be transferred into practice to support play and learning. Audit completed 17/11/23. Key workers to share audit with team to ensure consistent understanding of approaches.</p> <p>Personal Plans to be reviewed and updated accordingly in term 3 as part of QA calendar.</p> <p>Key children and strategies discussed and shared at fortnightly team meetings.</p> <p>A Key Worker overview will be completed which highlights individual children's needs. This will be shared with all supply staff to ensure all staff have a clear overview of individual needs and how to respond to these (completed 08/01/23).</p> <p>Head Teacher to review key aspects of updated Medication Policy with team. Simplified flow chart of Medication procedures and correct forms</p>	Dec 2023	<p>Head Teacher, SEYP’s, EYP’s</p> <p>Revised personal plan format</p> <p>Systems for quality assurance</p>	

	<p>to be completed also revised with team (17/11/23 and 23/01/23).</p> <p>SEYP to provide additional time out for all staff to reread new Medication Policy and sign to show understanding.</p> <p>Medication audits planned for in QA Calendar.</p> <p>Care Plans to be reviewed and signed by parents each term.</p> <p>Head Teacher to complete random medication checks to ensure correct medication procedures are being followed at all times.</p> <p>Staff training on how to write an IEP.</p>			
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<p>How good is our setting? (Requirement 2)</p> <p>By 31 December 2023, the provider must provide a safe and clean environment for children.</p> <p>To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:</p> <p>a) Ensure that children’s handwashing is effectively supervised and supported; and</p> <p>b) Have robust arrangements in place to ensure that children are protected through secure entry to the premises.</p> <p>This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) (Welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work and Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011 (SSI 2011/2010).</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19); and 'My environment is secure and safe' (HSCS 5.19).</p>	<p>Improvement Action Point:</p> <p>Staff will understand and implement the appropriate procedures to ensure children are safe and healthy.</p>
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Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	Actions Required What do we need to do?	Timescales	Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	R A G
Quality assurance observations undertaken by Head Teacher and SEYP will show that staff are actively implementing the policy and procedure to ensure children are safe and health.	<p>Staff Rota to document member of staff responsible for supervising handwashing at lunch, tea and snack times.</p> <p>All staff aware of importance of ensuring good handwashing routines.</p> <p>Cleaning schedules in place to ensure hygiene throughout ELC.</p> <p>Staff rota documents staff member responsible for ensuring secure entry to the premises.</p> <p>Updated Missing Child Policy details procedures that staff follow to ensure children are protected through secure entry to the premises.</p> <p>All staff understand that any visitor should report to the main office to sign in.</p>	Dec 2023	Full ELC Team – quality assured by SLT/SEYP’s Cleaning schedule exemplar (ELC Sharepoint) Review as a team current policy and procedure.	

<p>How Good is Our Leadership? (Area for improvement 1)</p> <p>To ensure that practice protects and promotes positive outcomes for children, meets regulatory requirements and SSSC expectations, the provider should develop robust quality assurance practices. This should include, but not be limited to:</p> <p>a) Regular support and supervision of staff.</p> <p>b) Audits of all records and practice.</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).</p>		<p>Improvement Action Point:</p> <p>Quality Assurance Calendar for session 2023-2024 will provide planned evaluation activities to monitor the progress of our improvement agenda and evaluate our practice against HGIOELC QI's.</p> <p>All stakeholders will be aware of our Improvement Plan and progress made and will be involved in evaluating our provision.</p> <p>SLT and SEYP's will ensure opportunities for staff to look outwards in order to review and refresh their pedagogical knowledge and learn from best practice.</p> <p>Focus on planning, learning environment, interactions.</p>		
<p>Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i></p>	<p>Actions Required What do we need to do?</p>	<p>Timescales</p>	<p>Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)</p>	<p>R A G</p>
<p>Quality Assurance Calendar will evidence QA focus.</p> <p>Evidence from QA activities and feedback will show continuous self-evaluation of practice linked to HGIOELC QI's and key improvement priorities.</p>	<p>Quality Assurance Calendar will be created for 2023-2024 which will record the focus of continuous improvement.</p> <p>Continually monitor QA evaluations to identify any key themes and ensure progress being made.</p> <p>QA activities will inform focus of staff meetings/ training.</p>	<p>Term 1</p> <p>ongoing</p>	<p>SLT/ SEYP</p> <p>QA calendar examples shared by HT.</p> <p>SEYP to evaluate examples</p>	
<p>Progress will be displayed, visually on our Improvement Wall.</p> <p>Feedback from our stakeholder self-evaluations will show parents understand and help shape our improvement journey.</p> <p>Staff self-evaluation will show a shared</p>	<p>We will create an interactive improvement planning wall which clearly identifies our priorities and the progress we are making towards this.</p> <p>We will include creative and manageable ways to gather feedback from parents on our key priorities and HGIOELC core QI's.</p> <p>Our Improvement wall will clearly identify key priorities of</p> <p>-Planning for learning</p> <p>- quality interactions</p>	<p>Term 1</p> <p>ongoing</p>	<p>HT, SEYP, All ELC Team.</p>	

<p>understanding of our improvement journey.</p> <p>Staff will have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in our improvement journey.</p> <p>Quality Assurance visits will evidence the improvements in practice.</p>	<p>- Quality Environments both inside and out Environment</p>			
<p>Staff will complete feedback forms after each visit that highlight how their visit will impact on practice and support improvement focus area.</p>	<p>HT, SEYP to identify ELC settings to visit.</p> <p>SEYP to give staff members improvement focus areas and responsibilities.</p> <p>Staff will provide feedback from visits to other settings and will share developments on findings.</p> <p>SLT will support staff to identify relevant settings to visit.</p> <p>Realising the Ambition focus as staff team.</p>	<p>Term 1 and ongoing</p>	<p>All staff</p>	

<p>How good is our staff team? (Area for Improvement 2)</p> <p>To ensure children’s emotional and developmental needs are consistently met, the provider should:</p> <p>a) Review staff deployment taking account of children’s needs, staff knowledge and skills.</p> <p>This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: ‘I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed’ (HSCS 4.23).</p>	<p>Improvement Action Point:</p> <p>A high quality learning environment with meaningful interactions, rich learning experiences and interesting and motivating spaces inside and out.</p> <p>Develop high quality intentional and responsive planning that respond to the needs of all children.</p>
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Measures of Success How will we know this has been achieved? <i>What evidence will we have?</i>	Actions Required What do we need to do?	Timescales	Resources Who and what is required? (including cost/fund)	R A G
<p>Learner feedback will reflect positive interactions, experiences and spaces.</p> <p>Self-Evaluation feedback from all stakeholders will evidence progress (pre and post enhancements)</p> <p>Realising the Ambition Environment audits will evidence quality.</p> <p>Leuven Scale, CICS and Up, Up and Away evaluations will evidence children’s wellbeing and engagement and evaluate quality of learning environment.</p>	<p>HT/ SEYP’s to support staff training using RtA with a focus on developing a quality learning environment- interactions, experiences and spaces.</p> <p>HT/ SEYP’s to develop QA observation formats which incorporates Leuven Scale, RtA and relevant HGIOELC QI’s.</p> <p>Include learners and stakeholders in improvement planning and self-evaluation process via ebooks and Improvement planning journey wall.</p> <p>HT to provide environment posters that highlight key resources, the adult role, and key questioning for each play context to support quality developments.</p>	<p>Oct 2023 and ongoing</p>	<p>HT to provide examples of improvement/self-evaluation wall.</p> <p>SEYP’s to lead development of Improvement Display.</p> <p>ELC team to involve children in improvement process and record via ebook or floorbook.</p> <p>HT to provide formats for QA observations.</p>	

<p>QA visits and observations will evaluate practice in relation to core QI's and Realising the Ambition National Practice Guidance. Click here for format.</p>				
<p>Planning formats will evidence quality of planning.</p> <p>QA of planning will evidence planning against HGIOELC QI's.</p> <p>QA observations will evidence planning in practice. Feedback will evidence progress.</p> <p>Learner observations will evidence impact of planned learning opportunities and ELC teams ability to plan responsively and in the moment.</p> <p>Learning observations will be of high quality focussing on learning/skills being developed and next step to support progress.</p>	<p>SEYP's to support team to develop confidence in intentional planning and responsive planning.</p> <p>HT/ SEYP's to evaluate observations and consider training to ensure observations are high quality and staff can identify any next steps or enhancement needed to move learning forward.</p> <p>Staff to work in pairs to plan developments for individual contexts, including children, parents and other staff in improvement process.</p>	<p>Sept 2023</p>	<p>Planning formats.</p> <p>Education Scotland Observation training video.</p> <p>ELC team. Resources may be required to support planning for play contexts.</p>	

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RIVERBANK ELC – Appendix G	Action required	Stakeholders & timescale	Desired outcomes for children	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG
Areas for improvement					
How good is our care, play and learning? 1.1 Nurturing care and support & 1.3 Play and learning					
<p>a) ensure that children are nurtured and supported throughout their daily experience in a way that is suitable to them as an individual.</p> <p>b) ensure children's overall wellbeing is supported through effective use of personal planning</p> <p>c) ensure all children get the support they need to reach their full potential, the staff should increase their knowledge and skills in relation to adverse childhood experiences</p> <p>d) ensure that children have fun and experience high quality play, learning and development opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to be given feedback on the draft CI report, with discussion around improvements required and their role in this. Personal plan formats to be discussed with the team so that everyone is well informed of what is required and why. Modelling of personal plan discussions for all staff led by LL. Monitoring of this by HT / feedback from parents IEP's and PCRA's to be developed for children who require, based on both personal plan information and observations. – discuss when IEP or PCRA is required Overview sheets of children's needs are to be developed and shared with all staff, focusing on individualised and responsive care needs so that all staff, including relief staff are aware. Modelling of Case tracking by LL for staff. Termly Case tracking of children, which clearly identify actions, within a specified time frame. 	<p>01.05.23 All staff</p> <p>30.06.23 – SEYP & KW</p> <p>30.06.23 2023 LL</p> <p>30.06.23 2023 SEYP & KW</p> <p>30.06.23 SEYP</p> <p>07.06.23 SEYP & LL</p> <p>HT & SEYP 30.06.23</p>	<p>Children will have detailed personal plan which detail the strategies needed to be able to meet their care and learning. These will be fully implemented by the staff team, ensuring children feel loved and nurtured and receive consistent, high-quality personalised care. IEPs and PCRA will be in place for those who require these and they will support the children within the ELC</p>	<p>01.05.23 – Draft feedback at Inset day. 08.06 23 – All staff provided with a copy of the report.</p> <p>Ongoing- IEP's and PCRA's to be implemented for new start children (if required) with 4 weeks of their settling in visit. Keyworkers to lead this with support from SEYP's</p> <p>30.06.2023- SEYP – created an overview sheet of children's needs, this was shared with all staff and relief staff on arrival. This document will be ongoing with changes being made as and when new children arrive. SEYP will monitor monthly.</p> <p>07.06.23 – LL modelled case tracking – shared with all staff at staff meeting 07.06.23</p>	
<p>a) Staff understand and follow the service's own Child Protection procedures when reporting to ensure appropriate action is taken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child protection refresher training to be revisited by all staff and procedures read, signed, and understood. The following child protection process followed by all: Child protection concern form completed by staff member with the concern 	<p>01.05.23 All staff led by HT</p> <p>01.05.23 All staff led by HT</p>	<p>Children will be well protected from harm and any information required to support them to do so will be shared appropriately to ensure that their welfare is paramount at all times.</p>	<p>01.05 23 – All ELC staff attended refresher training led by HT – all have signed to confirm they have understood all the procedures.</p>	

	<p>Concern shared immediately with CP officer or depute. CP officer to action in line with ACC policy CP officer to feedback to staff member as appropriate.</p>				
<p>a) Undertaking a full review of all medication to ensure details and records are up-to-date. b) Carrying out a review of long-term medication every three months along with parents. c) Ensuring staff are knowledgeable and competent in the safe storage, recording, and administration of medication.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medication forms reviewed with parents present, medication plans added to medication boxes and forms organised clearly. Medication audits will be regularly (at least every 3 months) undertaken to ensure that all medication is up to date, reviewed, stored and administered correctly. Medication policies and procedures will be reviewed, signed that they have understood by all staff to ensure they are aware of best practice. Medication policy shared with parents to aid support and understanding Designated member of staff / and depute identified to organise medication 	<p>18.04.23 – SEYP, HT & PT</p> <p>Ongoing SEYP</p> <p>07.06.23 PT</p> <p>30.06.23 SEYP</p> <p>07.06.23 HT</p>	<p>Children's medical needs will be well documented and shared across the team to ensure that where they require medical support, this is done so safely and sensitively, allowing children to feel secure in their health needs being met.</p>	<p>18.04.23 Medication forms reviewed</p> <p>15.09.23 QA Calendar updated to include monthly monitoring by SEYP & Termly by HT</p> <p>07.06.23 Medication policy shared with all staff (2 absent) at staff meeting – all signed to confirm they understand this.</p> <p>07.06.23 Designated member of staff is Holly Coleman (SEYP), depute is Rachael Smith (SEYP) (Updated 15.09 due to staff absence)</p>	
<p>a) Ensuring staff are knowledgeable in supporting children's learning and their wellbeing needs are met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning board to be utilised by the whole team to show continuous provision, responsive & intentional planning Upskill staff with regard to expectations of observations and planning. Explore planning processes of other settings to ensure best practice a Riverbank ELC Staff to agree the expectations in terms of what is required for observations and planning and be held accountable to these, receiving support where required. Identify & establish online methods to increasing communication between staff and parents of children's learning. Provide training for Seesaw for all staff. Communications to be shared with parents around the intentions of observation and planning and what they should expect, with the intention of involving them more in 	<p>07.07.23 SEYP</p> <p>30.06.23 SEYP</p> <p>23.06.23 HT SEYP</p> <p>30.06.23 All staff</p> <p>Aug 2023 HT & SEYP</p> <p>Nov 2023 SEYP & HT - Further input Feb 2024</p>	<p>Children will benefit from relaxed, play experiences which are well planned around their individual needs and extend their learning in a way which is personal to them. These being shared with families will allow the further extension of learning opportunities at home and promote a consistent approach to care and learning.</p>	<p>28.05.23- Planning board created within cloakroom area which all staff and parents can access.</p> <p>29.05.23- Planning expectations displayed on staff information board detailing process and expectations of staff.</p> <p>22.04.23- Circle audit completed by SEYP & LL – information collated used to implement changes.</p> <p>Nov 2023- Initial training provided to staff attending strike days to explore the use of SEESAW</p>	

	<p>children's learning and linking to home. – monitored weekly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and observations to be reviewed and audited regularly. • Circle audit on literacy undertaken, actions identified. • Tracking of progress, tracking meetings termly with HT. • Connected and compassionate classroom training to be provided for all ELC staff 	<p>30.06.23 SEYP, PT & HT</p> <p>30.06.23 SEYP, PY & HT</p> <p>22.04.23 SEYP & LL</p> <p>Inservice day Aug & Nov 2023</p>		<p>and how to upload observations.</p> <p>Dec 2023- Children enrolled into class lists on SEESAW .</p> <p>04.08.23 – Circle audit used to implement changes to the nursery environment.</p> <p>08.06.23 ACEL tracking meeting with SEYP & HT</p> <p>15.09.23 QA Calendar update to include tracking meetings</p> <p>15.09.23 HT to deliver at Nov Inset - Rescheduled for Feb inservice day- CIRCLE framework training prioritised</p>	
<p>How good is our setting? 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities</p>					
<p>a) Ensure all areas for children maintain children's safety at all times</p> <p>b) Ensure all areas for children are clean and well maintained</p> <p>c) Ensure staff at all levels are trained and knowledgeable in good hygiene practices and carry this out as per relevant guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share will all staff clear expectations with regard to their role to support infection control, read signed & understood by all staff • Rotas created to ensure infection control procedures are followed in all areas (zone specific) • Cleaning rota improved for toilet area, (hourly checks) • HT to discuss with the Cleaning Supervisor the poor standard of cleaning in the nursery – ongoing monitoring. • Areas of disrepair reported to ACC and prompt repair organised. 	<p>07.06.23 PT</p> <p>15.05.23 SEYP</p> <p>20.04.23 SEYP</p> <p>19.04.23 HT (ongoing)</p> <p>Reported 19.04.23 – repair due July 2023</p>	<p>The environment will be clean and free from possible sources of infection/ contamination.</p> <p>Children's learning, play and wellbeing needs will be met. Children will have access to a comfortable well furnished, well resourced environment.</p>	<p>07.06.23 Infection control policy shared with all staff (2 absent) signed to confirm understanding.</p> <p>15.05.23 – Cleaning rotas discussed and shared with staff – displayed in zoned areas</p> <p>20.04.23 Toilet cleaning rota updated to reflect hourly checks</p> <p>19.04.23 HT met with cleaning supervisor to highlight issues with cleaning in the nursery</p>	

<p>d) ensure children experience high quality facilities, the provider, manager and staff should ensure that the indoor environment provides a well-furnished comfortable and homely place for children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit of current resources within the nursery, disposal of those no longer required, appropriate resources / furnishings procured. 	<p>Audit April 2023 Procurement August 23</p>		<p>19.04.23 Areas of disrepair have been reported – gate issued solved 02.06.23. Other issued will be repaired July 2023</p> <p>30.04.23 – Audit completed- disposal of those not required to be arranged.</p> <p>July '23- Areas of despair have been restored : ELC room has been freshly painted (walls, interior doors, skirting boards and window ledges) Children's toilet area has had replacement skirting boards and toilet 'splash backs' replaced.</p> <p>02.08.23 – SEYP reported to assets and estates officer that the replacement boards in children's toilet area have not been finished to a high standard. Advised that building services have been informed that they need to return to repair the area. 15.09.23 HT contacted C Cowan for update re damage to replacement boards and external lighting</p>	
<p>How good is our leadership? - 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well</p>					
<p>a) To ensure quality care and experiences for children, quality assurance and self-evaluation should be embedded into practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions to be held around ensuring that children are always nurtured and cared for and issues immediately addressed. Updated Quality Assurance calendar to be implemented including regular termly audits 	<p>01.05.23 HT, SEYP, PT & KW 30.06.23 SEYP, PT & HT</p>	<p>Children and families are meaningfully involved and influence changes within the setting Quality assurance, including self-evaluation</p>	<p>01.05.23 Inset day agenda 15.09.23 Updated QA calendar agree based on ACC template</p>	

	<p>of key areas such as personal plans, observations and medication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased staff observation to be undertaken by SLT to identify any areas for development and training / support required. Refreshed remits to be created for all levels of the team to ensure that roles are clear. Self-evaluation to be carried out regularly, in conjunction with families, using key document to evaluate with clear improvement plans devised. Develop / implement a self-evaluation process to ensure parent and pupil voice is heard. Staff to engage with parent focus groups to ensure parental feedback is sought and acted upon Create self-evaluation board for parents and staff – monthly focus Vision, Values & Aims <i>We aim for all children to be happy and have fun whilst playing in Nursery.</i> <p><i>We aim to provide a secure, enabling and challenging environment where children's are respected and their talents are valued.</i></p> <p><i>We aim to and maintain positive relationships with parents, carers and professional partners in order to enable children to reach their full potential.</i></p> <p><i>We aim to improve the Health and Wellbeing of all children in Nursery including helping them to make friends and encouraging them to be responsible, resilient and confident.</i></p> <p>- revisit these with all stakeholder and align with school VVA as appropriate.</p> <p>rights</p>	<p>30.06.23 HT</p> <p>01..05.23 All staff</p> <p>30.06.23 SEYP, PY & HT</p> <p>30.06.23 SEYP</p> <p>30.09.23 SEYP, PT & HT</p> <p>30.06.23 SEYP</p> <p>15.10.23 SEYP & HT</p>	<p>and improvement plans, lead to high quality care and support for all children and their families</p>	<p>01.05.23 – Remits discussed and reviewed (<u>action, staff signed that they have understood their remit</u>)</p> <p>10.07.23- Self-evaluation undertaken for staff in accordance to Care Inspectorate feedback – displayed for staff on staff information board so that they can add accordingly. ("How do we ensure children's overall wellbeing is supported through effective use of personal planning? What do we do well? How can we improve this?")</p>	
<p>How good is our staff team? – 4.3 Staff deployment</p>					
<p>a) Ensure staff have the skills and are deployed in a way that keeps children safe.</p> <p>b) ensure effective supervision and quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff rotas to be reviewed to ensure staff are deployed to maximise the experience for the children and that their safety is prioritised at all times Ensure SEYP prioritise good communication between staff & effective staff deployment 	<p>10.05.23 SEYP</p> <p>10.05.23 SEYP</p>	<p>Children will be supported by staff who are knowledgeable and fully aware of their care and learning needs and are able to communicate</p>	<p>10.05.23 – Nursery zones created – clear staff deployment in these</p> <p>10.05.23 – Zoning implement / daily comms</p>	

engagement with children across the day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relief staff information sheets improved and shared with all relief staff when working in the ELC Planning board to be utilised by all staff to share outcomes for children and next steps. Regular staff meeting's and all staff to ensure they read daily the communication book. Regular 1-2-1 meeting's to be held with all staff members focusing on support and development. 	<p>10.05.23 SEYP</p> <p>14.06.23 all staff</p> <p>14.06.23 SEYP</p> <p>05.05.23 PT</p>	effectively in order to promote these, improving outcomes for children and families.	<p>book, monthly staff meetings</p> <p>10.05.23 – Info sheets reviewed & shared with relief staff</p> <p>10.05.23- New communication book implemented, staff to read and sign that they have understood communication.</p> <p>07.06.23 – Monthly staff meetings in place. Staff reminded to read and sign the communication book (daily)</p> <p>05.05.23 – All staff have participated in a 1-2 -1 meeting with PT</p> <p>15.09.23 Monthly whole staff meeting dates and times agreed by all</p>	
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Key

HT – Head Teacher & Registered Manager

PT – Principal Teacher

SEYP – Senior Early Years Practitioner

LL – Locality Lead Officer

KW – Key Workers

COMMITTEE	Education & Children’s Services Committee
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Collaborative Improvement Report
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/048
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The Education service participated in a Collaborative Improvement Review in November 2023. This report outlines the process of a Collaborative Improvement Review and presents the outcome of this peer review model.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the Collaborative Improvement Review report; and
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Education Officer to keep Committee sighted on national developments around Collaborative Improvement models which impact the remit of the Education and Children’s Services Committee.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Based on the recommendations from the 2015 OECD report, the Education Reform Joint Agreement published in June 2018, had one of its key principles as ‘effective system-wide improvement requires strong leadership, collaborative working and clarity of purpose at all layers of the system – school, local, regional and national.’ To take this forward ADES (the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland) and Education Scotland have developed a Collaborative Improvement (CI) model.
- 3.2 The model is resourced by an ADES Officer acting as coordinator. The coordinator secures the release of senior colleagues from some of Scotland’s 32 Local Authorities whilst Education Scotland identify a team of Inspectors and Officers to join a peer review team. Over the Collaborative Improvement visit the team work with the host Local Authority to explore a key question of the host Local Authority’s choosing. In real terms, CI enables an individual Local Authority to identify an area for further exploration based on their own self-evaluation and then benefit from an objective 3 day peer assessment of what is working well and what may require further focus.
- 3.3 Given the variation in Early Learning and Childcare inspection outcomes, the education service chose to focus the three day peer assessment on our

approach to supporting improved quality of Early Learning and Childcare. The service was keen to explore if there was anything further that could be done to accelerate improvement.

- 3.4 The Interim Chief Education Officer a Quality Improvement Manager (Primary) and the Service Manager Early years worked together to identify the key question to be explored during the three day peer assessment. Following engagement with members of the Collaborative Improvement Team, **“To what extent does our engagement with ELC managers/leaders empower staff at all levels to improve outcomes for children and their families?”** was agreed as the question to form the basis of the review.

Activity During the Visit

- 3.5 Prior to the visit all members of the team were sent copies of our Quality Improvement Framework to review along with recent Care Inspectorate gradings to provide a context for the review.
- 3.6 The visiting team consisted of 2 Attainment Advisors, an Inspector with ELC experience, 3 peer local authority representatives, the Education Scotland lead for Early Years and a senior Officer from ADES. Following an input from Aberdeen City Council officers to set the context, the team spent time speaking to focus groups of staff and had the opportunity to visit a number of ELC settings to spend time in the playrooms and speak to families.
- 3.7 The Collaborative Improvement Team (CIT) found staff to be open and honest in their focus groups, sharing what they felt worked well and what they felt could be improved locally in their own settings and across the sector.
- 3.8 The CIT noted the enthusiasm of staff teams and were impressed by the number of staff keen to describe and share best practice. They commented on the positive impact of recent sharing and training events and the plans to create more opportunities for practitioners from different settings to come together. The final report, which provides a comprehensive summary of learning from the peer review visit, is available in Appendix A.
- 3.9 In general terms, the peer review process validated the approach being taken to improve quality across Aberdeen City. The CIT noted that the implementation of 1140 had been tightly controlled due to the restrictions in place at the time and that this had inadvertently built an over reliance on the central team and in particular Locality Leads. The visits to ELC settings allowed the CIT to experience the variability across the authority and identify settings who were finding solutions and improving independently of the central team and those with an overreliance on Locality Leads. The CIT prompted the team to consider some further actions that could be utilised to build more independence. Suggestions include introducing mandatory training for all registered managers, streamlining communication to all ELC staff, and the establishment of ELC working groups to progress developments particularly in literacy and numeracy. An action plan with anticipated timelines for delivery of the suggested next steps is contained in Appendix B.
- 3.10 The CIT noted that the new national framework could provide a further opportunity to review roles and responsibilities within settings and the local authority.

- 3.11 The service welcomed the opportunity to participate in the collaborative improvement process. It was helpful to have our self-evaluation validated by peers and take the time to review the arrangements in place to support improvement in ELC.

Further National collaborative models

- 3.12 Considerable work is on-going nationally to look at how collaborative improvement models can add more value than traditional scrutiny models following the successful role out of the ADES Collaborative Improvement Model. As a result, a developing framework for Education Authority inspections is likely to follow a collaborative improvement approach. It is proposed that the Chief Education Officer keep Committee sighted on developments in this area.
- 3.13 Self-evaluation remains important for all Local Authority clusters and functions. Aberdeen City Council is currently making use of Improvement Service self-evaluation tools to support an evaluation of Corporate Boards. This collaboration with the Improvement Service will ensure that we continue to improve our approaches to managing performance and risk based on a robust evaluation of the impact of current approaches and will help us benefit from fresh perspectives and external peer challenge.
- 3.14 COSLA and the Improvement Service are committed to collaborative improvement models and are currently exploring how to establish further models to empower and enable Local Authorities and partners to accelerate improvement and learn from each other. The Interim Director Children and Families continues to monitor these developments closely to ensure that the Local Authority is well placed to positively respond.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. The costs of the Collaborative Improvement Visit were met from established budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Having regard to the Collaborative Improvement Team feedback will assist the Council discharge its statutory duties under 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 children in ELC .	Quality Improvement Framework in place and the approach to quality improvement has been validated through the Collaborative Improvement approach.	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Approaches being used to support improvement are aligned to national guidance.	L	Yes
Operational	Risk that improvement work does not lead to improved outcomes for learners	There is clear evidence that providing high quality services will help improve outcomes for children. Documentation and approaches are aligned with national quality frameworks.	L	Yes
Financial	No risks identified			
Reputational	Risk that poor quality of provision will present a reputational risk to the Council	Evidence that current approaches are realising an improvement in quality	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	This report will help the service ensure that high quality services are made available to children, high

Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.	quality services are most likely to help close the poverty attainment gap.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026	Engagement with the Collaborative Improvement Review team has provided Officers with the opportunity to reflect on current approaches to quality improvement and gain from the insights of the various members of the review team.
Regional and City Strategies Prevention Strategy Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	Engagement with Collaborative Improvement Team 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.

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

Appendix A Collaborative Improvement Report
Appendix B Collaborative Improvement Action Plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Education Scotland / ADES – Collaborative Improvement

Aberdeen City - November 2023

What is collaborative improvement?

Based on the recommendations from the 2015 OECD report, the Education Reform Joint Agreement published in June 2018 had one of its key principles as ‘effective system-wide improvement requires strong leadership, collaborative working and clarity of purpose at all layers of the system – school, local, regional and national.’ To take this forward ADES (the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland) and Education Scotland have developed a Collaborative Improvement (CI) model.

The model is resourced by an ADES Officer acting as coordinator. The coordinator secures the release of senior colleagues from some of Scotland’s 32 Local Authorities whilst Education Scotland identify a team of Inspectors and Officers to join the peer review team. Over the Collaborative Improvement visit the team work with the host Local Authority to explore a key question of the host Local Authority’s choosing. In real terms, CI enables an individual Local Authority to identify an area for further exploration based on their own self-evaluation and then benefit from an objective 3 day peer assessment of what is working well and what may require further focus.

The focus of the Aberdeen City Collaborative Improvement Visit

Given the variation in Early Learning and Childcare inspection outcomes and inclusion of our work to improve early years practice within the National Improvement Framework Plan and Children’s Services Plan, the team was asked to explore if current systems in place to secure improvement across Early Learning and Childcare settings are sufficiently robust.

The Education Service presented an updated ELC Quality Improvement Framework to the Education and Children’s Services Committee in June 2023. The service’s own self-evaluation had determined that early gains were evident but that some variation remains as the framework is being implemented. As a result, the service was keen to explore if it could do anything further to realise more accelerated improvement and the following key question was posed:

“To what extent does our engagement with ELC managers/leaders empower staff at all levels to improve outcomes for children and their families?”

The Chief Education Officer designed a programme to enable members of the Collaborative Improvement team to explore four themes thought related to the key question. The four themes were:

- Is the purpose of our engagement with Managers/Leads understood and does this impact outcomes for children and families?
- How effective is our sharing of best practice with managers and leaders at influencing change within your setting?
- How do managers/leaders empower their staff at all levels to improve outcomes for children and families?
- How effective are approaches to strengthening management and leadership skills within our ELC settings and how does this inform change?

