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ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

<u>To</u>:   Councillor Greig, <u>Convener</u>; Councillor Mennie, <u>Vice Convener</u>; Councillors Allard, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Fairfull, Grant, McLeod, Radley, MacGregor and Mrs Stewart; and Ms Danielle Barclay (Parent Representative - Nursery / Primary), Ms Jacqueline Munro (Teacher Representative - Secondary Schools), Dr Alison Murray (Parent Representative - Secondary), 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, 24 June 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 **<u>TUESDAY, 2 JULY 2024 at 10.00 am</u>. 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

ALAN THOMSON
INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER - GOVERNANCE

B U S I N E S S

NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1.1   There are no items of urgent business at this time

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

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

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3.1   Members are requested to intimate any declarations of interest

DEPUTATIONS

4.1   There are no requests for deputation at this time

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1   Minute of Meeting of 30 April 2024 - for approval (Pages 5 - 16)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

6.1   Committee Business Planner (Pages 17 - 26)

NOTICES OF MOTION

7.1   Notice of Motion - Councillor Kate Blake

That the Education and Children's Services Committee:

1. Agrees that strong parental engagement is important to educational outcomes and notes that this is enshrined in law via Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, which established a "duty of the Scottish ministers to promote the involvement of the parents of pupils in attendance at public schools"

2. Notes that the National Parent Forum of Scotland is a statutory consultee mentioned by name in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 – Gaelic provisions

3. Notes with concern the decision of the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills to defund the National Parent Forum of Scotland on 18th May 2024.

4. Notes that the independent organisational review of the National Parent Forum of Scotland published in February paid for by the Scottish Government gave the following recommendation:

    "The findings of this review provide strong evidence of the on-going impact of NPFS. However, without adequate funding, the current situation is not sustainable, and the organisation is at risk of spiralling into a downward trajectory without the financial support it requires"

    The review did not recommend defunding the organisation.

5. Notes that the Cabinet Secretary has outlined in her response to the Scottish Parliament on 21st May 2024 that the National Parent Panel run by the charity Connects will be up and running by the new academic year in August

6. Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to write to the Cabinet Secretary to ask for the implementation plan including timeline and volunteer mobilisation plan, so that there is no loss of the parental voice of Aberdeen at a national policy level and to also ask for clarification around any potential impact on Gaelic Medium Education.

7. Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to write to parent councils and parents across the city to reassure them of continuity of support from a national organisation.

REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES

8.1   There are no referrals at this time

PERFORMANCE AND RISK

9.1   Performance Management Framework/Accessibility and Behaviour Progress Report - Families and Communities - CORS/24/194 – to include presentation from Mike Paul (Pages 27 - 72)

9.2   Inspection Reporting - F&C/24/192 (Pages 73 - 108)

9.3   Approaches to Quality Improvement - F&C/24/195 (Pages 109 - 164)

EDUCATION

10.1   Consultation Reports: Proposed Catchment Area Changes for Hazlehead Academy, Greenbrae School and Scotstown School - F&C/24/196 (Pages 165 - 194)

10.2   Easter in the City Programme 2024 - F&C/24/189 (Pages 195 - 206)

10.3   Free School Meals Annual Update - F&C/24/180 (Pages 207 - 220)

10.4   Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 - F&C/24/181 (Pages 221 - 272)

10.5   Healthy Weight - CFS/24/188 (Pages 273 - 282)

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

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

11.1   Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill - CFS/24/193 (Pages 283 - 296)

11.2   Edge of Care Pilots - CFS/24/197 (Pages 297 - 312)

Impact Assessments for this Committee can be viewed here:- Impact Assessments | Aberdeen City Council

Service Updates for this Committee can be viewed here

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

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 30 April 2024.   Minute of Meeting of the EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Greig, Convener; Councillor Mennie, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Allard, Blake, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Crockett (as substitute for Councillor Mrs Stewart), Hutchison (as substitute for Councillor Fairfull), Malik (as substitute for Councillor Grant), McLeod, Radley and MacGregor.   External Members:- Mrs Frances Cardno (Parent Representative - Primary Schools/ASN) (to article 11), Mr Michael Crawford (Parent Representative - Secondary / ASN) (to article 11), Mr Doug Haywood (Teacher Representative - Primary Schools) (to article 11), Ms Jacqueline Munro (Teacher Representative - Secondary Schools) (to article 11), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative) (to article 11), Mr Madhav Regmi (Third Religious Representative) (for articles 7 to 11) and Mrs Hilda Smith (Church of Scotland representative) (for articles 5 to 11).

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.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

1. The following statements of transparency were noted:-
- Mr Murray made a general statement of transparency, noting that his daughter taught at St Peter's RC School and he had two grandchildren at St Joseph's RC School, but he did not consider that this amounted to an interest which would prevent him from participating in the meeting; and
- in relation to item 9.1 (Inspection Reporting), the Convener advised for reasons of transparency that he was an elder of Fountainhall Church which owned the building occupied by Queen's Cross Nursery, however he did not consider that this required him to declare an interest for that item, and he would therefore remain in the meeting and participate in the discussion.

DEPUTATION - MR DAVID WILLIS AND MR KEVIN MASSON, GMB - IN RESPECT OF ITEM 10.1

2. The Committee heard from Mr David Willis and Mr Kevin Masson, representing the GMB, in respect of the report at item 10.1 (Behaviour Report).

Mr Willis explained that he was the Convener of the GMB Trade Union. He thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak. He asked that Members note from the report that GMB had welcomed all the commitments agreed in the action plan, however a key demand made by the GMB in response to the unacceptable behaviour that their Members were facing had not been met. The GMB had called for a working group to be established

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to review the Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision within the city, and Mr Willis asked that the Committee give officers an instruction to undertake that review. He explained that the GMB were seeing an increasing number of learners with additional support needs, and a limited number of places within specialist settings, meaning that more learners with complex additional support needs were placed in mainstream settings.

He explained that the GMB were not against inclusion, but there was a need to ensure that the environment was suitable, and the resource sufficient for both the young people and the staff supporting them. Staff needed to be suitably trained for the situations they faced, and Mr Willis explained that he did not believe that was currently the case. He noted that he had been horrified when he first learned that bite guards were being issued to their members, and stated that PPE should always be a last resort, noting that it might reduce the risk, but it did not eliminate it completely. He added that schools were now issuing Kevlar hoodies as staff had had their hair pulled out by the roots, and he was aware of one setting where the Kevlar sleeves had proved insufficient, and thick leather welding gauntlets were being issued instead. Mr Willis stated that no employee should have to go to work with that level of fear for their personal safety.

Mr Willis said that there were settings where classrooms were having to be evacuated on a daily basis due to dysregulated behaviour, and entire buildings emptied on a weekly basis. He added that he understood that dysregulated behaviour could be a form of communication, but asked if the level of disruption would still be seen if the environment was more suitable and the child was being nourished. He asked if the Council was 'Getting it Right' for that child, and indeed for every child. Mr Willis advised that the GMB had been informed by Education officers that there was no expectation for any staff member to put their hands on a child, which was to be welcomed, and yet there was a dichotomy where members told the GMB that they had received training on how to restrain a child exhibiting dysregulated behaviour.

Within the behaviour report, Mr Willis noted that the resilience of staff was called into question. He added that he found this particularly galling, and believed that the examples he had given demonstrated that that section of staff were being pushed to breaking point, noting that there were many more examples available. Mr Willis explained that essential workers were feeling undervalued and unappreciated, and he believed that a thorough review of ASN provision, and the actions that informed, would go a long way to restoring the belief that their employer was one that cared for their welfare and respected the contribution they made to nourishing the young people within their care.

Mr Masson then added that nationally, in 2013, around 131,000 pupils in schools had required ASN provision. Recent figures showed this was now around 250,000 pupils, or 36.7% of the current school population. During that time, every ASN child would have had a co-ordinated support plan, however Mr Masson added that this had now fallen by 60%. Therefore the number of ASN children had doubled, but the number of support plans had halved. He added that this information had been taken from the Scottish

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Children's Services Coalition, and it stated that this was having an impact in terms of surging levels of school violence. He explained that the GMB had seen an increase in the number of reports from their members in respect of violence against them, including being bitten, having bones broken, having hair pulled out and being scratched, not to mention the impact on their mental health from stress and trauma.

Mr Masson explained that he was not having a go at Aberdeen City Council, nor the Education team, and in fact he thought Aberdeen was one of the best places there was and so it should be a leading example in addressing the problems. He added that the GMB had had excellent working relationships with the Education service, and they would wholeheartedly want that to continue. He advised that he and Mr Willis were at Committee because they wanted recognition that there was a problem with the ASN provision within mainstream settings. He stated that it was about resource; about making sure that buildings were fit for the needs of children; about ensuring that staff had the proper training and facilities; and that there was the correct number of resources to ensure that the young learners had the best possible provision to have the best possible future. He added that this was why the GMB had requested a working group to be set up, asking that the Council be honest and transparent and see exactly what the demand was, where Aberdeen currently sat, and whether the correct resources existed or whether more were required.

Mr Masson referred to the Scottish Government's Behaviour in Schools report 2023, noting that it clearly indicated that there had been a significant increase in aggressive behaviour in schools, with on average around a 50% increase. He added that it all indicated that there was a rising surge in behaviour incidents in particular schools, but also that there was a need for ASN provision in schools to be fully supported. He noted that the Council could not get it right for every child if it was not getting it right for the staff who supported those children. He concluded by reiterating that the GMB requested that a transparent working group be established to review specialist provision in Aberdeen for the needs of young learners and for the safety of staff. He noted that a 'that will do' attitude was a foundation stone for disaster.

Members then asked questions of the deputation.

The Committee resolved:-
to thank Mr Willis and Mr Masson for their presentation.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF 20 FEBRUARY 2024

3.   The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2024 for approval.

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The Committee resolved:-
(i)   in relation to article 7(i), to note that the Clerk would re-share the information circulated from officers on the outline process for the work set out in the Northfield Primaries report with Councillor Blake; and
(ii)   to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

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

Members asked a number of questions in respect of the delayed items and those recommended for removal.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to agree to remove items 10 (Inspection Reporting – Inspection of Regulatory Care Services); 32 (School Estate Plan - Victorian Schools - feasibility study & options appraisal); 58 (School Estate Plan - Harlaw Academy Improvements - feasibility study); and 59 (School Estate Plan - Ferryhill School - feasibility study) for the reasons outlined in the planner; and
(ii)   to otherwise note the planner.

INSPECTION REPORTING - F&C/24/119

5.   The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Executive Director – Families and Communities 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 (ELC) settings since the last meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee in February 2024.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee –
(a)   note the content of the report; and
(b)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to support Early Learning and Childcare settings and schools to implement continuous improvement in keeping with the Quality Improvement Framework agreed at Committee in July 2023.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to note that officers would circulate the Queen's Cross Nursery action plan to Members outwith the meeting;
(ii)   to note that the link at section 3.8 of the report was broken and that officers would circulate a new link to Members after the meeting; and

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(iii)   to approve the recommendations.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT/NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK PROGRESS REPORT - FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES - CORS/24/117

6.   The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Executive Director – Families and Communities and the Executive Director – Corporate Services which presented (a) the status of key performance measures relating to the Children's and Family Services function and (b) an interim progress update in relation to implementation of the Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan 2023/24.

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:-
to note the report.

BEHAVIOUR REPORT - F&C/24/121

7.   With reference to article 4 of the minute of its previous meeting, the Committee had before it a report by the Interim Executive Director – Families and Communities which detailed the current picture in relation to behaviour in Aberdeen schools; the arrangements in place to promote positive behaviour in schools and outlined procedures currently in place to improve incident reporting. The report also detailed collaborative work undertaken with Trade Unions to develop a shared Action Plan for consideration by the Committee, and an overview of the January Magpie meet and an update on the work of the sub group of Head Teachers looking at how best to utilise resource, in line with the instruction from the last meeting of the Committee.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee –
(a)   note the content of this report;
(b)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to work with Trade Unions to co-deliver the Action Plan in Appendix B;
(c)   delegate authority to the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to make any amendments necessary, in consultation with Trade Unions, following the publication of the National Behaviour Plan and update Members of any changes through Service Update; and
(d)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to update on progress against the Action Plan through the established performance management reports.

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

That the Committee approve the recommendations in the report, and:-

(i)   acknowledge the challenges related to children's wellbeing, which could impact the behaviour of children and young people in school settings;

(ii)   thank Education staff for their flexibility in supporting children and young people with impaired wellbeing and acknowledge how challenging this could be;

(iii)   thank the EIS, GMB and others for their continuing constructive engagement with Aberdeen City Council on improving our school environments to create safe and nurturing settings for all;

(iv)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to continue constructive engagement with Unions and others; such as those with an interest in the provision of supports for those with additional support needs including local organisations and the Northfield Advisors, to allow a continuous improvement journey in all of our schools;

(v)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to review the adequacy of the current allocation of pupil support staffing and provision of specialist placements across the city;

(vi)   further instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to consider the output of (iv) and (v) and report options for consideration back to the Education and Children's Services Committee within three cycles;

(vii)   instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to include in the annual School Estate Plan update a workstream to evaluate the physical Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision in individual settings and include a timescale within the plan on when recommendations on potential space for future ASN purposes could be brought forward;

(viii) instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to work in collaboration with Trade Unions to deliver and evaluate the impact of the agreed Action Plan on children, young people and staff;

(ix)   note that Head Teachers remind staff of agreed school behaviour policies and procedures on the first in-service day; and instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to seek assurance from Head Teachers of the percentage of staff given the opportunity to engage with this;

(x)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report the number of staff who complete the Maybo training as part of the regular update on progress against the Action Plan;

(xi)   note that Aberdeen City Council was leading the way on driving innovative positive change in various areas within Education and Children's Services; however acknowledge this was an ongoing improvement journey and reinforce our commitment to education in this city;

(xii)   therefore, further instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to develop a system in data recording which differentiates information on incidences in schools; to allow further qualitative analysis of need, and to further allow identification of need and targeting of resource.

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

That the Committee –

(i)   note the content of this report;
(ii)   note the continued concerns raised by the Trade Unions about ASN provision within the city and instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to implement a review of specialist ASN provision and the finding of the review to be considered as part of the school estate plan;
(iii)   recommend to Council that it establishes a working group of Officers, Trade Unions and Elected Members to work to co-deliver the Action Plan in Appendix B with the addition of (ii) to the action plan with authority to make any amendments necessary, following the publication of the National Behaviour Plan, and update Members of changes through a report to the next Education and Children's Services Committee following publication of the National Plan;
(iv)   agree that the Scottish Government was failing school staff with the continued delay to implementing their National Behaviour Plan; and
(v)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to update on progress against the Action Plan through a separate and distinct report to Committee.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (13) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillors Allard, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Hutchison, MacGregor, McLeod and Radley; and Mrs Cardno, Mr Crawford and Mrs Smith; for the amendment (3) - Councillors Blake, Crockett and Malik; declined to vote (4) – Mr Haywood, Ms Munro, Mr Murray and Mr Regmi.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to note that Mike Paul could present learning to the Committee on the trial Bucksburn Academy were undertaking; and
(ii)   to adopt the motion.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING - F&C/24/120

8.   The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Executive Director – Families and Communities which set out the findings of the Health and Wellbeing surveys undertaken within Aberdeen City Schools in November and December 2023, and the current support in place for wellbeing, both physical and mental.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee –
(a)   note the content of the report and the data shared within Appendix A;
(b)   instruct the Interim Executive Director - Families and Communities to consider the findings of the report and plan next steps as part of work being taken forward

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through the Children's Services Plan and associated National Improvement Framework Plan; and

(c)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report the findings of the next Health and Wellbeing surveys to Committee within one calendar year.

The Committee resolved:-

(i)   to note that officers were considering issuing communication to parents around social media and the use of devices, similar to the attendance communication which had previously been issued;

(ii)   to thank all involved in the ongoing work to support children and young people in achieving better health and wellbeing;

(iii)   to note and welcome the considerable amount of positive interventions in place which were effectively helping and nurturing young people in the city;

(iv)   to note and welcome the significantly increased participation from young people in the latest annual SHINE surveys and instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to work with Head Teachers to encourage participation in future surveys;

(v)   to note and welcome the continued signs of improvements in indicators relating to loneliness, body image, general health, self-harm, low mood;

(vi)   to note the value of the Family Stress Model in identifying emotional, economic and social pressures which affect the wellbeing of children and young people in their home, local and learning environments;

(vii)   to note with concern evidence that indicated that the current cohort of S4 girls were generally outliers in the improvement journey; and, therefore, instruct the Interim Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to give this issue special focus and undertake further targeted work on supportive solutions; with information on actions and outcomes reported back in the agreed report at recommendation (c); and

(viii) to approve the recommendations.

ABZ CAMPUS - F&C/24/115

9.   The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Executive Director – Families and Communities which provided an update on some of the key areas of progress made in implementing Phase 1 of ABZCampus in Session 2023-24 (including the provision of Pathways Advocates); plans in place for Phase 2 in Session 2024- 25; and future plans for Phase 3 in 2025-26.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee –

(a)   note the progress made in delivering Phase 1 of ABZCampus and advanced plans for Phases 2 and 3 which aim to further broaden the curriculum offer for young people in the Senior Phase in Aberdeen City Council schools;

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(ii)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to support the roll out of Phase 2 and 3 of ABZCampus; and

(iii)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress including a full review of the impact of Pathways Advocates within one calendar year.

The Committee resolved:-

(i)   to approve the recommendations;

(ii)   to note that officers would however investigate the possibility of bringing an interim evaluation of the impact of Pathways Advocates to Committee, or potentially bringing the full evaluation at an earlier stage than 2025;

(iii)   to instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to report back with a method for providing an overview of participation and achievements in ABZCampus; and

(iv)   to welcome and congratulate the innovative, effective outcomes reported in Phase 1 of ABZCampus and thank all staff and partners for working together positively on increasing learning opportunities for young people as Phases 2 and 3 are developed.

2023-24 EDUCATION CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT - F&C/24/118

10.   The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Executive Director – Families and Communities which provided an update on some of the key events that have taken place within schools to educate children and young people about Climate Change, Biodiversity and the drive towards Net Zero during school session 2023-24. The report also outlined the work from the Youth Climate Change Group over the school session.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

(a)   note the summary of events that took place in schools to educate children and young people about Climate Change, Biodiversity and the drive towards Net Zero in session 2023-24;

(b)   note the work of the Youth Climate Change Group; and

(c)   instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress through service update within one calendar year.

The Committee resolved:-

(i)   to request that officers invite Aberdeen for a Fairer World to either give a presentation to Committee or provide a workshop to Members;

(ii)   to note that officers were giving consideration as to how to encourage applications from all secondary schools for the roles of Youth Climate Change Presidents and Vice Presidents;

(iii)   to approve recommendations (a) and (b);

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(iv)   to instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress via committee report within one calendar year;

(v)   to express sincere thanks to the Youth Climate Change Group and all involved in school-based green projects for their important contribution towards achieving net zero targets and environmental wellbeing;

(vi)   to instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to support the Youth Climate Change Group and all environmental activities in school settings by developing the partnership work with the Hutton Institute, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Aberdeen For a Fairer World, and others and report back on progress in the above-mentioned report; and

(vii)   to agree to recommend to the Youth Climate Change Group that, in consultation with the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning, they allocate funding contained in the 2024/25 Council revenue budget, across the eleven Associated School Group (ASG) localities; with the requirement that each ASG reports back within seven months to the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning with an evaluation that details how funds have been spent, comments from participating pupils and teams about the biodiversity, sustainability and outdoor learning aims that their projects have aimed to address, photographs and comments from pupils on how they think green projects and outdoor learning should develop in the future in their area and in the city.

PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

11.   The Convener advised the Committee that this was the last meeting for both Mrs Cardno and Mr Crawford, who had reached the end of their tenure on the Education and Children's Services Committee as parent representatives. He added that he wished to express his sincere thanks to them both for their thorough and robust work during their time on the Committee, and their thoughtful contributions at meetings. He noted that they had been very proactive and had very effectively represented parents.

The Committee resolved:-
to concur with the remarks of the Convener.

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

BAIRNS HOOSE - F&C/24/122

12.   With reference to article 15 of the minute of its previous meeting, the Committee had before it a report by the Interim Executive Director – Families and Communities which provided an update on progress in relation to the development of Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose.

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The report recommended:-
that the Committee –
(a)   note the update of progress and the Scottish Government grant award for 2024/25 to support delivery of Aberdeen's Bairns Hoose;
(b)   instruct the Chief Officer, Children's Social Work and Family Support / Chief Social Work Officer to provide an update on progress as appropriate during 2024/25; and
(c)   instruct the Chief Officer, Children's Social Work and Family Support / Chief Social Work Officer to arrange a visit for Elected Members to view the Bairns Hoose upon completion of the build.