The Collaborative Improvement visit took place over three days in November 2023 and was supported by an extensive team including:

- Executive Officer – ADES
- Senior Regional Advisor (Education Scotland Northern Team)
- 2 Attainment Advisors (Education Scotland Northern Team)
- Senior HM Inspector from Education Scotland
- Early Years lead Education Scotland
- Executive Director - Education & Children's Services
- 2 senior leaders with responsibility for ELC from local authorities

Team members engaged in a series of focus groups designed to explore each of the themes, visited 8 ELC settings, attended a series of scheduled meetings with senior officers and took the opportunity to explore documentation and resources. All these sources of evidence were used to inform the findings of the team.

The analysis and challenge provided by the Collaborative Improvement team has greatly aided the education service to reflect on progress made and identify next steps. The findings of the three day visit are outlined below.

What is working well?

The Collaborative Improvement Team (CIT) recognised the commitment of Local Authority senior leaders to realise high quality ELC provision and endorsed the ambitious aims of the ELC expansion programme believing that the Plan is likely to improve outcomes in the longer term. The establishment of a wider range of roles and development of a clear workforce progression pathway as part of the expansion programme was thought to be particularly impactful. The CIT saw clear evidence of both Support Workers and Modern Apprentices seizing opportunities to further their skills and qualifications in order to secure positions with more responsibility. The team identified that the public health restrictions in place at the time 1140 was fully implemented will have contributed to the variation currently being experienced.

The CIT endorsed the arrangements in place to reset expectations and standards and validated the approaches being taken to identify the level of support required in each setting. The enthusiasm of motivated ELC staff (including Locality Leads) was noted with many staff able to describe aspects of best practice and demonstrating a strong desire to share their work with others.

ELC staff benefit from the fortnightly newsletter and remain committed to participating in professional learning. The provider neutral approach taken to the majority of professional learning made available was noted as positive. Networking opportunities provided through the management and leadership programme are highly valued by participants. Opportunities for other staff to network are in the early stages of implementation.

The Locality Leads work well together and have a clear sense of expected standards. Good relationships between Locality Leads and staff within ELC settings is evident in most cases. Where this is the case, staff in settings feel that the Locality Leads provide high quality support which is responsive to their needs. Quality assurance conversations have a strong focus on outcomes for children and arrangements now have more rigour.

The CIT validated the evaluation of senior leaders that poor inspection outcomes are most likely where accountability is unclear. Where accountability is clear, confident staff work as a team and utilise staffing resource to ensure that the team can meet to progress areas identified for improvement and feel empowered and motivated to drive change from within. Some settings clarify responsibilities through visual cues and verbal briefings and this contributes to the effective leadership from Senior Early Years Practitioners. Consistent features of high quality settings visited include the Head Teacher/centre manager having regular contact with the ELC team, ELC viewed as integral to the school community with distinct quality assurance arrangements, positive links with partners, high quality communication with parents and a strong sense of team work contributing to a shared desire to secure improvement in both formal and informal ways.

Almost all staff (practitioners, senior leaders, apprentices, and support workers) demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and confidently articulate the ways in which they are empowered to lead improvement. The most significant improvement is secured when there is a sense of partnership in leading change through a combination of aspects identified by leaders, staff, and central staff and when messages from setting management and central officers are fully aligned.

In some cases, ELC staff are now effectively supporting staff working in the early stages of primary school to develop play pedagogy.

Highly effective seniors empower their staff by providing positive feedback which builds on strengths and encourages leadership at all levels. They lead solution focussed team meetings and use periods with fewer children to drive improvements. Clear agreements on how paperwork is most effectively completed is in place in these settings. In a few cases the senior is helping to set the agenda for meetings with the Locality Leads and the Locality Leads validate evaluations made by ELC teams.

Recent manager meetings are proving to be a valuable forum for discussion, the sharing of best practice and helping upskill school leaders on expectations. Managers welcome the opportunity to help set agendas for future meetings. Many spoke positively about the use of e-books to record their improvement journey.

Work is in progress but could be further developed

Clear information on roles and responsibilities is in place. However, in a few cases, staff report a lack of clarity around the role of all staff working in ELC settings in driving improvement with responsibility deemed to lie with the Local Authority rather than the individual setting. There is a need to understand the overreliance on the central team in some cases and take action to ensure absolutely clarity. The CIT noted that recent work to address such issues had been successful. The anticipated new national framework could present an opportunity to review roles and responsibilities in the context of delivering against the revised standard and be well supported through a series of FAQs to support staff at different levels.

Some ELC teams are now making considerable progress and are better placed to come to their own solutions. Leaders (both school and Local Authority) should communicate their permission for teams to find their own solution and ensure that there are opportunities for regular face to face team dialogue by ensuring staff better

understand ratios to secure staff meeting time. There is a need to carefully consider how settings who are working at a higher level can be challenged by exploring practice nationally. Co-constructed examples of good to excellent practice shared through an interactive Aberdeen Standard could be considered and there could be benefits in aligning this with planned regional work.

Now that an increasing number of staff are demonstrating their knowledge of the standards expected, it could be helpful to establish a mechanism to enable ELC teams to directly inform the Local Authority professional learning offer both through on-going evaluation of the impact and therefore value of certificated and locally developed courses and through a regular audit of need.

Staff are benefiting from a range of visits to other settings. Staff teams should now be empowered to make approaches to visit other settings both within and beyond their ASG to share practice without the coordination of the central team. It is important that this is done in a way where staff continue to genuinely learn from other, similar, settings both local and national. There could be benefit from including SEYPs from ASG settings in quality assurance activity.

Given their distinct role, Support Workers could benefit from a Network to share ideas and access to a distinct package of professional learning around additional support needs to help them understand their role and responsibilities and help build capacity and capability further. This emerging Networks model should be accelerated.

The relationship between Quality Improvement Managers, Quality Improvement Officers and Locality Leads could be further strengthened to ensure consistent messaging. This should include consideration of how the Locality Lead reports their external evaluations in a consistent way to ensure that both school managers and seniors are able to engage with the feedback to limit miscommunication. The service has been running hard to address the variation issues, they should ensure that time is taken to reflect on progress more routinely.

New areas for development

It could be advantageous to include ELC staff more fully in setting local authority Plans and in driving improvement at local authority level and the central team should now resist providing solutions but instead commission a group of staff from across the city to progress work on behalf of others. A starting point for this work could be exploring paperwork given some perceptions that exist.

There is a need to think about on-line communication to ensure that the number of newsfeeds are kept to a minimum and that every opportunity is taken to empower staff.

Given that some registered Managers are unclear of their role, there is a need to design and implement a mandatory course for all registered Managers based on the current baseline and more routinely share data with them to effect improvement, including if improvement is maintained following intensive support.

There is a need to now share best practice around e-books and quality improvement processes to ensure a shared understanding of their purpose and a group from across the system should drive this work forward. This could be built upon further to consider

how progress through early level (particularly in literacy and numeracy) could be progressed by encouraging staff from across the system to work more closely together.

Consider expanding the use of trios during quality improvement visits to include more practitioners and consider the introduction of the role of the 'disruptor' to ensure there is always appropriate challenge.

Ask HT to clarify the budgets available to ELC Teams.

Reflection on the process

The collaborative improvement process has been exceptionally beneficial to the Education Service. In general terms the team has validated our own self-evaluation and endorsed our long term ambition. They have helpfully shared national best practice that can now be used to enhance our approaches and these areas will be taken forward with support from the team where beneficial. The team has also provided a helpful reminder to pause and take stock of how far many have come and guided us to start to consider arrangements to support good or very good settings to drive their own on-going journey to excellence.

What will happen next?

This report will be shared with the sector, at a HT meeting, with the central team and with the Education and Children's Services Committee.

Actions that can be taken forward with relative ease will be prioritised for completion by Easter 2024, other areas will be used to inform both the refresh of the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan, refresh of the Children's Services Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan for 2024/25.

The Education Service will engage with the ADES Officer and Education Scotland to secure on-going support in areas agreed with them.

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Appendix B - Collaborative Improvement Action Plan

Areas for Improvement	Action Required	Stakeholders and Timescale	Evidence and Confirmed Completion
Support for new and existing ELC Managers.	Design and implement a mandatory course for all registered Managers.	QIO/QIM/LL/Managers By April 2024	
The relationship between Quality Improvement Managers, Quality Improvement Officers and Locality Leads could be further strengthened to ensure consistent messaging.	Review structure and attendees at central team meetings to provide more opportunities for collaborative working.	QI team. By Feb 2024	
Given their distinct role, Support Workers could benefit from a Network to share ideas and access to a distinct package of professional learning around additional support needs to help them understand their role and responsibilities and help build capacity and capability further.	Include face to face sessions for Support Workers as part of the QI calendar for ELC. This can be coordinated during quieter periods across holiday periods.	Central Officers During holiday periods.	
Staff teams should now be empowered to make approaches to visit other settings both within and beyond their ASG to share practice without the coordination of the central team.	Support ASG SEYPs to organise a programme of visits for all staff. These visits should have a particular focus linked to ELC setting improvement priorities.	LLOs/SEYPs/QIO Introduce at Learning Festival in February with a view to everyone having had a visit by summer 2024.	

<p>It is important that this is done in a way where staff continue to genuinely learn from other, similar, settings both local and national.</p>			
<p>Include SEYPs from ASG settings in quality assurance activity.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for SEYPs to be involved in ELC QI activity.</p>	<p>QI team/HTs/SEYP Planning in place and begin implementation by April 2024</p>	
<p>There is a need to carefully consider how settings who are working at a higher level can be challenged by exploring practice nationally. Co-constructed examples of good to excellent practice shared through an interactive Aberdeen Standard could be considered and there could be benefits in aligning this with planned regional work.</p>	<p>Ensure examples of ELC are part of whole city standard. Facilitate a focus group of HTs/SEYPs/QI team members to quality assure practice examples.</p>	<p>HTs/SEYPs/QI team members Begin April 2024</p>	
<p>Consider expanding the use of trios during QI visits to include more practitioners and the introduction of the role of disruptor to ensure there is always appropriate challenge.</p>	<p>Invite the SEYP to be part of trio visit feedback on ELC. QIMs/ CEO/Director to take on role of disruptor in settings out with their locality.</p>	<p>Central team to coordinate. By April 2024.</p>	

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Update on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in School Buildings
REPORT NUMBER	RES/24/053
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Jones
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report is intended to provide assurance to members relating to the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in school buildings. It includes details of the outcome of building inspections, along with an overview of the strategies and procedures which have been put in place to manage and maintain the affected buildings. It also provides an update on progress with longer term planning for the removal of the RAAC from the buildings.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

2.1 Notes the contents of this report;

2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to carry out a detailed options appraisal for the long term future of Northfield Academy, with a view to providing a solution to address the presence of RAAC within the building, and to include an update on progress within the next annual update to the School Estate Plan in September 2024.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 At its meeting of 11 September 2023, Council instructed the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report to the Education and Children’s Services Committee on the outcome of inspections and identified risks in relation to the presence of RAAC in schools. This report seeks to fulfil that instruction.

3.2 In response to information held on historic property records, Independent Structural Engineers were appointed by Aberdeen City Council in Summer 2023 to undertake inspections of schools within Aberdeen to identify RAAC panels, assess their condition and advise on recommendations for any required remedial works and management strategies. The inspection scope and

procedure is based on guidance by The Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE) - Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) Investigation and Assessment - Further Guidance - April 2023.

- 3.3 A combination of visual and intrusive surveys was undertaken within the school estate. Findings identified RAAC to be present at three secondary school buildings: Northfield Academy, St Machar Academy, and Hazlehead Academy. None of the city's primary schools and no other secondary schools were found to have RAAC present within them.
- 3.4 For each of the three school buildings where RAAC was identified, the independent structural engineers provided a detailed management strategy report setting out their recommendations on any immediate remedial measures required, and any procedures which should be put in place for the longer term management of the RAAC within these buildings. A summary of the engineers' findings and recommendations for each school are provided below.

St Machar Academy

- 3.5 Following detailed inspection and testing throughout the buildings at St Machar Academy, the presence of RAAC was confirmed in one small area, within a roof access stairwell. Whilst no immediate concerns with regard to this RAAC were identified, following advice from the specialist engineers and as a precautionary measure, a temporary structure was constructed within the affected area of the building, to ensure that the area can continue to be used safely.
- 3.6 Longer term, plans for the complete removal of the small amount of RAAC in this building are to be incorporated into a forthcoming roof replacement project, within the Council's condition and suitability programme. This work is expected to be carried out during financial year 2025/26. In the meantime the affected area of the building will be regularly monitored. The details of the monitoring programme are provided at paragraph 3.13 below.

Hazlehead Academy

- 3.7 Following detailed inspection and testing throughout the buildings at Hazlehead Academy, the presence of RAAC was confirmed in several areas of the site. Following advice from the engineers, remedial works were undertaken within an outbuilding at the school, where there was evidence of historic damage to some of the roofing panels. No immediate concerns with regard to RAAC in the other areas of the school site have been identified, and the specialist engineers advised that no further remedial works were required to be undertaken.
- 3.8 Longer term, the affected areas of the building will continue to be monitored regularly, as explained at paragraph 3.13 below, until the planned replacement building for Hazelhead Academy has been completed and the existing building is demolished. If the regular monitoring within the existing building identifies a change in the condition of any RAAC panels, or if any additional risks are identified which would require their removal prior to the new school building opening, then the appropriate action will be taken to ensure the safety of building users.

Northfield Academy

- 3.9 Following detailed inspection and testing throughout the building at Northfield Academy, the presence of RAAC was confirmed in several areas of the building. No immediate concerns with regard to this RAAC were identified, and the specialist engineers advised that no remedial works were required to be undertaken.
- 3.10 Due to the extent of RAAC roof panels throughout the building at Northfield Academy, removal of these and replacement of the roof deck with an alternative material is estimated to cost approximately £900,000, which is not currently budgeted for, and would likely cause significant disruption to the running of the school whilst works are carried out. Further work is therefore required to fully assess the options for Northfield Academy in the long term, to provide a suitable solution for dealing with the RAAC within this building.
- 3.11 It is therefore proposed that officers are instructed to carry out a detailed options appraisal for the long term future of Northfield Academy, with a view to providing a solution to address the presence of RAAC within the building, and to include an update on progress within the next annual update to the School Estate Plan, due to be presented to the Committee in September 2024.
- 3.12 In the meantime, the affected areas of the Northfield Academy building will be monitored regularly, as explained at paragraph 3.13 below. If the regular monitoring within the building identifies a change in the condition of any RAAC panels, or if any additional risks are identified which would require their removal, then the appropriate action will be taken to ensure the safety of building users.

Monitoring and Maintenance Programme

- 3.13 For each of the above school sites, a programme of regular monitoring of the areas of the buildings containing RAAC has been put into place. This consists of an annual visual inspection of the RAAC panels by a structural engineer to assess their condition. In addition, further visual inspections will be arranged following any severe weather events, to ensure that the panels have not been damaged by storms or heavy rain or snowfall. Engineers will then provide officers with a report on any observed changes to the condition of RAAC panels, and any remedial action required to be undertaken.
- 3.14 To minimise any deterioration in the condition of the affected roofs caused by poor drainage, a programme of three monthly roof and gutter cleaning for these buildings has also been implemented.
- 3.15 A RAAC Management Strategy document has been created for each of the affected sites, and copies of these are provided at Appendix A. These documents include details of the above monitoring and maintenance arrangements, along with advice and guidance for key members of staff at each school site. The documents will help to ensure that there is an awareness amongst staff of the presence and location of RAAC within their building, and of the procedures to be followed if any changes to the condition of roof

structures are observed. An updated risk assessment on the management of RAAC is also included within the Management Strategy document.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The cost of the scheduled monitoring and maintenance programmes which have been put in place for the schools affected by RAAC, as described at Paragraph 3.13 and 3.14 above, is estimated at £9,000 per year. Any additional roof inspections required (for example after extreme weather events) are estimated to cost up to £500 per inspection. These costs will be met from existing maintenance budgets.
- 4.2 The planned roof replacement project at St Machar Academy, which will incorporate the removal of the identified RAAC panels within that building, is included within the Council's Condition and Suitability programme, and the cost of that project will be met from the approved budget for that programme.
- 4.3 Should it become necessary, the cost of removal of the RAAC panels at Northfield Academy, and replacement with an alternative roofing material, is estimated at £900,000. This does not include the cost of providing alternative accommodation for pupils whilst the work is carried out, should this be necessary.
- 4.4 Any costs related to the proposed options appraisal work for Northfield Academy will be met from existing budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Plans to remove RAAC panels and replace them with an alternative roofing material will contribute positively to improving the environmental performance and climate resilience of the affected school buildings.

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 of non-compliance with the	Arrangements are in place for the instruction of the	L	Yes

	required inspection and maintenance regime as recommended by structural engineers	required annual inspections and three monthly gutter cleaning to be triggered automatically at the appropriate frequency. Following any extreme weather events, automated alerts will be sent electronically to the appropriate officers to ensure additional inspections are instructed.		
Operational	Risk of injury to building occupants if RAAC panels were to fail. Interruption to service delivery	Regular inspection of affected areas of building. Increased frequency of maintenance. Awareness raising amongst staff on site and clarification or reporting procedures for any concerns.	L	Yes
Financial	Risk of additional / unplanned cost of repair / replacement if condition of RAAC panels deteriorates	Re-prioritisation of the Council's Condition and Suitability Programme to free up necessary resources for any works required	L	Yes
Reputational	No significant risks identified			
Environment / Climate	Increase in frequency of storms / extreme weather events could lead to deterioration of the condition of RAAC roof panels	Arrangements in place for additional inspections to be triggered following extreme weather events, ensuring appropriate action can be taken if condition deteriorates	M	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
Impact of Report	
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Regional and City Strategies	The proposals within this report supports the approved Property and Estates Strategy strategic outcomes in particular 'Assets will be fit for purpose, in appropriate condition and with appropriate utilisation' and 'Assets will be environmentally sustainable'.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Stephen Booth, Chief Officer Corporate Landlord on 17 January 2024
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	No additional impact assessments have been completed for this report.

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 Appendix A: RAAC Management Plans for St Machar Academy, Northfield Academy and Hazlehead Academy

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix A – RAAC Management Strategies

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Management Strategy and Guidance for St Machar Academy

1. Introduction

1.1 What is RAAC?

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) is a lightweight concrete construction material that was used in the construction of some public buildings like schools and hospitals between the 1950s and 1990s. It was used mostly in flat roofing, but also in some pitched roofs, floors and walls. It was quicker to produce, easier to install, and cheaper than standard concrete. Despite its name, it is very different to traditional concrete although it looks similar. It is aerated, or ‘bubbly’, and is therefore less durable than traditional concrete. RAAC can be susceptible to failure when exposed to moisture. The ‘bubbles’ can allow water to enter the material. This moisture can also cause decay in any reinforcement steel (also known as rebar) present in the material. Unexpected collapses due to construction defects can occur in exceptional and very rare circumstances.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

This document sets out the plans which have been put in place to manage the RAAC which has been identified within St Machar Academy, and how the associated risks will be mitigated. It also provides guidance to the Premises Responsible Person, janitors and other relevant building users, on their responsibilities for reporting any concerns relating to the areas of the building known to contain RAAC.

2. Presence of RAAC in St Machar Academy

RAAC is known to be present within the roof panels of the following area of the school:

- Roof access stairwell within Rear Extension

See Appendix 1 for a floorplan which shows the location of the affected area.

3. Risk Assessment

Aberdeen City Council has created a risk assessment to record and manage the risks associated with RAAC in all of the Council’s affected buildings. An extract from the risk assessment, which covers the risks for St Machar Academy, is included at Appendix 2 below.

4. Management Plan

4.1 Annual Surveys

The RAAC panels within the buildings will be visually inspected annually, to check their condition and whether there is any increased risk associated with them. These annual surveys will be instructed and managed by Corporate Landlord. It is anticipated that surveys would be carried out during school summer holidays, to minimise the impact on school operations.

4.2 Extreme weather events

Additional inspections of RAAC panels will be instructed following extreme weather events (i.e. following significant periods of rain or snowfall, indicated by an amber or red weather warning). These inspections will

be instructed and managed by Corporate Landlord, and may need to be carried out during term time / normal school hours.

4.3 Roof / gutter cleaning schedules

Orders will be issued to Building Services every three months for the necessary cleaning to be carried out, to maintain drainage from affected roof areas. This work will be instructed and managed by Corporate Landlord.

4.4 Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to the condition of the roofs or ceilings within the affected areas of the building, including any visible damage, leaks or changes to the appearance of ceiling or roof panels, should be reported to the Non-Housing Repairs Service Desk (see contact details below). Information provided to the service desk should include the fact that the building is known to contain RAAC.

4.5 Signage requirements

Signage is being developed that will indicate the presence of RAAC roof panels within the building, ensuring the building owner / occupants / users are aware of the concerns relating to RAAC and providing reassurances that appropriate measures are being undertaken.

5 Contacts and Further Information

5.1 Key Contacts

For reporting all concerns, defects, damage etc:

- Non-Housing Repairs Service Desk: **01224 070100** (Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm)
- Regional Communications Centre - **0845 608 0919 / 01224 219281** (Mon-Fri 5pm-8.30am & at Weekends)

General enquiries relating to RAAC and the RAAC Management Strategy:

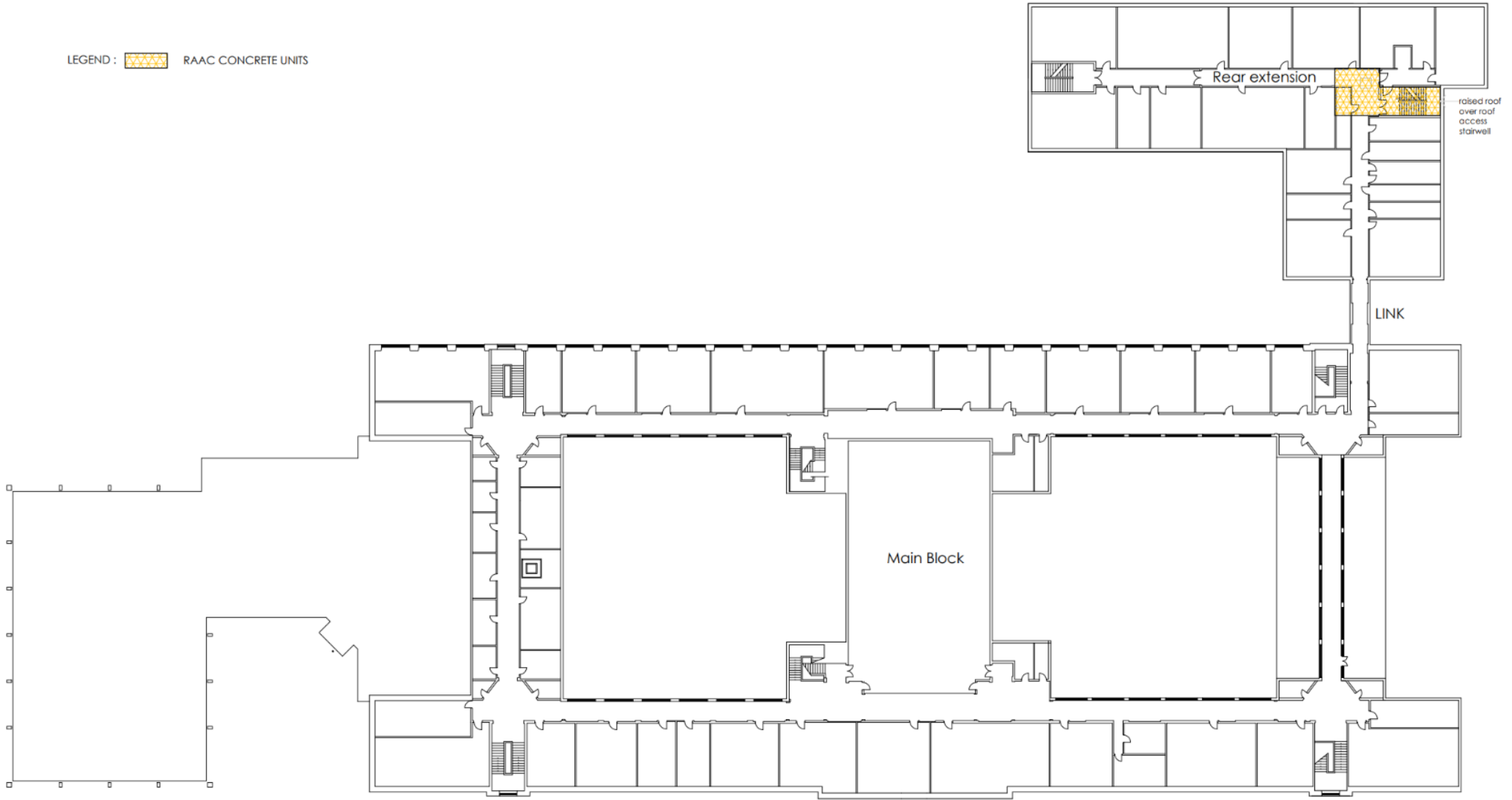
- School Estate Team: ecsassets@aberdeencity.gov.uk

5.2 Further Information

- [Standing Committee on Structural Safety \(SCOSS\) Alert 2019](#)
- [Institution of Structural Engineers Investigation & Assessment 2022](#)
- [Institution of Structural Engineers RAAC Guidance 2023](#)

Appendix 1: Locations of RAAC within St Machar Academy

LEGEND :  RAAC CONCRETE UNITS



1st FLOOR PLAN

Appendix 2: Extract from ACC RAAC Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment (general)

Section A

Risk Assessment Title: RAAC in non-housing buildings		Date of Risk Assessment: 12 January 2024
Department/area controlling the activity: Corporate Landlord	Location of activity Non-housing buildings	
Responsible Manager Job Title: Chief Officer Corporate Landlord	Print name and sign: STEPHEN BOOTH (Assessment actions outstanding)	
Risk Assessor Job Title: Team Leader Asset Management	Print Name and Sign: ALASTAIR RED	
Responsible Manager Job Title: Chief Officer Corporate Landlord	Print Name and Sign: Stephen Booth (Assessment and All Actions Completed)	
Task / Activity(ies) Being Risk Assessed: Management of Reinforced Aerated Autoclaved Concrete (RAAC) in non-housing buildings.		

Section B

Hazard	Who might be harmed? and how might they be harmed?	Existing Control Measures	Initial risk			Additional Control Measures (if action required add within the control measure)	Residual risk			Any actions required		
			Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating		Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating	Owner	Target date	Completion date and initials
RAAC is not identified in the operational portfolio.	<p>Building users. Including staff, contractors and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of unidentified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to service delivery.</p>	<p>Desktop exercise completed. Including reviewing plans and photos.</p> <p>Structural inspection of shortlisted buildings.</p> <p>Invasive testing in buildings identified as having RAAC.</p>	5	3	15	Second review of non-housing buildings.	5	2	10	Corp Landlord	31 Jan 2024	
RAAC is not identified in the commercial portfolio.	<p>Building users. Including tenants, staff, contractors and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of unidentified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to business activities.</p>	<p>Desktop exercise completed. Including reviewing plans and photos.</p> <p>Structural inspection of shortlisted buildings.</p> <p>Invasive testing in buildings identified as having RAAC</p>	5	3	15	Second review of commercial buildings.	5	2	10	Corp Landlord	31 Jan 2024	

<p>Confirmed presence of RAAC in a building.</p>	<p>Building users. Including tenants, staff, contractors, tenants and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of identified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to service delivery and business activities.</p>	<p>Inspection reports and recommendations from structural engineers.</p> <p>Buildings can be closed or partially closed (if significant issues identified).</p> <p>Avoid increasing loading.</p> <p>Programme of quarterly gutter, downpipe and roof cleaning.</p> <p>All waterproof coverings are maintained in good condition.</p> <p>Annual programme of reinspection in place.</p> <p>Updated Premises Responsible Persons guidance.</p> <p>Implement process for identification of</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>Implement management strategy.</p> <p>Provide key information and guidance e.g. location of RAAC plans to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building Services - Janitorial - PRP - Hard FM Team <p>Warning signage to be installed.</p> <p>Implement process for reinspection by structural engineers following Amber or Red weather events.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Corp Landlord / Capital</p>	<p>28 Feb 2024</p>	
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Hazard	Who might be harmed? and how might they be harmed?	Existing Control Measures	Initial risk			Additional Control Measures (if action required add within the control measure)	Residual risk			Any actions required		
			Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating		Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating	Owner	Target date	Completion date and initials
		ponding (officer inspections).										
Presence of RAAC in St Machar Academy Extension	<p>Building users. Including staff, pupils, contractors and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of identified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to service delivery.</p>	<p>Inspection report and recommendations from structural engineers.</p> <p>Temporary protection measures constructed in stairwell.</p> <p>Plans in place for business continuity if roof is identified as being unsafe.</p>	5	3	15	Removal of RAAC as part of planned roof replacement works.	5	2	10	Corp Landlord / Capital	Summer 2024	

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Management Strategy and Guidance for Northfield Academy

1. Introduction

1.1 What is RAAC?

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) is a lightweight concrete construction material that was used in the construction of some public buildings like schools and hospitals between the 1950s and 1990s. It was used mostly in flat roofing, but also in some pitched roofs, floors and walls. It was quicker to produce, easier to install, and cheaper than standard concrete. Despite its name, it is very different to traditional concrete although it looks similar. It is aerated, or 'bubbly', and is therefore less durable than traditional concrete. RAAC can be susceptible to failure when exposed to moisture. The 'bubbles' can allow water to enter the material. This moisture can also cause decay in any reinforcement steel (also known as rebar) present in the material. Unexpected collapses due to construction defects can occur in exceptional and very rare circumstances.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

This document sets out the plans which have been put in place to manage the RAAC which has been identified within Northfield Academy, and how the associated risks will be mitigated. It also provides guidance to the Premises Responsible Person, janitors and other relevant building users, on their responsibilities for reporting any concerns relating to the areas of the building known to contain RAAC.

2. Presence of RAAC in Northfield Academy

RAAC is known to be present within the roof panels of the following areas of the school:

- Management Offices
- Staffroom / Hairdressing
- Assembly Hall / Stage
- Games Hall
- Reprographics
- Pupil Support
- Pupil Toilets
- Technical Department
- RME
- PSE

See Appendix 1 for a floorplan which shows the location of these areas.

3. Risk Assessment

Aberdeen City Council has created a risk assessment to record and manage the risks associated with RAAC in all of the Council's affected buildings. An extract from the risk assessment, which covers the risks for Northfield Academy, is included at Appendix 2 below.

4. Management Plan

4.1 Annual Surveys

The RAAC panels within the buildings will be visually inspected annually, to check their condition and whether there is any increased risk associated with them. These annual surveys will be instructed and managed by Corporate Landlord. It is anticipated that surveys would be carried out during school summer holidays, to minimise the impact on school operations.

4.2 Extreme weather events

Additional inspections of RAAC panels will be instructed following extreme weather events (i.e. following significant periods of rain or snowfall, indicated by an amber or red weather warning). These inspections will be instructed and managed by Corporate Landlord, and may need to be carried out during term time / normal school hours.

4.3 Roof / gutter cleaning schedules

Orders will be issued to Building Services every three months for the necessary cleaning to be carried out, to maintain drainage from affected roof areas. This work will be instructed and managed by Corporate Landlord.

4.4 Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to the condition of the roofs or ceilings within the affected areas of the building, including any visible damage, leaks or changes to the appearance of ceiling or roof panels, should be reported to the Non-Housing Repairs Service Desk (see contact details below). Information provided to the service desk should include the fact that the building is known to contain RAAC.

4.5 Signage requirements

Signage is being developed that will indicate the presence of RAAC roof panels within the building, ensuring the building owner / occupants / users are aware of the concerns relating to RAAC and providing reassurances that appropriate measures are being undertaken.

5. Contacts and Further Information

5.1 Key Contacts

For reporting all concerns, defects, damage etc:

- Non-Housing Repairs Service Desk: **01224 070100** (Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm)
- Regional Communications Centre - **0845 608 0919 / 01224 219281** (Mon-Fri 5pm-8.30am & at Weekends)

General enquiries relating to RAAC and the RAAC Management Strategy:

- School Estate Team: ecsassets@aberdeencity.gov.uk

5.2 Further Information

- [Standing Committee on Structural Safety \(SCOSS\) Alert 2019](#)
- [Institution of Structural Engineers Investigation & Assessment 2022](#)
- [Institution of Structural Engineers RAAC Guidance 2023](#)

Appendix 2: Extract from ACC RAAC Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment (general)

Section A

Risk Assessment Title: RAAC in non-housing buildings		Date of Risk Assessment: 12 January 2024
Department/area controlling the activity: Corporate Landlord	Location of activity Non-housing buildings	
Responsible Manager Job Title: Chief Officer Corporate Landlord	Print name and sign: STEPHEN BOOTH (Assessment actions outstanding)	
Risk Assessor Job Title: Team Leader Asset Management	Print Name and Sign: ALASTAIR RED	
Responsible Manager Job Title: Chief Officer Corporate Landlord	Print Name and Sign: Stephen Booth (Assessment and All Actions Completed)	
Task / Activity(ies) Being Risk Assessed: Management of Reinforced Aerated Autoclaved Concrete (RAAC) in non-housing buildings.		

Section B

Hazard	Who might be harmed? and how might they be harmed?	Existing Control Measures	Initial risk			Additional Control Measures (if action required add within the control measure)	Residual risk			Any actions required		
			Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating		Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating	Owner	Target date	Completion date and initials
RAAC is not identified in the operational portfolio.	<p>Building users. Including staff, contractors and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of unidentified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to service delivery.</p>	<p>Desktop exercise completed. Including reviewing plans and photos.</p> <p>Structural inspection of shortlisted buildings.</p> <p>Invasive testing in buildings identified as having RAAC.</p>	5	3	15	Second review of non-housing buildings.	5	2	10	Corp Landlord	31 Jan 2024	
RAAC is not identified in the commercial portfolio.	<p>Building users. Including tenants, staff, contractors and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of unidentified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to business activities.</p>	<p>Desktop exercise completed. Including reviewing plans and photos.</p> <p>Structural inspection of shortlisted buildings.</p> <p>Invasive testing in buildings identified as having RAAC</p>	5	3	15	Second review of commercial buildings.	5	2	10	Corp Landlord	31 Jan 2024	

<p>Confirmed presence of RAAC in a building.</p>	<p>Building users. Including tenants, staff, contractors, tenants and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of identified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to service delivery and business activities.</p>	<p>Inspection reports and recommendations from structural engineers.</p> <p>Buildings can be closed or partially closed (if significant issues identified).</p> <p>Avoid increasing loading.</p> <p>Programme of quarterly gutter, downpipe and roof cleaning.</p> <p>All waterproof coverings are maintained in good condition.</p> <p>Annual programme of reinspection in place.</p> <p>Updated Premises Responsible Persons guidance.</p> <p>Implement process for identification of</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>Implement management strategy.</p> <p>Provide key information and guidance e.g. location of RAAC plans to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building Services - Janitorial - PRP - Hard FM Team <p>Warning signage to be installed.</p> <p>Implement process for reinspection by structural engineers following Amber or Red weather events.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Corp Landlord / Capital</p>	<p>28 Feb 2024</p>	
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			Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating		Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating	Owner	Target date	Completion date and initials
		ponding (officer inspections).										
Presence of RAAC in Northfield Academy	<p>Building users. Including staff, pupils, contractors and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of identified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to service delivery.</p>	<p>Inspection report and recommendations from structural engineers.</p> <p>Plans in place for business continuity if roof is identified as being unsafe.</p>	5	3	15	To be considered as part of a future update of the School Estate Plan.	5	2	10	Corp Landlord / Capital	TBC	

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Management Strategy and Guidance for Hazlehead Academy

1. Introduction

1.1 What is RAAC?

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) is a lightweight concrete construction material that was used in the construction of some public buildings like schools and hospitals between the 1950s and 1990s. It was used mostly in flat roofing, but also in some pitched roofs, floors and walls. It was quicker to produce, easier to install, and cheaper than standard concrete. Despite its name, it is very different to traditional concrete although it looks similar. It is aerated, or 'bubbly', and is therefore less durable than traditional concrete. RAAC can be susceptible to failure when exposed to moisture. The 'bubbles' can allow water to enter the material. This moisture can also cause decay in any reinforcement steel (also known as rebar) present in the material. Unexpected collapses due to construction defects can occur in exceptional and very rare circumstances.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

This document sets out the plans which have been put in place to manage the RAAC which has been identified within Hazlehead Academy, and how the associated risks will be mitigated. It also provides guidance to the Premises Responsible Person, janitors and other relevant building users, on their responsibilities for reporting any concerns relating to the areas of the building known to contain RAAC.

2. Presence of RAAC in Hazlehead Academy

RAAC is known to be present within the roof panels of the following areas of the school:

- Art Block
- Home Economics Block
- Music Block
- Technical Department
- Gym / Games Hall & Changing Rooms

See Appendix 1 for a floorplan which shows the location of these buildings.

3. Risk Assessment

Aberdeen City Council has created a risk assessment to record and manage the risks associated with RAAC in all of the Council's affected buildings. An extract from the risk assessment, which covers the risks for Hazlehead Academy, is included at Appendix 2 below.

4. Management Plan

4.1 Annual Surveys

The RAAC panels within the buildings will be visually inspected annually, to check their condition and whether there is any increased risk associated with them. These annual surveys will be instructed and managed by Corporate Landlord. It is anticipated that surveys would be carried out during school summer holidays, to minimise the impact on school operations.

4.2 Extreme weather events

Additional inspections of RAAC panels will be instructed following extreme weather events (i.e. following significant periods of rain or snowfall, indicated by an amber or red weather warning). These inspections will be instructed and managed by Corporate Landlord, and may need to be carried out during term time / normal school hours.

4.3 Roof / gutter cleaning schedules

Orders will be issued to Building Services every three months for the necessary cleaning to be carried out, to maintain drainage from affected roof areas. This work will be instructed and managed by Corporate Landlord.

4.4 Reporting Concerns

Any concerns relating to the condition of the roofs or ceilings within the affected areas of the building, including any visible damage, leaks or changes to the appearance of ceiling or roof panels, should be reported to the Non-Housing Repairs Service Desk (see contact details below). Information provided to the service desk should include the fact that the building is known to contain RAAC.

4.5 Signage requirements

Signage is being developed that will indicate the presence of RAAC roof panels within the building, ensuring the building owner / occupants / users are aware of the concerns relating to RAAC and providing reassurances that appropriate measures are being undertaken.

5. Contacts and Further Information

5.1 Key Contacts

For reporting all concerns, defects, damage etc:

- Non-Housing Repairs Service Desk: **01224 070100** (Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm)
- Regional Communications Centre - **0845 608 0919 / 01224 219281** (Mon-Fri 5pm-8.30am & at Weekends)

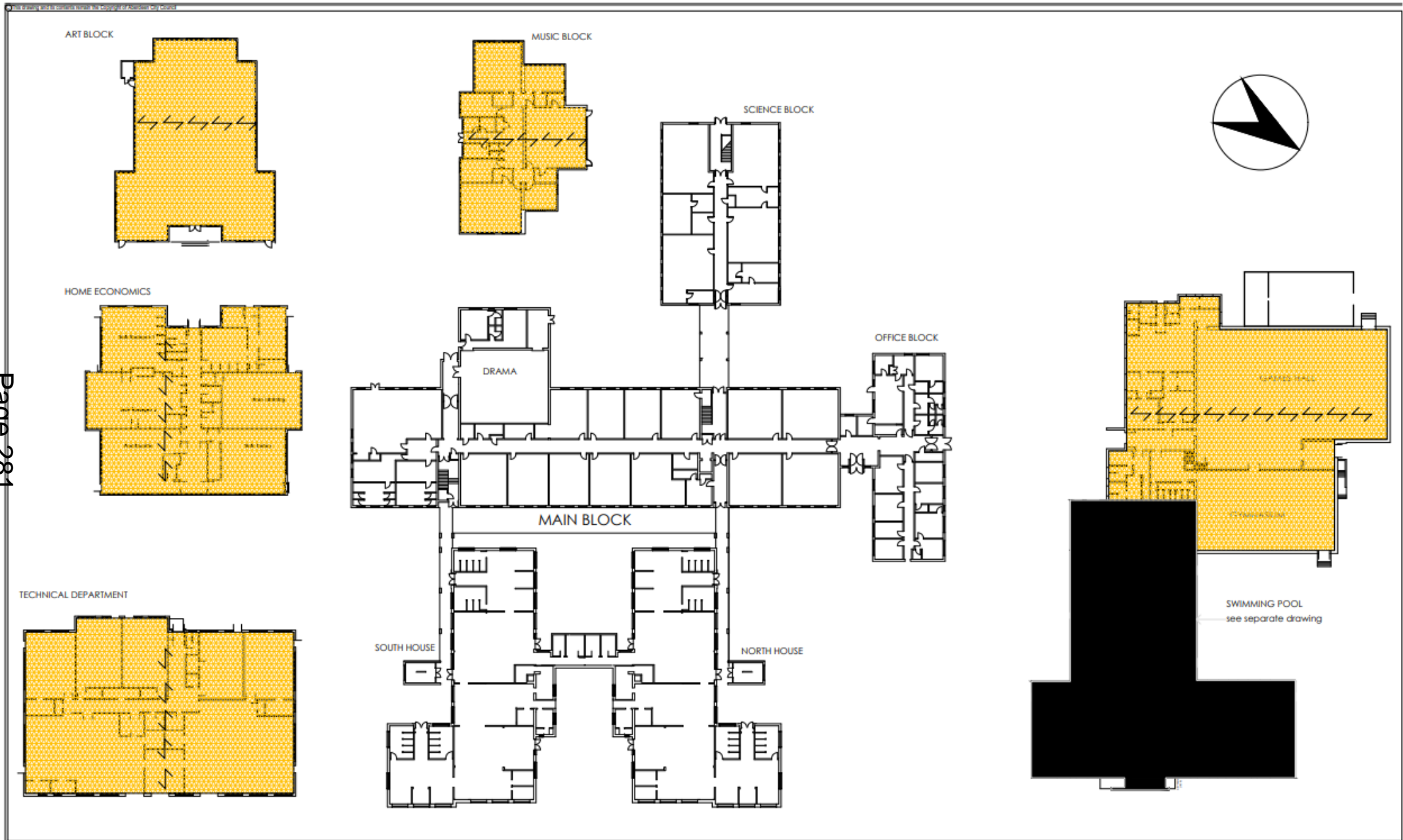
General enquiries relating to RAAC and the RAAC Management Strategy:

- School Estate Team: ecsassets@aberdeencity.gov.uk

5.2 Further Information

- [Standing Committee on Structural Safety \(SCOSS\) Alert 2019](#)
- [Institution of Structural Engineers Investigation & Assessment 2022](#)
- [Institution of Structural Engineers RAAC Guidance 2023](#)

Appendix 1: Locations of RAAC within Hazlehead Academy



Appendix 2: Extract from ACC RAAC Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment (general)

Section A

Risk Assessment Title: RAAC in non-housing buildings		Date of Risk Assessment: 12 January 2024
Department/area controlling the activity: Corporate Landlord	Location of activity Non-housing buildings	
Responsible Manager Job Title: Chief Officer Corporate Landlord	Print name and sign: STEPHEN BOOTH (Assessment actions outstanding)	
Risk Assessor Job Title: Team Leader Asset Management	Print Name and Sign: ALASTAIR RED	
Responsible Manager Job Title: Chief Officer Corporate Landlord	Print Name and Sign: Stephen Booth (Assessment and All Actions Completed)	
Task / Activity(ies) Being Risk Assessed: Management of Reinforced Aerated Autoclaved Concrete (RAAC) in non-housing buildings.		

Section B

Hazard	Who might be harmed? and how might they be harmed?	Existing Control Measures	Initial risk			Additional Control Measures (if action required add within the control measure)	Residual risk			Any actions required		
			Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating		Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating	Owner	Target date	Completion date and initials
RAAC is not identified in the operational portfolio.	<p>Building users. Including staff, contractors and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of unidentified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to service delivery.</p>	<p>Desktop exercise completed. Including reviewing plans and photos.</p> <p>Structural inspection of shortlisted buildings.</p> <p>Invasive testing in buildings identified as having RAAC.</p>	5	3	15	Second review of non-housing buildings.	5	2	10	Corp Landlord	31 Jan 2024	
RAAC is not identified in the commercial portfolio.	<p>Building users. Including tenants, staff, contractors and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of unidentified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to business activities.</p>	<p>Desktop exercise completed. Including reviewing plans and photos.</p> <p>Structural inspection of shortlisted buildings.</p> <p>Invasive testing in buildings identified as having RAAC</p>	5	3	15	Second review of commercial buildings.	5	2	10	Corp Landlord	31 Jan 2024	

<p>Confirmed presence of RAAC in a building.</p>	<p>Building users. Including tenants, staff, contractors, tenants and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of identified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to service delivery and business activities.</p>	<p>Inspection reports and recommendations from structural engineers.</p> <p>Buildings can be closed or partially closed (if significant issues identified).</p> <p>Avoid increasing loading.</p> <p>Programme of quarterly gutter, downpipe and roof cleaning.</p> <p>All waterproof coverings are maintained in good condition.</p> <p>Annual programme of reinspection in place.</p> <p>Updated Premises Responsible Persons guidance.</p> <p>Implement process for identification of</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>Implement management strategy.</p> <p>Provide key information and guidance e.g. location of RAAC plans to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building Services - Janitorial - PRP - Hard FM Team <p>Warning signage to be installed.</p> <p>Implement process for reinspection by structural engineers following Amber or Red weather events.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Corp Landlord / Capital</p>	<p>28 Feb 2024</p>	
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Hazard	Who might be harmed? and how might they be harmed?	Existing Control Measures	Initial risk			Additional Control Measures (if action required add within the control measure)	Residual risk			Any actions required		
			Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating		Severity	Likelihood	Risk rating	Owner	Target date	Completion date and initials
		ponding (officer inspections).										
Presence of RAAC in Hazlehead Academy	<p>Building users. Including staff, pupils, contractors and members of the public.</p> <p>Harm:- Injury or death via sudden collapse of identified RAAC.</p> <p>Interruption to service delivery.</p>	<p>Inspection report and recommendations from structural engineers.</p> <p>Plans in place for business continuity if roof is identified as being unsafe.</p> <p>Remedial work completed.</p>	5	3	15	<p>Review presence of Photovoltaic Panels.</p> <p>Demolition as part of new build school (awaiting approval).</p>	5	2	10	<p>Corp Landlord / Capital</p> <p>Corp Landlord / Capital</p>	<p>22 Dec 2023</p> <p>TBC</p>	

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Northfield Primary Schools Excess Capacity
REPORT NUMBER	RES/24/054
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 summary of the findings from a recent feasibility study, which aimed to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools within the Northfield Associated Schools Group (ASG).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of this report; 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 Northfield ASG, alongside the planned review of the long term future of Northfield Academy, and to include an update on progress within the annual update to the School Estate Plan in September 2024.

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 for officers to carry out a feasibility study, to identify options for reducing the number of primary schools within the Northfield 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 At its meeting on 8 November 2022, in relation to the above instruction, the Committee agreed that "officers should fully explore and exhaust all options in order to avoid any such school closures where possible".
- 3.3 A feasibility study was carried out between March and June 2023, and this included a stakeholder engagement exercise, 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.

- 3.4 A summary of the findings of the feasibility study and stakeholder engagement is provided at Appendix 1. This includes details of the options which were considered viable and which therefore required to be explored further within an outline business case, in order to identify a preferred option for recommendation to the Committee.
- 3.5 However, following the conclusion of the feasibility study and stakeholder engagement, work on progressing this project was paused, whilst inspections of the primary schools in Northfield were undertaken, to check for the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC). This followed concerns raised nationally relating to the safety of buildings containing this type of material in their roof structures, and it was deemed prudent to delay making any recommendations on the closure of specific schools until the status of the buildings in relation to RAAC had been determined.
- 3.6 It has subsequently been confirmed that none of the primary schools in Northfield contain RAAC, although RAAC was confirmed to be present in a large part of the Northfield Academy building. In a separate report to the Committee for its meeting on 20 February 2024, detailing the arrangements for managing the RAAC at Northfield Academy and the other schools it has been found to be present in, officers have recommended that consideration should be given to the long term future of Northfield Academy, with a view to providing solutions to address the presence of RAAC within the building. The report recommends that officers are instructed to provide the Committee with an update on this and possible next steps at its meeting in September 2024.
- 3.7 For the Northfield primary schools, the options to be explored in the outline business case require to be assessed whilst giving consideration to the feedback received from stakeholders, including their concerns regarding the impact which the closure of a school may have on children, and the wider school community. Any preferred option would need to include provision for maintaining safe walking routes to school, which was another concern highlighted by stakeholders. The outline business case would also need to consider the instruction by Committee members to fully explore and exhaust all options in order to avoid any school closures where possible.
- 3.8 Given that there is now a requirement to consider the options for the long term future of Northfield Academy, due to the presence of RAAC within the building, this presents an opportunity to look at the school estate within this ASG as a whole, including the secondary school provision. This may generate new options for consolidating the primary schools, which were not considered within the feasibility study, and which may help to better address the concerns raised by stakeholders.
- 3.9 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 Northfield ASG, alongside the proposed work to

consider the long term future of Northfield Academy. An update on this work would be reported to the Committee as part of the annual update to the School Estate Plan in September 2024.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Any costs related to further options appraisal 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	<p>Risk that the Council is seen to make significant changes to schools without considering the views of stakeholders.</p> <p>Risk of successful legal challenge for failing to comply with statutory duties.</p>	The recommendation to take further time to consider additional options before proposing changes to 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 relationships with community members. Proposals to close schools may not be popular with some stakeholders	The recommendation to take further time to consider additional options before proposing changes to schools at this time demonstrates that full consideration has been given	L	Yes

		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 to take further time to consider additional options before proposing changes to 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 immediate 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>	<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 considers the options for providing improved school facilities in the Northfield ASG</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Prosperous People: The project will support Stretch Outcome 8 in the LOIP - <i>Childfriendly city where all decisions which impact children and young people will be informed by them by 2026.</i> The recommendation takes into account the views expressed by children and other stakeholders.
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	New Integrated Impact 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 Appendix 1: Northfield Primary Schools Feasibility Study – Summary of Findings

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Andrew Jones
Title	Service Manager
Email Address	ajones@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	045101

Northfield Primary Schools Feasibility Study June 2023

Summary of Findings

Introduction

A feasibility study was carried out between March and June 2023, and focused on reviewing each existing primary school site within the Northfield Associated Schools Group (ASG), to gather data on each school's circumstances, including building layout, condition, accessibility, overall size of the site, and how spaces are currently being used. This information was used to help identify the viability of sites to accommodate additional pupils, to allow the number of schools in the ASG to be reduced.

Reducing the number of operational primary schools within an ASG would inevitably require at least one school to be closed. Pupils displaced by the closure of a school building would then require to be provided with places in an alternative school building.

It is acknowledged that closing a school and requiring pupils to move to a different school is likely to be unsettling, for pupils and also staff, and would require to be managed carefully and sensitively. It would be important to minimise any undue stress, disruption and anxiety created by the changes being proposed.

For this reason, and in response to feedback received from stakeholders (outlined below), the options for school closures considered within the feasibility study were limited to those which would allow a whole school community to move together to the same alternative building, rather than being split across more than one of the remaining school buildings, to help maintain existing community cohesion and ensure that existing pupils' friendship groups were not separated.

The options considered also focused on schools being merged together to form a new school, with a new school name, in one of the existing buildings (or in a new building on one of the existing sites), rather than pupils from the closed school simply being expected to integrate into an existing alternative school.

Where individual school sites were identified as having the potential to accommodate a merged school, consideration was then given to which other school(s) would be most suited to being merged on that site (and therefore could potentially be closed). The first consideration here was proximity – schools to be merged together would need to be adjacent to one another, to ensure that pupils continue to live within a reasonable walking distance of their school, and to allow catchment areas to be altered appropriately to create a new catchment area for the newly merged school.

For each of the schools adjacent to an identified site, consideration was then given to whether it would be appropriate to propose closing that school, whether the identified site could accommodate the forecast pupil numbers from that school, and whether such a merger would bring about educational benefits.

Stakeholder Feedback

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 on the proposal to consider reducing the number of schools in the ASG. Key messages from the feedback received include:

- Concerns about the impact on children and their families, if any of the primary schools in Northfield were to be closed
- The value of the existing schools' sense of community, and the need to avoid breaking up communities if a school was to be closed
- The need to maintain reasonable and safe walking distances from home to school, if the number of schools were to be reduced
- The need to avoid the remaining schools becoming overcrowded, if a school was 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.

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, all options assessed in the feasibility study which involved using existing buildings to accommodate merged schools, included a consideration of what adjustments would be required to these buildings to ensure there would be sufficient space to accommodate additional pupils. An assessment of any adjustments required to provide appropriate space for additional support needs provision was also carried out. It was assumed from an early stage in the feasibility study that merging schools together into one building and making no adjustments to the building, would not be a desirable option.

School Sites – Potential Options

The feasibility study and feedback from stakeholders helped to identify which of the existing school buildings or sites could potentially accommodate additional pupils, either by reconfiguring the existing building to create additional classroom space if required (whilst also maintaining sufficient space for children with additional support needs), or replacing the building with a new, larger building. This provided options for these particular schools to be merged with an adjacent school, which could then subsequently be closed.

Some options were quickly discounted at the feasibility stage, where it was immediately clear that these were unlikely to be viable, due to lack of space in the building or on site for example, or where moving additional pupils to that building was unlikely to bring about any educational benefit.

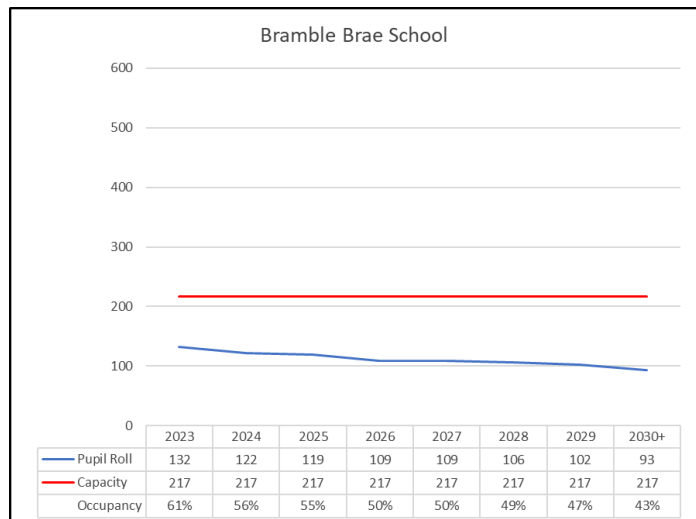
The options which were discounted early during the feasibility study, and those which were deemed likely to be viable and therefore requiring further detailed exploration within a business case, are set out below.

Annual running cost figures in the tables below include energy and utility costs, grounds and building maintenance, waste disposal and business rates. The required maintenance figures represent an estimation of the investment which is likely to be required at each site over the next five years, to fully resolve all elements of the building which have been identified for repair or replacement within the most recent condition survey.

School roll forecast figures used in this document were taken from the most recent draft school roll forecast, which was completed in Summer 2023. Figures shown for the pupil roll in 2023 are actual figures.

Bramble Brae School Site

School Roll / Capacity Forecast



Available Class Spaces:	7
Number of Operational Classes in 2022/23:	6
Operational Class Spaces Required in 2030:	4

Building Condition Rating:	B
Building Suitability Rating:	B
Annual Running Cost:	£200,000
Required Maintenance (next 5 years):	£475,000

Site Features / Challenges (highlighted within feasibility study)

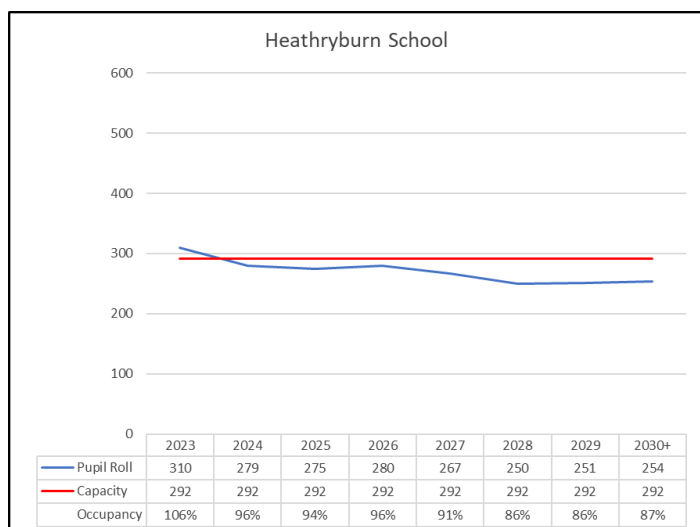
- Limited classroom spaces in existing building
- The school has only one hall for assembly / gym
- Dining space within the building is severely limited
- One classroom space is in use by counselling services
- Space on site for a larger building is very limited
- Sloping site - would make extension or building replacement challenging

Conclusion

Due to the above site limitations, there were no potentially viable options identified to allow a merged school to be accommodated on the Bramble Brae site.

Heathryburn School Site

School Roll / Capacity Forecast



Available Class Spaces:	10
Number of Operational Classes in 2022/23:	13
Operational Class Spaces Required in 2030:	9

Building Condition Rating:	A
Building Suitability Rating:	A
Annual Running Cost:	£1.1m*
Required Maintenance (next 5 years):	N/A**

***As a 3Rs school, annual running costs include the unitary charge payment which covers the cost of construction of the building.**

****The 3Rs contract requires the school to be maintained at a Condition A rating and maintenance costs are included within the contract.**

Site Features / Challenges (highlighted within feasibility study)

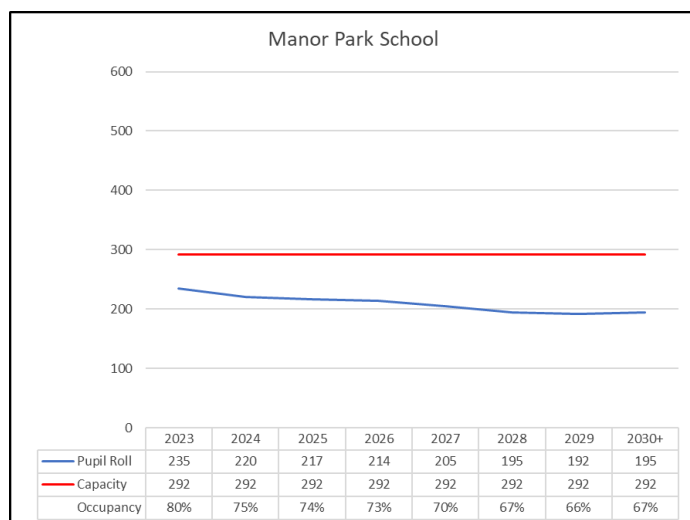
- 3Rs school - modern well maintained building
- School currently over capacity
- Cloakroom and GP spaces have been temporarily repurposed to provide additional class space
- Site benefits from two halls and an all-weather pitch
- 3Rs contract would make extending or replacing the building complex and costly

Conclusion

Due to limited available spare capacity at this school, there were no potentially viable options identified to allow a merged school to be accommodated on the Heathryburn site.

Manor Park School Site

School Roll / Capacity Forecast



Available Class Spaces:	10
Number of Operational Classes in 2022/23:	10
Operational Class Spaces Required in 2030:	7

Building Condition Rating:	A
Building Suitability Rating:	A
Annual Running Cost:	£1.1m*
Required Maintenance (next 5 years):	N/A**

***As a 3Rs school, annual running costs include the unitary charge payment which covers the cost of construction of the building.**

****The 3Rs contract requires the school to be maintained at a Condition A rating and maintenance costs are included within the contract.**

Site Features / Challenges (highlighted within feasibility study)

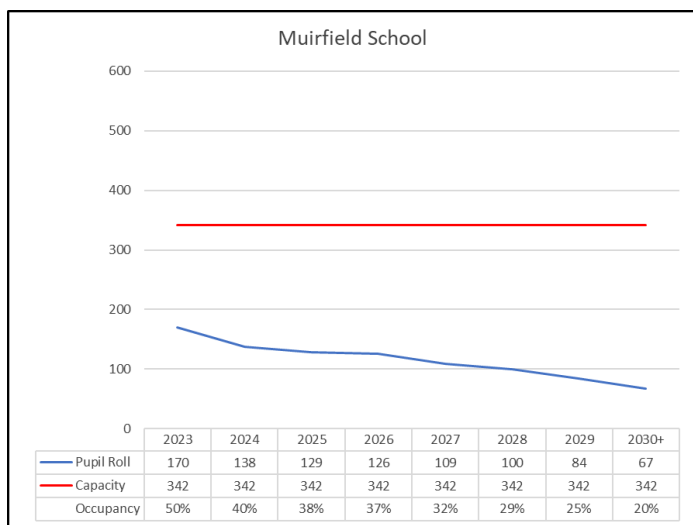
- 3Rs school - modern well maintained building
- Site benefits from two halls and an all-weather pitch
- Layout of building including generous cloakroom spaces provide opportunities to create additional class spaces
- 3Rs contract would make extending or replacing the building complex and costly

Conclusion

Given that there is some spare capacity within this building, it may be possible to merge Manor Park School with another school, to be accommodated on the Manor Park School site. The two schools within the Northfield ASG which are adjacent to Manor Park School are Heathryburn School and Bramble Brae School, and the viability of merging Manor Park with either one of these schools should be set out within an outline business case.