<u>The Committee resolved</u>:-
to approve the recommendations.
- COUNCILLOR MARTIN GREIG, <u>Convener</u>

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	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed by the Committee as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
3	2 July 2024								
4	Easter 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. E&CS 20/02/24 - to instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education to report to Committee on the impact of the Easter (2024) programme following delivery		Sharon Skene	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
5	Family Support Model	To seek approval to progress a period of co-design to shape the provision of multi-agency family centric support for families facing complex challenges in Northfield.		Eleanor Sheppard	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
6	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. E&CS 20/02/24 - approval of revised School Estate timeline	Will be a combined report with item 7	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
7	Consultation Report – Greenbrae School / Scotstown School Catchment Area Changes	To report the outcomes of a recent statutory consultation on proposed changes to the catchment area boundaries for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School.	Will be a combined report with item 6	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
8	Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill	ODC 17/01/19 - To instruct that annual reports be submitted on the progress of implementation of the Autism 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. Updated guidance is still awaited from Scottish Government, therefore a report has been provided on the Learning Disablities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill in the interim		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1.1		
9	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Franework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
10	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	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1.5		

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11	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	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1/2.1	R	This is a standing item in case of any updates - there is no requirement for a report this cycle
12	Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-2024`- progress / outcomes / Evaluation of Early Learning and Childcare Service	EODC 14/06/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Education to report on the progress and outcomes of the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24 in 2 years' time E&CS 24/01/23 - to instruct the Chief Education Officer to report on the progress and outcomes of the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24, and to prepare an updated Delivery Plan for 2024-26, in June 2024, to dovetail with the Strategic Plan for Scotland E&CS 24/01/23 - to instruct the Director of Education & Children's Services to report back to committee in early 2024 with the outcomes of the evaluation (March 2023 report refers) and any recommendations that may need to be considered.		Louise Beaton	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
13	Free School Meals Annual Update	EOD Committee 19/04/18 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to bring a report to Committee prior to the close of each school year (a) detailing the numbers registered for and taking free school meals by school and (b) assessing the progress made by implementing the new workstreams and detailing any required adjustments for the following school year		Paul Tytler	Housing	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
14	Sunnybank School Relocation of Additional Services - Options Appraisal (S2)	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to consider the options for relocating other services accommodated within the Sunnybank School building, and to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations (if required)		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3	R	The School Estate Plan identified a potential need to create additional capacity at Sunnybank School, and a proposal to achieve this by relocating services currently using space within the building. There is no longer pressure on classroom space at the school, so to avoid unnecessary disruption, the proposal to relocate services has not been taken forwards.
15	Inspection Reporting	A standing item (if required) to report on the outcome of inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies (To include an update on Northfield Academy)		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.6		
16	Healthy Weight	E&CS 20/02/24 - to instruct the Interim Director - Children's and Family Services to report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee within two committee cycles on proposed approaches to progressing (a) more family centric approaches to support families facing complex challenges living in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1; and (b) a whole system approach to addressing obesity		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.2		
17	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 and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		

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18					**17 September 2024**				
19	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Franework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
20	National Children with Disabilities Thematic Inspection	To present an update		Carol Davie	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
21	CSW Workforce Planning	To present an update		Ali McAlpine	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
22	Inspection Reporting	A standing item (if required) to report on the outcome of inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.6		
23	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 (approval of Outline Business Case and consultation proposal) E&CS 20/02/24 - approval of revised School Estate timeline		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
24	Performance Management Framework Report / National Improvement Framework – Education and Children's Services	To present the latest performance for the cycle and update on the progress made delivering the National Improvement Framework Plan EOD Committee 19/04/18 - to instruct the Chief Operating Officer to track progress against the proposed KPIs in order to report progress to the Education Operational Delivery Committee. Reporting will comprise (a) a yearly progress report based on validated data and (b) a six monthly update to provide an indication of progress to that point.		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
25	Children's Social Work Statistics	ODC 31/08/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Integrated Children's and Family Services, to report annually to the relevant Committee, sharing the published Children's Social Work Statistics, Scotland and providing a comparison with performance in Aberdeen City.		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.3		
26	Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan	This report will cover the instruction from EODC 25/11/21 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Education to present an annual report on the progress of care experienced children and young people to the Committee, commencing in September 2022, and will will also cover the yearly self evaluation.		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1		

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27	Community Learning and Development Plan	E&CS 12/09/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to report to the Education and Children's Services Committee with an annual update on progress.		Margaret Stewart	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
28	School Estate Plan Annual Update	EODC 08/09/22 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to present an annual update to the School Estate Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee, commencing from September 2023, to report on progress with the agreed actions and to update these as appropriate, in light of the most recently available data.

E&CS 20/02/24 - to instruct 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, and to agree that there will be active engagement with the local community and young people.

E&CS 20/02/24 - to instruct 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, and to agree that there would be active engagement with the local community and young people to provide reassurance that primary and secondary changes will be considered together.

E&CS 30/04/24 - to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to include in the annual School Estate Plan update a workstream to evaluate the physical ASN provision in individual settings and include a timescale within the plan on when recommendations on potential space for future ASN purposes could be brought forward | | Andrew Jones | Corporate Landlord | Families and Communities | 1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3 | | |
| 29 | Music Service Update | E&CS 12/09/23 - to instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education to continue to extend opportunities for music making through partnership working between the Music Service and Aberdeen Music School and others; and to instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education to report back on progress within one calendar year.

E&CS 24/01/23 - to instruct the Chief Education Officer to work with stakeholders to develop a strategic vision for the provision of Music across the city to inform next steps; and to instruct the Chief Education Officer to report back on progress within one calendar year (Agreed at E&CS Committee 22/11/23 that this be merged with the above report) | | Beth Edwards / Shona Milne | Education and Lifelong Learning | Families and Communities | 1.1.1 | | |
30	Education and Children's Services reforms	A standing item if required - To provide Committee with an update		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1/2.1		
31	Aberdeen City Council Out of School Care Policy	E&CS 20/02/24 - to instruct 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		Louise Beaton	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
32	**26 November 2024**								
33	Education and Children's Services reforms	A standing item if required - To provide Committee with an update		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1/2.1		

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34	Corporate Parenting Annual Report	To present the Corporate Parenting Annual Report for assurance		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
35	Behaviour Action Plan	E&CS 30/04/24 - (i) to instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to continue constructive engagement with Unions and others; such as those with an interest in the provision of supports for those with additional support needs including local organisations and the Northfield Advisors, to allow a continuous improvement journey in all of our schools; (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to review the adequacy of the current allocation of pupil support staffing and provision of specialist placements across the city; and (iii) to further instruct the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to consider the output of (i) and (ii) and report options for consideration back to the Education and Children's Services Committee within three cycles		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
36	Grandhome / Oldmachar / Bridge of Don Secondary Provision - Outline Business Case (NA1) / Oldmachar ASG primary school provision	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. E&CS 12/09/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out further work to identify potential future options for improving and consolidating primary school provision in the Oldmachar ASG, alongside the planned work to review secondary school provision in this area of the city, and to report back to the Committee with recommendations and next steps as appropriate. E&CS 20/02/24 - Approval of revised School Estate timeline		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
37	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 Commiittee. E&CS 20/02/24 - Approval of revised School Estate timeline		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
38	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. E&CS 20/02/24 - Approval of revised School Estate timeline		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
39	Education and Children's Services Performance Management Franework	To present the regular performance update		Alex Paterson	Data Insights	Corporate Services	1.1.3		

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40	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. E&CS 20/02/24 - 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.		Amy Anderson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
41	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	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
42	Inspection Reporting	A standing item (if required) to report on the outcome of inspections and any changes in the approach of inspection agencies To include an update on Northfield Academy		Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.6		
43	Cluster Risk Register - Education / Integrated Children's & Family Services	To report on the cluster risk register		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.4		
44	Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report	To present the Chief Social Work Officer annual report.		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.5		
45					**DATE TBC / BEYOND 2024**				
46	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	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	TBC		
47	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. E&CS 20/02/24 - (i) to instruct 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; and (ii) to agree that there would be active engagement with the local community and young people to provide reassurance that primary and secondary changes will be considered together.	Update to be included in September 2024 School Estate Plan	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.2		

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48	Consultation on proposed new school at Bucksburn / Newhills	EC&S 04/07/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a statutory public consultation on the proposal to establish a new primary school at Bucksburn / Newhills, and on propsed changes to the existing school catchment area for Brimmond School, to create a new catchment areas which would be served by the proposed new school; to provide Members with a firm date for the statutory consultation and to report the date to the next Committee meeting; and to report back to the Committee on the outcomes of the consultation at the first available meeting following conclusion of the consultation process. E&CS 12/09/23 - in relation to the proposal to establish a new primary school at Bucksburn / Newhills, and on proposed changes to the catchment area for Brimmond School, to note that the statutory consultation for the proposed new school at Bucksburn / Newhills will be carried out from 5 February 2024 to 22 March 2024. To note in the School Estate Plan that the Committee would consider consultation feedback & confirm decision on implementing proposals in July 2024 E&CS 20/02/24 - E&CS 20/02/24 - approval of revised School Estate timeline - dates for carrying out the consultation to be confirmed		Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
49	Loirston Loch Additional Primary Provision - Outline Business Case (L1)	E&CS 12/09/23 - Instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to make arrangements to carry out a feasibility study and stakeholder engagement to identify options for creating the required additional school capacity to serve the planned Loirston Loch development, and report back to the Education and Children's Services Committee with recommendations as appropriate.(Recommendation L1) E&CS 20/02/24 - Revised school estate timeline approved. No immediate requirement for this, revisit post 2024	Dates to be provided in future updates to school estate plan	Andrew Jones	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.5		
50	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. 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 20/02/24 - to 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 instruct the Chief Social Work Officer to provide an annual update through the Children's Services Plan Annual Report. E&CS 20/02/24 - 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. E&CS 30/04/24 - to instruct the Interim Director Families and Communities to consider the findings of the health & wellbeing annual report and plan next steps as part of work being taken forward through the Children's Services Plan and associated National Improvement Framework Plan		Eleanor Sheppard	Families and Communities	Families and Communities	1.1.1		

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51	Health and Wellbeing	E&CS 30/04/24 - to instruct the Interim Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to report the findings of the next Health and Wellbeing surveys to Committee within one calendar year; and to note with concern evidence that indicated that the current cohort of S4 girls were generally outliers in the improvement journey; and, therefore, instruct the Interim Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to give this issue special focus and undertake further targeted work on supportive solutions; with information on actions and outcomes reported back in the agreed report	June 2025	Emma Powell	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
52	ABZCampus	E&CS 30/04/2024 - (i) to instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress including a full review of the impact of Pathways Advocates within one calendar year; and to note that officers would however investigate the possibility of bringing an interim evaluation of the impact of Pathways Advocates to Committee, or potentially bringing the full evaluation at an earlier stage than 2025; and (ii) to instruct the Interim Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to report back with a method for providing an overview of participation and achievements in ABZCampus	June 2025	Mark Jones	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
53	Education Climate Change Annual Report	E&CS 30/04/2024 - (I) to instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education and Lifelong Learning to report back on progress via committee report within one calendar year and (II) to instruct the Interim Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to support the Youth Climate Change Group and all environmental activities in school settings by developing the partnership work with the Hutton Institute, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Aberdeen For a Fairer World, and others and report back on progress in the above-mentioned report	June 2025	Stuart Craig	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
54	St Peter's RC School - Long Term Education Provision	E&CS 21/11/23 - subject to approval of recommendation 2.4 (for the Finance and Resources Committee), to note that a progress report would be presented to a future meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee in 2024		Maria Thies	Corporate Landlord	Families and Communities	1.1.1, 1.1.5, 1.3		
55	Refreshed Local Authority Plan for implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	E&CS 24/01/23 - to instruct the Chief Education Officer to present a refreshed Local Authority Plan for implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to the Education and Children's Services Committee following receipt of the anticipated Statutory Guidance in 2023	Date to be confirmed - dependent on date when Statutory Guidance received	Shona Milne	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.1		
56	Bairns Hoose updates / visit	E&CS 30/04/24 - (i) to instruct the Chief Officer, Children's Social Work and Family Support / Chief Social Work Officer to provide an update on progress as appropriate during 2024/25; and (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer, Children's Social Work and Family Support / Chief Social Work Officer to arrange a visit for Elected Members to view the Bairns Hoose upon completion of the build.		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.1		
57	Minimising Exclusion Policy	To present the revised exclusion policy for approval		Mhairi Shewan	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.5		

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58	Early Learning and Childcare Concession Agreements	E&CS 24/01/23 - to instruct the Chief Education Officer to continue to monitor the concession contracts and report back to Committee at the end of the first 3 full years of the current concession agreement.	January 2026	Louise Beaton / Fiona Lawrie	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities			
59	Accessibility Plan	E&CS 12/09/23 - to instruct the Interim Chief Officer - Education to present an updated Accessibility Plan to the Education and Children's Services Committee within 3 calendar years.		Mhairi Shewan	Education and Lifelong Learning	Families and Communities	1.1.5		

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Agenda Item 9.1

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Performance Management Framework/Accessibility and Behaviour Progress Report – Families and Communities
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/24/194
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald/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 annual performance measures relating to the Children's and Family Services function, including summary National Benchmark Measures derived from the second release of educational data through the national Insight tool and (b) a progress update in relation to ongoing work around addressing accessibility and behaviour issues within schools.

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 (the Plan) that was agreed by Council on1st of March 2023.

3.2 Appendix A reflects the in-year content against this Plan, which was subsequently replaced by the 2024-25 Council Delivery Plan at the Budget meeting on 6th March 2024.

3.3 Reporting against the refreshed Plan, including updating of Service Standards agreed at that meeting, will be incorporated within future Performance Management Framework reports to each of the relevant Council Committees.

3.4   The Council's Performance Management Framework, supporting and enabling scrutiny against progress of the Council Delivery Plan and its key measures, establishes a robust performance management and reporting system which encompasses single and multi-service inputs, outputs and outcomes.

3.5   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.

3.6   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.

3.7   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.

Customer
- KPIs common to all clusters
- Cluster specific KPIs
- Commissioning Intention KPIs
- Regulatory/Statutory KPIs

Finances & Controls
- KPIs common to all clusters
- Cluster specific KPIs
- Commissioning Intention KPIs
- Regulatory/Statutory KPIs

Processes
- KPIs common to all clusters
- Cluster specific KPIs
- Commissioning Intention KPIs
- Regulatory/Statutory KPIs

Staff
- KPIs common to all clusters
- Cluster specific KPIs
- Commissioning Intention KPIs
- Regulatory/Statutory KPIs

3.8   This report, in Appendix A, focuses on end of year information around operational measures, Service Standards, and national measures aligned with Education & Lifelong Learning and Children's Social Work and Family Support Clusters.

3.9   On this occasion, and subsequent to the recent publication of additional Children's Services measures contained in the national Local Government Benchmarking Framework Report, there is (a) reflection on the range of performance measures which are consistent with the reporting year, and (b) an extended overview of Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland inspection outcomes of education provision at fiscal year-end.

3.10   Work around aligning corporate metrics and Performance Management Framework reporting against the new organisational Function and Cluster structures, outlined and agreed in the TOM1.2 Organisational Structure report to Council on 7th February 2024, is currently on-going. Completion of this work

will be reflected in future reports to the relevant Committees, as will the revised outcome measures contained in the 2024/25 Council Delivery Plan.

3.11   Appendix A also captures a high-level summary of post-review National Benchmark Measures attainment data made available to local authorities through the second release of Insight tool information in March 2024,

3.12   This information aligns with, and updates, Local Benchmark Measure information previously considered by this Committee in November 2023,but is linked specifically to school leaver outcomes.

3.13   Appendix B reflects on progress against Accessibility and Behaviour work being delivered by Education service teams.

3.14   Within the summary dashboard the following symbols are also used:

Performance Measures

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) *taking into account controls/control actions	*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

Council Delivery Plan	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Partnership Agreement	This report supports the following key Council priorities:

Improving Educational Choices	- 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.
Creating Better Learning Environments	- Work to ensure that every school community provides a safe and respectful environment for young people and staff.
Caring for Young People	- Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems. - Work with the Scottish Government to expand free early learning and childcare to one- and two-year-olds from low-income households. - Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce "out of authority" placements - Ensure local education services identify young people with mental health problems and help them get early support and help, where appropriate, to transfer to adult services.
Aberdeen City Local Outcomes Plan April 2024 Refresh	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes (Children and Young People)	The detail within Performance Management reporting to this Committee evidences how Families and Communities delivery leads, contributes to, or influences, each of the Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes in the refreshed LOIP. This includes the following Outcomes: **95% of all children will reach their expected developmental milestones by their 27–30-month review by 2026.**

	90% of children and young people report they feel listened to all of the time by 2026. **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.** **95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods (Quintiles 1 & 2) will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.** **83.5% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026** **100% of our children with Additional Support Needs/disabilities will experience a positive destination**
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes (Adults)	Families and Communities services, through the Improvement Project Aims below contribute to achievement of Outcome 11 - **Reduce the rate of both alcohol related deaths and drug related deaths by 10% by 2026** *Reduce the average age from 14 to 12 at which children are identified as requiring preventative support to mitigate the risk of future harm in relation to drug and alcohol use by 2026 and ;* *Reduce the % of 13–15-year-olds reported as using each sub group of drug by 50% and cannabis by 20% by 2026.*
Community Empowerment Stretch Outcomes	The detail within Performance Management reporting to this Committee evidences how Families and Community service delivery leads, though the Improvement Project Aim; *100% of decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them by 2026* contributes to, or influences Outcome 16: **50% of people report they feel able to participate in decisions that help change things for the better by 2026.**
Regional and City Strategies	The detail within Performance Management reporting to this Committee evidences how Families and Communities delivery leads, contributes to, or influences outcomes aligned to the City's National Improvement Framework Plan. Data contained in the report also offers contextual evidence of Education and Childrens Social Work

Assessment	Outcome
Service's contributions to the City's Children's Services Plan, along with both regional Economic and Skills strategies.	

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	It was confirmed by Chief Officer, Martin Murchie, on 28th May 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 2023/24 – CFS/23/268
Council Delivery Plan 2024-25 – COM/24/060

11.   APPENDICES

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

Appendix B – Progress Update on Accessibility and Behaviour

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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

Education

Table 1. Service Level Measures – 2022-23 Service Standards (Education)

Performance Indicator	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	84.5%	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, and apply to the current academic year. 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. **Table 2** below outlines the average score outcomes from Care Inspectorate inspections of Quality Indicators for each of the financial years from 2021/22 to 2023/24.

Separately from these annual measures, there have been a further four inspections of ELC settings published by the Care Inspectorate since the previous report to Committee, each of which have been overwhelmingly positive.

Consequently, as at the end of May 2024, the rolling 12-month average score for Care Inspectorate evaluations, were improved on those reported in April, when the average Overall QI score figure was 89.7%. There are increases in assessment scores against each Organiser with Leadership and Staffing as highlighted below in the tables below, being the most significant drivers. As at the time of completion of this report, there were a number of recent inspections pending publication. These are not reflected in the data below.

Percentage of Care Inspectorate Evaluations of Core Quality Indicators receiving an average score of Good or Better (12 month rolling average to 31st May 2024)

Core Quality Indicator Scope	Care Inspectorate Core Quality Indicators				Overall Quality Indicator Outcome
	How good is our care, play and learning?	How good is our setting?	How good is our leadership?	How good is our staff team?	
Percentage of assessments achieving National Standard (average score of Good or better)	90.4%	91.3%	98.1%	98.0%	94.5%

Percentage of Care Inspectorate Evaluations of Core Quality Indicators receiving an average score of Good or Better (12 month rolling average to March 2024)

Core Quality Indicator Scope	Care Inspectorate Core Quality Indicators				Overall Core Quality Indicator Score
	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	

Percentage of assessments achieving National Standard (average score of Good or better)	86.2%	87.9%	93.1%	91.4%	89.7%

Inspection reporting

In part, as a consequence of the limitations of regular reporting and analysis against the small number of Education Scotland reports available at any one time in the Committee schedule, and with recent addition of further published organiser evaluation information (Securing Children's Progress) within some Education Scotland (ES) inspection reports, the data above is marginally different in scope with that previously reported to Committee against this Standard. Going forwards the data will now reflect this change in evaluation scope and capture 12 month rolling information.

However, in terms of providing comparable year-on-year data, and to assist Member scrutiny at this point in time, **Table 3**. below offers directly related calculations around the average scoring from 2023/24 and 2022/23 financial years, covering the periods from April to March in these years, along with baseline 2018/19 data, In the context of the limited extent of ES inspection activity in both years prior to 2022/23, (there was no formal inspection activity in 2020/21 and only limited inspections in 2019/20), this earlier data may offer some additional assurance around the performance of schools against external inspection activity.

This formatting brings both Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate datasets further into alignment, enabling assessment of both inspection agency outcomes, and quality of delivery of the service as it impacts on national priorities for early learning children and school pupils, on an identical basis.

Table 2. Service Level Measures – 2023-24 Annual Financial Year Indicator – Quality of Early Learning Provision (Care Inspectorate) % Inspections meeting the National Standard (Good or above) by Average Score

Year	Organiser *	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 QI Outcome Score
2023/24	Local Authority Sub-total	93.4%	94.7%	100.0%	100.0%	97.0%
	All Providers	89.0%	91.0%	96.0%	94.0%	94.5%
2022/23	Local Authority Sub-total	93.2%	90.9%	88.6%	95.5%	92.0%

	All Providers	97.5%	98.8%	95.0%	100.0%	95.2%
2021/22	Local Authority Sub-total	100.0%	80.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.0%
	All Providers	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	100.0%	92.5%

Service Commentary

These data represent final validated analysis of Care Inspectorate inspection activity which may differ marginally from that presented in regular updates to Committee over the course of the reporting year as it captures the outcomes of all published inspection reports, some of which was publicly unavailable through Care Inspectorate release at each of the prior snapshot points.

In the course of the 2023/24 financial year, a total of 27 settings were inspected, providing for assessment against 103 Organiser Quality Indicators. Of these inspections, 20 were conducted against local authority managed centres, almost double that recorded in 2022/23, with 7 partner providers also being inspected through the full assessment model.

Overall, the average % of total evaluations scoring 4 or above (equivalent to Good or better – the National Standard) has fallen by 0.7 p.p. in 2023/24, however, evaluations from Local Authority provisions have increased by 5.0 p.p. Some caution needs to be exercised in interpretation of year-to-year change as the number of assessments in each year vary significantly, which can influence the outcomes.

*The organiser titles, and focal points of inspections conducted by the Care Inspectorate have been subject to revision across the timeline of the table above

Table 3. Service Level Measure – 2023/24 Annual Financial Year Indicator -Quality of Primary and Secondary Education Provision (Education Scotland) - % Averaged Inspection Score Of Good or above by Organiser

Year	Leadership of change	Learning, teaching and assessment	Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Raising attainment and achievement	Overall Quality Indicator Outcome
2023/24	85.0%	80.0%	100.0%	75.0%	85.0%
2022/23	66.7%	75.0%	50.0%	70.0%	65.4%
2018/19	68.8%	85.0%	62.5%	80.0%	74.1%

Service Commentary

An element of caution requires to be exercised in interpreting the year-on-year change from 2022/23 to 2023/24 outcomes as in both years, the number of inspections by Education Scotland were limited. On this basis, data from 2018/19 is added to the comparison as these two years are more equal in terms of the extent of ES activity with 5 inspections in the current year, and 6 in the latter.

Taking this into account, the 2023/24 data shows a general increase in averaged scores of Good or better against the majority of Organisers themes, and the overall Quality Indicator outcome, driven by improvements in the quality of Leadership of Change and service delivery of Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion for our school pupils.

Table 4. Corporate Measures – 2023-24 Cluster Level Indicators (Annual)

Performance Measure	2021/22 Value	2022/23 Value	2023/24 Value	Status	Long Trend - Annual
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Education	107	115	110	📈	⬆️
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Education	72%	73%	71%	✅	
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Education	17.8%	15.7%	12.7%	📈	⬆️
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Education	25	14	10	📈	📈

Service Commentary

Overall, the outcomes for Complaints handling, in terms of the number of complaints received, resolved within timescale, these are similar to those in both of the prior years, with some material improvement in the proportion of complaints which are upheld on a continuous three-year trend.