Muirfield School Site

School Roll / Capacity Forecast



Available Class Spaces:	12
Number of Operational Classes in 2022/23:	7
Operational Class Spaces Required in 2030:	3

Building Condition Rating:	B
Building Suitability Rating:	B
Annual Running Cost:	£225,000
Required Maintenance (next 5 years):	£47,000

Site Features / Challenges (highlighted within feasibility study)

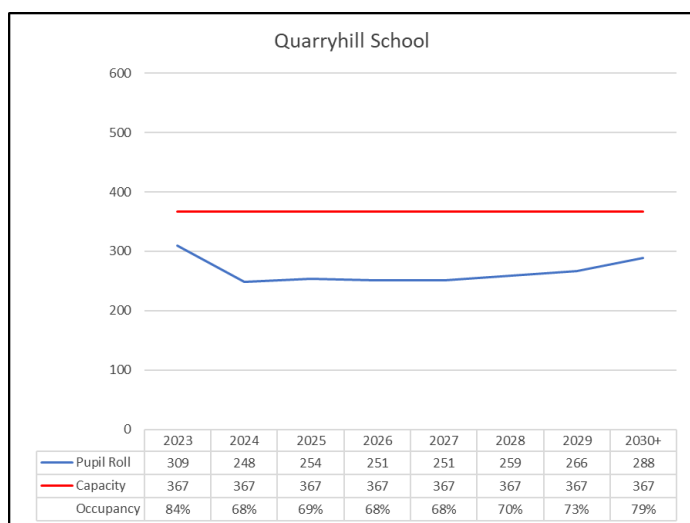
- School roll well below capacity and forecast to continue to fall
- Some classroom spaces in use by Music Service, and others used for other purposes including after school club, nurture space, support for learning – these could be reinstated as classrooms to accommodate pupils from another school
- Two halls available

Summary

Given that there is significant spare capacity within this building, merging Muirfield School with another school to be accommodated on the Muirfield site, may be viable. The two schools within the Northfield ASG which are adjacent to Muirfield School are Westpark School and Quarryhill School, and the viability of merging Muirfield with either one of these schools should be explored within an outline business case.

Quarryhill School Site

School Roll / Capacity Forecast



Available Class Spaces:	13
Number of Operational Classes in 2022/23:	12
Operational Class Spaces Required in 2030:	10

Building Condition Rating:	B
Building Suitability Rating:	C
Annual Running Cost:	£193,000
Required Maintenance (next 5 years):	£154,000

Site Features / Challenges (highlighted within feasibility study)

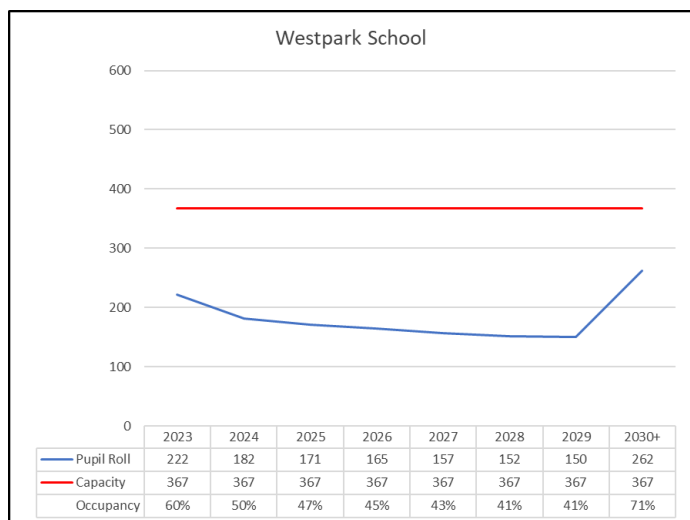
- Some spaces in the school not currently used as classrooms could be repurposed to create additional classroom spaces
- Only one hall for assembly / gym / dining
- Building condition is rated as 'C' (Poor)
- Building not fully accessible due to changes in floor level throughout the building
- The nursery at the school was recently refurbished

Conclusion

The findings of the feasibility study suggest that there could be capacity within the Quarryhill School building to accommodate a merged school on the Quarryhill site. The three schools within the Northfield ASG which are adjacent to Quarryhill School are Bramble Brae School, Westpark School and Muirfield School, and the viability of merging Quarryhill with any one of these schools should be explored within an outline business case.

Westpark School Site

School Roll / Capacity Forecast



Available Class Spaces:	11
Number of Operational Classes in 2022/23:	10
Operational Class Spaces Required in 2030:	9

Building Condition Rating:	B
Building Suitability Rating:	B
Annual Running Cost:	£342,000
Required Maintenance (next 5 years):	£224,000

The forecast pupil roll and required operational class spaces above include the expected increase in demand for places at Westpark School which will be generated by the planned housing development at Greenferns, which falls largely within the school's catchment area.

It is likely that the school will require to be extended in the future, to accommodate the anticipated increases in pupil numbers due to the planned additional housing. Consequently, it is not considered viable to merge Westpark School with any other schools, as this would limit the school's capacity to accommodate the new development.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, no viable options were identified for using the Westpark School site to accommodate a merged school.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	School Estate Plan Revised Timeline
REPORT NUMBER	RES/24/055
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Jones
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents a draft revised timeline for continuing to implement the recommended actions from the School Estate Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

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

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At its meeting of 8 September 2022, the former Education Operational Delivery Committee approved the Council's School Estate Plan, and subsequently on 8 November 2022, the Education and Children's Services Committee considered and approved a detailed timeline for the implementation of the individual actions contained within the School Estate Plan.
- 3.2 At its meeting of 12 September 2023, the Committee was presented with the first annual update to the School Estate Plan, which provided details of progress to date with each of the projects and priorities within the Plan, along with an indication of the timescales for carrying out the remaining projects.
- 3.3 As a consequence of concerns raised nationally regarding the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in some school buildings, and the requirement for the School Estate Team to prioritise their response to these concerns from late August 2023 onwards, a number of projects within the School Estate Plan programmed to be under way in Autumn/Winter 2023 were

delayed. This has subsequently impacted on the planned timelines for projects which are scheduled to be undertaken in 2024.

- 3.4 Consequently, it has become necessary to reprioritise projects and revise the overall timeline for the School Estate Plan, to ensure that it can be delivered successfully within the limits of the available staffing and capital resources.
- 3.5 The revised and reprioritised timeline is included at Appendix 1. The significant changes to the programme and timeline are summarised below.

Bucksburn / Newhills additional primary provision

- 3.6 At its meeting of 4 July 2023, the Committee approved a recommendation to carry out a statutory public consultation on the establishment of a new primary school and related changes to the existing catchment area for Brimmond School, to serve planned new housing within the Newhills Development Area. At that time officers anticipated that the consultation would be launched in Winter 2023/24.
- 3.7 Having reviewed the forecast pupil numbers likely to be generated by the Newhills development, and the available capacity at Brimmond School, the catchment area for which currently includes the new housing, officers have determined that there is no immediate requirement to start work on the construction of the proposed new school, and therefore that it would not be appropriate to launch a public consultation on such proposals at this point in time.
- 3.8 To relieve pressure on staff resources, it is proposed that the launch of the consultation is delayed, and this has been reflected within the revised programme at Appendix A. Officers will continue to regularly monitor progress with the construction of housing within the new development, and future updates to pupil roll forecasts, to determine when would be the optimum time to commence work on establishing a new school, and therefore when it would be appropriate to launch a public consultation on this proposal. An update on this will be provided within the annual update to the School Estate Plan, in September 2024.

Northfield ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity

- 3.9 As noted within a separate report to the Committee for its meeting on 20 February 2024, detailing the outcomes of a feasibility study on reducing the number of primary schools within the Northfield Associated Schools Group (ASG), officers have recommended that further work is undertaken to identify potential future options for improving and consolidating primary school provision in the Northfield ASG, alongside the proposed work to consider the long term future of Northfield Academy.
- 3.10 The date for reporting back to the Committee with an outline business case and a preferred option has therefore been moved within the revised programme at Appendix A, to allow time for this further work to be carried out. An update on

this work would be reported to the Committee as part of the annual update to the School Estate Plan in September 2024.

Victorian School Building Improvements

- 3.11 Preparatory work for the feasibility study to look at options for improving the city's Victorian school buildings was undertaken in 2023. The feasibility study itself was launched in January 2024, and is currently ongoing. Emerging findings from the work undertaken to date indicate that the costs involved in carrying out the required improvements at each of these buildings will be significant.
- 3.12 Due to the number of buildings included in this project and the extent of the works likely to be required at each, more time will be required to carry out the feasibility study, to fully assess the requirements in each building, to identify options for bringing about the necessary improvements, and for designing and costing potential solutions to be presented in an outline business case.
- 3.13 Meanwhile, feasibility studies have been carried out to identify improvements for Harlaw Academy and Ferryhill School, which are also Victorian buildings but which are being treated as separate projects, because they are considered to be the highest priority for requiring improvement to their condition and suitability. Outline business cases for these two projects are being drafted, and due to the extent of the work required to bring about the necessary improvements to these buildings, significant capital funding and also staffing resource will be required to deliver the preferred options which have been identified within the business cases.
- 3.14 Given the clear need to find appropriate solutions for improving all of our Victorian school buildings, whilst also recognising that there are currently limited resources for managing these (both in terms of budget and also staffing), the timeline for delivering these projects has been adjusted. This will allow the required additional time this year for the feasibility study to fully investigate each building in the Victorian Schools project, and to allow a more detailed and costed outline business case to be presented for committee consideration, with a view to the required improvement works commencing from 2025 onwards.
- 3.15 The adjusted programme, as shown within Appendix A, will also allow priority to be given this year to progressing the outline business cases for Harlaw Academy and Ferryhill School, which are in the process of being drafted. This will help to ensure that if the business cases are approved, works to improve these buildings can be started as soon as possible.

Loirston Loch Additional Primary Provision

- 3.16 The approved School Estate Plan includes an instruction to officers to carry out a feasibility study to consider options for creating additional primary school capacity to serve the planned Loirston Loch development. It was originally intended for this feasibility study to be undertaken from Autumn/Winter 2023/24.

- 3.17 There has been limited progress with the Loirston Loch development to date, which means any required additional school capacity is not likely to be required for some time. To help manage staff resources, it is therefore proposed that this feasibility study is delayed, and this has been reflected in the revised programme at Appendix A. Officers will continue to monitor progress with the proposed new development, and future updates to pupil roll forecasts, to determine when would be the optimum time to commence the feasibility study. An update on this will be provided within future annual updates to the School Estate Plan.

St Peter's RC School Refurbishment

- 3.18 At its meeting on 13 December 2023, Council instructed officers to take forwards the refurbishment of Old Aberdeen House and an extension to provide refurbished accommodation for St Peter's School. This project has been added to the timeline at Appendix A to allow for progress with the project to be reported and monitored alongside the rest of the School Estate Plan.

Summary

- 3.19 For the reasons outlined above, the programme for the implementation of the School Estate Plan has been revised and reprofiled. It is recommended that the Committee instructs officers to implement the School Estate Plan in accordance with the revised timeline presented at Appendix 1 of this report.

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 revised implementation plan are in fulfilment of the above duties incumbent upon the Education Authority.

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

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Failure to plan effectively for the school estate, leading to schools becoming over / under subscribed	The School Estate Plan and revised implementation plan set out the priorities for the school estate and proposals for continually monitoring and updating plans, to ensure adequate and efficient provision is maintained	L	Yes
Compliance	(1) Failure to plan effectively for the school estate, leading to the Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate	1) The School Estate Plan and revised implementation plan set out the priorities for the school estate and proposals for continually monitoring and	L	Yes

	<p>and efficient provision</p> <p>(2) Failure to consult formally with stakeholders on changes to schools would be in breach of legislation</p>	<p>updating plans, to ensure adequate and efficient provision is maintained</p> <p>(2) Any proposed changes to schools arising from the School Estate Plan will incorporate full statutory consultation to ensure compliance with legislation</p>		
Operational	<p>Failure to engage and consult with 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</p>	<p>The School Estate Plan emphasises an approach which places community engagement and consultation at the centre</p>	L	Yes
Financial	<p>High construction inflation likely to lead to increased costs for construction projects</p>	<p>Outline business cases and full business cases will be regularly reviewed, to ensure estimated costs are up to date, and any increases above approved budgets will be reported through the Council's established governance processes.</p>	M	Yes

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</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>This report supports the delivery of the following policy statements:</p> <p><u>A City of Opportunity</u></p> <p>Policy Statement 2 - Review and invest in our school estate, ensuring all of Aberdeen's schools are fit for the educational needs and the challenges of the 21st century. The report seeks Committee's approval of the revised implementation timeline for the School Estate Plan, which will help bring about improvements to the school estate.</p> <p><u>A Prosperous City</u></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.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of Stretch Outcome 8 in the LOIP – Child friendly city where all decisions which impact children and young people will be informed by them by 2026. The School Estate Plan and revised implementation plan set out how all stakeholders including children and young people will be consulted on proposals to make changes to the school estate.
Regional and City Strategies	The School Estate Plan and revised implementation plan will support the delivery of the Council's Property and Estates Strategy (currently in draft).

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment (Stage 1) relating to the School Estate Plan Implementation 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](#).
- 10.2 Education and Children's Services Committee, 8 November 2022: Agenda Item 10: [School Estate Plan Implementation Plan](#).

- 10.3 Education and Children's Services Committee, 4 July 2023: Agenda Item 5: [Newhills Additional Primary School Provision](#).
- 10.4 Education and Children's Services Committee, 12 September 2023: Agenda Item 16: [School Estate Plan Annual Update 2023](#).

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 : School Estate Plan Revised Implementation Plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix 1 : Revised Implementation Plan (February 2024)

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	Previously Reported Timescale	Current Status	Revised Timescale
HH1 - Hazlehead / Countesswells Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Autumn 22 - Summer 23	In Progress (On Track)	
<i>Develop and submit LEIP funding application</i>	Autumn 2022	Complete	
Deadline for LEIP application	31/10/2022	Complete	
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	Autumn/Winter 22/23	Complete	
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Winter 22 - Spring 23	Complete	
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	17/05/2023	Complete	
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	04/07/2023	Complete	
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC		Winter/Spring 24
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC		TBC
A5 - Review signage in all schools	Autumn 22 - Summer 23	In Progress (Revised Dates)	
<i>Research / project scoping</i>	Autumn 22	Complete	
<i>Survey schools</i>	Winter 22/23	Complete	
<i>Implement Changes</i>	Spring/Summer 23	In Progress	Spring/Summer 24
B2 - Bucksburn / Newhills additional primary provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Autumn 22 - Summer 23	In Progress (On Track)	
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	Autumn 22	Complete	
<i>Feasibility Study & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	Winter 22/23	Complete	
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Winter/Spring 23	Complete	
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	17/05/2023	Complete	
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	04/07/2023	Complete	
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC		TBC
O2 - Greenbrae School rezoning - Consultation	Autumn 22 - Spring 23	Complete	
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	Autumn/Winter 22	Complete	
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	21/03/2023	Complete	
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC	Complete	
B1 - Bucksburn Academy Extension - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Autumn 22 - Spring 23		
<i>Update and finalise OBC</i>	Autumn/Winter 22	Complete	
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC		Winter 24/25
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC		TBC
L2 - Walker Road School Relocation - Consultation	Winter 22/23 - Spring 23	Complete	
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	Winter 22/23	Complete	
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	21/03/2023	Complete	
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC	Complete	
N2 - Northfield ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 22/23 - Autumn 23	In Progress (Revised Dates)	
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	Winter 22/23	Complete	
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	Spring/Summer 23	Complete	
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Spring/Summer 23	Complete	
ECS Committee Meeting - consider recommendations from OBC	12/09/2023		TBC
F&R Committee Meeting - consider recommendations from OBC	13/09/2023		TBC
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC		TBC
O3 - Oldmachar ASG Primary Schools Excess Capacity - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 22/23 - Autumn 23	[N/A]	
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	Winter 22/23	Complete	
<i>Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement</i>	Spring/Summer 23	Complete	
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Summer 23	Complete	
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	12/09/2023	N/A	
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	13/09/2023	N/A	
<i>Statutory Consultation*</i>	TBC		
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC		
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC		
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC		
HH4 / AG3 - Gaelic Medium Education catchment areas - consultation	Winter 22/23 - Summer 23	Complete	
<i>Statutory Consultation</i>	Winter/Spring 22/23	Complete	
ECS Committee Meeting - approve proposed changes	23/05/2023	Complete	
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC	Complete	
CA1 - Victorian School Building Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 22/23 - Spring 24	In Progress (Revised Dates)	
<i>Planning & Preparation / Analysis & Research</i>	Winter/Spring 22/23	Complete	
<i>Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessments</i>	Summer/Autumn/Winter 23/24	In Progress	Spring/Summer 24
<i>Develop OBC</i>	Winter/Spring 24		Autumn 24
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	May 2024		Jan/Feb 25
<i>Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Funding approval* - Council budget meeting</i>	TBC		TBC
<i>Implement Decisions*</i>	TBC		TBC
H2 - Harlaw Academy Condition & Suitability Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23	In Progress (Revised Dates)	
<i>Planning & Preparation</i>	Spring 23	Complete	

[ECS September 23 - Decision to include primary schools within scope of secondary schools feasibility - see timescales for Project NA1 below]

Recommendation / Key Tasks & Milestones	Previously Reported Timescale	Current Status	Revised Timescale
Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment	Summer/Autumn 23	Complete	
Develop OBC	Summer/Autumn 23	In Progress	Winter/Spring 24
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	22/11/2023		08/05/2024
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC		TBC
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC		TBC
Implement Decisions*	TBC		TBC
S3 - St Machar Academy Outdoor Space Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23	In Progress (Revised Dates)	
Planning & Preparation	Spring 23	Complete	
Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment	Summer 23	Complete	
Develop OBC	Summer/Autumn 23	In Progress	Winter/Spring 24
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	22/11/2023		08/05/2024
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC		TBC
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC		TBC
Implement Decisions*	TBC		TBC
H3 - Ferryhill School Suitability Improvements - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Spring 23 - Autumn 23	In Progress (Revised Dates)	
Planning & Preparation	Spring 23	Complete	
Feasibility Study & Accessibility Assessment	Spring/Summer 23	Complete	
Develop OBC	Summer/Autumn 23	In Progress	Winter/Spring 23/24
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	22/11/2023		08/05/2024
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC		TBC
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC		TBC
Implement Decisions*	TBC		TBC
RC1 - Denominational Primary Schools Feasibility - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Summer 23 - Summer 24	In Progress (Revised Dates)	
Planning & Preparation	Summer/Autumn 23	Complete	
Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement	Autumn/Winter 23/24	In Progress	Winter/Spring 23/24
Develop OBC	Winter/Spring 24		Spring 24
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	July 2024		12/09/24
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	July 2024		17/09/24
Statutory Consultation*	TBC		TBC
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC		TBC
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC		TBC
Implement Decisions*	TBC		TBC
L1 - Loirston Loch Additional Primary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Summer 23 - Summer 24	Not Started	
Planning & Preparation	Summer/Autumn 23		No immediate requirement - revisit post 2024 (dates to be provided in future updates to school estate plan)
Feasibility Study & Stakeholder Engagement	Autumn/Winter 23/24		
Develop OBC	Winter/Spring 24		
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	July 2024		
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	July 2024		
Statutory Consultation*	TBC		
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC		
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC		
Implement Decisions*	TBC		
S2 - Sunnybank School Relocation of Additional Services - Options Appraisal	Winter 23/24 - Summer 24	Not Started	
Planning & Preparation	Winter 23/24		Spring 24
Develop Options Appraisal	Winter/Spring 23/24		Spring 24
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal (if required)	June 2024		02/07/24
Statutory Consultation (if required)*	TBC		TBC
Implement Decisions*	TBC		TBC
NA1 - Grandhome / Oldmachar / Bridge of Don Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 23/24 - Autumn 24	Not Started (Revised Dates)	
Planning & Preparation	Winter 23/24		Spring 24
Feasibility Study, Accessibility Study & Stakeholder Engagement	Winter/Spring 23/24		Summer/Autumn 24
Develop OBC	Spring 24		Autumn 24
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	September 2024		26/11/24
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	September 2024		Jan 25
Statutory Consultation*	TBC		TBC
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC		TBC
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC		TBC
Implement Decisions*	TBC		TBC
NA2 - Bucksburn & Dyce Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (OBC)	Winter 23/24 - Autumn 24	In Progress (Revised Dates)	
Planning & Preparation	Winter 23/24	In Progress	Winter 23/24
Feasibility Study, Accessibility Assessment & Stakeholder Engagement	Winter/Spring 23/24		Spring 24
Develop OBC	Spring/Summer 24		Summer 24
F&R Committee Meeting - approval of OBC	September 2024		05/11/24
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of OBC & consultation proposal	September 2024		26/11/24
Statutory Consultation*	TBC		TBC
Full Business Case* - develop and obtain approval for project to proceed	TBC		TBC
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	TBC		TBC
Implement Decisions*	TBC		TBC
S1 - Riverbank School Excess Capacity - Options Appraisal	Winter 23/24 - Spring 24	Not Started (Revised Dates)	
Options appraisal	Winter 23/24		Summer 24
ECS Committee Meeting - approval of recommendations	March 2024		26/11/24
Implement Decisions*	TBC		TBC
St Peter's School Refurbishment		In Progress (On Track)	
Feasibility Study	Autumn 2023	Complete	
Stakeholder Engagement	Autumn 2023	Complete	
Outline Business Case - develop	Autumn 2023	Complete	
Full Council Meeting - approval of OBC	13/12/2023	Complete	
Funding approval* - Council budget meeting	06/03/2024		06/03/2024
Implement Decisions*	TBC		TBC

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services Committee
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Autumn in the City Programme 2023
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/047
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 Autumn in the City programme 2023.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

- 2.1 notes the high level evaluation of the Autumn in the City programme;
- 2.2 agrees to utilise the £27,914.83 which remains in the In the City 23/24 budget to design and deliver a more limited programme for the Easter holiday period; and
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to report to Committee on the impact of the Easter (2024) programme following delivery.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

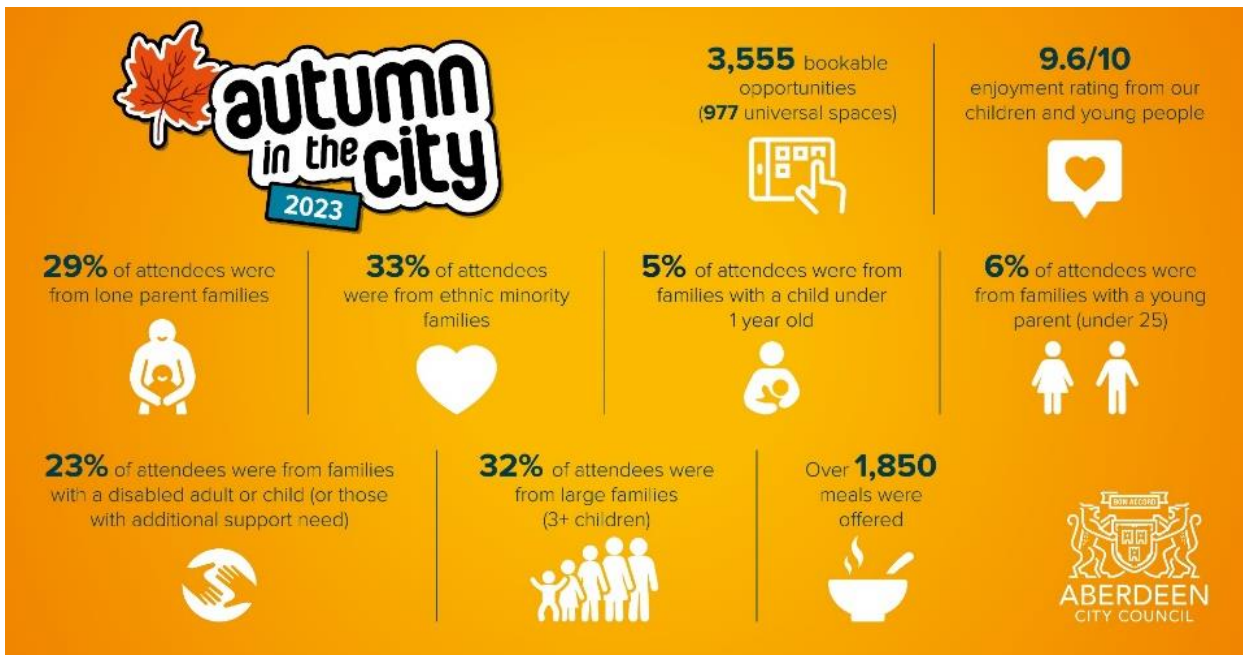
- 3.1 An Autumn in the City programme was made available to children and young people across Aberdeen City over the school holiday period. This programme, shaped by the feedback of young people and their families, included a range of short, half-day and full-day activities ranging from sport, dance and outdoor activities to drama camps, 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 years old)
 - Children from families with a child under 1 year old
 - Children from larger families (3+ children)
- 3.3 A budget was allocated by Council in March 2023 to deliver holiday programmes over summer, autumn 2023, and Easter 2024.
- 3.4 Officers from across the organisation and local partners worked together to deliver the programme. The full Autumn 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 Wednesday 4 October at 12pm and 83% of all opportunities available through Microsoft Bookings had been booked in less than 24 hours. Families eligible for priority activities were asked to only book 3 half or full day activities OR 2 half/full day activities and 1 multiday activity per child to ensure that as many families had the opportunity to utilise invaluable 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 a 41.3k reach (number of times customers saw the posts on their social media channels). Across the entire campaign we saw 67 likes and 97 shares/retweets. The Autumn in the City webpages had 26,483 page views with customers landing on the 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 977 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 2558 bookable opportunities available. These included, short sessions, half day and full day camps/holiday clubs, and this provided greater flexibility for many parents accessing the programme. These spaces included activities such as biking, beach days, scrambling and included lunch, as well as shorter activities such as dance and art. Figures from the ACC booking system showed over 96% occupancy was achieved on 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:

- 29% of children and young people were from lone parent families
- 33% of children and young people were from ethnic minority families
- 23% of children from families with a disabled adult or child (or those with additional support need)
- 6% 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
- 32% 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. 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 paragraph 4.1 who helped deliver a varied and high-quality Autumn in the City programme.

3.13 In addition to the Autumn in the City activities programme, an October Holidays What's On webpage was created as a resource for parents and families. On this webpage, families could access information on other activities -outside of the Autumn 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 1,834 times since its launch in September 2023.

3.14 £27,914.83 remains available in the In the City budget and it is proposed that this resource be used to design and deliver a more limited programme for Easter.

3.15 It is further proposed that the Chief Education Officer report to Committee on the impact of the Easter (2024) programme following delivery.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Costs for the Autumn in the City programme were met from the resource allocated at Full Council. The total cost of delivery of the Autumn 2023 programme was £37,712.00.

Partner	Total Cost
Sport Aberdeen	£10,000.00
Peep	£100
Techfest	£800
Creative Learning	£3,000
CLICC	£3,600
Transition Extreme	£2,952.00
We Too	£3,210.00
Community Groups – Russell Anderson Foundation, Early Intervention Aberdeen, Middlefield Youth Hub, King's Foundation (VicTorry Camp), Aberdeen City Council Family Learning Team, Fersands and Fountain SCIO, Shazam Theatre Company SCIO, Children 1 st , Denis Law legacy Trust (Streetsport), Team Jak Foundation, Balnagask Community Centre, Middlefield Community Project, Northfield Community Centre, Ukrainian Hub Aberdeen, Sheddocksley Baptist Church, Stockethill Church of Scotland, and Station House Media Unit	£14,050.00
TOTAL	£37,712.00

4.2. There is £27,914.83 remaining within the 23/24 budget to fund the Easter (2024) programme.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct 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>1.3 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.</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>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>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

<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 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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>Regional and City Strategies Regional Cultural Strategy</p>	

Prevention Strategy Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	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.
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to In the City Programme has been reviewed and no changes required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Full Autumn in the City Programme

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Sharon Skene
Title	FIS Development Officer
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Tel	

APPENDIX A- Autumn 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 throughout the holidays.	All	Throughout holiday
Museums and Galleries	My hero workshop	Families	1
Sport Aberdeen	Family swimming sessions	All ages	9
	Family ice skating session	All ages	2
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	2
		1-4 years	2
Tech Fest	Sociable science drop-in sessions at local parks.	All ages	2

Targeted offer for Priority Groups

Provider	Event Description	Ages	Sessions
Sport Aberdeen	Multi Active Day (AM or PM)	5-12 years	4
	Multi Active Day Adventure Aberdeen	5-12 years	2
	Scrambling/sandboarding	8-15 years	1
	Mountain Biking	12-14 years	1
	Forest Adventure	5-7 years	1
	Hill walking	12-14 years	1
	Young family Stay and Play session	Family (under 1 and siblings)	1
Middlefield Community Youth Hub	Day trips programmed in consultation with the young people. Trips included Ice Skating, Cinema	11-18 years	4
Middlefield Community Project	Holiday club with various trips and activities across Aberdeen	5-11 years	3

Fersands	Fersands and Fountain SCIO October Playscheme, included Arts & Crafts and Science/ messy play	P1-7	2 weeks (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday)
October playscheme (Balnagask community)	Activities for children and young people including, sports sessions, arts and crafts, Lego, baking, obstacle course	P1-7	4
Northfield P1 to P5s Group	Variety of activities	P1-5	4
Make Lunch (Sheddocksley Baptist Church) Activities and lunch	2 hour programme in partnership with TLG Make Lunch. This involves 1 hour of fun activities, crafts and arts (holiday club style) followed by a 2 course hot meal for every child present.	Primary School Age	6
Creative Learning/ City Moves	Creative dance sessions	5-8 years	1
	Artists Assemble arts and crafts session	8-12 years 5-8 years 8-12 years	3
Family Learning Team	A variety of activities such as arts, spooky walk, music etc. Sessions were held all over the city	Families	3
VicTorry October Holiday Club (King's Church Aberdeen)	Holiday club	P1-7	2
Transition Extreme	Skate and scran multi activity session	8-14 years	2
	Climb and Dine	5-14 years	6
Things that go Bump in the dark! (Tillydrone Community Campus with Shazam Theatre Company SCIO)	Drama and musical session	8-12 years	4
Denis Law legacy Trust (Streetsports)	Variety of outdoor sports activities	8-18 years	8
Music School	Musical activities at Muirfield Primary School	5-11 years	1 AM and PM
Russell Anderson Development School (RADS)	Fun sporting activities	5-11 years	5

Holiday Lunch Club (Stockethill Church of Scotland)	Session for families which include games, crafts and lunch.	Families with primary aged children	4
Shmu	Day Challenge, record a song, film school and radio day	Secondary Age young people	6
Community Link Childcare	Seaton, Gilcomstoun and Kaimhill holiday club	5-12 years	3 sessions per venue

Additional Support needs specialised sessions

Provider	Event Description	Ages	Sessions
Sport Aberdeen	ASN Stay and Play sessions	5-12 years	2
Family Learning	ASN and Kinship baking and crafts session	Families	1
We Too	Witches Woodland Wander at Hazelhead Park, den building, build a fire and join us for hot chocolate and marshmallows	3+ years	1
	Relaxed Bubble Football	10+ years	1
	Relaxed Creepy Cupcakes and Crafts	5+ years	1
	Lego & Board Games	5+ years	1
	Pumpkin Carving	5+ years	1
	Gordon Highlanders Museum	All	1
	Spooky, Sensory Stories with Pauline Coordinator	3+ years	1
	Relaxed Tubing	5+ years	1
	Relaxed Movie Screening	3+ years	1
	Relaxed Bowling	3+ years	1
	Relaxed Amine Art Academy	7+ years	1
Early Intervention	ASN Pumpkin Decorating Session for Children	3-9 years	2
	ASN Wizard School & Visit to pets corner	Primary school age & younger siblings	2

	ASN Fancy Dress Party	4-11 years	2
	Music Session ran by a music therapist	5-8 years	2
	ASN Animal Assisted Therapy Pony & Pygmy and Halloween Crafts	3-9 years	2
	The Critter Keeper Session	4-11 years	1
	ASN Mad Hatters Sensory Seekers Messy Play Session & Visit to Pets Corner	primary school age & younger siblings	2

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	School Holiday Pattern 2025 - 2030
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/044
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Caroline Johnstone
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Committee with a recommended school holiday pattern for school sessions 2025–2026 to 2029–2030.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 approves the proposed school holiday pattern to 2030 outlined in Appendix A of this report; and
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to publish details of the holiday pattern.

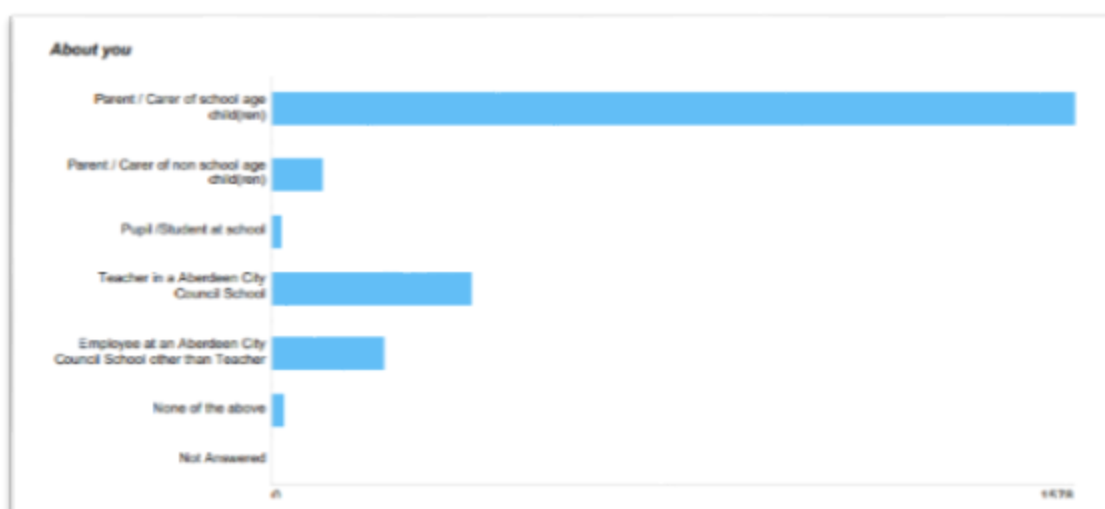
3. CURRENT SITUATION

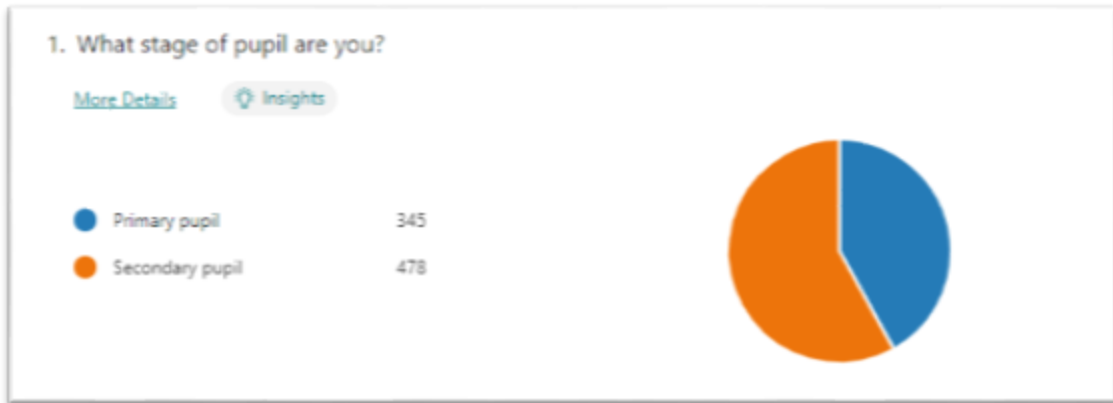
- 3.1 Committee last established a 5-year school holiday pattern in 2019. As a result, there is now a need to establish the Aberdeen City school holiday pattern for the next 5 years.
- 3.2 A recent online consultation was open to all parents, staff and pupils between 5th December 2023 and 5th January 2024. The questions posed were carefully considered to ensure that children and young people and families were able to fully engage with the process and inform the recommendation presented to Committee.
- 3.3 The consultations collected a combined total of 3156 responses, a decrease of 964 compared with previous survey in 2019. This lower response rate may be attributable to the relative increase in surveys and engagements since the last holiday pattern was established in 2019.
- 3.4 The statutory number of school openings is 190 days for pupils. In addition, teachers attend five in-service days on days when school is not open to pupils. The proposed holiday pattern available in Appendix A takes account of this requirement.

- 3.5 The proposed holiday pattern adheres to the general principle that, wherever possible, schools will open for complete weeks, rather than part-weeks, to minimise disruption to learning and teaching. However, in ensuring an appropriate balance, this is not always possible.
- 3.6 Aberdeenshire Council is Aberdeen City Council's only geographically adjacent local authority. Many staff work in one Local Authority area and live in the other. There is some movement of children and young people across the boundary, particularly at Dyce Academy, Bridge of Don Academy and Cults Academy, and it is reasonable to suggest that broad commonality between the holiday patterns of the two Councils is desirable.
- 3.7 Currently, the holiday pattern between Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire is very similar, the only differences being the timing of local holidays (Aberdeenshire, for example, does not have the 'long' September weekend) and the dates of in-service days. We have worked closely with colleagues in Aberdeenshire Council to create the holiday pattern recommended in this report, aligning the needs of both local authorities as far as possible.

FEEDBACK FROM THE CONSULTATION

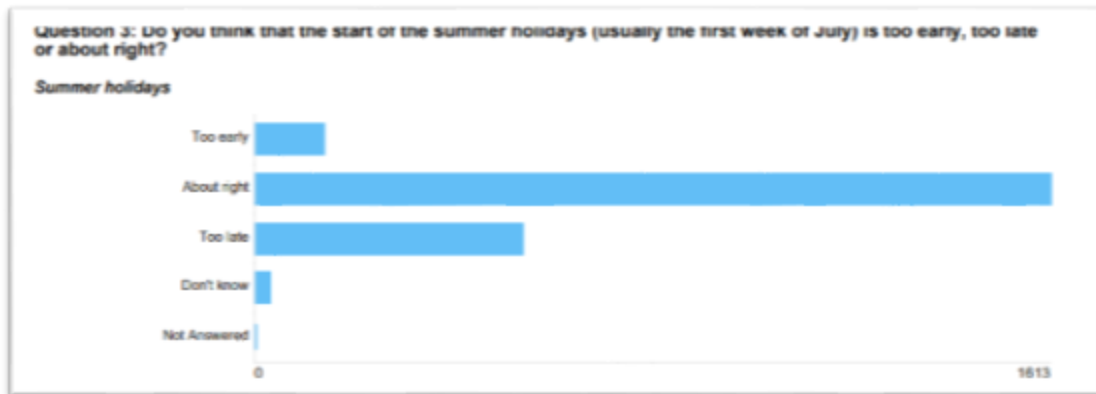
- 3.8 71.93% participating in the initial public consultation were parents (1578), with 26.23% school staff (612), with the remaining 1.84% (43) from children and young people in our education system or other.
- 3.9 The disappointing representation from children and young people has been attributed to the time of year the consultation was held. In order to ensure that the views of children and young people were accurately represented, a further consultation with children and young people ran from 10th January 2024 to 17th January 2024, this second survey secured 823 responses. 42% responses to the second survey of children and young people were from primary pupils and 58% were from secondary pupils. All 3156 responses from the two consultations have been considered in developing the proposed holiday pattern.





Summer holiday timing

3.10 69.14% (1613) of respondents to the public consultation feel the current timing of summer holidays is appropriate, this was by far the most popular response. Only 23.27% (543) feel this is too late. 44% (406) of pupils felt the current timing is appropriate (again the most prevalent response) whereas 38% (309) feel it is too late.



September weekend

3.11 A majority of respondents to the public consultation, 58.89% (1374), are happy with the traditional pattern of the September holiday weekend continuing with 34.12% (796) not in favour. 84% (689) of pupils are happy with this traditional pattern also, with only 11% (87) not in favour.

Question 4: Aberdeen has traditionally had a 'long weekend' in September – a holiday Friday / Monday. Do you think this should be continued?

September long weekend



4. Aberdeen has a long weekend in September-a holiday Friday / Monday. Do you think this should be continued?

[More Details](#)

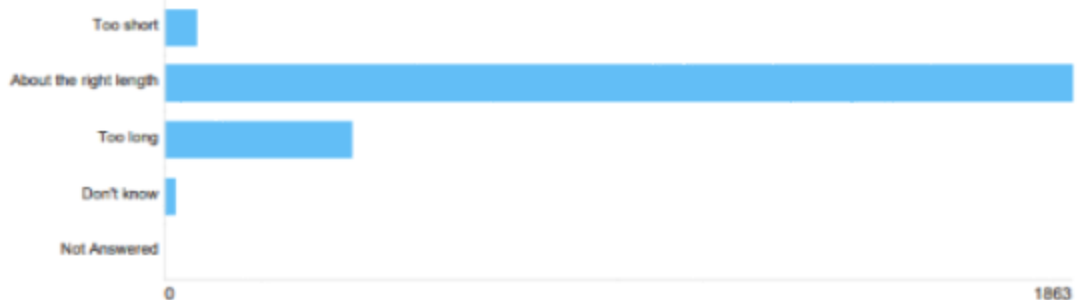


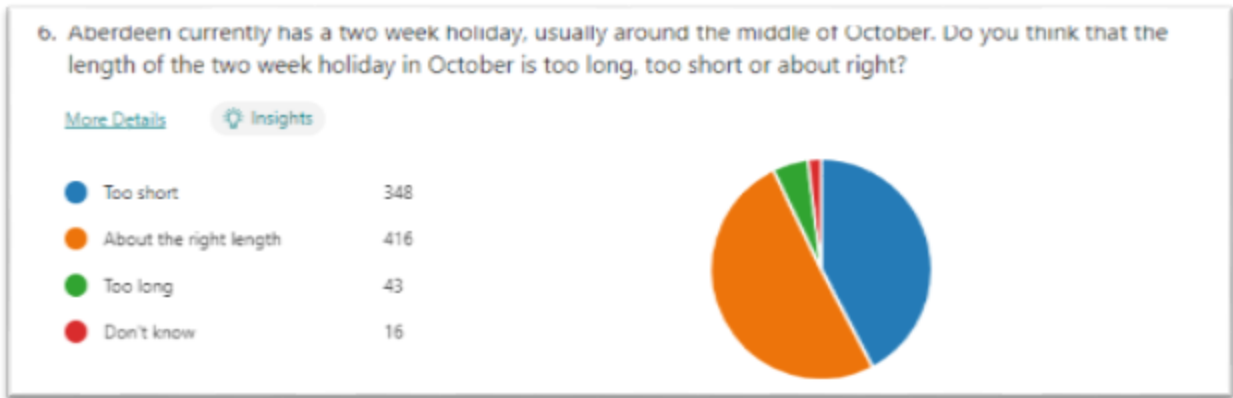
October break timing

- 3.11 A large majority of respondents in the public consultation are happy with the length and timing of the October holiday with 79.85% (1863) supporting this. 16.42% (383) felt the October break is too long and 2.79% (65) felt it too short. Similarly, 51% (416) of pupils are happy with the length and timing of this holiday, while 42% (348) of pupils feel it is too short.

Question 6: Aberdeen currently has a two-week holiday, usually around the middle of October. Do you think that the length of the two-week holiday in October is too long, too short or about right?

October holidays





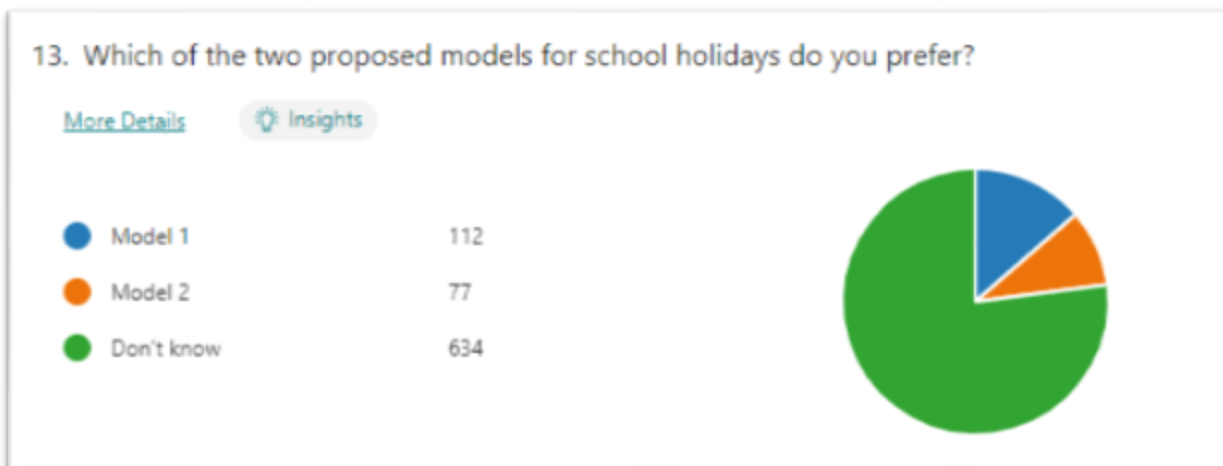
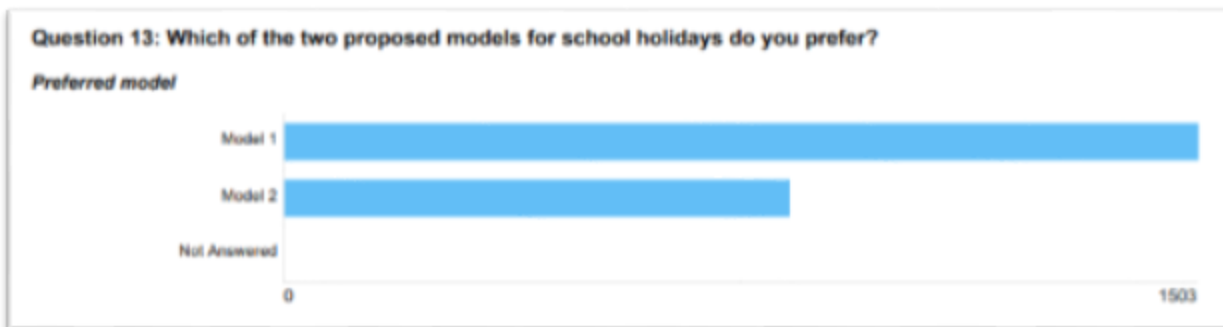
Easter holiday timing

3.12 88.26% (2059) of people who responded are happy with the length of the Easter holidays with 50.88% (1187) keen for the holidays to vary according to when Easter holiday falls. 55% (451) of pupils consulted are happy with the length of the Easter holidays, with 43% (357) keen for the holidays to vary according to when Easter falls.



General holiday pattern

3.13 When provided with two potential models of holiday pattern for 2025-26 through to 2029-2030, 64.42% (1503) of the public opted for the traditional option similar to previous years with only 35.58% (830) selecting the newer pattern with increased in-service days in the summer term. 14% (112) pupils preferred the traditional pattern with 9% (77) in favour of the newer pattern. 77% (634) of pupils registered that they didn't know which model they preferred.



3.14 A majority of responses across the range of questions surveyed in both consultations, suggests that there is no appetite to change the general timing or length of the school holiday pattern, however the holiday pattern recommended has been more aligned with when Easter falls. The only exception to this is in 2030 when Good Friday falls very late on 19th April and moving the holiday to incorporate this would cause an adverse impact to the preparations for the SQA exam diet for schools. These responses have informed the recommendation for the proposed holiday pattern for the next 5 years.

3.15 **HOLIDAY PATTERN FROM 2025/26-2029/30**

The feedback from the consultation has informed the development of a proposed 5-year school holiday pattern as outlined in Appendix A. In response to the consultation findings, the proposed model:

- broadly mirrors the pattern already in place
- has aligned the Easter holiday more clearly with when Easter falls
- retains the September weekend
- is broadly aligned with Aberdeenshire's plans

3.16 The detailed holiday pattern being proposed is available in Appendix A.

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 model outlined in Appendix A adheres to the need to provide 190 days of education on a yearly basis.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. RISK

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

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not agreeing holiday patterns in time to allow appropriate planning.	Agreeing holiday patterns in February will afford time for families to plan arrangements.	L	Yes
Compliance	Risk of not complying with holiday entitlements for pupils and staff	The proposed holiday pattern complies with the legislation around the provision of 190 days of education.	L	Yes
Operational	Education service and schools not being able to plan effectively	Agreeing holiday patterns in February will afford time for families to plan arrangements.	L	Yes
Financial	None			Yes
Reputational	Not having clear dates in place in a timeous fashion.	Instructing the Chief Education Officer to advertise the agreed dates will mitigate this risk.	L	Yes

Environment / Climate	None			Yes
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8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
Impact of Report	
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposed holiday patterns within this report support the delivery of Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes in the LOIP, which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Proposed School Holiday Pattern 2025-2026 to 2029-2030

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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APPENDIX 1 - Proposed School Holiday Pattern 2025-2026 to 2029-2030

Aberdeen City Council

Draft School Holiday Pattern 2025-2026 to 2029-2030

	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
Term 1					
In-service day	Mon 18 August	Fri 14 August	Mon 23 August	Mon 21 August	Mon 20 August
Pupils return	Tues 19 August	Mon 17 August	Tues 24 August	Tues 22 August	Tues 21 August
September holiday	Fri 19 September and Mon 22 September	Fri 18 September and Mon 21 September	Fri 17 September and Mon 20 September	Fri 22 September and Mon 25 September	Fri 21 September and Mon 24 September
Term ends	Fri 10 October	Fri 9 October	Fri 8 October	Fri 13 October	Fri 5 October
October holiday	Mon 13 October – Fri 24 October	Mon 12 October – Fri 23 October	Mon 11 October – Fri 22 October	Mon 16 October – Fri 27 October	Mon 8 October – Fri 19 October
Term 2					
Term starts	Mon 27 October	Mon 26 October	Mon 25 October	Mon 30 October	Mon 22 October
In-service day	Fri 14 November	Fri 13 November	Fri 12 November	Fri 17 November	Fri 16 November
Term ends	Fri 19 December	Fri 18 December	Tues 21 December	Fri 22 December	Fri 21 December
Winter holiday	Mon 22 December – Fri 2 January	Mon 21 December – Fri 1 January	Wed 22 December – Tues 4 January	Mon 25 December – Fri 5 January	Mon 24 December – Fri 4 January
Term 3					
Term starts	Mon 5 January	Tues 5 January	Wed 5 January	Mon 8 January	Mon 7 January
Mid-term	Mon 9 February	Mon 8 February	Mon 14 February	Mon 12 February	Mon 11 February
In-service days	Tues 10 February and Wed 11 February	Tues 9 February and Wed 10 February	Tues 15 February and Wed 16 February	Tues 13 February and Wed 14 February	Tues 12 February and Wed 13 February
Term ends	Fri 27 March	Thurs 25 March	Fri 31 March	Thurs 29 March	Fri 29 March
Spring holiday	Mon 30 March – Fri 10 April (includes Good Friday on Fri 3 April)	Fri 26 March – Fri 9 April (includes Good Friday on 26 March)	Mon 3 April – Fri 14 April (includes Good Friday on 14 April)	Fri 30 March – Fri 13 April (includes Good Friday on 30 March)	Mon 1 April – Fri 12 April (excludes Good Friday on 19 April)
Term 4					
Term starts	Mon 13 April	Mon 12 April	Mon 17 April	Mon 16 April	Mon 15 April
Good Friday	-	-	-	-	Fri 19 April
May day holiday	Mon 4 May	Mon 3 May	Mon 1 May	Mon 7 May	Mon 6 May
In-service day	Tues 5 May	Tues 4 May	Tues 2 May	Tues 8 May	Tues 7 May
Term ends	Thurs 2 July	Fri 2 July	Thursday 6 July	Fri 6 July	Fri 5 July

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children’s Services Committee
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Report on the National Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare and Local Delivery Plans
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/014
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHORS	Louise Beaton and Mark Duguid
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the National Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare and on local delivery plans in Aberdeen.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the Scottish Government Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare 2023;
- 2.2 notes the update on local delivery plans for School Age Childcare in Aberdeen;
- 2.3 Welcomes the additional funding from a successful bid to Scottish Government Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces Programme; and
- 2.4 instructs the Interim Chief Officer - Education to work with key stakeholders to review and refresh the Aberdeen City Council Out of School Care Policy, in line with national policy, and report back to Committee in September 2024.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Background

- 3.1 School Age Childcare services play a vital role within our communities, offering a variety of options which families can rely on to support their childcare needs before and after school, and during the school holidays. It is not currently a statutory service, like Early Learning and Childcare, however it is a crucial service for many families who rely on it to enable them to work or study and it contributes positively to the economic development of the city as well as helping improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 3.2 Following the implementation of Early Learning and Childcare expansion, we have seen a natural increase in demand for School Age Childcare, as parents and carers look to secure continuity of wraparound childcare when their children start Primary School. In our recent Early Learning and Childcare consultation

with Parents and Carers (June 2023), 45.2% of respondents indicated that they will require School Age Childcare when their child(ren) start Primary School.

- 3.3 Registered School Age Childcare provisions are regulated by the Care Inspectorate and are subject to ongoing inspection. Inspections in Aberdeen continue to be positive with almost all provisions receiving an average grading of 4 (Good) or better.

School Age Childcare Delivery Framework 2023

- 3.4 The National Framework for Delivery of School Age Childcare was published by the Scottish Government in October 2023, along with a Children's Charter for School Age Childcare, including a specific Charter for School Age Childcare in Aberdeen.
- 3.5 The National Delivery Framework outlines the Scottish Government's School Age Childcare commitments and the action areas for the next 3 years. Its key policy drivers are: Tackling child poverty; and improving outcomes for children and families, with the Framework highlighting that an expanded childcare offering for school age childcare is crucial to the national mission to tackle child poverty, to promote family wellbeing, drive greater gender equality and to #Keep The Promise to our care experienced children.
- 3.6 The Vision is for a rights based, dynamic School Age Childcare (SAC) offer for children and young people, which supports choice and growth, enabling families and communities to reach their full potential.
- 3.7 The aim is for Scotland to have a system of accessible and affordable SAC, providing care before and after school and during the holidays for primary school children from low income households, and that children will be able to access healthy and nutritious food as part of this offer.
- 3.8 The SAC offer will be directed towards the six priority family types, identified in *Best Start, Bright Futures: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2022-26*:
- Families with a baby under one
 - Families with three or more children
 - Lone parent families
 - Families with a young mother (under 25)
 - Minority ethnic families
 - Families with a disabled adult or child
- 3.9 Current key action areas include:
- Designing and building a system of SAC which will be people-centred and place-based;
 - Testing the change – Access to Childcare Fund Projects; Early Adopter Communities; Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces (ISACS) Fund; support to Local Authorities for costs related to the delivery of summer programmes; and support to local football clubs to provide after school

and holiday football clubs, in a joint project with Scottish Football Association; and

- Embedding monitoring and evaluation in the programme development; and Programme logic model to develop a theory of change.

3.10 In 2025/26, a more detailed delivery plan will be developed by the Scottish Government. This will set out what a targeted SAC offer will look like for families within communities and provide a clear timescale for delivery. We are keen to see how these developments will progress.

3.11 As part of the approach to build a system of SAC, a Children's Charter has been developed. This involved visiting children in primary schools in five Local Authority areas, including Aberdeen. The children came from a mix of communities including rural, urban and island communities, had experience both of attending after school activities or not, and included children whose families belong to one of the six priority family types.

3.12 The Children's Charter will be used to ensure that decisions take account of what's important to children and will be used in future engagement with childcare providers.

School Age Childcare (SAC) in Aberdeen

3.13 We have a mixed model of SAC provision in Aberdeen. There are currently 42 settings, delivering nearly 1700 registered places on a daily basis across the city (up 200 from June 2022). In addition, there are 931 registered breakfast club places across the city, as well as a number of unregistered services offering free or low cost breakfast. Aberdeen City Council (ACC) run approximately 1/5th of all registered services. The others are run by Community Link Childcare (CLICC), a social enterprise company, and a mix of other private and independent childcare providers.

3.14 A map has been created to provide a visual overview of where School Age Childcare is located across the city:

https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=15uXp_FoaRzx4vUVxVLILLH0yV-JcKLnP&usp=sharing

Aberdeen City Council Provision

3.15 We have built a very successful business model with competitive but standardised fees across the city, including 50% discount for families on low incomes and those in receipt of certain benefits. This means that our services are accessible and affordable for all. We are especially proud we can offer a SAC service for children with Additional Support Needs (ASN). It should be no different for these families, but they often find it much more challenging to secure the childcare they need. We are delighted we can help to meet their needs so that they are able to gain and sustain employment and training opportunities.

3.16 Our School Age Childcare service generates substantial income for Aberdeen City Council. We have increased income from around £250K per annum pre-2020 to over £600K in 2023, meeting the changing needs of families and

responding to local demand. The opening of two additional After School Clubs in the Northfield Associated School Group (ASG), one of our priority areas, in February 2024, will contribute significantly to addressing unmet need in this area and will enable more families to access employment and training opportunities.

Supply and Demand

- 3.17 We regularly monitor supply and demand across the city and work with our external SAC partners to support the establishment of new services, where viable, following feasibility studies. Sometimes the uptake of spaces does not match the initial interest noted by local families. However, we continue to monitor this situation closely.

Engagement with Parents and Carers

- 3.18 As part of our statutory duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, we are required to consult with parents and carers every two years on the provision of daycare of children's services. The Early Years team consulted with parents and carers in December 2023 and January 2024 on the provision of School Age Childcare in Aberdeen. The consultation received a total of 549 responses after 5 weeks (+1% from 2021).

- 3.19 Key headline data from our recent School Age Childcare consultation with parents and carers is below:

- 43.7% of all respondents currently use School Age Childcare to support the working day.
- 77% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to support the working day.
- 3% of all respondents currently use School Age Childcare to college/university.
- 5% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to attend university/college.
- 10% of all respondents currently use SAC to enable their child/children to play and/or socialise with other children.
- 18% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to enable their child/children to play and/or socialise with other children.
- 22.77% of all respondents currently access the service of a Breakfast Club.
- 36.43% of all respondents currently access the service of an After School Club.
- 16.21% of respondents indicated that they require both Breakfast and After School provision.
- 29.69% of respondents' children attended a registered Holiday provision.
- 41% of respondents' children attended unregistered sports/activity camps.
- With 20.03% respondents attending both registered and unregistered holiday provisions.
- 11% of respondents accessed the 'In The City' programmes.

- Most respondents (66.48%) indicated that they require holiday care during the Summer Holidays.
- With 43.53% during the Spring holidays and 41.53% during the Autumn holidays.
- Nearly a quarter (24.04%) of respondents said they currently have children attending an ELC setting that would require SAC once they attend primary school.
- With 27% of those families requiring SAC from 2024 and a further 30% in 2025.

3.20 The full report and analysis of the responses (Appendix 1) will be used to determine current and future demand for School Age Childcare services in the city and will also inform the refresh of the Aberdeen City Council School Age Childcare Policy.

Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces Programme

3.21 The purpose of the Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces (ISACS) Fund is to improve indoor and outdoor spaces in school estates for the purposes of supporting provision of SAC. Aberdeen City Council submitted four project funding proposals to Scottish Government / Scottish Futures Fund in May 2023, in relation to this Programme. We are delighted to confirm the projects listed below were considered to have met all the qualifying criteria at the time the assessment workshop took place and have been identified by Ministers to be included as part of ISACS Programme.