2. Process

Table 5. Service Level Measures – 2022-23 Annual Academic Year Indicator - Initial School Leaver Destinations

Year	Total in Positive Destination	Employed	Further Education	Higher Education	Personal Skills Development	Training	Voluntary Work	Unemployed Not Seeking	Unemployed Seeking	Not known
2022/23	93.5	16.3	29.0	44.6	0.2	3.0	0.4	2.1	3.4	1.0
2021/22	93.8	17.5	29.4	43.7	0.4	2.6	0.4	1.9	3.2	1.1
2020/21	95.4	13.8	30.8	45.7	0.3	4.1	0.5	1.8	2.2	0.6

Service Commentary

Data Description

School Leavers Initial Destinations, published in March of each year subsequent to conclusion of the academic year in the previous June/July reflects the destination outcomes of school leavers from the previous academic year at a survey point some three months post the end of Summer term.

This measure forms part of the National Benchmark Measure data suite. Publication of a follow-up survey, classed as School Leavers Sustained Destinations, sampled at around 9 months from the conclusion of the previous academic year, was due on the 18th of June with the wider analysis of post-school destinations of 16–19-year-olds (Annual Participation Measure) normally released in early Autumn. Analysis around these latter publications will be provided to the next meeting of this Committee.

Analysis

There is limited year-on-year variation in either the proportion of school leavers in an initial positive destinations overall or the spread of outcomes, with the exception of the percentage of leavers in Employment which has reduced by more than the +/- 1 percentage point tolerance that is considered to be influenced by sample sizes and leaver profiles from year-to-year.

In 2022/23, there were 1,806 school leavers in comparison with 1,796 in 2021/22 and 1,678 in 2020/21. The City and National outcomes for leavers in a positive destination in 2020/21 were amongst the highest recorded in the lifetime of this national measure. This outcome was substantively influenced by an outlying increase in leavers attaining Further and Higher Education destinations against the background of the ongoing economic legacy of COVID-19.

Service Level Measures – 2023-24 Annual Financial Year Indicator – Early Learning Centre Quality Standards

Table 6. Education Scotland Inspections of Early Learning Centres – Quality Indicators, Evaluation of Satisfactory or Above and Averaged Quality Score (Financial Year)

Year	Measure	Leadership of change	Learning, teaching and assessment	Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	Securing children's progress	Overall QI Outcome
2023/24	% of QI evaluated as Satisfactory or above (SPI)	100.0%	75.0%	100.0%	80.0%	85.7%
	Averaged Quality Score (% of evaluations of 4 and above)	75.0%	68.8%	100.0%	75.0%	79.7%
2022/23	% of QI evaluated as Satisfactory or above (SPI)	100.0%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	83.3%
	Averaged Quality Score (% of evaluations of 4 and above)	75.0%	62.5%	75.0%	75.0%	71.9%

2018/19	% of QI evaluated as Satisfactory or above (SPI)	60.0%	60.0%	80.0%	83.3%	71.4%
	Averaged Quality Score (% of evaluations of 4 and above)	65.0%	70.8%	75.0%	75.0%	71.5%

Service Commentary

Table 6.

The measure around QI evaluation of Satisfactory and above, aligns with the Council's Statutory Performance Indicator suite, which will be reported in full to a future meeting of Council.

As with the data around Care Inspectorate outcomes above, caution needs to be exercised around year-on-year interpretations of Education Scotland evaluations of Early Learning settings as the number of inspections vary and are small in any single year. 2018/19 data is included in the table above as it represents the last year prior to 2023/24 where a full 12-month formal inspection regime was enacted, and the number of inspections were similar to those in 2023/24.

In terms of the pattern of evaluations, Early Learning Centre inspections, in 2023/24 are recording improved outcomes (across both the Satisfactory or above Indicator and the Averaged Score fields) in comparison with 2022/23. Whilst the Average Score relating to 'Securing Children's Progress' is unchanged, the proportion of these evaluations delivering a Satisfactory evaluation have reduced, which is being analysed and against which action to address this is being delivered within the on-going Quality Framework programme.

At the same time, it should be noted that both this Organiser, and the Learning, Teaching and Assessment percentages are influenced by the outcomes from a short model inspection against a single setting from the five settings which were subject to evaluation.

Chart 1. National School Attendance Measure 2023-24 as at 15th May 2024

% Averaged School Attendance (all phases) -Session year to date by Urban and National Benchmarks

	Aberdeen	Dundee	East Dunbartonshire	Edinburgh	Falkirk	Glasgow	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	West Dunbartonshire	Scotland	Urban Average
Value	92.2	89.8	93.7	92.1	91.6	90.2	90.3	91.5	90.4	91.2	91.3
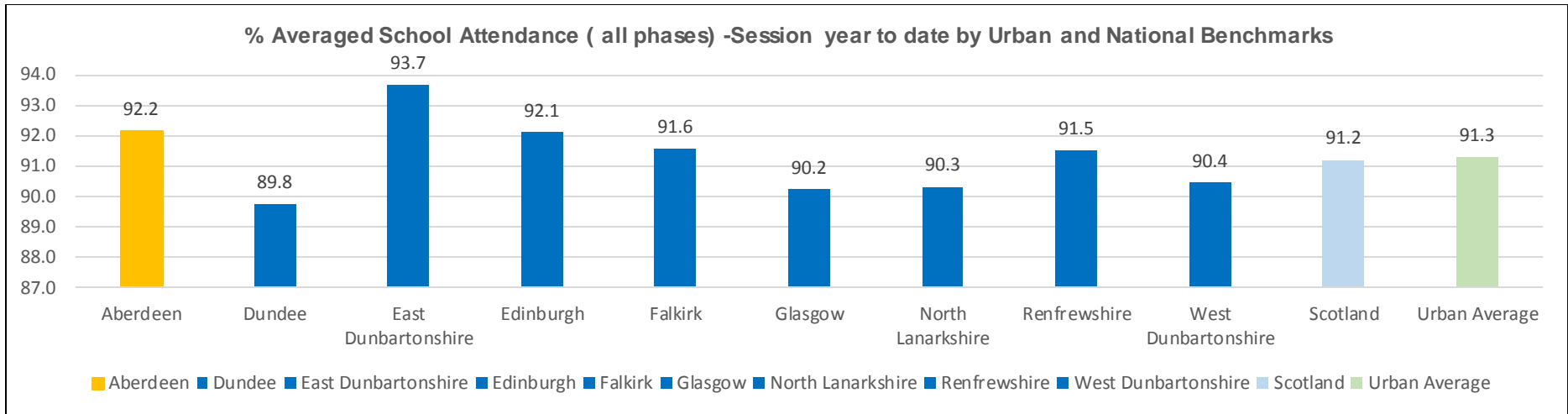
Chart 2. National School Attendance Measure 2023-24 as at 6th March 2024

% Averaged School Attendance (all phases) -Session year to date by Urban and National Benchmarks

	Aberdeen	Dundee	East Dunbartonshire	Edinburgh	Falkirk	Glasgow	North Lanarkshire	Renfrewshire	West Dunbartonshire	Scotland	Urban Average
Value	92.0	89.5	93.6	92.0	91.4	90.1	90.2	91.3	90.2	91.1	91.2
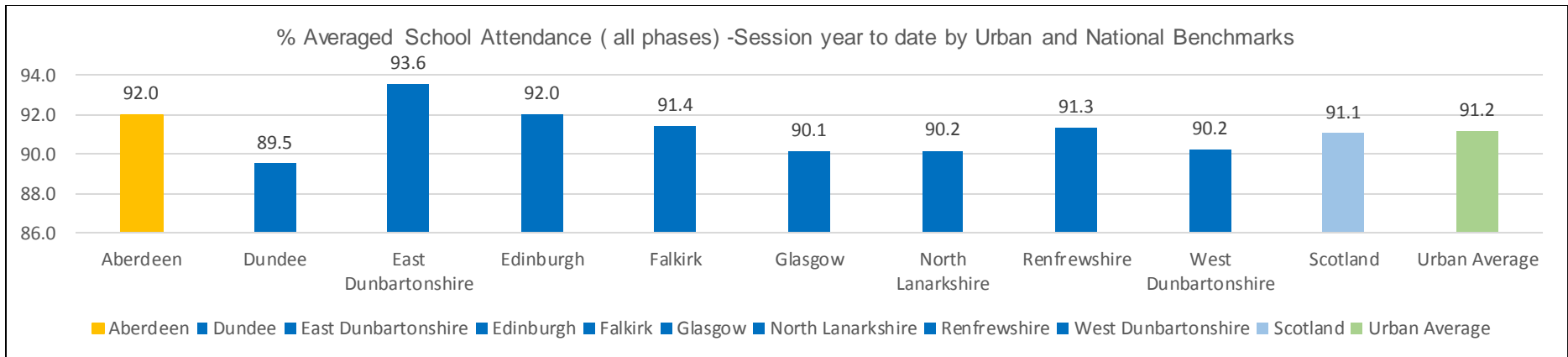
Service Commentary

Chart 1

Year-to-date pupil attendance overall for Aberdeen City continues to sit 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 school types. Averaged data is presented in this 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. On-going analysis is suggesting particular challenges around positive school attendance for S3 learners. This is being investigated further across our secondary schools.

Source: Fortnightly School Attendance, Scottish Government Education Analytics

Local Government Benchmarking Framework Outcomes – Children's Services Improvement

With publication of 32 out of 34 performance measures relating to Children's Services data linked to the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework, the graphic below reflects on the relative and year-on-year performance of our services, and partnerships, covering the most recent annual releases.

The datasets cover the period of 2022-23 by academic, financial and calendar year, dependant on the frequencies of the publicly available sources. These represent core benchmarking assessments of improvement in Local Authority supported delivery of services for our children and young people, as measured by a suite of nationally agreed metrics.

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework is a collaborative venture between COLSA and SOLACE, supported by the Accounts Commission in terms of evidencing relative Local Authority performance in Scotland, and is a valuable tool for the purpose of establishing alignment with present Best Value guidance, which flows from present legislation.

Graphic 1. Local Government Benchmarking Framework – Local Authority Performance (Children's Services)

Council Improvement **Relative Position Over Time**

These graphs show the proportion of indicators that have improved, deteriorated or stayed the same over time.

Aberdeen City	Aberdeenshire	Angus	Argyll & Bute	Clackmannanshire	Dumfries & Gall...	Dundee City	East Ayrshire
East Dunbartons...	East Lothian	East Renfrewshire	Edinburgh City	Eilean Siar	Falkirk	Fife	Glasgow City
Highland	Inverclyde	Midlothian	Moray	North Ayrshire	North Lanarkshire	Orkney Islands	Perth & Kinross
Renfrewshire	Scottish Borders	Shetland Islands	South Ayrshire	South Lanarkshire	Stirling	West Dunbarton...	West Lothian

Change from base year **Change in most recent year**

Source: Local Government Benchmarking Framework

Service Commentary

Graphic 1

Aberdeen City's outcomes for the education theme, incorporate attainment, achievement and attendance in Broad General Education and at Senior Phase, along with pre-and post-school outcomes/quality measures. Also incorporated are metrics around the development of our youngest citizens, the outcomes of our Looked After and protected children and young people and Best Value related information on the levels of spend/investment in these critical services.

Details of the purpose and content of LGBF reporting and national trends relating to each of the benchmark Indicators are available within the 2022-23 Report, published in March 2024, Subsequent to publication, there are further tranches of data release, the most recent of which was in April, that is captured above. Local Government Benchmarking Overview Report 2022-23 (2024 publication)

Reflecting on the capacity for improvement within our Children's Services, the extent of change in the most recent year, duplicates the position recorded at the same point in 2023 where Aberdeen City had amongst the largest proportion of Children's measures of 32 Local Authorities which were improving year on year, as defined by the LGBF Indicator suite.(Aberdeen City had the greatest proportion of improved measures in comparison with the 2012/13 baseline year in 2021/22)

The current 2022/23 summary outcome exceeds this position with 61.3% (19) of the measures showing year-on-year improvement, the greatest proportion of improved measures to date, and the highest figure of any other Scottish Local Authority, and with positive change on the baseline year of 62.5%. This latter percentage positions Aberdeen City within the upper quartiles of national performance and in line with the City's 'closest neighbour' authorities.

A single measure has effectively remained the same as in 2021/22, while 35.5% (11) showed some statistical downturn on the prior year, This is bettered only by the outcome for North Lanarkshire Council which was 34.3%. Comparisons with the baseline year around those measures that were deteriorating places Aberdeen City, equal with Edinburgh City Council on 25%, which again was a figure that only North Lanarkshire was able to better.

National Benchmark Measures – Senior Phase School Leavers – 2022/23 Academic Year

Data Descriptions

National Benchmark Measures (NBM) are defined by four measurable themes, Literacy and Numeracy, Destinations, Attainment for All, and Attainment in the Context of Deprivation, The Measures provide analysis of outcomes for pupils at the conclusion of the school journey and represent the totality of SCQF achievement and attainment over the course of secondary education up to the point of leaving school and entering the initial post-school period. These measures exclude evaluations of non-SCQF accredited attainment which form part of the wider achievement and credits framework for education.

Scottish Government Leavers and Attainment Publication- Data, Methodology and Sources

For the purpose of this report, the 'standard' measures published through the Insight Tool are supplemented by reflection on the Breadth and Depth Profile of Aberdeen City School Leavers, aligning with both the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (see above) and information published annually within

the Scottish Government's Secondary School Dashboard, which offers supporting evidence against the National Improvement Framework Plans at Scotland and Local Authority levels.

Grade Boundaries

Data against the 2018/19 academic year, representing attainment and achievement in the last pre-COVID-19 period, where assessment methodologies and course gradings were most like those in 2022/23, are offered within the tables below as a contextual guide to the performance of our young people, as defined by attainment and achievement against core SCQF measures.

Reflection against the impacts on recorded attainment of differing levels of COVID-19 related grade boundary mitigation in both 2022/23 and 2021/22 were outlined in the Performance Management Framework Report to the November meeting of this Committee. In effect, this may have some impact on direct year-on-year comparisons, with 2018/19 representing a closer systemic match to the current year grade boundary framework.

Deprivation

Deprivation analysis relating to National Benchmark Measures in 2022/23 and 2021/22 are based on/overlaid with assessments of deprivation from the national 2020 SIMD release, whilst those from the 2028/19 diet are aligned with national 2016 SIMD data. This, alongside the differing pupil cohorts each year, may influence the relative tariff point scores attributed to each SIMD cohort in any one year.

For additional context, the number of entries for examination across all SCQF levels at SIMD 1 and 2 in 2018/19 was 704 and 2,087 respectively whilst in 2022/23, these numbers increased to 786 in SIMD 1 and 2,342 in SIMD 2. Both of the 2022/23 figures represented a rise in the proportion of secondary pupils on the school roll in the Most Deprived 20-40% being entered for examination, and a larger proportion of all pupil candidates being presented.

The trends and outcomes for school leaver attainment are consistent with the information highlighted in the report to the November 2023 meeting of this Committee, and with the actions outlined in Aberdeen City Council's 2023/24 National Improvement Framework Plan.

Leaver Destinations

The wider social and economic circumstances around School Leaver Destinations in each of the 3 years reflected below are felt to be sufficiently matched to offer robust comparison between years, and across each benchmarked outcomes.

1. School Leaver Literacy and Numeracy

Chart 3. Percentage of School Leavers Attaining Literacy and Numeracy Combined by SCQF Levels 4, 5 and 6

Percentage of school leavers attaining Literacy and Numeracy Combined by Level

	Aberdeen City 2018/19	Virtual Comparator 2018/19	National 2018/19	Aberdeen City 2021/22	Virtual Comparator 2021/22	National 2021/22	Aberdeen City 2022/23	Virtual Comparator 2022/23	National 2022/23
% Pupils Achieving Level 4	85.9	87.62	89.3	88.2	89.33	89.6	86.8	89.26	89
% Pupils Achieving Level 5	57.8	62.6	66.6	63.6	66.96	68.2	62	68	68
% Pupils Achieving Level 6	21.3	24.3	25.8	20.7	24.9	23.7	22.8	24.1	23.4

Legend:
- % Pupils Achieving Level 4
- % Pupils Achieving Level 5
- % Pupils Achieving Level 6
- Linear (% Pupils Achieving Level 4)
- Linear (% Pupils Achieving Level 5)
- Linear (% Pupils Achieving Level 6)

Service Commentary

Chart 3.

At Level 4 pupil attainment in 2022/23 has remained statistically in line with the previous year, consistent with both benchmarks. The outcomes at Levels 5 and 6 show percentage point changes that imply some limited element of variation in educational outcomes which, year-on-year differ from both National and Virtual Comparator benchmarks in the direction of travel. At Level 5, this has slightly extended the distances to the benchmarks, with a statistical closing and matching of benchmarked attainment at Level 6.

In comparison with the 2018/19 baseline, the rate of improvement at Level 4 matches the both the National and Virtual Comparator trends while at Level 5, City pupil attainment closely tracks Virtual Comparator movement and is better than the National picture, closing the extended distance recorded in 2018/19. At Level 6, there is a pattern of improvement against both benchmarks, with the National figure experiencing a fall which has some educational significance.

2. School Leaver Destinations

Chart 4. Percentage of School Leavers in a Positive Initial Destination – Aberdeen City and Benchmarks

% of School Leavers in a Positive Initial Destination

	Aberdeen City	Virtual Comparator	National	Aberdeen City	Virtual Comparator	National	Aberdeen City	Virtual Comparator	National
	94	95	95	94	96	96	94	96	96
		2018/19			2021/22			2022/23	
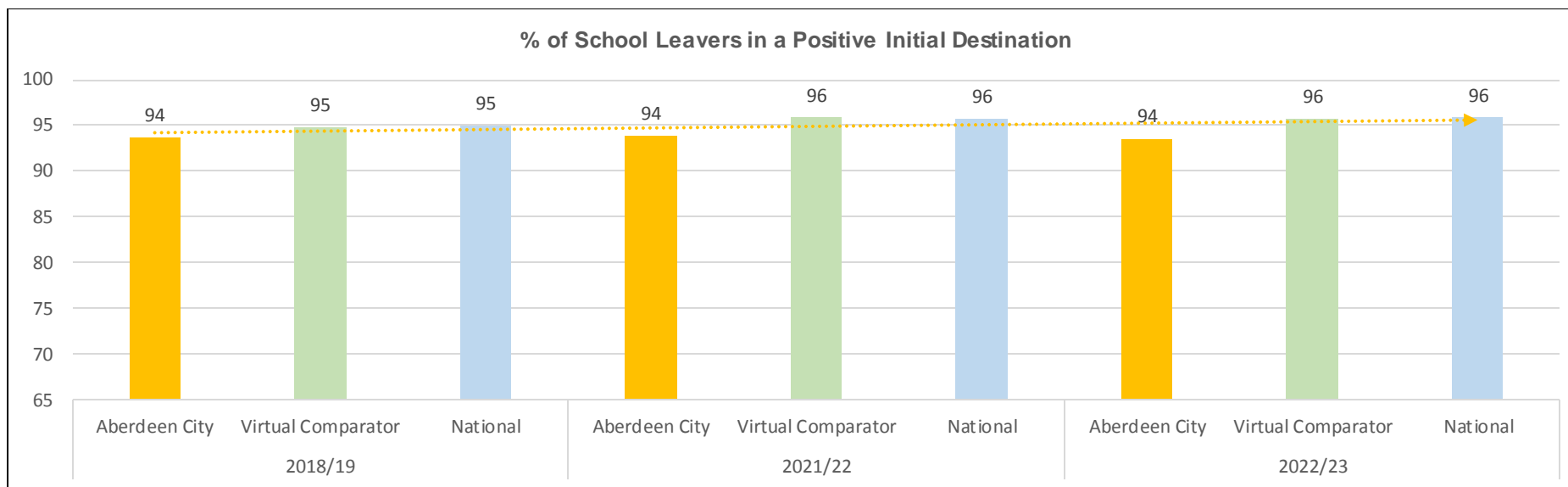
Service Commentary

Chart 4.

The proportion of school leavers achieving a positive destination in Aberdeen City, and National and Virtual Comparator benchmarks are materially unchanged in 2022/23, with year-on-year variations of less than 1 percentage point in each case. Resultantly, the differences between the destination outcomes of City school leavers and those of the two benchmarks remain unchanged.

Comparison with the benchmarks in the context of the 2018/19 baseline shows that the National and Virtual Comparator outcomes have moved marginally ahead of the Aberdeen City improvement rate, but this is within the year-on-year +/- 1 percentage point tolerances applied to these national statistics and are unlikely to represent a material difference in the educational outcomes of school leavers.

3. Attainment for All School Leavers

Table 7. Average Complementary Tariff Point Scores by Attainment Band and Benchmarks

Establishment	Year	Attainment Quintile	Average Complementary Tariff Points Attained
Aberdeen City	2022/23	Lowest 20%	379
Virtual Comparator			391
National			368
Aberdeen City		Middle 60%	955
Virtual Comparator			957
National			913
Aberdeen City		Highest 20%	1472
Virtual Comparator			1448
National			1405
Aberdeen City	2021/22	Lowest 20%	394
Virtual Comparator			392
National			367
Aberdeen City		Middle 60%	948
Virtual Comparator			980
National			923
Aberdeen City		Highest 20%	1439
Virtual Comparator			1457
National			1406
Aberdeen City	2018/19	Lowest 20%	401
Virtual Comparator			392
National			375
Aberdeen City		Middle 60%	916
Virtual Comparator			939
National			876
Aberdeen City		Highest 20%	1416
Virtual Comparator			1432
National			1370

Service Commentary

Table 7.

Attainment, as evaluated through the Average Complementary Tariff Score results for City pupils, show rising outcomes from 2021/22 to 2022/23, with the strongest performance in the Highest 20% of candidates, some raising of attainment amongst the Middle 60% (representing the outcomes of the majority of pupils) and some limited fall off in the outcomes for the Lowest performing 20% of school leavers,

In benchmark terms, attainment within the Middle 60% is better than the National figure and similar to the Virtual Comparator in 2022/23, whilst that of the Highest 20% is materially above both of the benchmark measures. Outcomes of the Lowest performing 20% show a 11-point advantage over the National benchmark and a similar deficit against the Virtual Comparator. These differences represent % distances of just under 3% in both instances.