Project Name:	Maximum award approved:
Cornhill School Community Wing	£100,000
Orchard Brae School	£56,420
Kirkhill Primary School	£59,431
Muirfield Primary School	£93,610
Total Funding Awarded	£309,461

Cornhill School Community Wing

3.22 We have secured funding to provide a secure outdoor area with direct access from the club room to outside, which will offer children the ability to have free flow play and make their own choice of being inside or outside. Suitable outdoor lighting will also be installed to allow access outdoors all year round. Outdoor storage will enable Loose Parts to be stored within the area with easy access for the children.

3.23 The improvements will also be of benefit to the wider Cornhill Community who access the Community Wing of Cornhill School. This project will provide:

- Access from room to outdoors;
- Suitable permanent fencing;
- Suitable outdoor surface; and
- Outdoor storage.

Orchard Brae School

- 3.24 We have secured funding to create and develop the space within the GP room in the school that is welcoming, cosy and offers the ability to be adapted to meet the differing needs of the children attending. This will include the purchase of suitable furnishings such as a sofa, beanbags, tables, chairs & sensory resources.
- 3.25 Funding will also be used to develop a permanent outdoor area which will be fully secure with suitable fencing and offer the opportunity for children to have free flow play opportunities from the room to outside and back as they choose. Suitable lighting will ensure that the outdoor area can be accessed year round. A suitable storage cupboard will also be added.
- 3.26 The school will also benefit by having access to the area during the school day as a breakout area for children who may need a quiet time away from class and the provision of a cosy adaptable space will also meet their needs.

Kirkhill Primary School

- 3.27 Funding has been secured to further develop both inside and outside areas, which will allow the development of a holiday club provision in the area. There is currently no holiday club provision in the local area and we are seeking to meet this gap in provision, by making the necessary improvements in order to offer longer hours of registered care. The project will provide:

- Access to outdoor area from room;
- Fence at both ends with gate at carpark end;
- Removal of current black fence;
- Resurface of tarmac area;
- New kitchen area including cooker;
- New flooring, decoration; and
- Lockable doors on cupboards for secure storage.

Muirfield Primary School

- 3.28 Finally, we have secured funding to facilitate year-round outdoor play and activities at Muirfield After School Club by improving the outdoor area. The project will provide:

- Outdoor flood lighting
- Outdoor storage.

- 3.29 This project is being delivered in partnership with Community Link Childcare (CLICC) who operate the After School Club at Muirfield.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Unlike Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), School Age Childcare is not currently a statutory service. However, under the Children and Young People

(Scotland) Act 2014, Aberdeen City Council is responsible for engaging and consulting with parents and carers on a regular basis (minimum of every 2 years) on the provision of daycare of children's services delivered locally and this includes School Age Childcare. We continue to meet our statutory obligations in relation to this duty.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.
- 6.2 The funding secured from Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces fund will be invested in outdoor spaces at four settings, enhancing our outdoor spaces and outdoor learning opportunities. Across all School Age Childcare settings, good use is also made of outdoor and green spaces where practicable and 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	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	No risks identified	N/A	L	Yes
Operational	Risk of not attracting enough new practitioners into the workforce.	Mitigated through the ongoing activities being undertaken to support workforce development.	L	Yes
Financial	Risk of building a financially unsustainable model.	School Age Childcare is currently an accessible but paid for service, with discounts available for families on lower incomes using Aberdeen City Council operated provision. Officers regularly monitor supply and demand in order to maximise resources and achieve best value.	M	Yes

		We have been careful to build our School Age Childcare services gradually to ensure it meets demand but is also sustainable. For example, delivering services for children from more than one school.		
Reputational	Risk of not delivering on legal obligations	There are currently no statutory obligations to deliver School Age Childcare.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the policy statement “Work with the Scottish Government to expand free early learning and childcare to one and two year-olds from low-income households.”</p> <p>The provision of funded Early Learning and Childcare has the potential to be transformational for many families, but especially for those with the lowest incomes in the city.</p> <p>The provision of School Age Childcare is required in order to meet the continued need for wraparound care once children start to attend Primary School. This is backed up by 45.2% of respondents, in our recent Early Learning and Childcare consultation with Parents and Carers (June 2023), who indicated that they will require School Age Childcare when their child(ren) start Primary School.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy - 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic	The School Age Childcare Delivery Framework 2023 and delivery of School Age Childcare in Aberdeen will continue to have a positive impact on this priority theme and will help to deliver the LOIP.

<p>opportunities as they arise by 2026 (Stretch Outcome 3)</p>	<p>The Aberdeen City Council School Age Childcare workforce has increased in order to deliver the increase in School Age Childcare provision. In particular, in our two newest settings at Manor Park and Heathryburn in the Northfield ASG, opening in February 2024, the majority of applicants were from the local area, which is extremely positive in terms of creating economic opportunities.</p> <p>In addition, we have introduced a Modern Apprenticeship position into our School Age Childcare structure. This involves training young people to become Playworkers as part of our 'Grow Our Own' workforce strategy. This is a new role in our Local Authority School Age Childcare settings and provides a positive destination and career pathway for our young people as well as strengthening our workforce. We currently have 4 Modern Apprenticeships working across the city.</p> <p>There will be ongoing opportunities to join the School Age Childcare workforce in Aberdeen and to retrain, to upskill and for career progression.</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 (Stretch Outcome 7)</p>	<p>We have introduced a Modern Apprenticeship (MA) position into our ELC staffing structure. This involves training young people to become Early Years Practitioners as part of our 'Grow Our Own' workforce strategy. This is a new role in our Local Authority ELC settings and provides a positive destination and career pathway for our young people as well as strengthening our workforce. We have also recently introduced this role into our School Age Childcare and currently have 4 Modern Apprenticeships working across the city in our School Age Childcare settings.</p> <p>School Age Childcare can improve long term outcomes for children and families.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The provision of high quality School Age Childcare will help to deliver the LOIP.</p> <p>The increase in funded ELC is designed to enable more families to take up employment and training opportunities, thus reducing poverty. More hours are now available in Local Authority ELC settings and Funded Provider ELC settings are now an option for many families who could not afford this previously.</p> <p>This means that there is also a need to ensure sufficient School Age Childcare is available to</p>

	support families when their children go to Primary School.
Regional and City Strategies	<p>The proposals within this report support the Strategic Development Plan by supporting the workforce. The provision of high quality School Age Childcare will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support families to take up employment and training opportunities; 2. Develop the Young Workforce; and 3. Support business to recruit and retain staff. <p>The Delivery Framework for School Age Childcare is aligned to the Children’s Services Plan and the National Improvement Framework Plan and work to address poverty in the Child Poverty Action Plan.</p>
Strategic Development Plan	
Children’s Services Plan	
National Improvement Framework Plan	

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	New Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required. As no personal information will be shared.
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Scottish Government: National Framework for School Age Childcare](#)
- 10.2 [Scottish Government: Children’s Charter](#)
- 10.3 [Scottish Government: A Children’s Charter for School Age Childcare in Aberdeen](#)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – School Age Childcare: Parent and Carer Consultation 2023 (Draft)

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Aberdeen City Council

School Age Childcare (SAC)

Parent/Carer Consultation Report 2023



1. Introduction

Part 8 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires Local Authorities to consult regularly with parents and carers about the provision of day care, including services for school aged children.

Aberdeen City Council shared the School Age Childcare (SAC) Consultation 2023 across all Primary Schools, ASN Schools and School Age Childcare services via an online consultation. The consultation was in circulation for a period of 5 weeks between 4 December 2023 and 7 January 2024. We asked every participant to complete Section 1 as we were interested to find out why some families may not use School Age Childcare. Only those households who currently use a School Age Childcare service were required to complete Section 2.

Our 2021 consultation was interested in gathering information regarding the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the use of School Age Childcare. With this recent consultation we were particularly interested to see how demand and usage has changed since the pandemic.

The consultation received a total of 549 responses after 5 weeks (+1% from our 2021 consultation). With only 1% difference in the amount of respondents received in 2021 and 2023 we are able to directly compare numbers and percentages across several areas of the consultation. When applicable these have been added to charts and graphs for clear comparison.

Key headline points from the returns include:

- 44% of all respondents currently use School Age Childcare to support the working day.
- 77% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to support the working day.
- 3% of all respondents currently use SAC to attend college/university.
- 5% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to attend university/college.
- 10% of all respondents currently use SAC to enable their child/children to play and/or socialise with other children.
- 18% of those families who currently access a SAC service do so to enable their child/children to play and/or socialise with other children.
- 23% of all respondents currently access the service of a Breakfast Club.
- 36.43% of all respondents currently access the service of an After School Club.

- 16.21% of respondents indicated that they require both Breakfast and After School provision.
- 30% of respondents' children attended a registered Holiday provision.
- 41% of respondents' children attended an unregistered Sports/activity camp.
- With 20% of respondents' children attending both registered and unregistered holiday provisions.
- 11% of respondents accessed the 'In The City' programmes.
- A high number of respondents (66.48%) indicated that they required holiday care during the Summer holidays.
- With 43.53% during the Spring holidays and 41.53% during the Autumn holidays.
- Nearly a quarter (24%) of respondents said they currently have children attending an ELC setting that would require SAC once they attend primary school.
- With 27% of those parents requiring SAC from 2024 and a further 30% in 2025.

2. Consultation Results: What did parent and carers say?

Section 1

Question 1: What area of Aberdeen do you live in? (These are listed by Associated School Groups (ASGs) for Aberdeen City Council Secondary School zones). We received responses from all eleven of the Aberdeen City's Associated School Groups (ASGs).

Option	Total	Percent
Aberdeen Grammar School – Ashley Road, Gilcomstoun, Mile End, Skene Square, St Joseph's	36	6.56%
Bridge of Don – Braehead and Scotstoun	26	4.74%
Bucksburn – Brimmond, Kingswells and Stoneywood	69	12.57%
Cults – Culter, Cults and Milltimber	66	12.02%
Dyce - Dyce	23	4.19%
Harlaw -Broomhill, Ferryhill, Hanover and Kaimhill	69	12.57%
Hazlehead - Airyhall, Countesswells, Fernielea, Hazlehead, and Kingsford	77	14.03%
Lochside – Abbotswell, Kirkhill, Charleston, Loirston, Walker Road and Tullos	57	10.38%
Northfield – Bramble Brae, Heathryburn, Holy Family RC, Manor Park, Muirfield, Quarryhill and Westpark	47	8.56%
Old Machar - Danestone School, Forehill, Glashieburn, Greenbrae, Middleton Park	36	6.56%
St Machar - Cornhill, Kittybrewster, Riverbank, Seaton, Sunnybank, Woodside	43	7.83%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

There was engagement from parents and carers from across the city with most responses from the Hazlehead ASG followed closely by Harlaw, Bucksburn and Cults. We should take into consideration that Dyce ASG is a very small ASG compared to others and it is possible that the consultation may have been better promoted and shared in some ASGs than others.

Question 2: How many of your children attend a School Age Childcare service?

Option	2023 Total	2023 Percent	2021 Total	2021 Percent
0	135	24.59%	241	44.3%
1	272	49.54%	208	38.2%
2	123	22.40%	92	16.9%
3	14	2.55%	6	1.1%
4+	5	0.91%	1	0.2%

We asked this question to determine a baseline demographic of how many children from each household currently attended a School Age Childcare service.

- Almost half of those surveyed (272 respondents, 49.54%) use a School Age Childcare service for one child;
- 123 respondents (22.40%) for 2 children;
- 14 respondents (2.55%) for 3 children; and
- 5 respondents for 4 or more children.

In comparison with our 2021 Consultation where we asked how many children from each household attended a SAC provision prior to the March 2020 Covid-19 pandemic/lockdown, the latest figures show an increase in the number of households accessing School Age Childcare.

Question 3: What is the age of your child/children attending the service? (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)

The purpose of this question was to determine an overview of the ages of the children from each household who currently attended a School Age Childcare service. The results reflected there was a noticeable trend that respondents with younger children are more likely to use a SAC provision than those with older children, with numbers dropping in Primary 6 and 7. By secondary school, these numbers have dropped considerably with only 35 respondents sending children collectively from S1 to S4. Although the number of attendance within this demographic has dropped, there has been a notable increase since 2021 of almost 45% of respondents accessing SAC services to care for their secondary school aged children.

It is important to highlight that older children and young adults who attend a SAC provision often have Additional Support Needs (ASN) and therefore require more specialist care during out with school hours to support their families/households.

Although Aberdeen City Council now operates ASN services during both term time and the school holidays there is still a high demand for this service. This should be taken into account as part of the National SAC Framework Delivery Plan.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
Not applicable	133	24.23%	143	26.3
P1	89	16.21%	87	16%
P2	87	15.85%	98	18%
P3	92	16.76%	78	14.3%
P4	96	17.49%	92	16.9%
P5	70	12.75%	65	11.9%
P6	50	9.11%	41	7.5%
P7	52	9.47%	41	7.5%
S 1-2	18	3.28%	13	2.4%
S 3-4	15	2.73%	5	0.9%

Question 4: Which of the following School Age Childcare services have your child/children attended? (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)

We were interested to find out which School Age Childcare services each household attended the most and how this compared to our 2021 survey.

- As with our 2021 consultation most respondents' children who attended a SAC service during 2023 attended an after school provision (36.43%).
- There was a slight increase in 2023 of the percentage of respondents attending a breakfast provision (22.77%).
- With 16.21% of respondents' children attending both a breakfast and after school provision.
- In 2023 there was a remarkable increase in households requiring childcare during in-service days rising from 2.8% (2021) of respondents to 10.39% (2023).
- This trend was also noticeable in the use of holiday provisions with an increase from 8.8% (2021) to 25.69% (2023). It is worth noting that these increases in the attendance of in-service and holiday provisions will possibly be a reflection of overall school attendance in 2021 (during the Covid-19 pandemic) compared to a complete school year in 2022/2023.

In the City (ITC)

60 (11%) of the 549 respondents accessed 'In the City 2023' holiday programmes but if we look at those respondents who attended 'In the City 2023' in isolation, we can clearly see that a mixed model of care has been required by these families, with only 14 (2.55%) of the 549 respondents only attending an ITC activity.

Total percentages within those 60 respondents who attended ITC

- 15 (25%) attended only an ITC activity during the 2023 holidays.
- 25 (41%) of those respondents also accessed registered Holiday Club (full + half day)
- 36 (58%) of those respondents also accessed unregistered Sports/activity camps.
- 15 (25%) of those respondents accessing ITC+ Holiday registered + unregistered Sports/activity.

Total percentage within all 549 respondents

- 15 (2.73%) respondents ITC only during the holidays
- 25 (4.55%) respondents ITC + Holiday Club (Full and half day registered)
- 36 (6.55%) respondents ITC + Sports/activity (unregistered)
- 15 (2.73%) respondents ITC + Holiday registered + Sports/activity unregistered

*Further analysis of respondents use of School Age Childcare during the Spring, Summer and Autumn school holiday can be seen later in Questions 9,10 and 11.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
Breakfast club	125	22.77%	107	19.7%
After school club	200	36.43%	197	36.2%
Breakfast club & after school club	89	16.21%	---	---
All-day holiday club	106	19.31%	42	7.7%
Half-day holiday	35	6.38%	6	1.1%
All-day in-service provision	45	8.20%	14	2.6%
Half-day in-service day provision	12	2.19%	1	0.2%
Spring/Summer/Autumn In The City Holiday Programme 23	60	10.93%	---	---
Sports/activity Camp	127	23.13%	---	---
Childminder	71	12.93%	52	9.6%
None	214	38.98%	219	40.3%

Question 5: We use School Age Childcare...

We wanted to establish why each household required a SAC service and how this may have changed since our 2021 consultation.

- As with our previous 2021 consultation most households required a SAC service in 2023 to support the working day with 237 respondents (43.17%). These results interestingly indicate a 16.73% drop since 2021. It is possible that these figures reflect a change in working patterns with many parents and carers now working from home following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Accessing SAC to attend a college or university course has remained the same with 2.08% (2021) and 2.91% (2023) respectively.

- There is a 5% drop in families accessing SAC to enable their children to play and socialise with other children since 2021. This could relate to the fact that during the Covid-19 pandemic families were feeling isolated and therefore recognised the importance of social interaction. It also may relate to inflated living costs resulting in families cutting back on non-essential services.
- Another noticeable drop is those families using SAC for a period of respite from 1.1% to 0.18%. This too could possibly be a result of the Covid-19 pandemic ending and/or an increased system of support for families with ASN children and young adults.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
Not applicable	240	43.72%	198	36.4%
to facilitate the working day.	237	43.17%	326	59.9%
to attend college/university.	16	2.91%	15	2.8%
to enable my children to play and/or socialise with other children.	55	10.01%	81	14.9%
for a period of respite	1	0.18%	6	1.1%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments:

“I have been lucky that I have usually been able to find places for my children but this has not always been the case, I generally have to book camps as soon as they become available in order to ensure I get childcare in the same setting for all 3 of my children on the same days.”

Parent/carer Cults ASG 2023

“Breakfast club is very important and helpful as we are both working parents this helps us in childcare”

Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG 2023

“We only use breakfast club one day per week as family help out and we work from home and work around the school day.”

Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG 2023

“We are really fortunate to have been able to access (the) after school club from the point that we needed it. Our children had their names down well in advance because we knew of the high demand for places but other people weren’t able to do that and have really struggled.”

Parent/carer Cults ASG 2023

Question 6: We do not use School Age Childcare because... (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)

- There has been a considerable reduction in those households not requiring SAC due to working from home with 13.4% (2021) dropping to 5.46% (2023).
- There has been an increase of more than 5%, since 2021, of respondents accessing childcare help from family and friends.
- A lack of local SAC services has remained much the same with a less than 1% change since 2021.
- A lack of SAC spaces at a local service and hours of operation have both increased by almost 5% since 2021.
- Interestingly, the largest increase with more than a 50% rise since 2021 is the number of respondents citing cost as the main reason for not accessing SAC.
- 19 respondents (3.46%) gave feedback that the lack of availability for children and young adults with additional support needs (ASN) was a factor for not attending School Age Childcare provision.

Option	2023	%	2021	%
Not applicable	253	46.08%	292	53.7%
never needed childcare.	60	10.93%	59	10.8%
currently working from home.	30	5.46%	73	13.4%
family and/or friends help with childcare.	97	17.67%	66	12.1%
cost.	91	16.58%	44	8.1%
no available spaces at local service.	66	12.02%	40	7.4%
no School Age Childcare services available in my area.	28	5.10%	33	6.1%
hours of service does not meet our needs.	42	7.65%	12	2.2%
Other	45	8.20%	0	0%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments:

“Used a childminder and after school club pre-COVID but got my hours changed to hybrid working so always at home from school finish time so no longer required childcare.”

Parent/carer Old Machar ASG 2023

“I am on maternity leave just now and will need to use out of school care to allow me to return to work.”

Parent/carer Lochside ASG 2023

“Regularly used childcare pre-Covid as my husband and I work full time. Our boys are now 11 and 10. Post Covid we still work full time but our working hours mean we do not need childcare before or after school. We do need it over the school holidays and

go to as many clubs and sports camps as possible. The majority of these are very expensive and only a few are available that cover the full working day."

Parent/carer Lochside ASG

"Although it would be beneficial to us in terms of working hours we feel that our children may not manage with a long day in school followed by childcare."

Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG

91 respondents (16.58%) stated that cost was the reason they did not access a SAC service. The following are a selection of parent and carer comments.

"We have twins and the cost of childcare is much higher than the hourly wage, so it is not possible for us to access it and we rather work less hours"

Parent/carer Harlaw ASG

"As a 2 parent family. The cost of child care is so high that we don't get holidays as a family as we have to make sure mum or dad is off and can't be a family."

Parent/carer St Machar ASG

"The cost of all the after school clubs, breakfast clubs, holiday camps are so expensive. I have to rely on holidays and hope my family help out."

Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG

"Cost of childcare is really expensive and really hard to find childcare in our area so, we (me and my husband) try to working for change . It's difficult when kids have break from school."

Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG

"Currently I am unemployed as holiday allowance from any work place wouldn't be enough to cover all school holidays. Even with my partners holiday allowance it just wouldn't cover it."

Parent/carer Northfield ASG

“The cost of childcare is too much. In this moment I'd be working to pay childcare and my whole wage would be gone.”

Parent/carer Northfield ASG

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments not accessing school age childcare for children and young adults with Additional Support Needs (ASN)

“We do use family for childcare but as we also have a child attending Orchard Brae (severely disabled, requiring 121 care), we have realised that there are absolutely no places/services for them during the holidays and before/after school; Thankfully, along with family, we are in a position to manage holidays due to running our own business and being able to take both of our children with us to work whenever we need to. However, had this not been the case, we would really struggle during the holidays with the lack of facilities available for severely disabled children like my son”.

Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG 2023

“Nothing suitable in place for ASN children, children with Autistic Spectrum Condition / children who struggle with emotional regulation as part of a diagnosed condition”.

Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG 2023

Question 7: Are you aware of the following financial support available towards School Age Childcare costs? (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)

We wanted to ascertain if respondents were aware of financial support available to assist with the cost of school aged childcare.

- There was a drop in the number of respondents who were aware of at least one of the available financial supports from 61.8% (2021) to 54.1% (2023).
- With 252 of 2023 respondents (45.9%) not being aware of any of the suggested options of financial support it is important that we continue to communicate this information to parents and carers attending our school age childcare services.
- 24% of respondents were aware of Tax free childcare (0-11, up to 16 if disabled) this is a slight increase on 2021 (21.7%).
- Notably there was a considerable drop of more than 50% in those respondents who were aware of Occupational childcare vouchers from 32.4% (2021) to 14.75% (2023). It is likely this is a direct correlation to employer schemes closing to new applicants and being phased out from October 2018.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
ACC Discount Scheme (Aberdeen City Council provisions only)	24	4.37%	84	15.4%
Tax free childcare (0-11, 16 if disabled)	130	23.68%	118	21.7%
Tax credits for childcare (0-15)	103	18.76%	127	23.3%
Universal credit for childcare (0-16)	111	20.22%	96	17.6%
Occupational Voucher schemes	81	14.75%	176	32.4%
Support while you study	13	2.37%	27	5%
None of the above	252	45.90%	208	38.2%
Other	11	2.00%	0	0%

Question 8: Do you currently use any of the following financial support towards School Age Childcare costs? (Participants were asked to select all appropriate answers.)

This question sought to ascertain if respondents were accessing any of the financial support or voucher schemes listed in Question 7. Most 2023 respondents (67.94%) are not claiming any of the listed opportunities for financial support. This is an increase of over 5% of respondents since 2021. With many service users continuing to express concern about childcare costs, it is important that we make parents and carers aware of all potential childcare financial supports.

- Of those respondents claiming financial support towards their childcare costs, Tax free credits was the most widely accessed in 2023 by 55 respondents (10.02%).
- Followed closely by Occupational voucher schemes used in 2023 by 44 respondents (8.01%). It is worth noting that this marks a considerable decline since 2021 (19.9%).
- Between 2021 and 2022 there was no change in the amount of respondents (14, 2.6%) using the ACC Discount Scheme (Aberdeen City Council provisions only).
- There was an increase from 3 (2021) to 6 (2023) respondents accessing 'Support while you Study'.
- With 10 respondents (2023) preferring not to answer.

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
ACC Discount Scheme (Aberdeen City Council provisions only)	14	2.55%	14	2.6%
Tax free childcare (0-11, 16 if disabled)	55	10.02%	46	8.5%
Tax credits for childcare (0-15)	22	4.01%	22	4%
Universal credit for childcare (0-16)	35	6.38%	16	2.9%
Occupational Voucher schemes	44	8.01%	108	19.9%
Support while you study	6	1.09%	3	0.6%
None of the above	373	67.94%	335	61.6%
Prefer not to answer	10	1.82%	7	1.3%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments:

“Costly and as always, if you earn half reasonable wage, you’re punished with any financial support taken away from you.”

Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG

“I work full time so get no financial support at all. You are punished for working full time as “you make too much money” to receive support.”

Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG

“Please provide information about possible financial aids/credits that can be applied for and where to apply. We have been given no information about any financial aids, credits or vouchers etc.”

Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG

With Questions 9, 10 and 11 and information previously gathered in Question 4 we were looking to get an overview of the use of registered and unregistered School Age Childcare during the Spring, Summer and Autumn school Holidays.

Which of the following SAC services do you use?	2023	Percent
Breakfast club	125	22.77%
After school club	200	36.43%
Breakfast club & after school club	89	16.21%
All-day holiday club	106	19.31%
Half-day holiday	35	6.38%
All-day in-service provision	45	8.20%
Half-day in-service day provision	12	2.19%
Spring/Summer/Autumn In The City Holiday Programme 23	60	10.93%
Sports/activity Camp	127	23.13%
Childminder	71	12.93%
None	214	38.98%

Question 9: During the school holidays how many of your children attended a Holiday Care Provision (registered)?

Number of Children attended a Registered Holiday provision	Total	Percent
0	386	70.31%
1	112	20.40%
2	47	8.56%

3	4	0.73%
4	0	0.00%
5+	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Question 10: During the school Holidays how many of your children attended a Sports/Activity Camp (unregistered)?

Number of Children attended an Unregistered Holiday provision	Total	Percent
0	325	59.20%
1	154	28.05%
2	64	11.66%
3	6	1.09%
4	0	0.00%
5+	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

- 163 (29.69%) respondents' children attended a registered Holiday provision.
- 224 (40.80%) respondents' children attended unregistered Sports/activity camps.
- 110 (20.03%) respondents attended both registered and unregistered holiday provisions.

Question 11: During which holiday period would your child/children most likely attend? (Participants were asked to select all applicable services.)

We were interested to find out in which holiday periods respondents' children were most likely to attend a SAC holiday provision. Although there had been a drop of 2% in the number of respondents accessing a Summer provision, there was a considerable increase in those respondents accessing Spring and Autumn holiday provisions. There was also an overall rise of 13% in respondents' children attending a holiday provision across all three holiday periods.

- Most 2023 respondents' children attended a Summer provision (66.48%) this was a slightly less than 2021 (68.6%).
- With 43.53% (2023) rising from 29.2% in Spring (2021).
- And 41.53% (2023) rising from 32.9% in Autumn (2021).
- There was also an increase in respondents sending children to services during all three holiday periods rising from 25.18% (2021) to 37.89% (2023)

Option	2023	Percent	2021	Percent
Not applicable, we do not use any school age childcare during the holidays.	168	30.60%	74	13.6%
Spring holiday	239	43.53%	159	29.2%

Summer holiday	365	66.48%	373	68.6%
Autumn holiday	228	41.53%	179	32.9%
All school Holidays (Spring, Summer, Autumn)	208	37.89%	137	25.18%

Question 12: Parental engagement is an expected element of Care Inspectorate inspections and your feedback is valued to support service improvement. How would you prefer to engage with your service provider?

Of the 448 respondents who answered this question most (66.96%) said they would prefer to engage with the service through an online questionnaire. It should be noted that parents and carers if required must be given an opportunity for further one to one engagement with service providers after completing an online questionnaire. Although most respondents would prefer online communication it is important that services still engage with parents and carers on a one to one basis as this is best way to gather pertinent information regarding the care of each individual child and service feedback.

- 300 respondents (66.96%) would prefer to give SAC services feedback via an online questionnaire.
- The next most popular form of engagement (16.74%) was preferring to engage in person when picking up their children, with 4.01% preferring in person when dropping their children off.
- 8.9% at a pre-arranged appointment.
- With a further 12 respondents (2.6%) not having time or understanding why this is important or relevant to school age childcare.

Option	Total	Percent
Online questionnaire.	300	66.96%
At a pre-arranged appointment.	40	8.92%
In person at drop off.	18	4.01%
In person at pick up.	75	16.74%
Don't have the time.	6	1.33%
Don't understand why this is important or relevant to school age childcare.	6	1.33%
Other	3	0.66%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments:

"I'd be happy to provide feedback at any time but for convenience online questionnaire is best"
Parent/carer St Machar ASG

“Easier to do in own time.”

Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG

“In person or an online questionnaire”

Parent/carer Aberdeen Grammar School ASG

“Online questionnaire is the most convenient”

Parent/carer Bridge of Don ASG

“Easier to fill in at home”

Parent/carer Harlaw ASG

“Would be good idea when sometimes during picking up kids we can also speak to teachers”

Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG

Question 13: Do you have a child/children currently attending an ELC Nursery setting or Childminder who will require School Age Childcare once they attend school?

Our Early Learning & Childcare Parent and Carer Consultation 2023 highlighted that 45% of families would eventually need School Age Childcare once their child transitioned from an Early Years setting to attend Primary School, with 22.4% being unsure and 32.4% saying no. With a potential total of 67.6% needing School Age Childcare it was important that we asked the same question to those parents and carers currently accessing a School Age Childcare Service.

- All 549 respondents answered this question with the vast majority (71.58%) stating they would not require school age childcare once their child attended primary school.
- With almost a quarter (24.04%) of respondents stating that they would require School Age Childcare once their child attended primary school.
- and a further 4.37% of respondents being unsure.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	132	24.04%
No	393	71.58%
Unsure	24	4.37%

Question 14: If you answered yes to question 13 when will your child/children start to attend primary school?

- Again, if we look at these 133 preschool children (132 families) in isolation, 46.61% of those respondents' preschool children will require School Age Childcare from 2024.
- With 29.32% from 2025, 18.79% from 2026 and 5.26% from 2027.

Option	Total Respondents	Percent %
2024	62	46.61%
2025	39	29.32%
2026	25	18.79%
2027	7	5.26%

If we continue to look at these 132 respondents in isolation the following table shows us how these figures (133 preschool children) will break down across each of the Associated School Groups (ASGs) for Aberdeen City Council Secondary School zones.

- Cults shows the largest amount of children currently attending an ELC Nursery setting who will require School Age Childcare 2024 – 2025 (14.39%).
- Followed closely by Harlaw (12.12%)
- With Hazlehead Bucksburn (8.33%)

	2024	%	2025	%	2026	%	2027	%	Total	%
Aberdeen Grammar School	3	2.25%	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	0	0%	6	
Bridge of Don	1	0.75%	4	3.00%	1	0.75%	0	0%	6	
Bucksburn	8	6.01%	3	2.25%	3	2.25%	0	0%	14	
Cults	10	7.51%	9	6.76%	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	22	
Dyce	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	0	0%	0	0%	3	
Harlaw	10	7.51%	6	4.51%	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	19	
Hazlehead	7	5.26%	5	3.78%	6	4.51%	1	0.75%	19	
Lochside	7	5.26%	4	3.00%	4	3.00%	1	0.75%	16	
Northfield	8	6.01%	2	1.51%	2	1.51%	2	1.51%	14	
Old Machar	3	2.25%	2	1.51%	2	1.51%	1	0.75%	8	
St Machar	3	2.25%	1	0.75%	2	1.51%	0	0%	6	
Total	62		39		25		7		133	

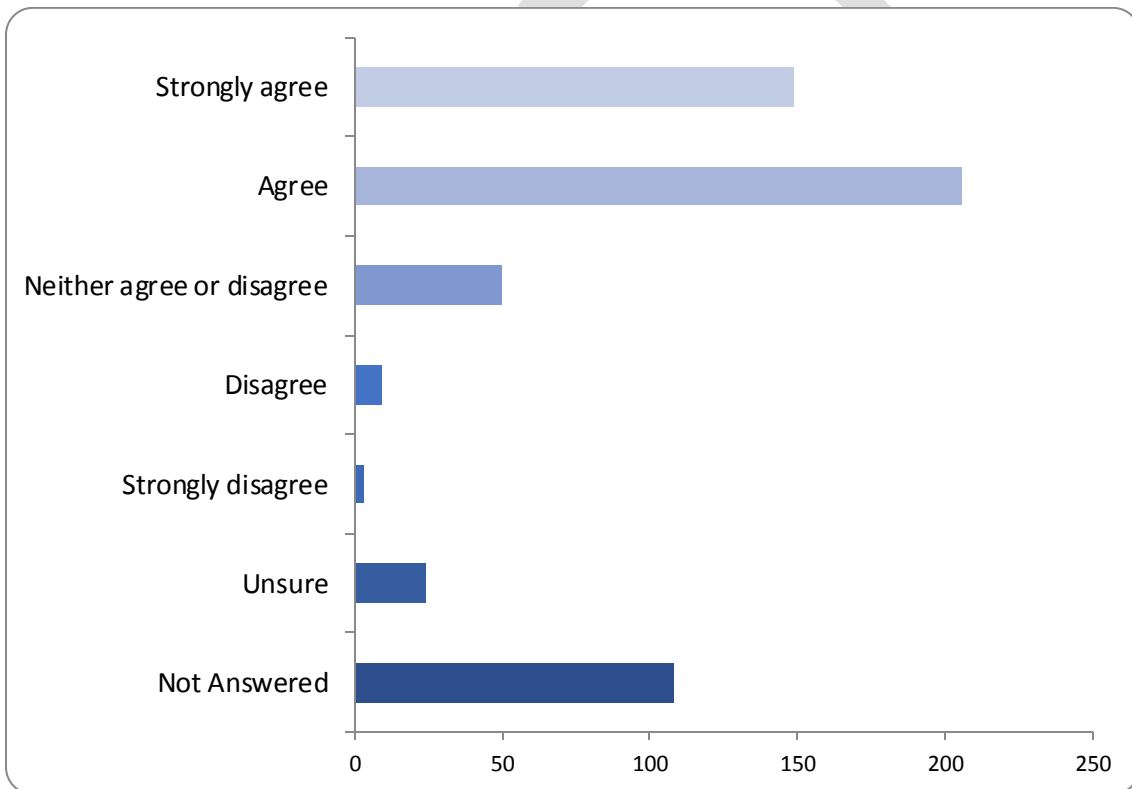
Section 2: About your children’s experience of the service. (430 - 441 Responses)

Each question in Section 2 was linked to the **Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)** eight **SHANARRI** wellbeing indicators: **Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible** and **Included**.

441 Respondents completed all or part of section 2, and mostly agreed or strongly agreed that their childcare setting was meeting their children’s needs.

Question 1: SAFE: My child/children are safe and secure in the service.

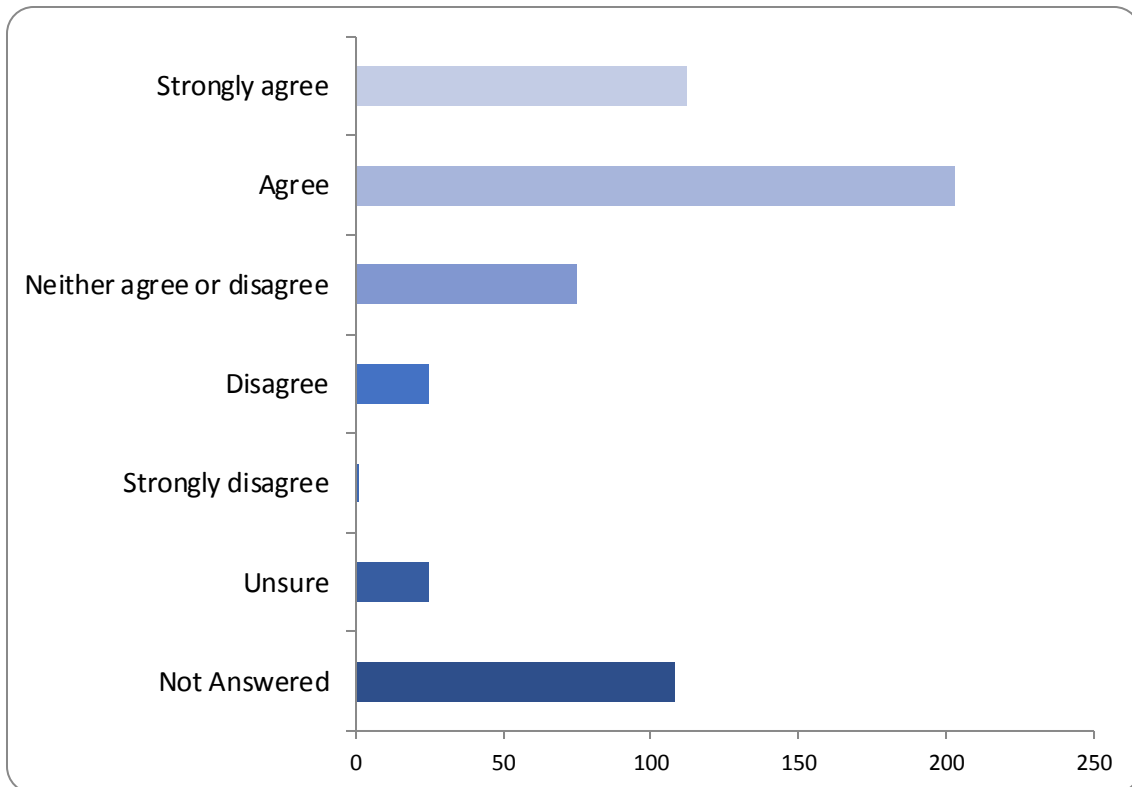
- The majority of respondents 64.66% strongly agreed or agreed that their children were safe and secure while attending the service.
- 50 respondents (9.11%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 12 respondents (2.18%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 24 respondents (4.37%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	149	27.14%
Agree	206	37.52%
Neither agree or disagree	50	9.11%
Disagree	9	1.64%
Strongly disagree	3	0.55%
Unsure	24	4.37%
Not Answered	108	19.67%

Question 2: HEALTHY: My child/children are provided with a healthy snack and learn about healthy eating.

- The majority of respondents 57.37% strongly agreed or agreed that their children **are** provided with a healthy snack and learn about healthy eating when attending the service.
- 75 respondents (13.66%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 26 respondents (4.73%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 25 respondents (4.55%) being unsure.

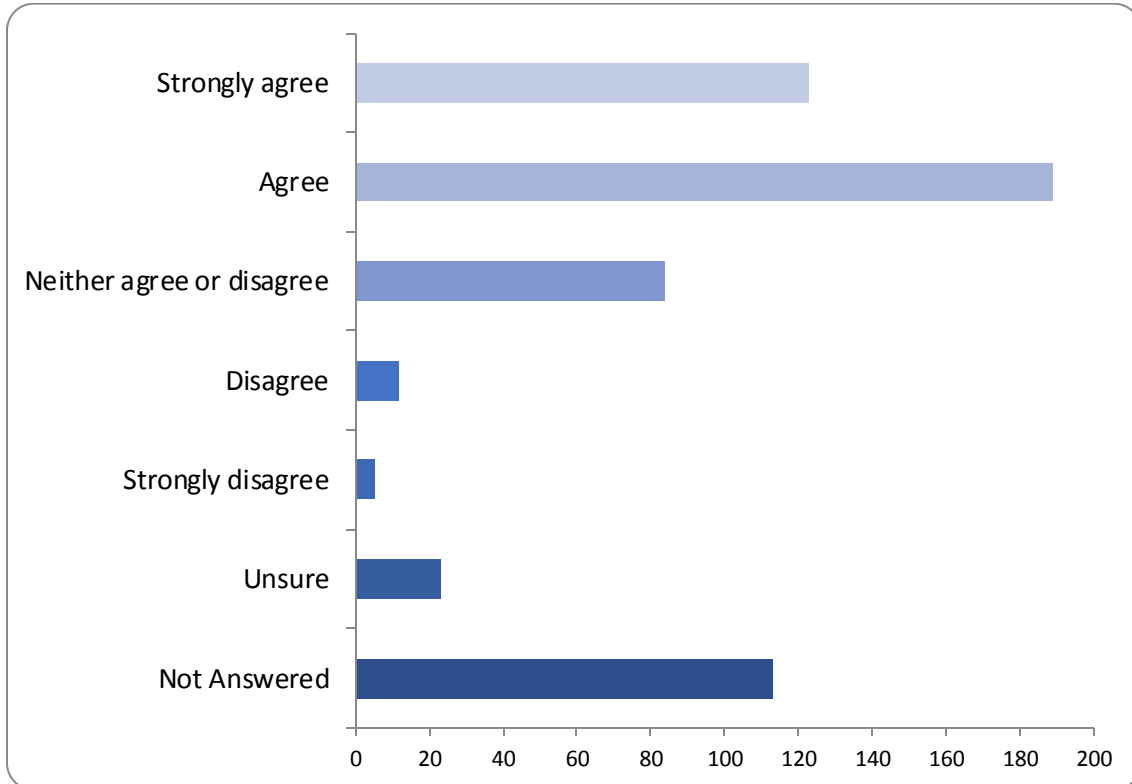


Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	112	20.40%
Agree	203	36.98%
Neither agree or disagree	75	13.66%
Disagree	25	4.55%
Strongly disagree	1	0.18%
Unsure	25	4.55%
Not Answered	108	19.67%

Question 3: ACHIEVING: My child/children are learning new skills and developing through the activities offered in the service.

- The majority of respondents 56.83% strongly agreed or agreed that their children are learning new skills and developing through the activities offered in the service.

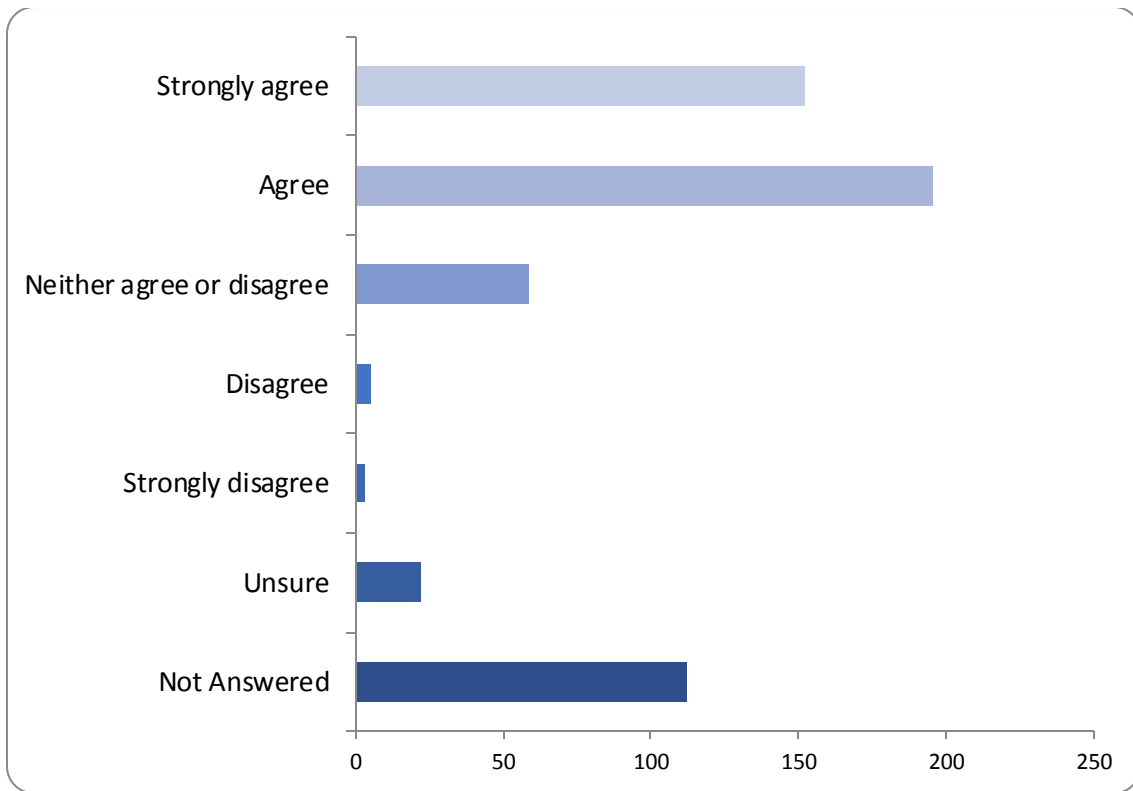
- 84 respondents (15.30%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 17 respondents (3.09%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 23 respondents (4.19%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	123	22.40%
Agree	189	34.43%
Neither agree or disagree	84	15.30%
Disagree	12	2.19%
Strongly disagree	5	0.91%
Unsure	23	4.19%
Not Answered	113	20.58%

Question 4: NURTURED: The staff are friendly, approachable and support my child/children’s needs.

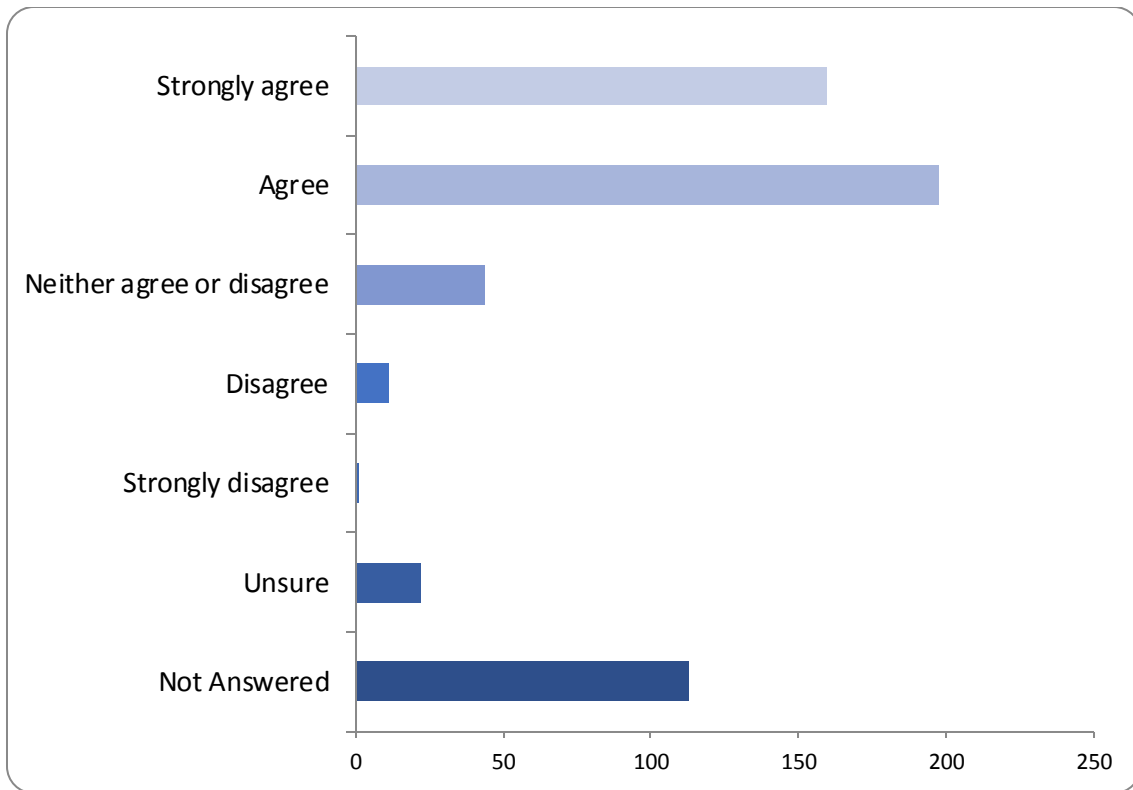
- The majority of respondents 63.38% strongly agreed or agreed that the staff are friendly, approachable and support their children’s needs while attending the service.
- 59 respondents (10.75%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 8 respondents (1.45%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 22 respondents (4.01%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	152	27.69%
Agree	196	35.70%
Neither agree or disagree	59	10.75%
Disagree	5	0.91%
Strongly disagree	3	0.55%
Unsure	22	4.01%
Not Answered	112	20.40%

Question 5: ACTIVE: My children have access to physical play and activities both indoors and outdoors.

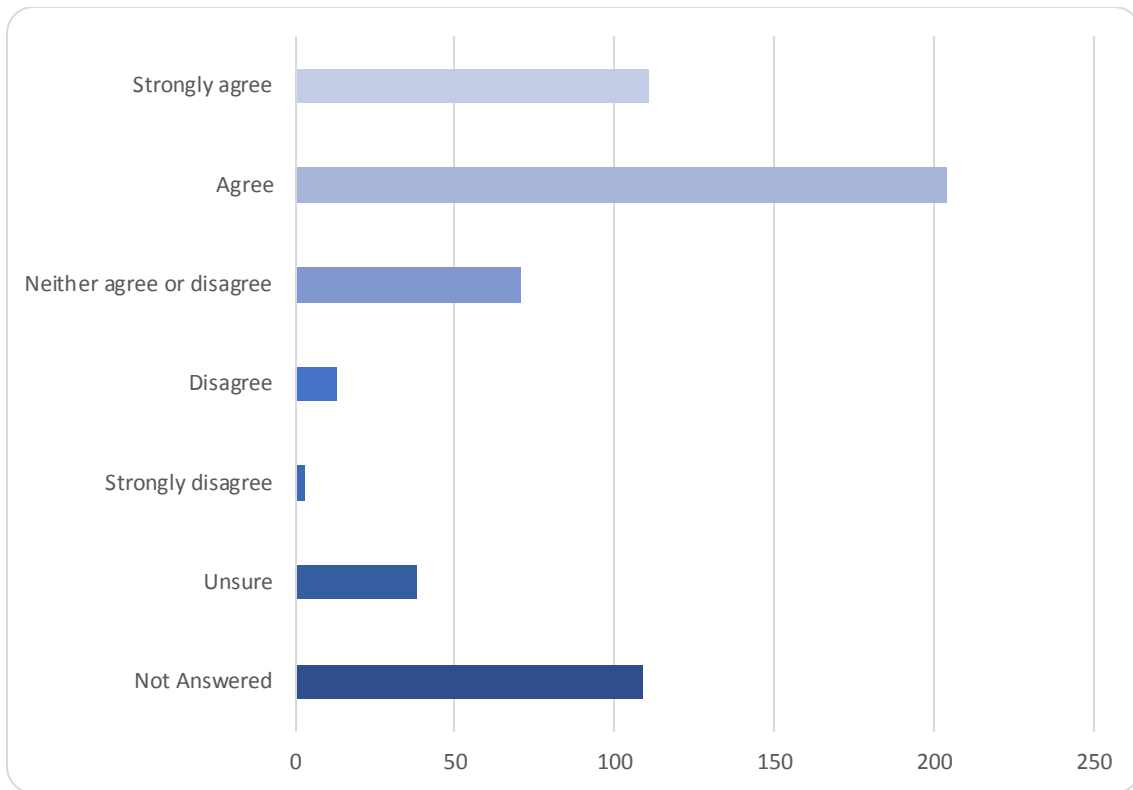
- The majority of respondents 65.20% strongly agreed or agreed that their children have access to physical play and activities both indoors and outdoors while attending the service.
- 44 respondents (8.01%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 12 respondents (2.18%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 22 respondents (4.01%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	160	29.14%
Agree	198	36.07%
Neither agree or disagree	44	8.01%
Disagree	11	2.00%
Strongly disagree	1	0.18%
Unsure	22	4.01%
Not Answered	113	20.58%

Question 6: RESPECTED: My child/children are listened to and their views are respected.

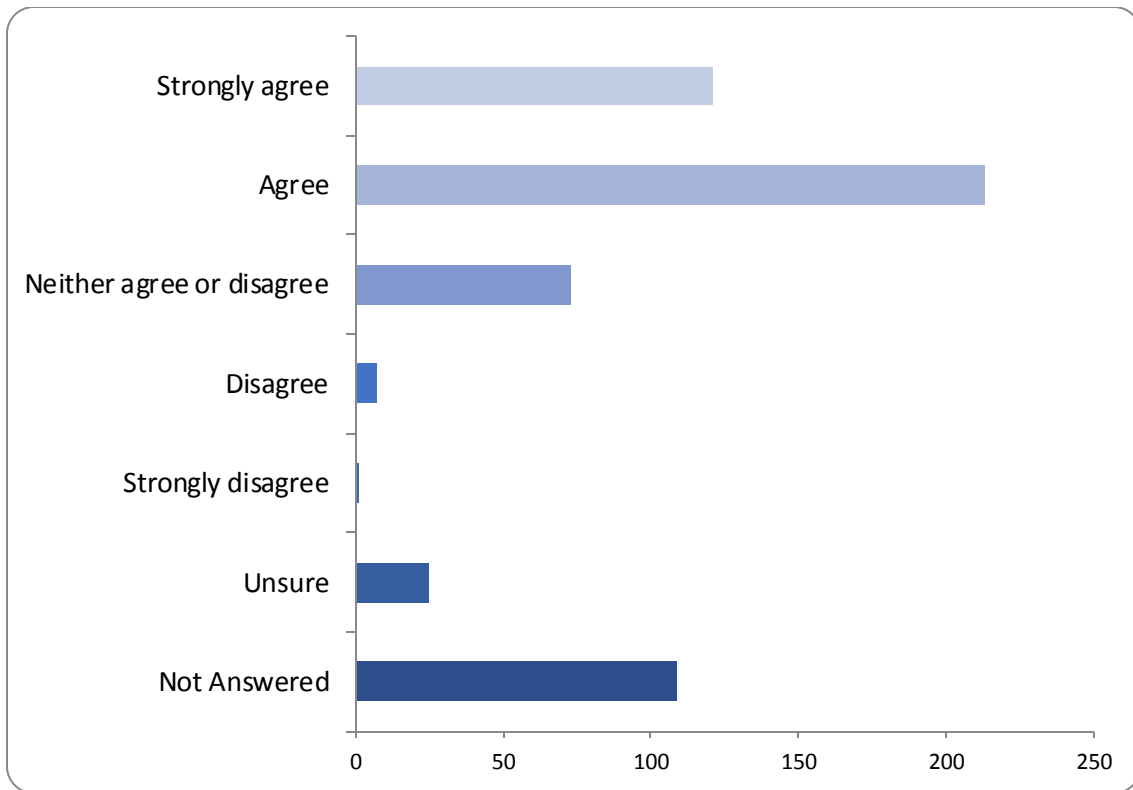
- The majority of respondents 57.37% strongly agreed or agreed that their children are listened to and their views respected while attending the service.
- 71 respondents (12.93%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 16 respondents (2.91%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 38 respondents (6.92%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	111	20.22%
Agree	204	37.16%
Neither agree or disagree	71	12.93%
Disagree	13	2.37%
Strongly disagree	3	0.55%
Unsure	38	6.92%
Not Answered	109	19.85%

Question 7: RESPONSIBLE: My child/children are learning to take responsibility for themselves and others.

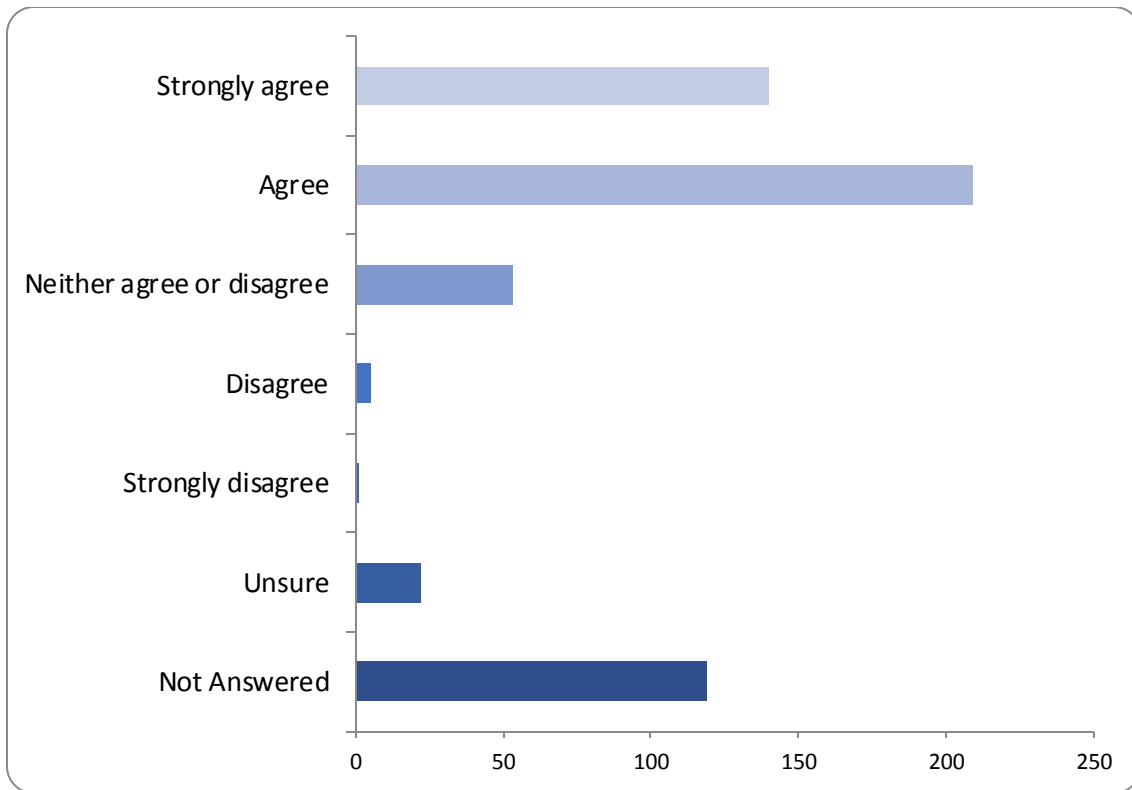
- The majority of respondents 60.83% strongly agreed or agreed that their children were learning to take responsibility for themselves and others while attending the service.
- 73 respondents (13.30%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 8 respondents (1.45%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 25 respondents (4.55%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	121	22.04%
Agree	213	38.80%
Neither agree or disagree	73	13.30%
Disagree	7	1.28%
Strongly disagree	1	0.18%
Unsure	25	4.55%
Not Answered	109	19.85%

Question 8: INCLUDED: My child/children feel welcome and included when attending the service.

- The majority of respondents 63.57% strongly agreed or agreed that their children were welcomed and included when attending the service.
- 53 respondents (9.65%) neither agreeing or disagreeing.
- 6 respondents (1.09%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 22 respondents (4.01%) being unsure.



Option	2023	Percent
Strongly agree	140	25.50%
Agree	209	38.07%
Neither agree or disagree	53	9.65%
Disagree	5	0.91%
Strongly disagree	1	0.18%
Unsure	22	4.01%
Not Answered	119	21.68%

The following are a selection of parent and carer comments regarding the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators.:

“The wrap around school care our child receives is fantastic being not only a care provision, but the educational/social benefits and activities provided is excellent.”

Parent/carer Aberdeen Grammar School ASG

“School has seen an increased in high-needs children which ensures they are included however it means that teachers/staff are struggling to adequately meet SHANARRI indicators because there are too many needs. This impacts safety and their ability to provide a nurturing environment.”

Parent/carer St Machar ASG

“More detailed information on the snacks provided and activities available at the settings would be beneficial.”

Parent/carer Hazlehead ASG

“The private after school club that provide the childcare to my children fulfil the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators. I could not ask for a better childcare provider.”

Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG

“Our privately run club is amazing in its care of our child.”

Parent/carer Bucksburn ASG

“Snack is healthy but my daughter is always saying how small it is!”

Parent/carer Cults ASG

“My son attends out of school care. He loves it and the staff are fantastic. It would be beneficial to have flood lighting / stronger security lights as at pick up it's very dark in winter and limited time for outdoor play as a result”

Parent/carer Harlaw ASG

“I think the older children should be made more aware of how to interact with little primary 1 children and how to model good behaviour.”

Parent/carer Cults ASG

Analysis

549 parents and carers responded to the 2023 consultation on School Age Childcare in the city. This was an increase of 5 respondents (1%) from the previous consultation undertaken in 2021. Responses were gleaned from all 11 of Aberdeen City's ASGs from parents and carers accessing School Age Childcare through all available services. Local Authority and private providers, both registered and unregistered.

The consultation findings demonstrate that 43% of all respondents who currently access School Age Childcare do so to support the working day with only 3% to enable them to attend College or University. 10% of all respondents use School Age Childcare to enable their children to play and/or socialise with other children, with only one (0.18%) respondent citing respite as reason to access childcare.

Wrap around Term Time care and In-service days

The majority, 36% of all respondents currently require the services of an After School Club, with 22.8% requiring a Breakfast Club. Of those respondents accessing term time care, 16% required both a Breakfast and After School provision. There was also an increase from 2021 of 8% of service users accessing childcare for In-service days during 2023.

Care during the School Holidays

Various registered and unregistered holiday childcare services are currently available across the city during the Spring, Summer and Autumn school holidays with 37.89% of respondents requiring care during all three holiday periods. Interestingly there were 10% more respondents' children who attended an unregistered Sports/Activity Camp compared to those accessing a registered Holiday Club. A fifth of all respondents (20.03%) accessed both registered Holiday Clubs and unregistered Sports/Activity Camps. 10.93% of respondents accessed the Spring/Summer/Autumn In The City programme 2023 with 25% of those respondents accessing a mix of registered, unregistered and In The City programme services. Evidence suggests that many parents and carers are currently accessing a mixed model of child care during the holidays to meet their needs.