4. Attainment in the Context of Deprivation

Chart 5. Aberdeen City – Summary Complementary Tariff Points by Deprivation (SIMD) Quintiles 2022/23

Cumulative Average Complementary Tariff Points Attained 2022/23 by Quintile
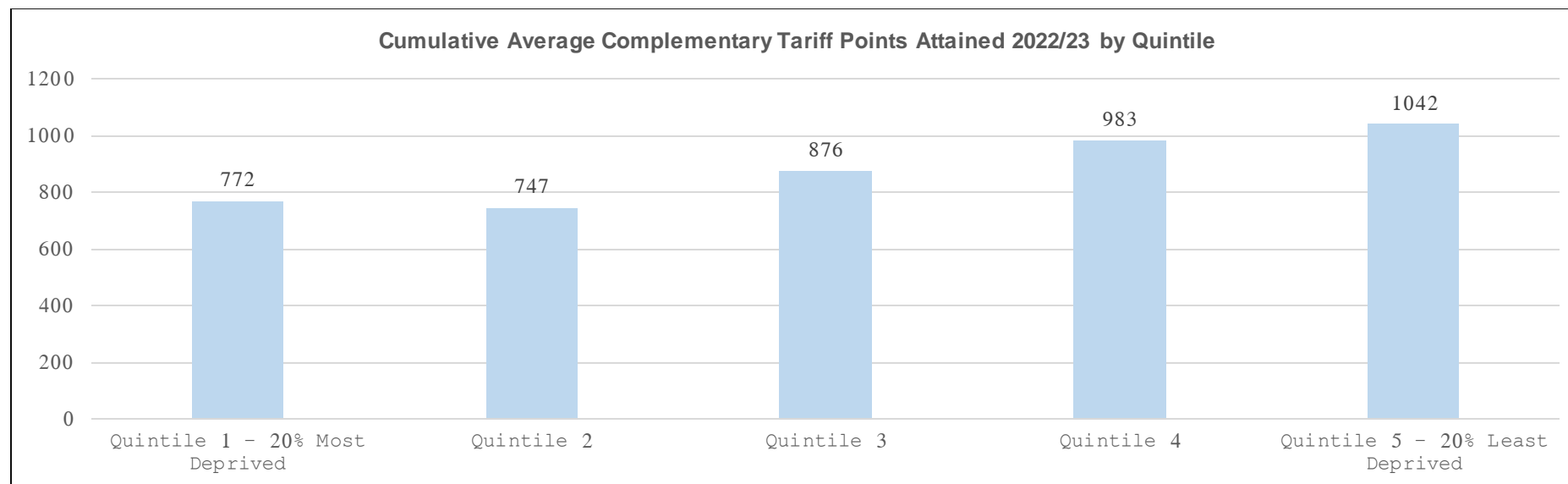
Table 8. Aberdeen City – Average Complementary Tariff Points by Attainment and Deprivation (SIMD) Quintiles 2022/23

Attainment Cohort	SIMD Quintile	Average Complementary Tariff Points Attained
Lowest 20%	Quintile 1 - 20% Most Deprived	206
Middle 60%		795
Highest 20%		1315
Lowest 20%	Quintile 2	242
Middle 60%		744
Highest 20%		1255
Lowest 20%	Quintile 3	332
Middle 60%		867
Highest 20%		1430
Lowest 20%	Quintile 4	472
Middle 60%		1011
Highest 20%		1466
Lowest 20%	Quintile 5 - 20% Least Deprived	532
Middle 60%		1060
Highest 20%		1533

Service Commentary

Table 8.

In the context of deprivation, the attainment of each Quintile cohort, (and the relationship between each to those of the Least Deprived) have made year-on-year gains. This is more pronounced at Quintiles 3 and 4 and while the performance of the Lowest 20% of attainment in Quintile 1 (see below), and across Quintile 2 has reduced slightly (from a cumulative averaged tariff score of 774 points in 2021/22 to 747 points in 2022/23 – **Chart 5 above**.) with some slippage in the distances to the Least Deprived cohort.

The Council's Director -led Performance Board, and the service itself, have already identified the attainment outcomes of pupils and school leavers in SIMD 2 in a distinct Improvement Project, which is presently being taken forwards, and will be reflected in additional actions captured within the City's 2024/25 National Improvement Plan for education. This refreshed Plan is due to be presented at the next meeting of this Committee

Chart 6. Summary Complementary Tariff Points of Most Deprived (SIMD 1) Pupils – Aberdeen City and Benchmarks

Averaged Complementary Tariff Points Attained by Year - SIMD 1
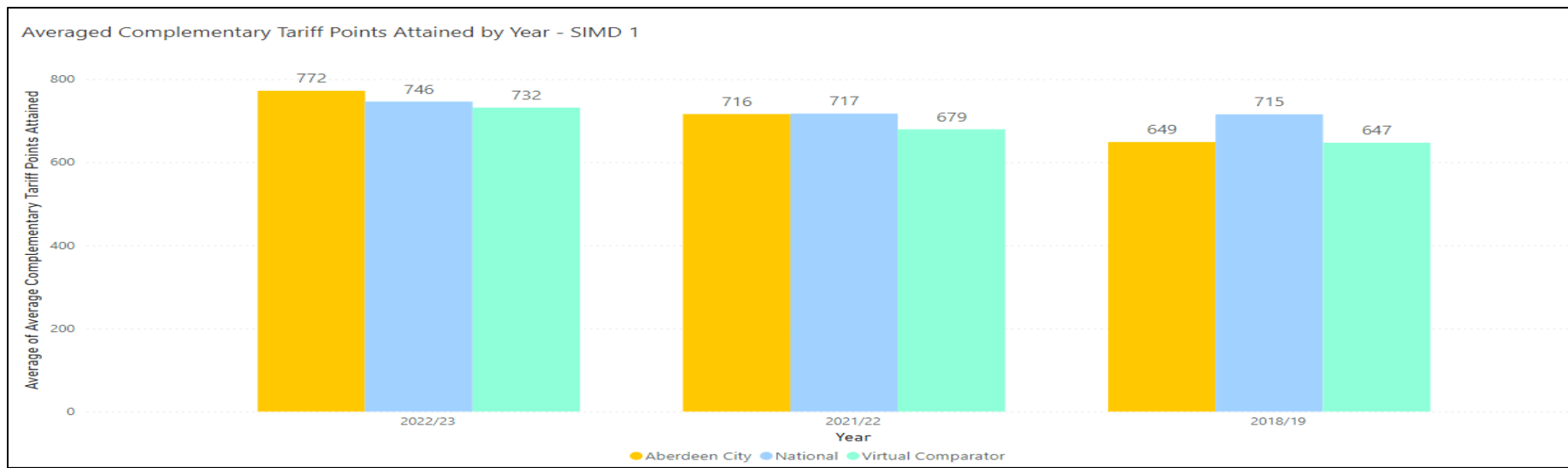
Service Commentary

Chart 6.

Overall, the 2022/23 outcomes of the Most Deprived school leavers are improved on 2021/22, with the summary of ACTP scores showing that the performance of City school leavers has risen over the previous year, and against both benchmarks. Aberdeen City now sits above the Virtual Comparator and National figures, having almost closed the distances to both in 2021/22.

Table 9. Average Complementary Tariff Points of Most Deprived (SIMD 1) pupils by Attainment Band – Aberdeen City

Establishment	Year	Attainment Cohort	SIMD Quintile	Average Complementary Tariff Points Attained
Aberdeen City	2022/23	Lowest 20%	Quintile 1 – Most Deprived	206
Virtual Comparator	2022/23			229
National	2022/23			263
Aberdeen City	2022/23	Middle 60%		795

Virtual Comparator	2022/23			726
National	2022/23			733
Aberdeen City	2022/23	Highest 20%		1315
Virtual Comparator	2022/23			1240
National	2022/23			1242
Aberdeen City	2021/22	Lowest 20%		207
Virtual Comparator	2021/22			167
National	2021/22			189
Aberdeen City	2021/22	Middle 60%	Quintile 1 - 20% Most Deprived	725
Virtual Comparator	2021/22			658
National	2021/22			728
Aberdeen City	2021/22	Highest 20%		1216
Virtual Comparator	2021/22			1213
National	2021/22			1234
Aberdeen City	2018/19	Lowest 20%		235
Virtual Comparator	2018/19			188
National	2018/19			277
Aberdeen City	2018/19	Middle 60%	Quintile 1 - 20% Most Deprived	602
Virtual Comparator	2018/19			621
National	2018/19			689
Aberdeen City	2018/19	Highest 20%		1109
Virtual Comparator	2018/19			1132
National	2018/19			1180

Service Commentary

Table 9.

This improvement is less pronounced in the Lowest 20% of attainment, which is unchanged, and shows some extending of the distances to the National and Virtual Comparator figures as a result of these benchmarks improving year-on-year by just under 40% which is in part, a consequence of unusually low outcomes in both measures in 2021/22.

With the exception of 2020/21, (which was influenced by differing assessment and grading models) the 2022/23 outcomes of the Middle 60% and Highest 20% of school leavers in the Most Deprived Quintile, are the highest Average Complementary Tariff Point (ACTP) scoring achieved since introduction of the current National Qualification framework. Both of these cohorts are achieving ACTP scores that are statistically in excess of the two benchmarks in this year.

Aberdeen City improvement rates for these two cohorts' year-on-year and against the 2018/19 baseline are ahead of both benchmarks, while attainment of the Lowest 20% has lost some ground to the comparators. In 2022/23, this quintile group encompassed 80 school leavers, an increased number but similar proportion of all pupils as in 2021/22 and 2018/19.

Chart 7. Attainment Gap – Highest 20% of Deprivation (SIMD 1) to Lowest 20% of Deprivation (SIMD 5) – Aberdeen City by Attainment Band

Deprivation related Gap - Average Complmentary Tarifff Score - Most Deprived School Leavers

	2018/19			2021/22			2022/23	
Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Highest 20%
255	404	348	377	323	293	326	265	218
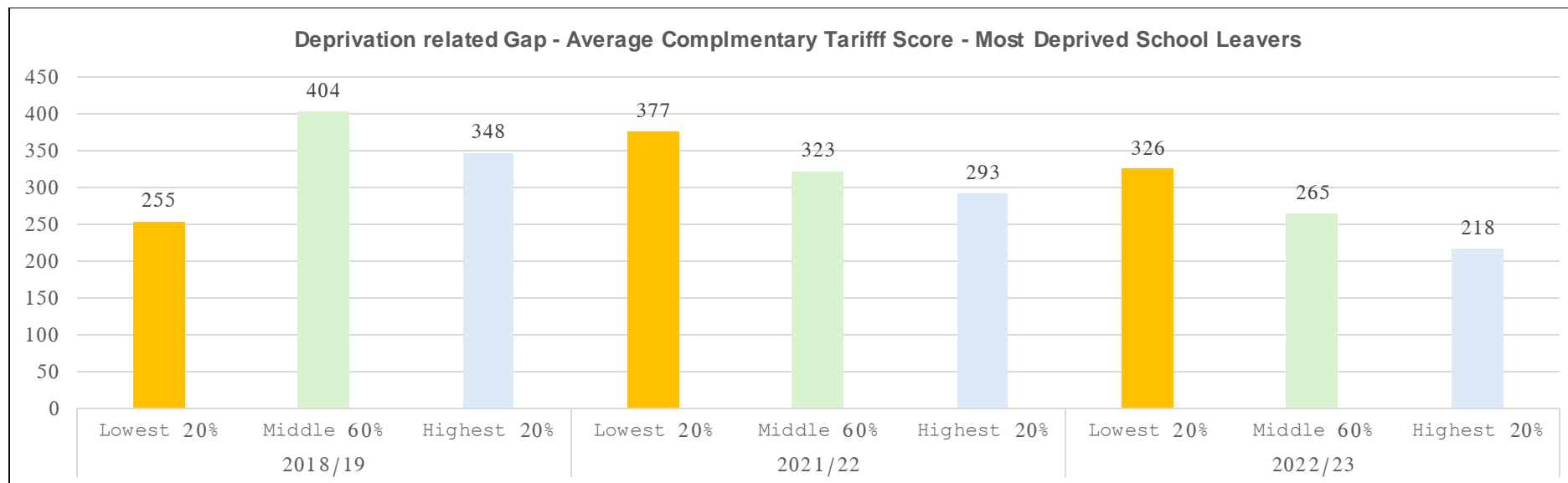
Service Commentary

Chart 7.

The distances between the outcomes of the majority of the Most and Least Deprived school leavers by attainment band show substantive improvements in year-on-year outcomes of our SIMD 1 categorised pupils, with each of the bands experiencing positive change in 2022/23, against a background of rising attainment by those Least Deprived school leavers.

Improvements in the gap between the two poverty related quintiles (SIMD 1 and 5) in the context of the 2018/19 baseline are most pronounced for the Middle 60% and Highest 20% of attainment, (covering 80% of all leavers) which reflects the almost equal influences of a marginal reduction in outcomes of the Most Deprived, and rising attainment of the Least Deprived leavers.

It should be borne in mind that the outcomes in the Lowest 20% of attainment, in each SIMD Quintile, often reflect achievement amongst those pupils with significant learning challenges where the gaining of SQA qualifications are supplemented by a range of other SCQF, and developmental qualifications

5. School Leaver Breadth and Depth

Chart 8. Percentage of School Leavers Achieving 5 or more Qualifications at SCQF Levels 5 and 6

% school leavers Acheiving 5 or more awards at SCQF Levels 5 and 6

	2018/19			2021/22			2022/23		
	Aberdeen City	Virtual Comparator	National	Aberdeen City	Virtual Comparator	National	Aberdeen City	Virtual Comparator	National
	58 / 30	59 / 33	64 / 36	66 / 36	66 / 38	68 / 39	63 / 37	65 / 38	66 / 38
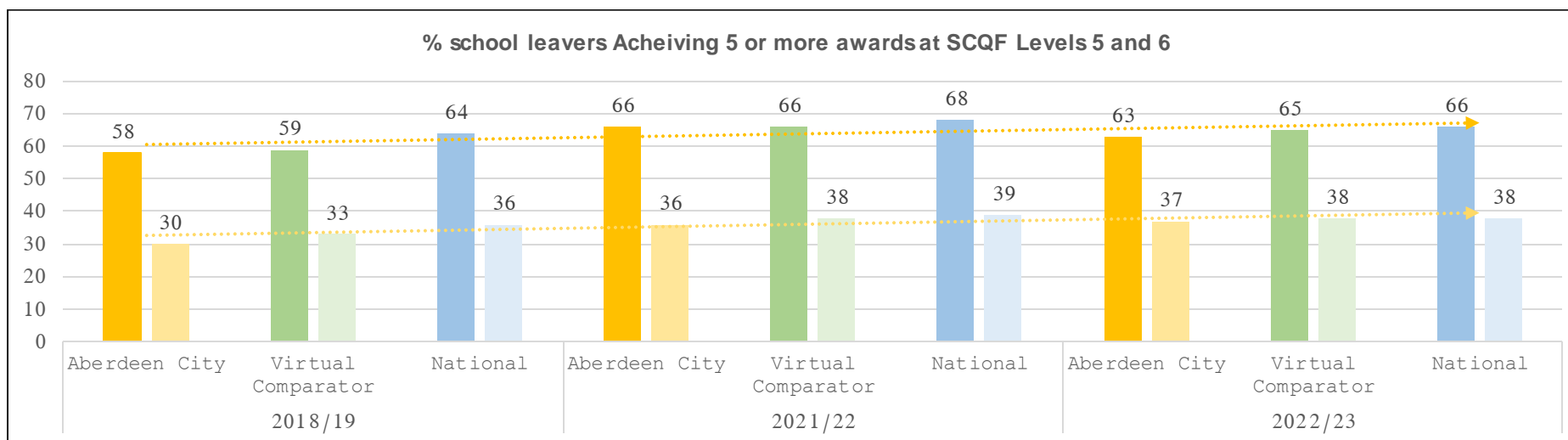
Service Commentary

Chart 8.

The two measures reflected above represent core breadth and depth stretch aim indicators derived from both the National Improvement Framework evidence pack and the Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework metrics suite.

In general terms, Aberdeen City's outcomes at SCQF Level 5 track the year-on-year movement and trends of the benchmarks, with a drop in the % of leavers attaining 5 or more qualifications between 2021/22 and 2022/23. At SCQF Level 6, there is a small rise in Aberdeen City attainment that is the same as the year-on-year Comparator change and better than the National trend. This moves the City closer to both of the benchmarks than in either prior table year.

In both instances, the city outcomes and distances to the benchmarks have improved on the 2018/19 baseline, against the SCQF 5 and SCQF 6 level attainment by 5 and 7 percentage points, respectively.

Table 10. Attainment of Vocational Qualifications - % of School Leavers Attaining 1 or more Qualifications by SCQF Levels 5 and 6

Year	Local Authority	1+ at SCQF Level 5 or better	1+ at SCQF Level 6 or better
2022-23	Aberdeen City	31.1%	14.9%
	Scotland	30.4%	12.2%
2021-22	Aberdeen City	26.1%	11.4%
	Scotland	27.2%	10.4%
2018-19	Aberdeen City	18.9%	4.5%
	Scotland	17.1%	4.6%

Service Commentary

Table 10.

The table above reflects the outcomes of school leavers presented against SCQF awarded Vocational and Technical Qualifications in each year and against similar stretch aim-based Level 5 and 6 parameters as in Chart 8. above

This shows that City school leavers are now out-performing the Scotland outcomes, at both SCQF Levels, with consecutive years of upwards trending

In 2022/23, the number of school leavers attaining of 1 or more qualifications, at Levels 5 and 6, was 839, whilst in 2021/22 this was 675 and in the baseline year, the number was 394. The proportions of all leavers presented for Vocational Qualifications (and achieving these higher levels) has increased in each year since 2018-19,

3. Staff

Corporate Measure – 2023/24 Service Level Indicators

Table 11. Establishment Levels

Performance Measure	2021-22 Value	2022-23 Value	2023/24 Value	Status	Long Trend - Annual
Establishment actual FTE – Education	3,019	3,122	3,198	📈	⬆

Table 12. Accidents and Incidents

Performance Measure	2021-22 Value	2022-23 Value	2023/24 Value	Status	Long Trend - Annual
H&S Employee Reportable by Cluster – Education	5	9	12	📈	⬇
H&S Employee Non-Reportable by Cluster – Education	477	794	944	📈	⬇

Service Commentary

Table 12.

As reflected in the commentary against the Health and Safety metrics captured in the previous report to Committee, there is a substantive additional push within the Service to ensure that accidents and incidents are accurately and timeously recorded within the corporate monitoring tool. This has driven the data relating to non-reportable incidents upwards in comparison with 2022/23 and 2021/22 and is an expected consequence of increasing the robustness of reporting.

Detailed analysis of the trends, patterns and validation of the current actions designed to reduce the number of incidents is currently being undertaken against this end of financial year data will be supplemented by similar data collation at conclusion of the academic year.

Table 13. Absence Due to Illness

Performance Measure	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Education (12 month rolling figure at year end)	4.72	6.25	6.5	9.4	✅	⬇
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Primary and Secondary Schools (12 month rolling figure at year end)	4.75	6.0	6,25	9.4	✅	⬇
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – Early Learning and Childcare (12 month rolling figure at year end)	2.42	6.8	9.1	9.4	✅	⬇

Service Commentary

Table 14.

Sickness absence levels across the three organisational services show a year-on-year increase which is a trend shared at Council level and across all Clusters. It is understood that, from early indications, a similar pattern is being experienced at national levels across a majority of local authorities but validated data returns for 2023/24 from all 32 authorities are currently not yet available to confirm this observation.

Data from the second half of 2023-4 and into Quarter 1 of 2024-25, (although the latter is incomplete at this point in time) is indicating that a trend in reduced number of working days being lost, is developing against each of the three service areas, having peaked in the Autumn of 2023.

12-month reporting of corporate absence data was most recently considered within the EAS Annual Progress Update Occupational Health and Absence Annual Update report to the Staff Governance Committee on 22nd of April 2024.

4. Finance & Controls

Table 15. Staff Expenditure

Performance Indicator	Quarter 1 2023/24		Quarter 2 2023/24		Quarter 3 2023/24		Quarter 4 2023/24	
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to full year budget profile – Education *	26.7%	✅	50.0%	✅	79.8%	⚠️	105.35%	⚠️

Service Commentary

Table 15.

The Management Commentary provided within the provisional year-end budget outcomes in the Q4 budget report to the Finance and Resources Committee on the 8th of May 2024, noted the financial pressures relating to school roll, and other 'inflationary' impacts on the Service, leading to the employment of additional teaching and pupil support staffing.

This was identified as the strongest negative driver on the Service's ability to deliver projected savings against the Service's vacancy factors, which have resulted in staffing expenditure exceeding the budget profile. The provisional out-turn figures for 2023-24 show that gross expenditure on teaching staff was £115.86 million, an increase of £9.27 million on the same figure in 2023/23, and an additional £1.47 million was expended on pupil Additional Support delivery. The level of spend on non-teaching staff has remained unchanged from that in 2022/23.

There are early indications that the un-modelled increases in school roll, arising from in-term registration levels and, in some instances, increased levels of vulnerability attached to these children are easing but the pupil profile, support needs and number of each new P1 intake is also an influencing factor that needs to be kept in mind.

* 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 Family Support

Corporate Measures – 2023-24 Cluster Level Indicators (Annual)

5. Customer

Table 16. Complaints Handling

Performance Measure	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Status	

	Value	Value	Value		Long Trend Annual
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	43	32	39	📈	⬇️
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	60.5%	84.4%	66.7%	⚠️	⬆️
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Children's Social Work	25.6%	25.0%	5.1%	📈	⬆️
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Children's Social Work	1	0	0	📈	📈

Service Commentary

Table 16.

The number of complaints received shows an increase year-on-year, and the proportion of complaints resolved within timescale has reduced (in part as a result of staffing issues experienced within the corporate processing team in Q2 which were highlighted in a prior report)

At the same time, the % of complaints where one or more points of complaint were upheld has improved, This is at the lowest level recorded against the service, and is better than both the corporate level and that of the majority of services across the Council

Table 17. Service Level Standards (Children's Social Work)

Performance Measure	2021/22 value	2022/23 value	2023/24 Value	Status	2023/24 Target	Long Trend Annual
% of care provided in Council children's homes, fostering and adoption services achieve a care standard of Good or better	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%	➖ ➖
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%	➖
% of children open to Children's Social Work supported to live at home, where safe to do so			75.1%	✅	75%	
% of Looked After Children looked after in a residential setting where living at home is not appropriate	11.0%	11.7%	12.0%	⚠️	10%	⬇️

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Status	2023/24 Target	Long Trend Annual
% of Looked After Children looked after in Kinship where living at home is not appropriate	20.5%	22.7%	23.8%	🔴	31%	⬆
% of Looked After Children looked after in Foster Care where living at home is not appropriate	45.75%	45.4%	43.3%	🔴	33%	⬆

Service Commentary

Table 17.

Overall, the data around balance of care, on an annual basis, supports the long-term strategic direction of travel expressed in the service's delivery model with positive performances in increasing the % of Looked After Children that are looked after in a Kinship setting and reducing the proportion looked after in Foster Care.

In both instances, the actual number of children and young people in these categories, and the wider data on the number of Looked After Children overall, as noted within the previous report to Committee, continue to reduce on a consistent pathway.

6. Process

Table 18. Service Level Standards 2023/24

Performance Measure	2021/22 Value	2022/23 Value	2023/24 Value	Status	2023/24 Target	Long Trend Annual
% Child Protection joint interviews completed within 5 days - average	83.0%	80.0%	69.0%	🔴	90%	⬇
% Initial child protection conferences held within 28 days - average	86.25%	71.5%	59.8%	🔴	80%	⬇
% of initial screenings undertaken and decisions on action required on all new referrals within seven days*			97,0%	✅	80%	▬
% Care Experienced Children and Young People with a pathway plan by the age of 15 years *			70.3%	🔴	95%	⬇
% Care experienced children and young people with 3 or more consecutive placements away from home in 12 months -average	4.5%	2.7%	1.5%	✅	10%	⬆

Service Commentary

Table 18.

There was reflection against those measures which are falling short of the targets around timelines for the two child protection measures in the previous meeting of this Committee, and these Standards have been replaced in 2024/25 to reflect the application of SCIM-based assessments where the focus is on the quality, rather than speed, of early evaluations of child protection needs,

The service latterly has seen gains in the proportion of Care Experienced C&YP with a pathway plan as a result of systemic work around improving the quality of data recording, mentioned in the report to April 2024 but this has yet to be completed and/or a decision made as to whether back-dating of revised data against 2023/24, would serve a purpose. This issue is being considered in the context of the impending national CLAS submission in July.

*In some instances, there is no directly comparable data available against prior years due to the introduction of new or revised Standards for 2023/24. Introduction of the D365 case management and reporting tool in late 2023, provides for advanced categorisation of these some outcome and process outputs that are, in some cases, also not directly relatable to prior annual data.

7. Staff

Corporate Measure – 2023/24 Service Level Indicators

Table 19. Establishment Levels

Performance Measure	2021-22 Value	2022-23 Value	2023-24 Value	Status	Long Trend - Annual
Establishment actual FTE – Children's Social Work	344	338	339		⬆

Table 20. Accidents and Incidents (Children's Social Work)

Performance Measure	2021-22 Value	2022-23 Value	2023-24 Value	Status	Long Trend - Annual
H&S Employee Reportable by Cluster – Children's Social Work	0	1	0		⬇
H&S Employee Non-Reportable by Cluster – Children's Social Work	3	5	4		⬆

Table 201. Absence Due to Illness

Performance Measure	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24 Corporate Figure	Status	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE – (12 month rolling figure at year end)	4.3	5.8	6.4	9.4	✅	⬇

Service Commentary

Table 21.

As with the Education Service, 2023/24 had seen a general upwards annual trend in the number of days lost to sickness, with a peak of 8.4 days being recorded against October in 2024 and with a consistently reducing figure since that point in time, to a rolling 12-month figure of 6.4 as at March 2023.

8. Finance & Controls

Table 22. Staff Expenditure (Children's Social Work)

Performance Measure	Quarter 1 2023/24		Quarter 2 2023/24		Quarter 3 2023/24		Quarter 4 2023/24	
	Value	Value	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status
Staff Expenditure – % spend to full year budget profile – Children's Social Work *	30.9%	🔴	54.5%	🔺	98.4%	🔴	121.6%	🔴

Service Commentary

Table 22.

In common with the circumstances around financial pressures within the Education service, increasing levels of vulnerability driving additional support needs for pre-school and school aged children, the overall rise in the number of older Care Experienced Young People and extended responsibilities for larger numbers of refugee children, have all been significant contributors in terms of pushing staff expenditure beyond the year-end budget profile.

The impacts of these influences have primarily manifested in the service's capacity to deliver budget savings linked to vacancy factor levels that were anticipated over the course of the financial year, but also relate to the general intensity of workload being experienced across Children's Social Work teams.

* 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.

  Some natural variation between quarterly outcomes can arise as a result of this. In terms of complaint resolutions within timescale, the number of complaints received can be a considerable influence in data movement as (a) the complexity of response to complaints and (b) the proportional impacts of a small number of unresolved complaints can result in an 'exaggerated' statistical change from one period to the next. The provision of Long-Term Trend direction indicators serves to provide additional assistance to Member evaluation of performance, taking both of these factors into account.

- Target Setting: Where no target is applied against Service Standards, the 'Business-as-Usual' objective is that these services will be delivered to a 100% level on a consistent basis.

- Trend Directions: Unless stated to the contrary, Long-Term Trends are based on the average of 24 monthly, 8 quarterly and 3 annual consecutive periods, respectively.

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
🔴	Alert (figure more than 20% out with target	⬆	Improving/Increasing	⬆	Improving/Increasing
🔺	Warning (figure between 5% and 20% out with target)	➖	No or Limited Change	➖	No or Limited Change
✅	OK (figure within target or better)	⬇	Getting Worse/Decreasing	⬇	Getting Worse/Decreasing
❓	Unknown				

	Data Only

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APPENDIX B		
Accessibility Update		
Augmentative and alternative signage at learner appropriate height Toilets signposted as accessible	An officer has initiated the audit to identify gaps in signage and requirements. Appropriate officers are reviewing draft Guidance.	
Consider suitability, accessibility and capacity within Victorian schools through feasibility study and options appraisal	The Corporate Landlord feasibility study continues and will be presented at the Education and Children's Services committee in September 2024.	
CIRCLE framework training delivered with partners across settings including use of Up and Away to support understanding of environments to meet needs.	A thinglink has been created to enable school staff to readily access information and guidance. This has been shared with CIRCLE ambassadors. Further strategies are being developed to enable a more specialised support layer at targeted level. Officers have been asked to present to the Regional Early Speech and Language Leads Event in May.	
Develop guidance to meet a range of sensory needs	The draft guidance has been reviewed in light of testing and Officers are now looking at how best to integrates this new guidance with other guidance available, i.e. CIRCLE to ensure that messages are clear and practical for staff teams.	
Child's planning format which is accessible for learners	A simplified, more accessible child's planning format has been piloted, although not fully agreed as we require to ensure the format still satisfied statutory requirements. The pilot has been put on hold while we await further guidance from the Scottish Government.	
Empower children and young people to have their voice heard when experiencing child protection processes through effective use of alternative communication systems	This work is now complete and being delivered through on-going delivery of Scottish Child Interview Model.	
Access to information through a single digital source of information for parents, carers and disabled young people	ASN & Outreach Services manage an information site: https://sites.google.com/ab-ed.org/asnoutreachservice/useful-links The site is regularly updated to take account of changes in legislation or to the services on offer to families. A recent review in collaboration with We Too indicated that parents were more aware of the Family Information Service digital support offering We also have an information site for families, Parent Learning Hub: https://sites.google.com/ab-ed.org/parent-learning-hub/home An analysis of "hits" is being undertaken to establish how and why sites are accessed to determine next steps.	
Implement "One Good Adult" programme	In place.	
Ensure summary information regarding additional support needs is accessible and available in a variety	Draft information has been created and has been shared with legal colleagues who are supporting the quality assurance process.	

of formats in accordance with legislation	

Behaviour Plan	
Improve the consistency of incident reporting by: - Continuing to investigate how to send an automatic notification to staff through Core HR - Reviewing the guidance flowchart to further exemplify expectations of the manager/employee post incident discussion to correctly determine if the incident is reportable through Core HR - Ensuring appropriate linkage to Prejudice Incident Reporting arrangements which will have to be reviewed following publication of national guidance on Preventing and Responding to Racism and Racist incidents. - Reviewing arrangements further in light of the National Behaviour Plan (to include clear definitions when Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 and Respect for All has been refreshed)	The work on automating the notification to staff will be part of the wider Microsoft programme and is scheduled to be scoped in September 2024. It was thought that this could be achieved within the current system, however this is not possible and there has to be a change to programming to allow this to happen. The flow chart is due to be reviewed at the safeguarding meeting scheduled for 5 June 2024 The incident reporting system has been updated to allow reporting of racist and prejudice incidents and these can now be reported on. We are awaiting the publication of the National Behaviour Plan and the update of Included, Engaged and Involved and Respect for All to inform any further edits to the plan.
Gain further assurance around the knowledge of/compliance with agreed policies by: - Co-designing a mandatory E-Learning module for all staff to cover key policies and procedures with TUs to include Person Centred Risk Assessment, Incident Reporting, Exclusion, Health and Safety and Whistleblowing (this will be subject to further review following publication of refreshed Included, Engaged and Involved) - Implementing E-Learning module as part of induction arrangements/mandatory yearly training and reporting compliance to ECS Committee - Update the Health and Safety policy exemplar template to include incident reporting and expected collaboration with TU H&S reps - All schools to update their Health and Safety policy in keeping with local exemplar - All schools to add a Health and Safety place holder in whole staff meeting agendas - Short Health and Safety briefings to be developed in collaboration with Trade Unions and posted on the Edu-Sharepoint site	The first draft of the e-learning module has been shared with trade unions, central officers and our headteacher group. Other modules are planned and will be created in June ready for issuing to school as part of the mandatory training pack for the first in service day in August. The template for the health and safety policy has been updated following consultation with all trade unions and the headteacher group. This will be issued prior to the summer holidays to allow school to have an updated policy in place for the start of academic session 2024/25. All schools have added Health and Safety into whole staff meeting agendas and are aware of the need to personalise the exemplar health and safety policy. The short Health and Safety briefings will be developed in collaboration with the TUs throughout the summer holidays and be in place for staff to access by the end of October
Refresh Behaviour and Relationship policies: - All schools to provide the central team with copies of current policies by May 2024 - Undertake an audit of what is working well with regard to nurturing approaches by the end of October 2024	All schools have shared their relationships policy with the central team. The Educational Psychology Service have scoped an evaluation which will be undertaken with all schools as part of their annual Early intervention consultations in June and September. Evidence gathered will be used to highlight good practice across the city through a series of case studies.

- Engage in peer learning around risk assessment, managing bullying, distressing and violent incidents (including support for pupils and parents) in keeping with the National Plan - All schools to table the National Plan with key stakeholders when published - Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) safeguarding group to develop an agreement and guidance note for schools based on the refreshed Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 including relevant definitions - Each school community to lead a local refresh of their Behaviour/Relationship Policy to reflect changes in refreshed Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 in collaboration with and through consultation with stakeholders (parents, school staff, young people and recognised Trade Unions). Policies to include agreement of how policy effectiveness will be monitored and reflect national best practice. - Implementation of school behaviour policies to be considered as part of quality assurance arrangements for 2024/25 through the updated Quality Improvement Framework in July 2024	School leaders have opportunities to come together through HT meetings to discuss successful approaches. The officer with responsibility for bullying and equalities carries out regular audits of the data and samples schools to have a deep dive into their antibullying processes. The Safeguarding group has been established and is meeting regularly to support the delivery of the plan. The group are well placed to develop a guidance document for school staff following publication of the National Plan. All schools have built time into their working time agreement to allow this work to happen over session 2024/25. The implementation of school behaviour policies has been built into the quality assurance processes for session 24/25, with the links clear in the updated Quality Improvement Framework.
Ensure robust provision of risk assessments by: - Building a generic staff risk assessment into the general school risk assessment process (this will be subject to review when the refreshed Included, Engaged and Involved Part 2 is published) - Make an accessible whole school stress risk assessment approach available to support the monitoring of staff wellbeing (and include reference to this in the Health and Safety guidance) - Collaboratively reviewing and updating Person Centred Risk Assessment guidance to include escalation arrangements, FAQs, the frequency of review alongside considerations of how best to provide targeted support to the young person during this period - Provide guidance to shape post-incident discussion to encourage reflection and discourage blame (link to debrief guidance) - Quality Assurance process over 2024/25 to include sampling of Person-Centred Risk Assessment processes	A generic risk assessment has been shared with all stakeholders for comment and will be circulated to schools once we have agreement. All schools will then be asked to complete a school specific risk assessment. The generic risk assessment was discussed and agreed at the meeting of the Safeguarding Group on June 5th, 2024 An approach to stress risk assessment is in development and will be worked on with trade unions and the headteacher group. The e-module will provide guidance on the creation and review of Person-Centred Risk Assessment (PCRAs), and this will be accompanied by written guidance. Debrief guidance has been shared with trade unions and is being finalised ready for distribution to schools Quality assurance of PCRAs has been built into quality improvement visits for session 2024/25
Supporting staff by: - Evaluating the impact of the whistleblowing form to determine next steps by July 2024 - Regularly reminding staff of corporate wellbeing supports through the education newsletter - Developing debrief guidance (including decompression time) to be agreed at LNCT and issued by July 2024	To date the form has not been used by any staff member to report a failure to follow procedures. The need for the form will be discussed with trade unions on 5th July 2024. Corporate wellbeing supports are shared through the education wellbeing newsletter to ensure all staff in schools have access to all supports available.

- Clarifying location of Education Scotland resources to support improvement at school level - Clarifying how schools should enable Police investigations - Resilience training offered to schools through Winning Scotland / Able-Futures	Awaiting information publication of resources to support improvement in relationships at school level Guidance on enabling police investigations will be discussed as part of the safeguarding group activity 8 schools have signed up for the offer of resilience training from Winning Scotland following a presentation at an HT meeting (St Machar Academy, Countesswells, Kingsford, Bucksburn Academy, Cults Academy, Airyhall, Lochside and Hazlehead Primary). Able futures is offered to individuals through the regular newsletter
Further build the capacity/capability of staff by: - Continuing to deliver Compassionate and Connected Communities - Continued focus on the CIRCLE framework - Continuing to roll out CALMs theory (de-escalation) training to all school communities - Continuing to offer bespoke training through the Educational Psychology Service - Reviewing the programme of Professional Learning/Thinglinks to increase the range of professional learning opportunities for all school staff by August - Continuing to work with head teacher colleagues to develop and implement a spending proposal for £33,000 received from Scottish Government for staff training by the end of May - Programme of restorative practice training being put in place from August 2024 - Implement Restorative Justice training (currently being negotiated) - Consider PSE review as part of National Improvement Planning 2024/25	The professional Learning Calendar will include Compassionate and Connected Communities ensuring schools who have lost a trainer are targeted first to maintain the ability to train new staff locally. The established CIRCLE leads in each school will continue to support work around implementing the framework. Opportunities to work collaboratively will continue through the Circle Teams site. Negotiations are ongoing with Maybo to deliver a universal offer of training to all staff in school and this will be part of the offer shared with schools in August. Time for this has been built into the working time agreement and some HTs are planning to use time on in-service days to deliver the training programme. The Educational Psychology Service will offer restorative practice training, details are being finalised. It is thought that this will include Restorative Justice training. The review of PSE will feature in the NIF plan for session 24/25
Improve knowledge of the legislative framework by: - Co-designing a Webinar on the legal framework with Trade Unions - Launching the Webinar and ensuring its availability to all school staff	These webinars will be created over the summer break and be available to schools from August.
Ensure effective mechanisms are in place to support continuous improvement by: - Reviewing the Terms of Reference of the Safeguarding School Staff group in collaboration with the Trade Unions and the Health and Safety team (a further review in light of the National Behaviour Plan may be required) - Establishing a Terms of Reference for the Incident Reporting Group in collaboration with the Trade Unions	The terms of reference have been agreed and meetings arranged monthly to track progress on the plan and look at best practice across the authority. These will be reviewed annually to ensure the purpose of the group is clear and changes are made based on needs. Terms of reference have been agreed by the Incident Reporting group.

and Health and Safety team in light of the National Behaviour Plan. - Commit to long term support of the nominated head teacher group to shape our use of resources to support those with a range of wellbeing and ASN needs.	The headteacher group continues to meet to inform the work of the plan and look at identifying best practice and sharing across the local authority. A scope to help review the adequacy of support in place has been agreed.
Continue to focus on a positive culture by: - Asking all head teachers to provide evidence of current arrangements for listening to staff and commit to keeping arrangements under review - Continuing to distribute wellbeing survey to staff (Trade Unions to help promote completion) - Collaborative review of learning from the staff wellbeing surveys with Trade Unions - Head teachers, central staff and Trade Unions to all encourage open and blame free reporting in all establishments - Trade Unions and central officers to exemplify expectations around respectful relationships and interactions for all staff	This has been gathered and will be used to share best practice across the local authority. Wellbeing surveys will be distributed, and feedback will be shared with TUs to identify areas. All managers are aware of the need to promote open and blame free reporting of incidents . Respectful relationships have been maintained throughout the development of the plan and the early stages of implementation.
Engagement with parents and carers on behaviour and relationships by: - Tabling this Action Plan with the City-Wide Parent Forum for comment - Tabling the National Plan at Parent Council meetings - Actively involving parents/carers in the review of Behaviour/Relationship policies - Work with Trade Unions to better understand the levels of violence from parents and carers and establish a protocol for staff who face aggression from parents and carers	The plan was shared with the Aberdeen Parent Forum on April 30 and parents were comfortable with the content. The group will be updated regularly as the plan progresses and once the National Plan is available this will be shared too. A working group of TUs, parent representatives and central officers will work on the protocol for staff who face aggression from parents. This work will start in the new term.
Committee business - Review the Devolved School Management scheme as planned - Take the agreed Action Plan through the Education and Children's Services Committee and report any impact on recruitment - Review the plan regularly in light of any updated national guidance - External review of our Whistleblowing Policy	The review of the Devolved School Management scheme is planned for early 2025 This is the update that will provided as part of the performance report at every Education and Children's services committee The plan will be reviewed in consultation with all TU's when the new national guidance is published.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Inspection Reporting
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/192
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne/ Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne / Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	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 Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to continue to support Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings and schools to implement continuous improvement in keeping with agreed Quality Improvement Frameworks.

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 QIF categorises schools/ELC settings as needing 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 QIs 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.*

The updated QIF proposed for academic session 2024/25 is also being considered by the Education and Children's Services Committee in July 2024.

3.2 **Education Scotland Inspection of Quarryhill Primary and Nursery Class**

Quarryhill Primary School and Nursery Class was inspected week beginning 22 January using the short inspection model. 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 well children were being supported. The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The supportive relationships all staff develop with children. This supports children to feel cared for. The positive relationships in the nursery help children to settle and make progress.
- The recently introduced developments to improve children's reading. This is leading to children becoming more able to discuss what texts they like and dislike.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and Quality Improvement Manager.

- Practitioners should build on their very recent, positive start to improving approaches to learning and teaching in the nursery. This will ensure experiences engage, motivate and challenge all learners appropriately.
- Develop high-quality learning and teaching, using topics which children find interesting. Teachers need to adopt a greater range of approaches to teaching, which motivate children more in their learning.
- Develop how teachers evaluate children's progress. Teachers need to use the information they gather to plan learning which provide all children with greater challenge.

Quarryhill School was evaluated as Weak against the Quality Indicators

Primary School Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	Weak (2)
Raising attainment and achievement	Weak (2)

Inspectors noted that staff had established positive relationships with children. Children come to school motivated and ready to learn however the curriculum on offer in most classes does not engage children or provide them with appropriate challenge. Although progression frameworks were available to staff, they require to be used consistently in order to ensure all children's needs are met effectively. Too much time is spent providing whole class instruction and children need support to understand the why and what of their learning.

It was noted that the range of lunchtime and after school clubs were helping to develop children's confidence however there is a need to help children to better understand the skills they are developing and how these relate to real life contexts.

Staff and parents were pleased the inspectors highlighted the work around the improved library environment and the work being done around improving classroom environments.

The whole management team changed in June 2023 and this left the school vulnerable as both the HT and DHT had been in post for a number of years. Officer-led Quality Improvement visits took place in February and October 2023. Evidence from these visits resulted in an overall assessment of the school at Satisfactory and the school remained at **Category 3,** due to the vulnerability around changes to the senior leadership team and the number of new members of staff in post **.** Records show that there was limited follow up of next steps identified during the visit partially due to the quality improvement team covering vacant head teacher posts. This vulnerability has been addressed through a review of the Local Authority Quality Improvement Framework also being considered by this Committee.

Following the inspection, the school remains **Category 3** and is in contact with the central team for support on a weekly basis. The QIO meets with Headteacher formally on a fortnightly basis to discuss progress against the plan. A copy of the plan can be found at Appendix A.

3.3 HMIe made the following evaluations of the Quarryhill Nursery Class. The Care inspectorate were not part of this inspection.

Nursery Class Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Learning, teaching and assessment	Weak (2)
Securing children's progress	Satisfactory (3)

Inspectors noted that the children at ELC experience warm and attentive relationships with staff. The curriculum requires to be reviewed to ensure practitioners are planning appropriately for sustained learning as well as offering spontaneous play opportunities. Practitioners require to deepen and extend children's learning through increased opportunities for children to apply their skills. The new approach to planning requires to be embedded in order to ensure learning builds on and develops learners' skills.

A quality improvement calendar is now in place and there is a detailed action plan in place to meet the improvements in the report.

Quality Improvement visits had taken place in February and September 2023 and evidence from these visits resulted in an overall assessment of Satisfactory for ELC and the setting remained at **Category 3.** Following the inspection the setting remains at **Category 3** and is receiving additional support on a weekly basis. A copy of the ELC Action Plan can be found at Appendix B.

The overall assessment of Satisfactory was based on observations of practice in classrooms and although the plans had been discussed, officers had not spent time scrutinising these. This scrutiny of written plans will be built into future Quality Improvement Visits.

Quarryhill will benefit from receive on-going support to address the areas for improvement. Support being provided includes:

- A formal partnership with Kingswells Primary Senior Leadership Team to develop a greater understanding of play based learning established immediately following the inspection.
- Officers collaborating with school senior leaders and teaching staff to review planning and the curriculum on offer ELC – P7. This will be progressed during the fortnightly visits from the Quality Improvement Officer
- Moderation activities in the school and across the Associated Schools Group to improve teacher judgement of achievement of a level.
- Staff visiting other settings to see high quality learning, teaching and assessment.

Progress will be monitored through Quality Improvement Visits and fortnightly meetings with SLT. A copy of the full report can be found here

It is of concern that the officer evaluations were one grade higher than those awarded by HMIe in one quality indicator. Following a review, it is thought that the reduced level of support afforded to the school due to officers covering vacant HT posts has impacted on progress.

Following the HMIE visit to this school and others in the locality, there has been a review of the working arrangements of the primary quality improvement team across the city. The service will move to a model where officers will spend more time working across different localities to ensure consistency in both evaluative judgements and in the support being afforded to schools.