Accessibility and Cost

While we have good coverage of SAC in Aberdeen there is still a demand for more places. Therefore it is important that we work with our partners to continually assess supply and demand across the city, and when and where possible either expand on existing provisions and/or create new services. As SAC is a paid for service, it is important that any new services are viable and sustainable. Expansion also has to take account of space available and the maximum number of registered places according to Care Inspectorate requirements.

With almost a quarter of respondents (24%) saying they will require School Age Childcare for their preschool children currently attending an ELC nursery and/or childminder, it is important that we also look ahead and consider future SAC coverage. Therefore we must continue to facilitate communication between parents, carers currently accessing ELC Nursery provisions and childminders and all SAC providers regarding future supply and demand.

Affordability continues to be a concern for many families with almost 17% saying they do not access SAC due to cost. The introduction of the National Framework for School Age Childcare Delivery Plan, when implemented, should make services more affordable for some families. However, we are also increasingly aware that cost can be an ongoing concern for many families who are currently in work but facing cost of living challenges. With 46% of families saying they were not aware of any available financial support and only 28% of respondents currently receiving support, it is

essential that this information is made more readily available. We will work with the Financial Inclusion Team and all SAC providers to ensure that all parents and carers are made aware of what financial support is potentially available to assist them with the costs of SAC. We will also link with the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN) to ensure that all information shared is current and in line with their existing drive to promote all available childcare financial support and benefits.

Next Steps

- A focus group will be established with our School Age Childcare partners, including providers and Head Teachers, to help develop and inform the refresh of the Aberdeen City School Age Childcare Policy.
- As part of our aim to fully understand future supply and demand we will engage and communicate with parents and carers, whose children are currently attending ELC nursery and childminder settings to monitor future projections of potential supply and demand. At this time we will also communicate the importance of planning ahead with regards to wrap around care once children transition to primary school.
- We will prioritise the promotion of potential financial support and benefits available to assist with the cost of childcare.
- To develop a more detailed understanding of our own SAC services we will continue to consult and engage with Aberdeen City Council service users directly to ensure that we are continuing to meet their needs within our services.
- In order to meet our ongoing statutory obligations and our commitment to engaging with parents and carers, another city-wide School Age Childcare consultation will be undertaken in Summer/Autumn 2025. Meanwhile we will continue to monitor supply and demand on an annual basis and work with providers to expand services where possible and where viable.

Thanks

Thank you very much to all the parents and carers who participated in this consultation. We strive to deliver a range of high quality School Age Childcare provision in Aberdeen which meets the needs of all children, families and local communities. Your input and views are invaluable in supporting us to achieve this.

Early Years Team
Aberdeen City Council
January 2024

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No This report relates to the provision of statutory social work services.
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Social work service provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Young People (UASYP)
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/045
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Alison McAlpine
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1.1 and 2.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to update Elected Members and provide assurance that appropriate and effective support is afforded to Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Young People (UASYP) within Aberdeen City.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the current plans to provide appropriate accommodation, support and intervention to meet the needs of this vulnerable group of children and young people; and
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to provide an annual update through the Children's Services Plan Annual Report.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 Global conflict and population displacement has had an impact across all regions of the UK over the last three years. Locally the most significant impact has been a significant increase in the demand and resource required from Children's Social Work services to support and safeguard UASYP who arrive in Aberdeen City.
- 3.1.2 UASYP will often have been exposed to significant trauma from within their countries of origin. In addition they will often have been exposed to exploitation and abuse during their journey to arriving within the UK. Many will have accrued

'debts' during the journey, debts which they will be expected to repay once they are in the UK.

3.1.3 Their needs are complex and require a multi-agency response. UASYP have the same status as other looked after children and the duties of all Corporate Parents to this group don't vary. The duty of all Corporate Parents is to provide care and support up to the age of 26. Each UASYP attracts a level of funding from the UK Government dependent on their age. Those aged 18years or over receive circa 25% of those aged under 18 years.

3.1.4 Main routes to arrival in Aberdeen City are:

Route of Referral	UASYP (as at 31.12.23)
Spontaneous arrival	3
National Transfer Scheme	25
Hotel Dispersal	21

3.2 National Transfer Scheme (NTS)

3.2.1 The number of asylum-seeking individuals, including unaccompanied children, arriving in the UK has increased in recent years, the majority arriving via small boats into Kent, England. To meet this demand and reduce the reliance of these children spending extended periods of time within hotels, a Transfer Scheme agreement was established between local authorities in England to ensure a more equitable distribution of these unaccompanied children. The legislation was amended in 2018, to include local authorities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

3.2.2 The above scheme was unable to respond to the scale of the demand and from 15 February 2022, Aberdeen City Council, in line with all local authorities, has been directed to participate in the National Transfer Scheme.

3.2.3 This scheme, operates on a rotational basis, mandating local authorities across the UK to accept referral of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, until the number of children has reached 0.1% of their child population. It is expected that children will be received by the mandated local authority within 5 working days of referral from the Home Office.

3.2.4 As at December 2023, 25 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Young People had moved to the care of Aberdeen City via the NTS (out of the 491 across Scotland through this scheme)

3.2.5 There remain local challenges to identifying appropriate accommodation, care placements and move on accommodation provision, (with two young people reunified with family in other parts of the UK being an exception). Resourcing for under 16yr olds is the most difficult, with a national shortage of foster carers and demand in our city children's homes increasing by 40% in 2022/23.

3.2.6 The placement costs provided by the Home Office are not sufficient to cover residential care or out of authority placements. All efforts continue to be taken to prevent the need for care to be purchased outwith Aberdeen City.

3.3 Hotel Dispersals

3.3.1 During 2023, 3 Hotels within Aberdeen City were commissioned by the UK Government, supported by Mears Group, a private social care and housing provider, to provide accommodation and support to adult asylum seekers, all males to date, who have been dispersed to Hotels from Kent.

3.3.2 The dispersal scheme has seen (at December 2023) just over 500 asylum seekers arrive in our city hotels. A small but significant proportion of these individuals (9% of hotel dispersed asylum seekers within the city) have since arrival in Aberdeen, disputed that they are over 18yrs of age.

3.3.3 The move to room maximisation within hotels has increased the number of asylum seekers arriving, which has in turn, increased the number referred to children's social work on account of disputing their age.

3.3.4 Each individual who disputes their age, either to indicate that they are an adult or, as has always been the case in Aberdeen, indicating they are under 18yrs of age and not therefore an adult as had been otherwise recorded, must have their stipulated age given due consideration via an Age Assessment undertaken by children's social work.

3.3.5 Whilst the time taken to undertake an assessment of age can vary dependent on each individual, it is clear that the intervention required to fulfil this task in line with guidance and legislative responsibilities is complex, should be carried out by more than one worker who has a social work qualification, will usually require several interviews, is subjective and by nature, very labour intensive.

3.4 Age Assessments

3.4.1 A number of UASYP regardless of the route by which they have arrived in the city, dispute the age that they are initially understood or assessed to be. There is a legislative requirement for Age Assessments to be undertaken to make a determination of age, with the results impacting on what services and intervention are required for that asylum-seeker.

3.4.2 When the assessment is that the asylum-seeker is under 18yrs of age, the legislation and policy, practice and guidance (National Child Protection Guidance 2021) dictates that they should become a Looked after Child.

3.4.3 UASYP should not be living within hotels assigned for adult asylum seekers. In keeping with our Homeless Policy, we are committed to stop using hotel accommodation and for looked after children to deploy the Care Leavers Housing Protocol.

3.4.3 Age Assessment Guidance has been set out by UK Govt and requires to be followed for all who are subject to immigration control who do not have sufficient

evidence to demonstrate their age, and either their claim to be children is doubted or they claim to be adults but are suspected to be children.

3.4.4 Consideration of age, initially via a 'brief enquiry' should be undertaken by two social workers, both with suitable experience and training to undertake this task. Given that any age assessment cannot provide the same degree of confidence about whether an individual is an adult or a child, as could be provided by reliable documents, the principle of 'benefit of the doubt' must be applied.

3.4.5 Benefit of the doubt means that where there is still uncertainty about whether the individual is an adult or a child, the individual should be treated as a child pending further consideration of their age. This further consideration may include a more robust Merton Compliant Age Assessment [Assessing age GOV.UK](#) where physical appearance and demeanour does not very strongly suggest they are significantly over 18yrs of age.

3.4.6 As at December 2023, 44 referrals have been made regarding age disputed asylum-seekers within the 3 hotels in the city. Social work assessment indicates that for 21 of these, there has been insufficient evidence to deem them to be under 18yrs of age. A further 23 individuals have been accepted to be under 18yrs of age, including a number of these for whom we are giving benefit of the doubt, as per guidance on Age Assessments.

3.5 Care and Support Provision

UASYP looked after in Aberdeen City (31.12.23) by age group	
Under 16 years of age	2
16-18 (under 18) years of age	38
18-26 years of age	9

- two were aged under 16 years old at point of placing, bringing the total number of UASYP in our children's homes in the city to 5
- 38 were aged 16-17 years and Looked After in Supported Accommodation provision
- 9 were over 18yrs old and requiring aftercare services
- Looked After Child planning and resource processes were deployed for all these children to support their specific needs.

3.5.1 To augment our accommodation options to meet this increased need, we have worked with Housing Providers and Registered Social Landlords, to secure accommodation for this group. We have also extended our third sector partnership for Aftercare support and together with our Youth Team, (care leavers provision) Action for Children are leading on aspects of outreach provision. We are developing our approaches to ensure we are taking account of UASYP individual cultural backgrounds, their experiences of loss and how for many this manifests in trauma. Securing health support, education provision and social integration remain key activities in our strategic planning.

3.5.2 Looked After Care and Aftercare planning is in place for UASYP, with an increasing number indicating their reluctance to remain in North East Scotland and a preference to move to an English city area.

- 3.5.3 Pathway planning is in place, allowing us to move asylum-seeking young people on from children's homes and closely supported accommodation, to wider supported accommodation and eventually into their own tenancies, as their scope to manage more independently in a new city, is developed and enhanced. This planning has facilitated some throughput for the steady stream of new arrivals to the city via both NTS and spontaneous arrivals.
- 3.5.4 We will continue to require to flex our planning given that we forecast demand will continue to increase at a faster rate than accommodation becomes available and UASYP are ready to move on to accommodation.
- 3.5.5 Where UASYP require to remain in hotel accommodation whilst planning to secure accommodation dedicated to under 18yr olds is identified, close working takes place with Mears, to ensure appropriate support and intervention is provided by children's social work to this group. To date, 8 young people have been moved from hotel accommodation, with planning taking place to move a further 15 as alternative supported accommodation is secured for them.
- 3.5.6 Financial remuneration is made available from the UK Government for each UASYP at the time they are received into the care of the local authority. The remuneration arrangements require this to be claimed in arrears, which adds uncertainty to forecasting when planning to meet accommodation and intervention need. This national model precludes infrastructure planning and has been raised with the Home Office via Cosla on behalf of all Scottish Local Authorities.
- 3.5.7 This funding is not sufficient to cover costs of children's home placements nor the higher costs of children and young people being placed in resources outwith Aberdeen City. Funding also reduces significantly when the individual turns 18yrs of age, at which time, as per the legislation, they may continue to require the same level of support and accommodation as they did prior to their 18th birthday.
- 3.5.8 To date we have not had to accommodate any of this group of asylum seeking children outwith Aberdeen and this will continue to be our aim. This is in line with the fact that our obligations to meet the needs of this group would be difficult to meet if they were not within close proximity and also that utilising residential and family care options out of the city is cost prohibitive, and is far in excess of the funding allocated by UK Govt.
- 3.5.9 Needless to say, the provision of accommodation and support to this vulnerable group of UASYP impacts the availability of children's home and supported accommodation options for all who require to be cared by the local authority in Aberdeen. There has been on average 22% occupancy by UASYP of all local children's home placements, over this reporting period.

3.6 Staff resourcing

- 3.6.1 To meet need, a revised staffing complement has been established within existing services to respond to current need. This augments existing staff

resource for a further 23 month period by 1x Team Leader, 2x social workers, 1x housing support officer.

3.6.2 Appropriate training for staff involved in this area of work has been absorbed within existing service training budget.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All available funding from UK Government has been utilised to meet the needs of UASYP and significantly to provide additional staffing required to care and support this new demand.

4.2 To date we have not required to place any UASYP outwith Aberdeen City, however meeting our legislative requirements for this vulnerable group via providing care and accommodation that is required, has directly impacted on our scope to utilise care placements for our local children and young people in need of care and protection. This has inevitably meant that some children who we would have wished to care for in Aberdeen, have had to be placed in residential resources outwith the city. The average cost of an out of authority placement is £280,000 per annum.

4.3 As at 17.01.24 we have 5 UASYP living in our children's homes and 6 UASYP in our most closely supported accommodation in Aberdeen City.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It is anticipated that there will be cases where age disputed asylum seekers will appeal decisions where their stated age is not accepted. The Council has duties to UASYP as looked after children under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 as amended. Where UASYP dispute the findings of an age assessment they can challenge the decision via judicial review proceedings.

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 related risks	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	Failure to act on the duty	Forward planning in place to identify next	M	Yes

	<p>to care for this group will see ACC in breach of statutory duties.</p> <p>Judicial Review</p>	<p>available resource and timeframe which is offered when NTS notify of new referral to the city. Close communication with NTS has helped to collaborate receiving of UASC is out with stipulated timeframe (5 days)</p> <p>Spontaneous arrivals Close communication with Mears housing provider ensures collegial response to need when it is not feasible to immediately move UASC from the Hotel into CSW accommodation. In these cases, CSW offer intervention and support albeit that for a period, the UASC remains in Hotel (adult) accommodation.</p>		
Operational	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people who need care is central to the planning for all open to Children's Social Work</p>	<p>Process map developed to clarify support and intervention from outset of referral to exiting services.</p> <p>Triage system to allow prioritisation of needs when resources are not immediately available for all.</p> <p>Close alignment with other areas of partnership to ensure corporate responsibilities are shared wider than solely CSW (housing, health)</p>	M	Yes
Financial	<p>Additional funding is claimed by</p>	<p>Joint working with CSW accountants to reconcile spend with</p>	M	Yes

	ACC in relation to this group. Funding is sufficient to meet need within the city but not to cover costs if we are required to place children out of our authority.	<p>respective allocated funding.</p> <p>Updates to Children's Services Board via statutory reporting (Annual Report) on demand and resource. Forecasting of future need using data shared on future Hotel dispersals</p> <p>Scrutiny of data to allow moving on plans to be worked up for those who can be supported into more independent living arrangements to allow throughput for new arrivals who are seeking asylum.</p>		
Reputational	Given the humanitarian nature of this need failure to deliver services is likely to adversely impact on ACC's reputation.	Close working across ACC services and with local housing providers has allowed additional accommodation options to be sourced and planning is developed to enhance this further	M	Yes
Environment / Climate	None identified.	N/A	N/A	N/A

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>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people who require to come into local authority care has a direct relevance to the delivery of the following statements contained within the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, to reduce 'out of authority; placements.

<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	<p>Aberdeen City Council's social work services play a central role to supporting and assuring that the multi-agency partnership delivers on the LOIP Prosperous People (Children and Young People) Stretch Outcomes 4-9.</p> <p>In addition the work of the Child Protection Committee ensures that our children are safe from harm. Children, young people and families who are adequately protected from threats to their health, safety and economic wellbeing are more likely to prosper than those who are not. Given the vulnerabilities of UASC this is of particular importance.</p>
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Aberdeen City Council's social work services play a central role to supporting and assuring that the multi-agency partnership delivers on the LOIP – Prosperous People (Children and Young People) Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9.</p> <p>UASYP are recognised as looked after children. The work of Stretch Outcome 6 fully aligns to supporting the needs of this groups of young people. We however recognise the work of the Child Protection Committee is highly relevant to ensure our UASYP are safe from harm. Children, young people and families who are adequately protected from threats to their health, safety and economic wellbeing are more likely to prosper than those who are not.</p>
Regional and City Strategies	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.
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.</p> <p>This wide ranging and ambitious programme impacts on a range of statutory duties on the Council in relation to vulnerable and care experienced children.</p> <p>Asylum-Seeking Children are specifically referenced in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland. The National Transfer Scheme was specifically compiled to ensure a nationwide approach to meeting the urgent needs of those fleeing home countries due to persecution and worldwide conflict.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Graeme Simpson, Chief Officer, Integrated Children's and Family Services on 15 January 2024.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required for this report.
Other	Not required for this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Bairns Hoose
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/049
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1.1 & 2.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise and share with members the outcome of Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose Pathfinder application and the subsequent "bid" application.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note Aberdeen City's successful Bairns Hoose Pathfinder application;
- 2.2 To note the award of **£281,875** for the year 2023/24 to support Aberdeen City's delivery of a Bairns Hoose and to note a further round of funding will be made available for 2024/25 with a bid being required to be submitted by 21 February 2024; and
- 2.3 To request that the Chief Social Work Officer provides members with an update on progress to deliver a Bairns Hoose within the Annual Child Protection Committee Report and within the annual update to Aberdeen City's Children's Services Plan.

3.1 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 A report was presented to the Education and Children's Services Committee in September 2023 (**see Background Papers**) in relation to Aberdeen City's plan to develop a Bairns Hoose. The Scottish Government has committed 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 brings together the four elements of justice, health, social work and advocacy/recovery support into a single setting to deliver integrated support to more effectively 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 To support delivery of the 'Bairns Hoose' policy the Scottish Government invited local partnerships to apply to be "Pathfinders". Aberdeen City was one of 6 partnerships that have been awarded "Pathfinder" status. (Others Pathfinders are Aberdeenshire; Tayside; Western Isles; North Strathclyde, Fife.) The Pathfinder phase will run from 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2025. There is live discussion with Ministers about this

timeframe being extended to align to the original intention of Pathfinders operating over two years.

- 3.4 Successful Pathfinders were invited to submit funding proposals from an annual £6m fund. This was split on a £2m Capital and £4m Revenue basis. All funds awarded are required to be spent by 31 March 2024. As a consequence of this Aberdeen City partnership received **£281,875**. (The breakdown is **£120,500** capital and **£161,375** revenue.)
- 3.5 Funding for the year 2024/25 will operate on a similar basis with partnerships required to submit plans for spend for the year including for Capital and Revenue costs. The total fund for the year is at present still to be determined but is anticipated to be circa £6m.
- 3.6 Building on the approach taken to deliver the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) across the North East, there are elements of our Bairns Hoose Pathfinder that we are collaborating with the Aberdeenshire Pathfinder. This will ensure consistency of approaches to undertaking child protection investigations but will also enable learning to be shared within a local context.
- 3.7 The Bairns Hoose Delivery Group continue to meet on a monthly basis ensuring a focus to progressing our Bairns Hoose. We recognise the need to ensure the views and voices of children, young people and their families are central to the design of our Bairns Hoose as well as how aspects of how the Bairns Hoose will operate. As such one of the five workstreams that will feed into the Delivery Group is VOICE. Ensuring its independence this is being led by Children 1st, our third sector partner who will deliver the advocacy and recovery service. The are 5 workstreams that will feed into the Group:
- VOICE
 - Systems and Processes
 - Capital and Resource
 - Governance
 - Evaluation
- 3.8 The Bairns Hoose Delivery Group will report progress to the Child Protection Committee on a quarterly basis, in addition to updating the Chief Officers Group who have strategic responsibility for delivery of the Bairns Hoose.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising out of this report.
- 4.2 The full extent of funding for Pathfinders remains unclear. We have received some initial funding and a further funding bid will be submitted at the end of February 2024 for the 2024/24 year. Our Pathfinder application also makes clear that delivery of a Bairns Hoose will require all agencies to contribute to its delivery.
- 4.3 The cost of developing our Bairns Hoose is included within the Councils Capital programme. Scoping todate indicates that the cost of redeveloping the space within the Links Hub for the Bairns Hoose will be greater than the forecasted amount within the Capital Programme. This will be revisited within the forthcoming Council budget process. The Capital element of the Pathfinder funding will be aligned to the Capital Cost.

- 4.4 The Pathfinder phase is intended to more accurately determine the revenue costs to deliver our Bairns Hoose. Some of these costs are already built into existing service delivery and will be 'lifted and shifted' into the Bairns Hoose. However there are other elements yet to be fully quantified, specifically the advocacy and recovery service. The evaluation of the 6 Pathfinders will inform the Scottish Government's financial planning to support and scale up delivery of Bairns Hoose across all 32 local authority areas.

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 have access to a Bairns Hoose service by 2025. It is anticipated that national reporting will in future include reporting against the Bairns Hoose Standards.	The CPC has primary oversight on progress to develop and deliver a Bairns Hoose. Regular reporting will be shared with Aberdeen's Public protection Chief Officers Group.	L	Yes
Operational	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 (CSW). CSW and Police Scotland have 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.	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.	L	Yes
Financial	There are no significant related financial risks from this report.	One of the core principles of delivering a Bairns Hoose service is	L	Yes

	The Strategic Business case is being concluded and will inform the Capital plan presented to Council in March 2024. All agencies will be responsible for funding the individual service components that will deliver a Bairns Hoose.	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.		
Reputational	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.	By being a pathfinder the Council will benefit from support from the National Bairns Hoose team to deliver a high quality service.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified.	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 Outcomes	People Stretch	<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>

	8. 25% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.
Regional and City Strategies	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.
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	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 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 Impact Assessment should be completed. New Initial Impact Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	Not required.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Education and Children's Services Committee, 12/09/2023 10:00](#)

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	20 February 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Secure Care Pathway Review
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/051
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1.1 & 2.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Committee members on the learning identified in the recently published Secure Care Pathway report and to highlight any immediate implications for the delivery of services to children and young people from Aberdeen who are in or on the edges of secure care.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report; and
- 2.2 Note that the outcome of our self-evaluation will contribute to the annual review of the statutory Children's Services Plan with required actions being built into the plan.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 In May 2022 the Scottish Government asked the Care Inspectorate to undertake a rights based thematic review in relation to Secure Care. The Secure Care Pathway Review ran from August 2022 through to August 2023.

- 3.1.2 The Independent Care Review in February 2020 highlighted:
"There is limited information about the circumstances of young people who are placed in secure care, their experiences of secure care and their destinations and outcomes on leaving secure care".

- 3.1.3 The intention of the thematic review by putting the voices of care experienced young people at the heart of the review was to support an improved understanding of the role of secure care and how it supports to improve the outcomes for some of our most vulnerable young people. It two aims were:
1. Understand how young people experience secure care

2. Understand the extent to which the Secure Care Pathway and Secure Care Standards are making a difference to how staff and managers understand and approach their work and whether they are helping to improve young people's experiences.

3.2 Methodology

- 3.2.1 All 32 local authorities were asked to identify young people who fell into the following groups:
 - young people who were living in secure care on 13/7/22
 - young people who left secure care between 1/3/22 and 12/7/22.
 - young people whom LA's had considered placing in secure care between 1/3/22 and 12/7/22.
- 3.2.2 From the 126 young people identified 30 young people were chosen and over the course of the review the inspection team tracked their plans and outcomes. They met with the young people where they were agreeable to this and met with relevant staff from the team around the child. In addition they interviewed all CSWO's and other relevant managers.
- 3.2.3 One young person from Aberdeen City was within the group of 30.

3.3 Review Findings

- 3.3.1 The findings of the Review were published in early October 2023. Learning was on a national basis as opposed to learning specific to each partnership. Six learning themes were identified for local partnerships to consider. These are
- 3.3.2 **Theme 1: Understanding the purpose and role of secure care:**

The purpose and role of secure care is to provide a safe and restricted environment that some young people need. It should enable them to get the care and therapeutic support that they require. While some young people are in secure care because they are a risk to others, some are in secure care because they are at risk of harm and in need of the specialist support provided by secure care services. The report concluded that young people, their families and staff working with young people do not always fully understand the role and purpose of secure care.
- 3.3.3 **Theme 2: Identifying and responding when young people are at high risk of harm:**

Across Scotland, children's services partnerships differ in their approaches to identifying, responding to and monitoring young people at high risk of harm who may require secure care. This includes before, during and after secure care to prevent admission or readmission and to support planning during secure care. The report concluded that there were inconsistencies to the extent to which staff and leaders from key agencies are involved in assessing and planning support for young people during their secure care journeys.
- 3.3.4 **Theme 3: Providing young people with stability of care**

The importance of stability of care and consistent relationships with staff for young people cannot be overestimated. The review found that too often, young

people were moved around the care system including in and out of secure care, especially when their behaviour was challenging as a result of trauma and distress resulting in changes of staff working with them.

3.3.5 Theme 4: Providing families with suitable support

The review highlighted that early and effective family-based support was not always available for families. This was particularly challenging for families caring for children and young people with complex needs (i.e. caring for young people who are care experienced or having ASN) to ask for help. The report noted that the provision of flexible and timely intensive support was not consistently available. In addition, it noted families were not always receiving the practical and emotional support they needed to stay in touch when young people were living away from home. There was a lack of support available to families to prepare them for young people returning to their care.

3.3.6 Theme 5: Meeting the housing needs of young people

The report identified that when young people left secure care they were not always prepared for leaving. They were often not well provided with support to make steps towards independent living or returning to live with family. Almost 1/3 of young people in the Review sample became homeless during the review period or were at risk of homelessness. The Review highlighted that suitable intermediate care settings were not consistently available for young people in or on the edges of secure care. At times, young people were placed with family members or in care settings that were unlikely to be sustainable because there were no other options available.

3.3.7 Theme 6: Providing young people with intensive and specialist support

The report found there were inconsistencies in the provision of support to young people living in the community. This included therapeutic support to address emotional distress and risks of self-harm and suicide and substance misuse. It noted more consistent, intensive community-based support could help to prevent young people moving or returning to secure care. The review found it was easier for young people to access and engage with therapeutic and specialist support while in secure care and there was a lack of continuity of therapeutic support when young people moved in and out of secure care. Multi-agency partners were much less likely to be involved in post-secure care planning and provision of support.

3.4 Next Steps

3.4.1 Over recent years Aberdeen City has placed very few children in secure care. The majority of recent placements have been as a result of the risks young people present to themselves (mental health/drug use) as opposed to being in conflict with the law. While locally we have done much to mitigate the need for secure care there is always more we can do. Many of the learning/action points identified within this thematic review reflect local experiences. They also reflect some of the areas of improvement already identified within our Children's Service Plan 2023/26 and Corporate Parenting Plan.

3.4.2 The Secure Care Pathway thematic review identified a small number of actions/reflective questions for local Corporate Parents to consider and evaluate local practice and services. Responding to these requires a multi-

agency response and it will therefore be fully considered at the next Corporate Parenting Group meeting. Given the significance of this report for CAMHS we have asked that a representative attend this meeting.

- 3.4.4 An evaluative report will thereafter be brought to the Children's Services Board for their consideration. Identified gaps in service provision or practice will directly contribute to the annual review of the statutory Children's Services Plan with required actions being built into the plan.
- 3.4.3 The Thematic Review recognised that a number of learning/action points require a response at a national level both in terms of the resources made available to services as well as approaches to address the national challenge of recruitment and retention of staff across children's social work and social care services.
- 3.4.5 The findings of the thematic review have a strong alignment to the draft Children's Care & Justice Bill that is currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament. Specifically the Bill proposes a redesign of the secure estate to ensure it better meets the needs of young people who need this restrictive form of intervention. In addition the Bill stresses the need for sufficient community-based alternatives so that detention is a last resort.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. It is important to recognise that the cost of placing a young person in secure care is significant circa £350,000 per child per year. The Council has limited control over these decisions but are responsible for the full costs of placing a young person in secure care.
- 4.2 While the thematic review is rightly focused on improving outcomes the financial implications are a further reason to ensure every effort is made by partnerships to provide appropriate intensive community based alternatives to secure care. Given the complexity of the needs of the small number of young people who potentially meet the legal threshold for secure care the cost of delivering community based alternatives are also financially onerous.
- 4.2 The financial memorandum that accompanies the Children's Care and Justice Bill is still subject to ongoing debate and consideration. It is therefore unknown at this point what financial resource will be assigned to delivering on the recommendations of the Bill including developing an alternative to secure care community option.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications from this report, however, the quality of support provided to children and young people in need of care and protection, including those in or on the edges of secure care are focused within statutory joint inspections of services delivered to children in need of care and protection. The partnerships response to the Secure Care Pathway Review will therefore be considered within this context.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No specific implications identified.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant related risks	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	Failure to act on the findings of the thematic review will inhibit the partnerships capacity to deliver on the Secure Care Standards and improve the outcomes for young people in or on the edges of secure care.	The annual reporting on progress to deliver on the Children's Services Plan will take account of the self-evaluation on the findings of this thematic review. The Care Inspectorates joint inspection of services delivered to children in need of care and protection will also take account the findings and delivering on the Secure Care Standards.	L	Yes
Operational	Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people who are in or on the edges of secure care is central to the multi-agency planning for all children and young people open to Children's Social Work.	The number of young people in secure care remains low. All placements are subject to review by the Chief Social Work Officer at least every 4 weeks.	L	Yes
Financial	There are no significant related financial risks from this report.	Committee will be kept appraised on the outcome on the progress of the Children's Care & Justice Bill.	L	Yes
Reputational	Failure to deliver on the Secure Care 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.	The self-evaluation of practice and services against the recommendations of the thematic review will identify strengths and gaps at a local level.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None identified.	N/A	N/A	N/A

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>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people in or on the edges of secure care 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, to reduce “out of authority” placements.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Aberdeen City Council's social work services play a central role to supporting and assuring that the multi-agency partnership delivers on the LOIP – Prosperous People (Children and Young People) Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9.</p> <p>In addition the work of the Child Protection Committee is highly relevant to ensure our children are safe from harm. Children, young people and families who are adequately protected from threats to their health, safety and economic wellbeing are more likely to prosper than those who are not.</p>
Regional and City Strategies	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.
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 and supports the Scottish Government's drive to #KeepthePromise.</p> <p>This wide ranging and ambitious programme impacts on a range of statutory duties on the Council in relation to vulnerable and care experienced children.</p> <p>In addition the Child Poverty programme and the development of Whole Family Support are key policy initiatives which have relevancy.</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required for this report.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required for this report.
Other	Not required for this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Secure care pathway review 2022-23](#)

11. APPENDICES

None.

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