Following a competitive recruitment process we have appointed an experienced Head Teacher to the post of permanent Head Teacher at Quarryhill Primary School.

3.4 **Education Scotland Inspection of Robert Gordon's Nursery Class**

Robert Gordon's Nursery is a funded provider located within the Campus of Robert Gordon's College and part of Robert Gordon's Junior School. Education Scotland Inspectors visited the school in February 2024. During the visit inspectors talked to parents/carers and children, worked closely with the headteacher and staff and the ELC to see how well children were being supported. Taking this approach enabled them to triangulate evidence to support their evaluations.

Inspectors noted that children experienced a welcoming and nurturing environment and were happy to attend nursery. Staff make good use of national training and should continue to explore their practice in order to further improve the quality of children's experiences.

Nursery Class Quality Indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	Good (4)
Learning, teaching and assessment	Good (4)
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and Inclusion	Very Good (5)
Securing children's progress	Very Good (5)

The staff team are pleased with the positive report and will continue to work on developing children's learning experiences. The Locality Lead Officer will offer support in this area. Prior to inspection the setting was in **Category 1** and following the inspection will remain into **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

3.5 **Education Scotland further Inspection of Northfield Academy**
Northfield Academy was subject to a further inspection during the week beginning 11 March 2024. During the visit inspectors talked to parents/carers and young people, worked closely with the headteacher and staff and visited classrooms in the school to observe how well young people were being supported. Taking this approach enabled them to triangulate evidence to support their evaluations.

Inspectors noted that the recently appointed headteacher was highly regarded by parents, staff and young people. The ethos and communication within school and with parents has improved with parents feeling welcomed to school for meetings and arranged drop-in sessions. The headteacher has engaged with all stakeholders ensuring they are aware of the priorities for improvement, why they have been selected, and how well the school is making progress towards these.

Improvements have been made around keeping young people safe, with an increasing number of young people who report feeling safe in school. The senior leadership team including the headteacher are more visible in the corridors and around the school which is impacting positively on corridor behaviour. Young people in the S1 Crew model are highly motivated and positive about the experience.

The recently implemented mobile phone guidelines are supporting improved lesson structure as young people are more ready to learn. Inspectors acknowledged that although in early stages of development, arrangements to plan, track and monitor when embedded will be effective.

Staff understanding of nurture is being developed through the promotion of the new vision and restructuring of the pastoral care team. Trusting relationships are being developed through the Crew model in S1 and this will be built upon as these young people move into S2. Attendance still requires further action and this is being looked across the ASG to support an early intervention and family approach.

Progress is being made in broadening the curriculum and increasing pathways for young people and this will, in turn, result in improved attainment.

The regular engagement between HMIe and the head teacher will continue in order to support the school on its improvement journey. Staff, although aware there is still work to be done, were pleased that inspectors could see the improvements they had made to date.

The school will remain in **Category 3** and continue to receive regular support from central officers.

A copy of the report can be found here

3.6 **Education Scotland Further Inspection of Sunnybank School And Nursery Class**
Sunnybank School and Nursery Class was subject to a further inspection in April 2024. During their visit, they talked to children and worked closely with the acting headteachers and staff looking for progress made against the areas identified in the original inspection.

Inspectors noted that under the leadership of the acting headteachers there has been an improvement in the quality of learning and teaching. Teachers are working to a set of agreed expectations ensuring consistency in the quality of delivery across the school and ELC.

Inspectors found that there has been an overall improvement in attainment for the majority of children . They noted that data was now being used effectively to track children's progress in writing and learners are now able to talk more positively about their learning.

The nurturing learning environments created by staff ensure that children with additional support needs are well supported in the school and ELC.

Inspectors believe the school has made positive progress against the original inspection and are confident in the capacity to continue to improve. Education Scotland will not be making any further visits to the school in connection with the May 2023 inspection.

Prior to the return inspection the school was sitting in **Category 3** and the ELC was in **Category 2** following the inspection both the school and ELC will move into **Category 2.**

A copy of the report can be found here

3.7 The Education (Scotland) Bill has been published. Part 2 of the Bill establishes a new non-ministerial office holder in the Scottish Administration to be called '*His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland*'. The statutory functions to secure the inspection of education provision will be conferred on the HM Chief Inspector, once appointed. HM Chief Inspector will lead a new independent education inspectorate (to be known as, His Majesty's

Inspectorate of Education in Scotland), to take forward the education inspection functions that currently sit within Education Scotland.

3.8 **Care Inspectorate Inspections**
The Care Inspectorate has now resumed their standard inspection model and no longer prioritise the inspection of settings deemed to be at higher risk.

3.9 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.

3.10 **St Devenicks Playgroup** is a funded provider playgroup located in St Devenicks Church, Bieldside. The playgroup was inspected by Care Inspectorate over 2 days on 12th and 13th March 2024. Inspectors praised the management and staff team who were committed to delivering a quality service to children and families.

Children benefited from warm nurturing interactions from staff who knew them well and had fun as they explored the environment freely though uninterrupted play, inspectors also noted that children and families benefitted from effective improvement planning. Inspectors suggested that Outdoor play areas should continue to be developed to support children's health and wellbeing.

All areas for improvement identified in previous inspections have been fully met.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Good (4)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Very Good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Very Good (5)

The staff team are delighted with the positive report and will continue to develop the outdoor area. The Locality Lead Officer will offer support in this area. Prior to inspection the setting was in **Category 2** and following the inspection will move into **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework.

The full report can be found here

3.11 **Kingsford ELC**, a Local Authority setting, received an unannounced visit from Care Inspectorate in April 2024. Inspectors noted that children received nurturing care and support from staff who knew them well.

Children were observed to lead their own play through a well balanced mix of activities both indoors and outside. Inspectors noted that the staff team were motivated and enthusiastic about their roles and were keen to engage in professional learning to develop their practice further. Inspectors suggested that management and staff should now continue to ensure quality assurance, including effective audits and monitoring, are embedded into practice.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation June '23	Recent Evaluation April 24
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Good (4)	Good (4))
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)

The team were happy that their progress had been recognised. The Locality Lead has been supporting the development of enabling spaces as well as reviewing personal plans. They are currently concentrating on quality assurance being embedded in practice to ensure that these processes impact positively on outcomes for children. This evaluation matches with the evaluation of the central team. Prior to inspection the ELC was sitting in **Category 2** and following the feedback they will remain in **Category 2** until they realise good gradings for all aspects. A copy of the ELC plan can be found at Appendix C.

The link to the full report can be found here

3.12 **Skene Square ELC**, a Local Authority setting located within Skene Square school, received an unannounced visit from the Care Inspectorate in May 2024. Inspectors reported that Staff knew the children very well and supported their individual needs. They were kind, caring and nurturing in their approach with the children. Staff had developed good relationships with parents, they felt well informed and involved in their child's experiences and learning. The inspectors highlighted the strong leadership of the setting which ensured a culture of continuous improvement.

Aspect being inspected	Evaluation May 2024
How good is our care, play and learning?	Very Good (5)
How good is our setting?	Very Good (5)
How good is our leadership?	Very Good (5)
How good is our staff team?	Very Good (5)

The team at Skene Square are delighted their hard work has been recognised in this very positive evaluation of their service.

This evaluation matches with the school self-evaluation and the evaluation gradings discussed at the most recent Quality Improvement Visit with central officers in February 2024. The setting was in **Category 2** prior to inspection and will now move to **Category 1** of the Quality Improvement Framework and practice will be shared with settings in categories 2 and 3. A link to the full inspection can be found here

3.13 **Copper Pots**, a funded provider setting based in the Woodside area of Aberdeen, received an unannounced visit from Care Inspectorate on 24 April 2024 . Inspectors noted that improvements had been made to the lunchtime

experience and children were getting more opportunities to play outdoors with a more proactive approach to risk assessment supporting safer play.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation July '23	Recent Evaluation
How good is our care, play and learning?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)
How good is our setting?	Weak (2)	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Weak (2)	Adequate (3)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)

The team at Copper Pots are happy that the work they have done to improve safety and environments has been recognised by inspectors. Although they had made some improvements to health care plans there is still a need to bring all the information together in a single plan which is easily accessible to all staff. Play environments have been improved however there is a need for staff to provide children with targeted challenge and support the extension and deepening of learning further.

This evaluation matches with the setting self-evaluation and the evaluation gradings discussed at the most recent Quality Improvement Visit locality leads in February 2024. The setting was in **Category 3** prior to inspection and will now move to **Category 2** of the Quality Improvement Framework. A copy of the action plan can be found at Appendix D.

A link to the full inspection can be found here.

3.14 **Flexible Childcare Services, Cummings Park**, is a funded provider setting located in the Cummings Park area of Aberdeen. The setting received an unannounced inspection over 2 days in April 2024. Care Inspectorate reported that staff were kind, warm, and nurturing in their approach with children. Staff knew the children and their families well, supported their individual needs, and acted on cues for comfort and reassurance.

Children led their own play through a well-balanced mix of activities, both indoors and outside. They commented that staff were passionate about their role and were keen to extend their professional development to further improve outcomes for children. The setting now have to ensure positive and nurturing mealtimes across the setting. Quality assurance, including effective audits and monitoring should now be embedded into practice.

Aspect being inspected	Previous evaluation September '23	Recent Evaluation April 2024
How good is our care, play and learning?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our setting?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our leadership?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)
How good is our staff team?	Adequate (3)	Good (4)

The management and staff team are pleased that their ongoing progress has been recognised and will continue to drive their improvement priorities. The setting will move to Category 2 level of support within the Quality Improvement Framework. The Locality Lead has been offering advice and support on a regular basis and will continue to work with the team as they embed quality assurance into practice.

The full report can be found here

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	Quality assurance arrangements in place to validate self-evaluation gradings	L	Yes

	will make the greatest difference to learners			
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

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices. Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.	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.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
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 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.
Regional and City Strategies	
Regional Cultural Strategy Prevention Strategy Children's Services Plan	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.

National Improvement Framework Plan	

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this Shona Milne , Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning .
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No DPIA is required.
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Quarryhill School action plan
Appendix B - Quarryhill ELC action plan
Appendix C - Kingsford ELC action plan
Appendix D - Copper Pots ELC action plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix A - Quarryhill School Action Plan - How Good is Our School?

- Develop high-quality learning and teaching, using topics which children find interesting. Teachers need to adopt a greater range of approaches to teaching, which motivate children more in their learning.
- Develop how teachers evaluate children's progress. Teachers need to use the information they gather to plan learning which provide all children with greater challenge.
- Raise attainment in literacy and numeracy across the school. This should include ensuring that targeted approaches to support children are successfully closing gaps in children's learning.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment - Weak

Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG
In most lessons, children are not motivated by their learning. Teachers need to **plan lessons, which interest children and engage** them more meaningfully in their learning, promoting their motivation to learn. Teachers should now develop their skills to use a range of creative teaching approaches to motivate and engage children in their learning more effectively. This should include making use of a wider range of learning environments. Children need greater opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups.	• SLT to encourage creativity when planning. Highlighting good examples during collegiate time/email circulation. • Stage/level planning, sharing ideas. • Whole school focus weeks (dates/themes to be decided). • Explore IDL headings (topic titles) in line with children's interests, use agreed bundled E&Os/progressions for each curricular area. • Further develop use of 'Big Questions' for IDL contexts. • SLT to track engagement levels using Glasgow Wellbeing Survey.	Lessons/areas of interest will increase learner engagement.	May '24 Ongoing Sept '24 May '24 Ongoing Aug '24	In-Service day input – positively received. Staff motivated to be creative in their teaching approaches.	🟩🟧🟧🟩🟧🟧
Teachers should continue with their plans to review their **classroom layouts** to provide motivating and enriching learning environments.	• Further develop use of CIRCLE framework. CTs to create clear plans for improvement. • SLT – learning walk focus.	Improved classroom environments will engage children better in their learning.	Sept '25 Sept '24	This is being led by the DHT and will be further embedded at the beginning of the 24/25 session.	🟧🟥

	• Peer classroom visits to evaluate environments, be a critical friend. • HWB group created to support improvements linked to CIRCLE. Action plan to be developed. Phase one – Hub, Rainbow Room, Library. Phase two – classrooms.		June '24		🟩
The **school's values** are not a prominent feature within the school. Staff need to review the school's values to represent the school's current context better.	• All stakeholders to be involved in audit and refresh of school's vision, values and aims. (Parent/carer, staff and learner focus groups/ questionnaires.) • Stakeholder involvement in creation of school mascot/motto aligned with V, V & A. • Create a video to showcase refreshed vision, values and aims.	Shared understanding of values will help to create a consistent understanding of expectations across the school.	Sept '24 August '24 Nov '24	Teaching and support staff input have been gathered. Phase 2 will involve Pupil Voice and the wider community input before going back to a small working group for draft write up (Phase 3).	🟧 🟥 🟥

Teachers are not yet implementing play-based approaches to learning in P1. Senior leaders need to support teachers, through appropriate professional learning, to develop their awareness and understanding of national guidance on **play pedagogy**.	• Early Level partnership working to be established with DHT Kingswells, PT Bramble Brae and DHT Westpark.
	  - Share/discuss relevant reading materials.
	  - Peer support to improve role of the adult/interactions, spaces and experiences.
	• P1 CTs co-plan, engage in professional learning (linked to DHT book group). Develop P1 environment.
	• Improve transition approaches with ELC.
		Staff will be able to support and extend children's learning through play.	March '24
			
			Aug '24
			
			June '24
				Group established.
				
				Dates set for improvement planning support sessions.
				
				Several sessions have already taken place and further visits have already been planned.
					🟩
					🟧
					🟩

Teachers spend too much time giving whole-class instructions. This leads to children becoming distracted	• SLT/CTs to develop and review approaches to planning to ensure learners are leading their own learning.	Teachers will plan more clearly for different groups of children within each class to ensure all children make	June ' 24	Progressions have now been developed for Numeracy, Literacy and IDL.	🟩

and **disengaging from their learning**. A few teachers plan learning at the right level of difficulty to support children to access their learning. Teachers need to continue to develop the use of **progression frameworks** when plan learning to meet the needs of all learners. Teachers need to develop lessons which offer increased **pace and challenge** in learning consistently across the school.	• SLT/CTs to develop and review their approaches to planning to ensure they plan children's learning progressively through the CfE levels. • CTs to agree weekly planning format. (Include assessment/evaluations.) • SLT/CTs to use quality assurance processes to ensure lessons are appropriately challenging. • Peer observations to be conducted (CT to create observation sheet to collate feedback/notes for improvement planning purposes). • Progression frameworks created Numeracy, Writing, Phonics and Reading. (Review and evaluate.)	greater progress in their learning.	June '24 April '24 Ongoing July '24 May '24	Many peer observations have already taken place and final observations taking place over the next two weeks. A comprehensive planning folder is in the final stages of development, having been reviewed by teaching staff and wider community. This will now be in place for the 24/25 session. It provides clear guidance, expectations and progressions for planning of learning and assessment.	🟩 🟩 🟧 🟧 🟩
Teachers need to give children the opportunity to **lead their own learning**, develop their independent learning skills choosing their own resources, including digital technologies, which will aid their learning.	• Further develop choice and autonomy across the school. (Assignments, projects, group work, goal setting - determine own path.) • SLT ensuring there is time allocated to sharing ideas/examples. • Learner involvement linked to IDL planning, use of Big Questions.	Learners will develop independent learning skills, leading their own learning with increased confidence.	Ongoing Ongoing Aug '24	Training during Inservice days around IDL planning has taken place. Led by QIO and DHT/PT. Stage planning of topics for Term 4 with a focus on creativity, enjoyment and how to engage learners in leading their learning.	🟧 🟧 🟧
Teachers need to develop further how they **explain to children what they are learning** and to help them identify how successful they have been.	• SLT to ensure there is clarity/consistency across the school regarding quality learning intentions and success criteria.	Children will be clear about the knowledge and skills they are developing or how they will know they have been successful.	June '24	Professional learning took place with ASG school during Inservice Day with a focus on developing effective LI/SC.	🟩

	Actions	Impact	Timescale	Progress/Comments	RAG
	• 'Quality LI/SC' CLPL sessions to be undertaken by all CTs. LI & SC PP.pptx • SLT to quality assure through learning walks/classroom observations. • Pupil focus group to be used to evaluate progress.	Children are supported more effectively to develop an understanding of their next steps in learning.	May ' 24 Ongoing Oct '24	Moderation of LI/SC took place in June 24 as part of collegiate time.	🟩 Green 🟧 Amber 🟥 Red
Teachers' use of **questioning** is predominantly limited to eliciting answers from children. They now need to develop how they use questions more effectively to promote children's curiosity and thinking skills.	• 'Effective Questioning' CLPL sessions to be undertaken by all CTs/PSAs. Higher Order Questioning & Thinking.pptx • SLT to quality assure through learning walks/classroom observations/planning evidence. • Question examples provided for Numeracy.	More skilled questioning techniques will promote children's curiosity and help children to reflect more on their learning.	Sept '24 Oct '24 April ' 24	Teachers have access to high-quality questioning and sentence stems as part of the numeracy progressions. CTs are encouraged to use these throughout lessons.	🟥 Red 🟥 Red 🟩 Green
Teachers should now develop how they use high-**quality feedback** to support children's learning across the school. This should include giving children increased opportunities to review their own, and their peers' work.	• Feedback CLPL sessions to be undertaken by all CTs/PSAs. • SLT to quality assure through learning walks/classroom observations. • Pupil focus group to be used to evaluate progress.	Learners will be able to identify next steps in their learning. Learners will receive consistently high quality verbal and written feedback.	Sept "24 Nov ' 24 Nov '24		🟥 Red 🟥 Red 🟥 Red
Teachers need to develop their use of **assessment data** further. Assessments needs to inform how staff plan learning, building more effectively on what children can already do. Teachers	• SLT to audit current assessment approaches. • CT/SLT sharing session to be undertaken. Share good practice/new examples for assessment/evidence gathering, across the	Consistent approaches evident regarding use of assessments to support teachers' professional judgements throughout the school.	June '24 Oct '24	CTs have been delivering CLPL 'Working Lunch' sessions for colleagues in the area of planning for Reading throughout term 3 and 4.	🟩 Green 🟥 Red
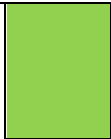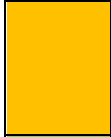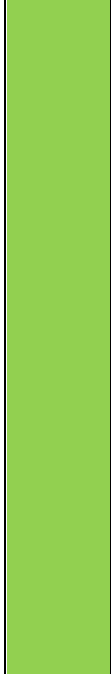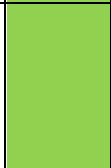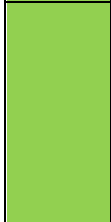
Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Stakeholders & timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG
need to develop approaches to assessment which provide robust information on children's progress in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers need to continue to develop their skills in analysing data gathered from tracking and monitoring activities.	curriculum. (Promote collaboration/learning from each other.) • SLT to continue to develop monitoring and tracking systems to support data analysis.		May '24, Nov '24, Feb '25.	Robust assessment and data practices have been developed and are being implemented. They now form part of the tracking meetings with CTs. More robust conversations have taken place with SLT linked to planning & assessment in order to meet individual learners' needs.	(orange)
SLT continue to gather **data linked to learner progress** and need to develop this further to support them to identify how well children facing additional challenges are progressing.	• HT to link in with Suzie Wood, Education Scotland Attainment Advisor. • HT to continue to engage in data discussions with QIO. • PT to ensure assessment processes and data used effectively when planning targeted support.	Progress for learners facing additional challenges will be tracked and monitored.	April '24 May '24, Nov '24, Feb '25 Aug '24	HT and DHT/PT have met with SW to review how PEF is used to better meet learners needs. PT has piloted a new SfL approach to meeting the needs of targeted children. The impact of this will be reviewed at the beginning of the next session. Feedback from CTs and initial phonics assessments indicate a positive impact.	(green) (orange) (orange)
Teachers are beginning to develop their skills in **moderating** children's work. Senior leaders should continue to support teachers to develop their understanding of **national standards**.	• SLT to provide opportunities for moderation across the school. (Stage/level planning, teaching and evaluating/assessing.) • SLT to provide opportunities for moderation with CTs from other settings. • Maths Moderation session to be undertaken. • Literacy Moderation session to be undertaken.	Improved understand regarding progression through Curriculum for Excellence levels.	Ongoing Ongoing May ' 24 Sept '24	Moderation in numeracy and literacy has already taken place in terms 3 and 4, led by subject leads. Further moderation by SLT will take place throughout the next session. Referring to the planning folder documentation for guidance and clarity.	(orange) (orange) (green) (green)

3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement - Weak

Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Stakeholders & timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG

Improve attainment in **Literacy and English**.	SLT/CTs to agree **expectations for teaching Literacy**, closely considering the following points:
	• Listening & Talking focus:
	  - Increase opportunities to share their learning with an audience, give presentations and lead group discussions.
	  - CTs to ensure skills ensure these skills are taught regularly and provide opportunities for children to apply their skills.
	• Reading focus:
	  - Increase use of inferential and evaluative questions.
	  - Focus required - adding more expression when reading aloud.
	  - Focus – reading for pleasure (visiting library, borrowing books, breadth of different texts).
	• Writing focus:
	  - Early level – focus on the letter formation. Increase opportunities to develop writing skills through play contexts.
	  - First & Second Level – increase opportunities to write at length/variety of purposes.
	  - Presentation and handwriting focus, across the school.
		The majority of children making greater progress from their prior levels of attainment in Literacy.	June' 24
			
			June ' 24
			
			June '24
				Expectations have been developed, agreed and now form part of the learning & teaching guidance and expectations.
				
				This has been shared with all teachers and is contained within the planning folders that each class teacher will work from next year.
				
				Quarryhill Planning Guidelines document has also been developed and reviewed by staff.	

Improve attainment in **Numeracy and Mathematics**.	SLT/CTs to agree expectations for teaching Numeracy, closely considering the following points.
	• Number, money and measurement.
	   ➢ Early Level:
	   - Support to develop their skills in recognition of coins to £2.
	   - Focus required - correct number formation.
	• First Level:
	   - Focus required - subtraction using exchange.
	• Second Level:
	   - Focus required - calculating percentages of a given quantity.
	All levels – opportunities to apply their learning in numeracy and mathematics in real-life and problem solving contexts.
	
	• Shape, position and movement.
	   - Support to identify acute, obtuse and straight angles.
	• Information handling.
	   - Children need more opportunities to present and interpret information using a variety of formats.
		The majority of children making greater progress from their prior levels of attainment in Numeracy.	Aug '24	Planning Guidelines document has been developed. Numeracy lead will break this down into numeracy specific points similar to literacy.	🟧

	• All children would benefit from using digital technology to display data in a variety of ways.		Oct '24		🟥

Senior leaders are at the early stages of gathering **robust data** and using this to **track attainment** in literacy and English, and numeracy and mathematics over time. Senior leaders need to **accelerate progress** in all curricular areas for most learners.	• SLT to audit current assessment approaches. • CT/SLT sharing session to be undertaken. Share good practice/new examples for assessment/evidence gathering, across the curriculum. (Promote collaboration/learning from each other.) • SLT to create a clear assessment calendar and system for tracking and monitoring accurate data.	CTs increased confidence in their use of a range of assessments, data, and moderation activities will ensure professional judgements are increasingly robust.	June '24 Sept '24 Sept '24	Robust assessment practices are now being embedded in the area of phonics, writing and numeracy. Attainment meetings with SLT refer to this data to ensure conversations are informed by data and how this is being used to meet individual learners needs. A whole school tracker is used by SLT to identify trends in numeracy and literacy. This will now inform how provision and support is targeted across the whole school. An assessment calendar has now been created that provides clarity around what CTs are expected to assess, what documentation is to be used and when assessments are to be carried out.	🟩 🟧 🟩
Staff need to **track the performance** of specific groups of children, such as by gender and those with barriers to learning. This will support further their understanding of children's progress over time and identify any gaps in children's learning which need to be addressed.	• Systems to be established to enable staff to monitor and report on the progress of learners (i.e. EAL/Care Experienced learners). • Focus on specific cohorts – May tracking meetings.	Staff are able to use assessment information effectively to accelerate children's progress.	May '24 May '24	Tracker for Care Experienced children has been implemented and used by staff. Whole school tracker is now being used by SLT to track specific cohorts and groups of children.	🟩 🟩

Senior leaders need to develop an overview of the progress individual children and cohorts are making, as a result of **targeted support**.	• SLT to establish a clear plan for ASL. • Clear guidance/expectations linked to internal system for requesting targeting support. • Tracking system to be established to monitor progress for learners receiving interventions/targeted support.	Teachers will have a clearer indication of the specific interventions which are having a positive impact on closing gaps in attainment over time.	June '24 Sept '24 June '24	PT has piloted a new approach to SfL this term with two members of staff dedicated to supporting targeted children based on assessment data. This is now being tracked and monitored for impact. An updated referral process for CTs to request support has been developed, supported by a flow chart outlining the supports available and their specific aim. Referrals are taken at the end of each term so that they are then in place for the beginning of the new term. HWB interventions are now being tracked using a Wellbeing survey as well as those accessing Resilience interventions using a RISE tracker. This is now being overseen by the DHT.	🟩🟩🟩
Senior leaders now need to provide further opportunities for more children to take on **leadership roles** within the school. Children need to be supported better to contribute more meaningfully to the life of the school and wider community.	• SLT/CTs to audit current opportunities for pupils to take on leadership opportunities. • Share ideas/agree plans to increase opportunities.	Leadership opportunities will enable learners to be included more fully in school improvement.	Aug '24 Sept '24	Pupil Council and Sports Leaders have been developed this term and will be expanded to other areas of responsibility in the next session.	🟧🟥
Children are not yet able to talk about the skills they are	• Tracking processes to be further developed linked to wider achievements.	Children will understand better the skills they are	Oct/Nov '24	A wider achievement process has been implemented and used	🟧

gaining from **wider achievements.**	• Staff to highlight skill development linked to participation in wider achievement activities. • SLT/CT to consider use of ACC Skills Framework. <u>ACC Skills Framework (sharepoint.com)</u>	developing and how these can be used in real-life contexts.	Oct/Nov '24 Oct/Nov '24	throughout term 4. It involves inviting children and parents to share wider achievements via the school newsletter, which is then celebrated during assemblies and on our Wider achievement board in our school foyer.	RED
Senior leaders are not yet able to identify how well PEF is accelerating closing the **poverty related attainment gap**.	• SLT to evaluate the impact of interventions on the attainment of individuals and cohorts of children. • Further develop use of Pupil Equity planner. • HT to link in with Suzie Wood, Education Scotland Attainment Advisor.	SLT will be able to measure the effectiveness of their interventions in closing the poverty related attainment gap.	June '24 Ongoing Ongoing	Assessment practices have been adapted and now form part of the referral and evaluation process of our SfL and HWB resource. This is done through the whole school tracker, Wellbeing Assessment, RISE assessment, subject specific assessment data and the updated attainment review process. The DHT/PT has met with Attainment Advisor to develop the PEF planner and further meetings are planned.	GREEN / AMBER

	Completed		Due for completion by end of 23/24		Planned for session 23/25

Quarryhill ELC Action Plan - How Good is Our Early Learning & Childcare?

<div style="background-color: #fdfdc8">

Practitioners should build on their very recent, positive start to improving approaches to learning and teaching in the nursery. This will ensure experiences engage, motivate and challenge all learners appropriately.

</div>

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment - Weak

Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG
Staff need to improve a **few spaces** to sustain children's play for longer periods of time. All children would benefit from increased opportunities to **apply their skills,** test out their ideas and explore their interests in more depth.	• SEYP/PT/LL to observe/support practitioners with a specific focus linked to Realising the Ambition. (Interactions, experiences and spaces.) • Practitioners - use national practice guidance to increase further their knowledge and understanding of the role of the adult to support children's learning. • Practitioners to participate in LL training offer linked to quality interactions. (Group reflection tasks.)	More opportunities for children to deepen and extend their learning.	June '24	Training currently being delivered by locality lead for all nursery staff. The locality lead is supporting observations before the end of the 23/24 session.	
Further develop new **planning** approaches. Practitioners should ensure what they know about children's achievements is used to influence their planning for individual children.	• PT/SEYP - create a shared vision/guidance material illustrating ELC/Quarryhill planning systems (intentional, responsive and personal planning). • ELC team to further develop their knowledge and understanding of the ACC Early Level Progression Pathways. • QIO/LL support visits to be offered while developing planning processes.	Responsive and planned learning will support children to build on and develop further their skills. Practitioners will confidently facilitate both intentional and responsive learning opportunities that offer support and challenge.	June '24 Ongoing April '24	New planning documentation/approaches being developed. The development of shared vision and guidance is currently being developed.	

Ensure **clear strategies** that practitioners implement in nursery and parents use at home are documented for all learners. DHT/SEYP should develop processes to **track and monitor** the progress of children with **additional needs** more effectively.	• All Personal Plans to be updated to include a clear support strategies section. Record keeping linked to Personal Planning to be accurate and kept up to date. • Practitioners - use national practice guidance to increase further their knowledge and understanding of the role of the adult to support children's learning. • Updated tracking system to be developed. • Tracking system implemented. • SEYP/DHT/PT to track and monitor progress of learners with additional needs.	Personal plans are used effectively to meet learners needs. Learners strengths and areas for development are clearly tracked and monitored. Tracking systems inform planning.	Ongoing Ongoing June ' 24 Aug '24 June '24		
Most practitioners do not yet **consistently record** children's significant learning and the skills children need to develop next. Records of learning do not always accurately reflect children's progress over time. The quality, and use of staff's **observations** and identification of next steps needs to improve.	• Peer monitoring (within setting/other settings). • LL to lead training linked to quality observations. • Progression pathways to be used consistently to create meaningful next steps. DHT/SEYP to quality assure.	Children's next steps in learning will better influence the planning of spaces, experiences and interactions. Practitioners will identify clear, appropriate and meaningful next steps for all children.	Aug ' 24 May' 24 Ongoing	Visits to other setting have taken place and there are more planned for term of 24/25.	
DHT/SEYP to provide more opportunities for **moderation** within the school and across the local learning community.	• Early Level partnership working to be established with DHT Kingswells, PT Bramble Brae and DHT Quarryhill. - Share/discuss relevant reading materials.	Increased understanding of national/local standards across Early Level.	March '24	Group established. Dates set for improvement planning support sessions. Several have already taken place.	

| | Peer support to improve interactions, spaces and experiences. | | | | |

3.2 Securing children's progress – Satisfactory

Areas for Improvement	Actions Required	Desired Outcomes for Learners	Stakeholders & timescales	Evidence and confirmed completion	RAG
All children would benefit from increased opportunities to **mark make** for a purpose.	- Practitioners to offer opportunities for learners to re-tell stories using resources and materials and to create and share their own books and stories. - Ensure environmental print is meaningful. - Outdoor environment provides opportunities to mark make. - Indoor environment ensures there are a variety of different opportunities to mark make. - Audit tools to be used by all staff to ensure we are offering a Literacy rich environment.	Children will have more opportunities to regularly write for a purpose. Increased confidence when mark making.	Ongoing August '24 Ongoing Ongoing June '24	 Staff exploring appropriate audit tools.	Amber
A clear system to track children's **progress over time** needs to be further developed.	- Tracking and monitoring system to be established. Link to both developmental overviews and E&O benchmarks. - Ensure termly data discussions are undertaken with SLT (Nov, Feb, May). - SEYP/PT to use data to inform planning.	Shared understanding of tracking system, and increased staff confidence levels linked to achievement of a level, will improve forward planning for individuals and cohorts.	Aug '24 Nov, Feb. May Ongoing	May tracking period has involved professional dialogue around the achievement of a level.	Red / Amber

	• DHT to analyse data to identify trends/areas for improvement.		Nov '24		🟥
Most children would benefit from a wider range of more challenging **numeracy and mathematics** experiences through play and real-life contexts.	• Continue to evaluate how effective and relevant experiences/spaces are in encouraging choice, curiosity, creativity and critical thinking.	Learners will benefit from a Numeracy rich environment.	Ongoing		🟧
	• Consider/evaluate as a team what numeracy looks like throughout ELC setting (inside & out).		Ongoing		🟧
	• Visit other settings to observe, consider spaces/use of resources.		July '24	Several visits have already taken place and further visits planned.	🟩
	• Develop context areas guide for all practitioners. ('What kind of learning could you see in this area?')		Oct '24		🟥
All children would benefit from continued use of the **language of wellbeing** to help them express and understand how they feel.	• Relationships Policy ensures a shared understanding of techniques/approaches to support learners to manage their emotions.	Children will express how they feel with increased confidence.	June ' 24	SLT to review relationships policy to ensure it meets the needs of the ELC setting and its learners.	🟧
	• Increased opportunities/use of stories/activities linked to emotions/feelings.		Ongoing		🟧
	• Focus - strategies to support practitioners linked to Emotion Coaching approaches.	Staff to complete the Emotion Coaching training provided by ACC.	Dec '24		🟥
Most children are ready for increased **leadership opportunities** across their nursery experiences.	• Practitioners to audit current opportunities for learners to take on leadership opportunities.	Learners will further develop confidence from increased leadership opportunities.	Aug '24		🟥
	• Share ideas/agree plans to increase opportunities.				

Senior leaders should develop the skills and confidence of the team in how to develop further and **measure and the impact** of accessing **practical support** has on children's progress.	• SEYP/DHT to audit confidence levels with all staff re: supports available/agency involvement. • Focused discussions linked to measuring impact (AO/PEEP/HV/SaLT).	Clearer system in place linked to measuring the impact of supports/other agency involvement.	Aug '24 Aug '24		■

	Completed		Due for completion by end of 23/24		Planned for session 24/25

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Appendix C – Kingsford ELC – Reviewed June 2024					RAG
Improvement Outcomes **What do we hope to achieve?**	Measures of Success **How will we know this has been achieved?** *What evidence will we have?*	Actions Required **What do we need to do?**	Timescales	Resources **Who and what is required?** **(including cost/fund)**	
Children are healthy, cared for and receiving meals.	Mealtimes are effectively planned and carried out to meet health and wellbeing needs of children	• Mealtimes to be served within each play space with designated staff serving and supporting in line with rota. • Mealtime guidance note to be updated and shared with all ELC staff • Continual evaluation of everyday practice of mealtimes and adapting practice through daily dialogue between staff members	October 2023 October 2023 Ongoing	All ELC Staff DHT All ELC staff	
Ensure all children are safe within the environment and accounted for at all times	All staff will have a shared understanding of safety policy and procedures and can communicate and respond effectively to follow through on these.	• Person-centred risk assessments created for individual children and accessible to all staff as required • Daily risk assessment to be completed in line with daily staff rota • All staff to be aware of individual children's needs with personal plans being updated as and when appropriate as well as through termly review	August 2023 Ongoing review August 2023 Ongoing review	SEYPs All staff All staff	

High quality self-evaluation that leads to change and improvement	All staff to be engaged in self-evaluation activities throughout the year and understand the strengths of the setting and areas for improvement	• Fully implement Quality Assurance calendar within the setting to embed self-evaluation practices.	August 2024	DHT / SEYPs	
		• Monthly focus on QI through the use of challenge questions to highlight quality practice	August 2024	All staff	
		• Consultation with all stakeholders to review key policies, linking in with focus QI	August 2024	DHT / SEYPs	
		• Review current vision, values and aims through engagement with children, staff and parents	October 2023	All staff	
		• Create updated vision, values and aims that are relevant to the Nursery linked to whole school work	November 2023	All staff	
High quality experiences and interactions	Adult-child interactions will lead to a more positive learning experience	• Further develop the 'buddy system' to give practitioners areas of responsibility within Literacy Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing to ensure challenge across the provision	August 2024	All staff	
		• Gap/strength analysis to be fully utilised to support environment audits ensuring that it is enabling and constantly evolving according to needs and development of skills	August 2024	All staff	
		• All staff to access CIRCLE training to support understanding of environment and the impact on children's learning	November 2023	All staff	
			August 2024		

		• Termly focused learning walks and QA visits to evaluate impact of training on practice within the setting based on Realising the Ambition with initial feedback to SEYPs	Ongoing	SLT / Locality Leads / QIO QIM SEYPs/DHT	🟩
		• Senior staff to continue to direct and support to ensure high quality provision for all learners	Ongoing	SEYPs	🟩
		• Staff to be supported to involve themselves in play to extend and personlise learning and to embed training in practice			
Increased parental engagement	Parents will be actively involved and included in their child's learning journey and with the life and work of the Nursery	• Consistent use of rotas to ensure more informed dialogue between staff and families during handover regarding learning and care experience during the session	Ongoing	All staff	🟩
		• A nursery specific newsletter / weekly update to be developed to highlight key learning experiences that children have been involved in	August 2024	SEYPs	🟧
		• Steering group to be established to meet termly to support consultation, policy creation, review and refresh	August 2024	DHT	🟧
		• Stay and play sessions to be embedded termly as a feature of parental engagement	December 2023	SEYPs	🟩
		• Key workers to ensure Focus Chlid approach is followed through to conclusion, including consultation with parents during the process using non-class contact time to support with this	November 2023	All staff	🟩
		• Regular review and update of learning journey board and ebook which will then be highlighted to parents to demonstrate improvements and developments within the setting	Ongoing	All Staff	🟧
		• Refreshed Vision, Values and Aims to be shared with parents through regular weekly communication	November 2023	DHT	🟩

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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					
To ensure children health needs are supported, the manager should improve health support plans. This should include ensuring health support plans are fully detailed and up to date.	The manager has already addressed children health care plans. Manager have introduced a new sheet form Aberdeen city council to develop and to improve health care plans to ensure health support plans are fully detailed and up to date. Staff to work proactive with children and their families for the Health Care Plans to be consistent ad effective by all staff to ensure positive outcomes. All health care plans and individual care plans to reviewed with parents by having a 15-minute meeting over a phone call or face to face. All staff have a clear understanding of their role and responsibility relating to keeping children safe and protected. The manager and deputy manager will check to ensure all the health care planed and medications signed and UpToDate at the end of the night. All information needed for children's health care requirements are to now be kept in one place, ensuring all staff have quick access, should they need too.	Manager Deputy manager	Reduce of risk of medical incidents and will improve possible failure to administer medication. This will help reduce risk of harm to children through effective monitoring of daily practice by observing staff practice. To ensure children's health needs are met in a quick and effective manner	Review meeting with families every 28 days by having a 15-minute meeting face to face or over the telephone. Continue to further develop monthly observation and audits. Manager made a new auditing system that she will share the load with a deputy manager and senior. Manager will introduce a monthly meeting with the provider, deputy manager, supervisor and senior.	
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 and extend and deepen children's learning further.	The manager has resource numeracy and literacy training that all staff have attended. The manager will look into some courses for all the staff to attend to extend their knowledge and skills to provide more challenging experiences and opportunities for the children. Staff to set up provocation to develop children's skills in language, literacy, and numeracy. Manager will arrange a training for all the staff to refresh a child development course to use his to support high quality of play and learning experiences. Continue to monitor the use of children independence choices about leading their play and learning within stimulating, challenging and creative setting. Manager will be doing an observation training in July to ensure that staff writes high quality observations and skilled interaction to extend children's thinking, widen their skills and consistency through their learning through play. The Manager and provider will resource relevant Numeracy and Literacy development training and how to implement this is the dally nursery day. Management will support the	Manager, Deputy manager, All staff Ongoing – 6 months	To extended children learning so they can confidently and successfully meet their milestones. Ensure children have receives high quality observations and skilled interactions to extend children's thinking, widen their skills and consistency through their learning through play.	Numeracy – 3rd of June 2024 Literacy – June/July Observation – July Manager is looking into face-to-face training for all the staff to undertake of all those highlighted areas. Child development refresher – July This will be evidence through weekly/fortnight planning and monthly observation and children's individual trackers. Continue to monitor interaction between staff and children	

	team to implement this and source additional resources, if neededWe will also continue to observe our team and environment to ensure the children in our care are receiving a quality education and achieving desired milestone and curriculum areas.				

How good is our setting? 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities

To support high levels of infection prevention and control the provider should develop a plan, complete with timescale to ensure that children's personal care practices are consistent with the Care Inspectorate document "Nappy Changing for early learning and childcare settings (exclude childminders)	The provider will develop a plan with a sensible timescale to ensure children's personal care practices are consistence with the care Inspectorate document. All the walls to be covered in wettable walls.	Provider Manager Ongoing – 6 months	To provide hygienic environment for the children to comply with care Inspectorate document. To provide the children with a warm, comfortable, and easily cleaned nappy change area. In line with up-to-date Care inspectorate guidance "Nappy Changing for early learning and childcare settings (exclude childminders).	Infection prevention and control will be monitored closely by quality assurance practice using daily/weekly/monthly audits. The provider will install the wet walls all over the changing rooms. The manager will assign for all staff to refresh their infection prevention and control to confidently ensure a high-quality safe environment for themselves and children in the setting.	

How good is our leadership? - 3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well

To support positive and improved outcomes for children and families, the provider should develop quality assurance system, including self-evaluation and improvement plans and ensure that they lead to continuous improvement.	*Manager will develop further self-evaluation system by evaluation staff practices, monitoring and developing further nursery policies and procedures, auditing rooms paperwork and manager paperwork. The manager will work on to continue to develop further the quality assurance system and be consistent. The manager will introduce a system where success and achievements are shared with children, families are used as a starting point for further improvements. The manager will develop further staff weekly reflections to reflect together and use these reflections to bring about positive changes to outcomes for children and our families.*	Manager Deputy Manager Ongoing – 6 months	To ensure that all standards of care and learning is always met. The manager will develop quality self-evaluation further to deliver high quality care and support tailored towards children and families' particular needs and choices. To ensure our setting is achieving positive outcomes for all our children, families and staff, to achieve high standards and	Manager have spoken on the staff meeting (11.06.2024) to make sure that when staff is filling out weekly staff reflection to put more details and to extend their answer so we can develop it further and offer more specific support.	

		continually develop our setting		

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Approaches to Quality Improvement
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/195
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report details how Aberdeen City schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings will be supported to improve performance against the Core Quality Indicators used by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIe) and The Care Inspectorate.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee:-

2.1 notes the content of this report;

2.2 instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to immediately implement the approach detailed in the Aberdeen City Council Early Learning and Childcare Quality Improvement Framework;

2.3 instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to implement the approach detailed in the Aberdeen City Council Quality Improvement Framework across all schools from August 2024; and

2.4 instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to review the impact of arrangements on evaluations of core Quality Indicators over school session 2024/5, amending approaches as required, and report back to Committee with any proposed changes to arrangements in advance of the 2025/6 school session.

3. **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1 The Quality Improvement Frameworks (QIF) established for the 2023/24 school session were put in place to help drive improvement across all sectors (ELC, primary and secondary). The frameworks have provided a helpful scaffold to support central officers and head teachers to deliver more proportionate quality improvement support.

3.2   The impact of the QIF on inspection outcomes for each sector (ELC, primary and secondary) and on positive movement up the categories of support has been reviewed to inform the design of frameworks for the 2024/25 academic session.

3.3   **Early Learning and Childcare**
Early Learning and Childcare is currently assessed against two inspection frameworks, HMIE inspect against How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare with the Care Inspectorate inspecting against the Health and Social Care Standards. Work continues nationally to develop one combined framework and this development is welcomed and will go some way to addressing uncertainty around expectations. As a result of the two inspection frameworks, the themes from the inspection activity of each agency differs.

3.4   Over the last year, HMIe reports into ELC provision have highlighted a need to continue to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. In some cases, reports are also highlighting a need to strengthen the leadership of change which relies on all staff having a very clear understanding of their role in driving improvement and working together to realise a common purpose.

3.5   As a result of these vulnerabilities, a programme of mandatory professional learning was developed and ran from August to December 2023. The training brought together managers and seniors, reinforcing roles and responsibilities. A learning festival also ran for all practitioners on the February Inservice day bringing staff from both local authority and funded providers together to hear key messages. The learning festival was also shaped by the insight gleaned from the Collaborative Improvement Visit earlier this year. Training will continue to be offered to managers next session to further develop practice in these two areas.

3.6   Care Inspectorate reports have moved to a mix of risk based and routine inspections, this can make it harder to elicit a balanced view of performance against the Health and Social Care Standards. Areas for improvement identified both locally and nationally include personal planning, self-evaluation and safe environments. Bespoke support is offered to settings based on the recommendations received and key themes are used to design the training programme for practitioners.

3.7   The 6 ELC Locality Leads support approximately 200 ELC settings (including childminders). The team regularly visit settings to offer support and guidance to ensure improvement. Regular meetings with the schools quality improvement team allows Locality Leads to share intelligence and ensure all messaging from the central team is aligned. This way of working has resulted in an incremental improvement in gradings from care inspectorate.

	Quality of Care		Quality of Environment		Quality of staff		Quality of Management and Leadership	
	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24	22/23	23/24
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Very Good	4	5	5	5	6	5	3	4
Good	2	1	2	2	0	0	2	1
Adequate	1	3	1	3	2	3	1	3
Weak	3	1	2	0	2	1	3	1
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average Gradings	3.7	4.0	4	4.2	4	4.2	3.8	4.1

3.8 The average gradings have increased for all QIs. The increase in average grading for Quality of Leadership and Management suggests that the additional professional learning in this area has had impact. The number of weak gradings has decreased across all QIs, this suggests that the support being provided to Category 3 settings is realising improvement and should be maintained. Quality of care combines gradings from care, and play and learning. Individual grades, shared at feedback but not published, evidence the quality of play and learning requires to be improved in order to increase the overall grade for Quality of Care.

3.9 Some recent Care Inspectorate inspection outcomes are exceptionally positive. Leaders from high performing ELC settings have welcomed staff from settings with less positive evaluations to help exemplify standards further and they have also been used as part of tactical teams to support others through modelling. Opportunities to share and support will continue to be developed. It is thought that further gains will be made against both our Local Government Family Group and national averages when published later in the year.

CHN18 - Proportion of funded early years provision which is graded good/better
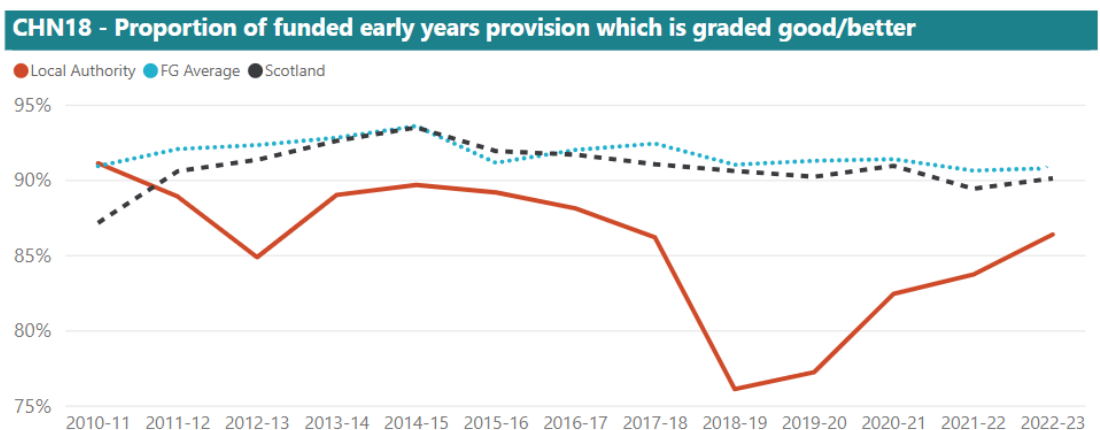
3.10 Support offered to Category 3 ELC settings has enabled 50% of Category 3 settings to move to at least Category 2 in the last 12 months. As a result of the changes witnessed over the last academic year, the ELC Quality Improvement Framework will remain largely unchanged. The associated Quality Improvement Calendar has been slightly amended to reflect an increased focus

professional learning to build capacity around play and learning. Focussing on this area should realise improvement in Quality of Care and the quality of HMIe gradings in Learning, Teaching and Assessment. Appendix A contains the proposed ELC Quality Improvement Framework for 2024/5. The Framework will require to be further updated when the joint inspection framework is published.

3.11 **Primary Schools**
Primary schools are assessed by HMIe against How Good is Our School (4). There are two types of inspection model. The short inspection model which involves a team visiting the school for 2 days and focusing on Quality Indicator(QI) 2.3 (Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment) and 3.2 (Raising Attainment and Achievement) and the full inspection model where the team are in school for 5 days and cover all 5 quality indicators.

3.12 The Framework has guided a far more proportionate approach to quality improvement, however, capacity issues have impacted on the consistency of application across localities. Currently, 2 members of the team have responsibility for each of the 3 localities (Dee, Don and West). Vacant Head Teacher posts often have to be covered by the locality team and this can reduce central team capacity, vacancies in the central team and a high volume of inspections to prepare for can further impact on the team's ability to fully deliver against the framework. These challenges had a disproportionate impact on one locality and this has triggered a review of the working arrangements. Consideration has also been given to how to further prioritise those who most need support to improve.

3.13 The service will move to a model where officers spend more time working across localities to ensure consistency. It is thought that this more holistic approach will better enable the team to support primary schools through the range of activity outlined in the Quality Improvement Framework.

3.14 The professional learning offer has been reviewed to be more focussed on the areas of vulnerability identified through quality improvement visits and inspections. There is a need to focus on the leadership of change, planning, curriculum and learning, teaching and assessment next session. In addition to this, there is a commitment to focus on supporting relationships through the agreed Behaviour Action Plan and associated actions have been added to the framework for 2024/25.

3.15 The primary Quality Improvement Team of 3 Quality Improvement Managers and 3 Quality Improvement Officers carried out 55 full quality improvement visits in primary schools this session. All 48 primary headteachers have been part of the evaluation team in at least one other school and almost all DHTs have had the opportunity to participate in a visit, increasing the capacity of our middle leaders. In addition to this, each primary school has received 3 formal data discussions providing support and challenge around attainment. Some schools will have received very regular contact to check progress against actions for improvement depending upon their classification of need, with mechanisms in place to check that agreed actions are completed timeously. Taking this approach has realised positive movement in inspection outcomes.

Primary HMIe	Leadership of Change			Learning Teaching and Assessment			Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion			Raising attainment and achievement		
Gradings	18/19	22/23	23/24	18/19	22/23	23/24	18/19	22/23	23/24	18/19	22/23	23/24
Excellent												
Very Good		1			1			1	1		1	
Good		1	1		2	3			1		2	3
Satisfactory			1	4	2	2		1		3	1	2
Weak	3				0	1	3			1	1	1
Unsatisfactory												
Average	2	4.5	3.5	3	3.8	3.8	2	4	4.5	2.75	3.6	3.8

3.16 It is worth noting that the sample size is small and looking at this data in isolation doesn't give a complete overview. However, in the last 12 months there is evidence of improvement in QI 3.1 (Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion) and QI 3.2 (Raising attainment and achievement). The increase in raising attainment and achievement could indicate that training in data literacy and accountability is beginning to have impact. If we look at the pre-pandemic baseline, there is a significant positive shift across all core QIs, however there are still some schools who require support to achieve gradings of good or better and this has to be prioritised.

3.17 6 schools have moved up a category of support over the year. 9 Primary schools are now in Category 1 (2 more than in June 2023) and able to contribute to the self-improving system. Schools across the West Locality are not making as much positive progress as those in the other two localities and as a result, 9 schools remain in Category 3 (compared to 10 in June 2023). Working city wide will allow resource and expertise to be better targeted to support category 3 schools across the city. It is thought that there is sufficient evidence of improvement across the 2 localities less impacted by reduced capacity to demonstrate that the more proportionate approach to supporting schools is beginning to realise improvements. Schools and central staff evaluations continue to align leading to agreement on the support category the school requires to be in to make required improvements. Appendix B provides an overview of the categories in place for schools for the start of the 2024/5 academic session.

3.18 The Quality Improvement Framework for 2024/25 will be complemented by a professional learning programme focussed on:
- Planning
- Curriculum
- Learning teaching and assessment
- Relationships and actions from the behaviour plan

3.19 Quality Improvement visits will continue to be supported by Trios of Head Teachers and this will be widened out to include other senior leaders in schools to help build capacity in our Deputy Head Teachers and Principal Teachers in keeping with our approach of growing the Head Teachers of the future . Schools

have been in the same Trios for 4 years now and some HTs have expressed a desire to change Trios in order to expand opportunities to share practice. The membership of Trios will be reviewed at the start of session 24/25. There is a need to ensure that the Trios offer further challenge.

3.20 The Quality Improvement Framework (Appendix C) has been amended to reflect changes to working practices as outlined in paragraphs 3.11 and 3.12, more intensive contact with schools not yet achieving evaluations of good or better and the agreed Behaviour Plan.

3.21 **Secondary Schools**
There continues to be variability across secondary schools with some schools performing at the highest levels and being sector leading in some areas, whilst a small number require considerable on-going support through support at Category 3. This wide range requires us to think quite differently about how we use the expertise available to us in our schools to support improvement across all schools, including for example through the establishment of Tactical Teams, supports from other Local Authority schools, access to high quality mentors or supports in particular areas from national agencies.

3.22 The Quality Improvement Manager for secondary and two Quality Improvement Officers have worked in collaboration with other senior Officers and Secondary Head Teachers to test a range of support mechanisms based on the individual circumstances of the schools. These bespoke arrangements are only required where a school self-evaluates as requiring support in Category 2 or 3 (see Appendix B). The kind of support required can change over time, possibly best exemplified by how the role of the Northfield Tactical Team has changed over the last year.

3.23 During session 23/24 the secondary team undertook 11 Quality Improvement visits. 6 visits focussed on (QI 2.3) Learning, Teaching and Assessment, 1 focussed on QI2.3 and QI3.1 and the remaining 4 provided detailed feedback on all Quality Indicators. Over the course of the visits, teams visited a total of 438 classes and schools were left with a clear set of next steps to progress.

3.24 Each of the visits had a team comprising central team and senior leaders from schools. 9 of our secondary HTs and 31 DHTs have been part of a team visiting another school in the city over session 23/24. The model provides valuable professional development for team members and has been received positively by schools and staff involved in the visits.

3.25 50% more secondary schools are now classified as being Category 1 (four in total now compared to only two in June 2023), with 4 more making good progress with the supports available at Category 2. The remaining schools (3) remain in Category 3 and continue to receive bespoke support aligned to their particular circumstances. There is very clear evidence that Category 3 schools make most progress when school leaders fully drive improvement at school level.

3.26 There is emerging evidence of the impact of involving members of school senior leadership teams in quality improvement activities beyond their own schools. Widening the visit team to include a wide cross section of senior leaders not

only benefits the school being visited but also the individual team members and their home school. This approach also ensures a shared understanding of what high quality looks like building capacity across our schools.

3.27 Secondary schools and the central team introduced a programme of professional learning during session 2023-24. The central team delivered professional learning in:

- Curriculum Rationale (Sep 2023)
- Pathway Planning (Sep 2023)
- ABZ Campus (Jan 2024)
- Timetabling (Dec 2023)
- Attainment (Statistical Summary Report & INSIGHT) - Various Across Year (e.g. Sep 2023, May 2024)
- Timetabling Software (Mar 2024)
- Tracking & Monitoring (HT Input) (Feb 2024)
- Attendance (HT Input) (Feb 2024)

3.28 The timetabling course received positive feedback and we are exploring how this can be offered to neighbouring authorities as all other courses are centrally based. Professional learning inputs for session 24/25 will cover each of the core quality indicators set out by Education Scotland.

3.29 **Quality Improvement Framework for 2024/25**
Having reached out to a high performing local authority and comparing Quality Improvement Frameworks, our processes and procedures are similar. As a result, only small changes have been made in advance of the new school session and these are highlighted in red in Appendix C. These include:
- changes to the range of evidence gathered and the information reviewed during visits to reflect the agreed Behaviour Plan
- changed city wide primary working arrangements
- more intensive arrangements for those who are yet to evaluate as good or better by providing minimal levels of support for those in Category 1

3.30 In order to address vulnerabilities around QI1.3 (Leadership of Change), the team are developing a Headteacher Induction programme which consists of a 4 day programme providing introductions to key policies, procedures and personnel. In addition to this there will be a buddy system to provide new headteachers with a mentor.

3.31 The work led by the Executive Director of Families and Communities, in her capacity as Lead of the Northern Alliance, has led to the appointment of officers from each of the 8 northern local authorities to develop a learning and teaching toolkit. This will help increase capacity to support this important area.

3.32 Many other Local Authorities have areas of vulnerability similar to those identified in Aberdeen. We have begun discussions with other local authority colleagues to discuss how we might work more closely together to secure improvement with an initial focus on sharing the approaches to preparing schools for inspection given that the volume of inspections being experienced

hampers general quality assurance and improvement work as resource is redirected to support schools.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   The recommendations in this Report will assist the Authority to fulfil its duty under the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 to endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education which is provided in the schools managed by the Authority; and to exercise its functions in relation to such provision with a view to raising standards of education.

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

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices. Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.	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.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
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 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.
Regional and City Strategies Regional Cultural Strategy Prevention Strategy Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	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.

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	I confirm an impact assessment is not required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11.   APPENDICES
Appendix A – ELC Quality Improvement Framework
Appendix B – School Support Categories
Appendix C – Quality Improvement Framework for schools

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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QUALITY FRAMEWORK PACKAGE - ACC Early Years

ELC

Communication
Creativity
Curiosity
Play
Well-being
Inquiry
Pedagogy
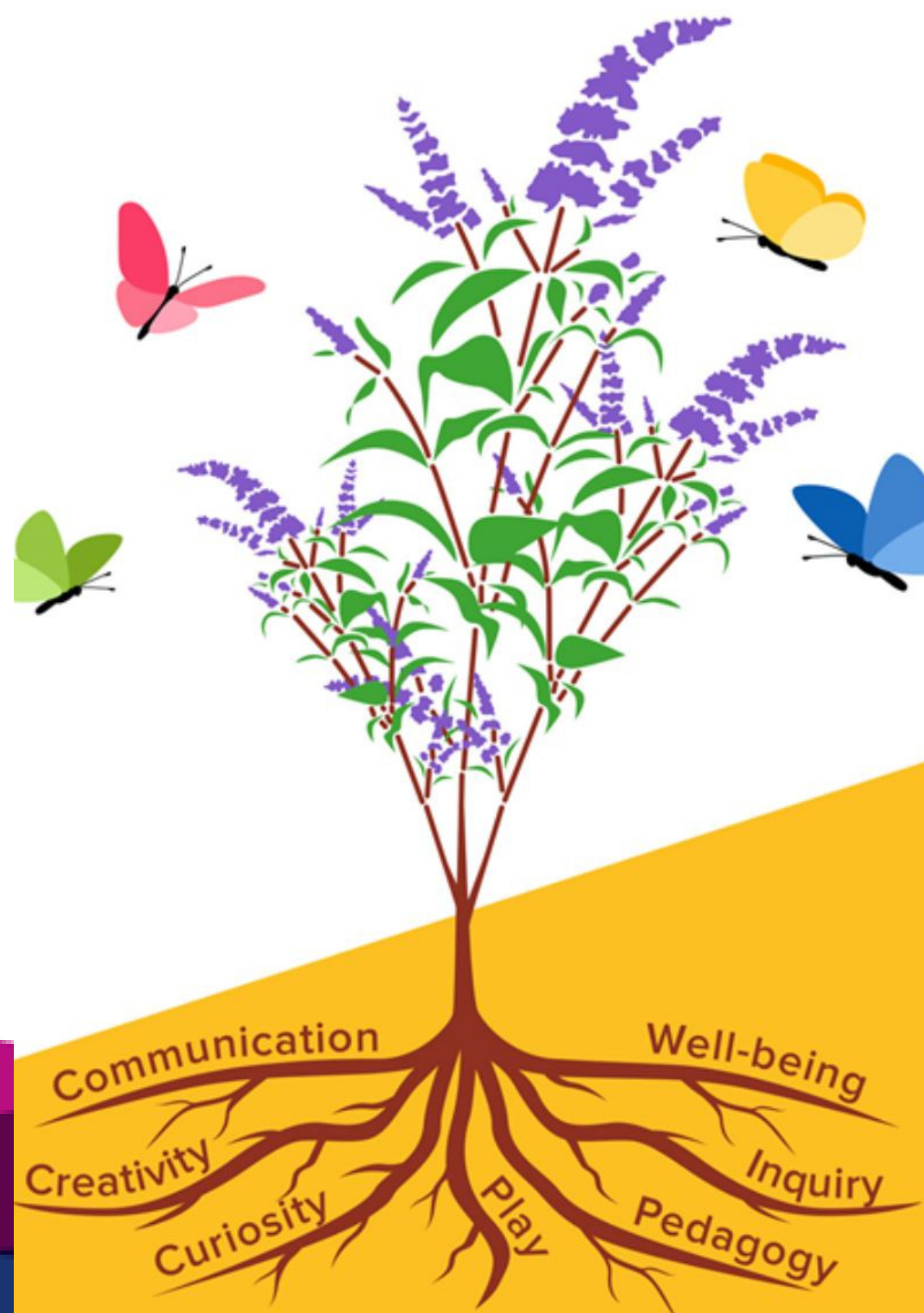
Introduction

Self-evaluation for self-improvement is a key feature of improving the Early Years sector. Self-evaluation is at the heart of everything that settings do and should focus on the quality of provision, in relation to the key guidance and quality frameworks promoted nationally.

The current key guidance and frameworks promoted across Scotland in ELC and Education are as follows;

Realising the Ambition - Education Scotland

How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare - Education Scotland

Quality Framework - Care Inspectorate

Health and Social Care Standards - Scottish Government

The National Standard - Scottish Government

To support settings to become more familiar in the use of these key documents, the Early Learning and Childcare Team has developed a framework informed by the Curriculum for Excellence Refreshed Narrative (for further info please see https://scotlandscurriculum.scot/) and the key documents highlighted above.

This framework will:

- Outline the protocols which inform our quality improvement visits for each Early Years setting in Aberdeen

- Describe the criteria which will determine the agreed level of support provided by the Early Learning and Childcare Team, to ensure settings receive the support required for continuous improvement

- Detail the format of the Quality Improvement visits

- Support settings with self-evaluation for self-improvement through using audit materials, which will help identify priorities for improvement

- Support settings with the process of creating and implementing action plans for improvement

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Quality Assurance Support Visits

During visits, the Early Learning and Childcare Team will meet with the Manager of the setting, along with other key members of staff.

A 'learning discussion', informed by the four 'contexts' (Opportunities for Personal Achievement, Inter-disciplinary Learning, Ethos and Life of the School as a Community and Curriculum Areas and Subjects) will take place to focus on how the setting meets the needs of individual children and their families. We will also look for a 'Golden Thread' of learning running through the whole process and the links with key documents. This will enable the Early Learning and Childcare Team to highlight current priorities with Managers and to work with teams to ensure priorities are taken forward within each setting.

Visits and discussions will explore:

• Planning process

• The Manager providing evidence of the planning process e.g. floor books, learning walls etc.

• Planning for progression in Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy

• Evidence of planning for improvement

• Evaluation of effectiveness of team meetings

• Effectiveness of tracking and monitoring strategies

• Evidence of engagement with the key documents and frameworks used nationally

• The learning spaces

• The quality of adult/child interactions

• The quality of children's experiences

• The impact of CLPL on outcomes for children

Levels of Support

The level of support given to the setting will be determined by both the service's inspection grades and the criteria below, following the outcome of QA support visits.

Please ensure that, as per your contractual agreement, you notify your ELC Locality Lead Officer of any inspections, incidents and/or complaints, to ensure we deliver the most appropriate level of support.

UNIVERSAL

High quality provision

Stable staff team

Good inspections

Clear vision

Reflective practitioners

Positive ethos

Enabling environment

High quality staff interactions

Learning identified

Engaged children – Leuven Scale

Improvement plan having an impact

- Assigned ELC Locality Lead Officer
- 3 Quality Assurance Support Visits Annually
- Access to CLPL offer throughout the year
- Tailored input from ELC Locality Lead Officer

TARGETED

Staff changes

Adequate inspections

Quality inconsistent/not maintained

Environment – additional support required to challenge/support learning

Inconsistent quality of staff interactions

Variable levels of child engagement

Variable levels of child-initiated learning

IIn addition to the universal offer:

A programme of support would be agreed by the Management team and the Early Learning and Childcare Team member. The support may take various forms and would be dependent on the needs of your setting. The impact of support provided should be monitored and evaluated by both the setting staff and the Early Learning and Childcare Team member.

INTENSIVE

Service does not meet the national standard

New/inexperienced management team

Poor/weak inspections

Large turnover of staff

Intensive support required with staff/child interaction

Consistently low levels of child engagement

No improvement plan/no engagement with plan

High level of adult direction

Intensive support required with planning cycle

Intensive support required with written observations of children

As well as the previous support, the Early Learning and Childcare Team member may at any point identify the need for and broker the support of another member of the Early Learning and Childcare Team and/or other agencies. To achieve the National Standard, a 12-month Service Improvement Period programme will be made in partnership with the Manager and staff.

Self-Evaluation and Improvement Planning

Self-Evaluation should be a continuous, reflective process through which settings get to know themselves well. The following documents will help with this task:

- National Improvement Framework

- How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare?

- Realising the Ambition

- Health and Social Care Standards

- Quality Framework Early Learning and Childcare

In order for a setting to examine the quality and effectiveness of its work, a systematic process of self-evaluation should be designed and adopted as illustrated below.

Plan ➡ Do ➡ Study ➡ Act
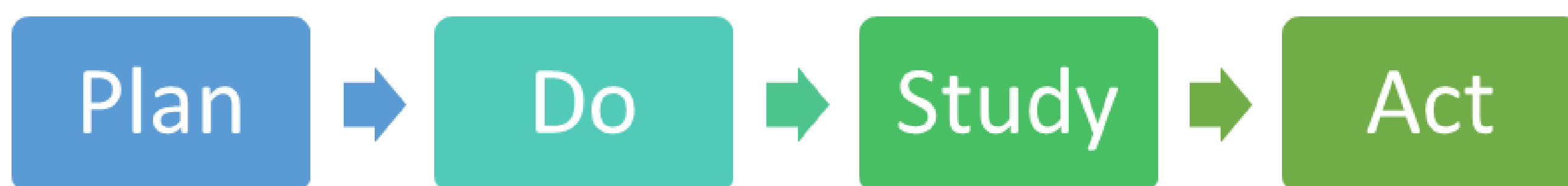
The significant relationship between effective self-evaluation and improvement might also be understood to help settings to answer these familiar three questions, which remain at the heart of self-evaluation:

- How are we doing?

- How do we know?

- What are we going to do now?

In order to answer these questions, all practitioners should be actively engaged in continuously evaluating and improving your setting. Settings should be able to demonstrate your answers, linked to your Vision, Values & Aims.

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Evaluation Report

- Interactive report - including written comments, video, audio and photographs

- Created in Partnership with the service (in the moment)

- Will reflect on prior visit priorities

- Will celebrate practice and identify further opportunities for improvement

- Link with key documents and frameworks

- Inform your curriculum design

As part our Quality Assurance support visit, we will use the framework below to underpin the evaluation report:

Opportunities for personal achievement	Interdisciplinary Learning
	The Curriculum 'The totality of all that is planned for children and young people throughout their education'
Ethos and life of the school as a community	Curriculum areas and subjects
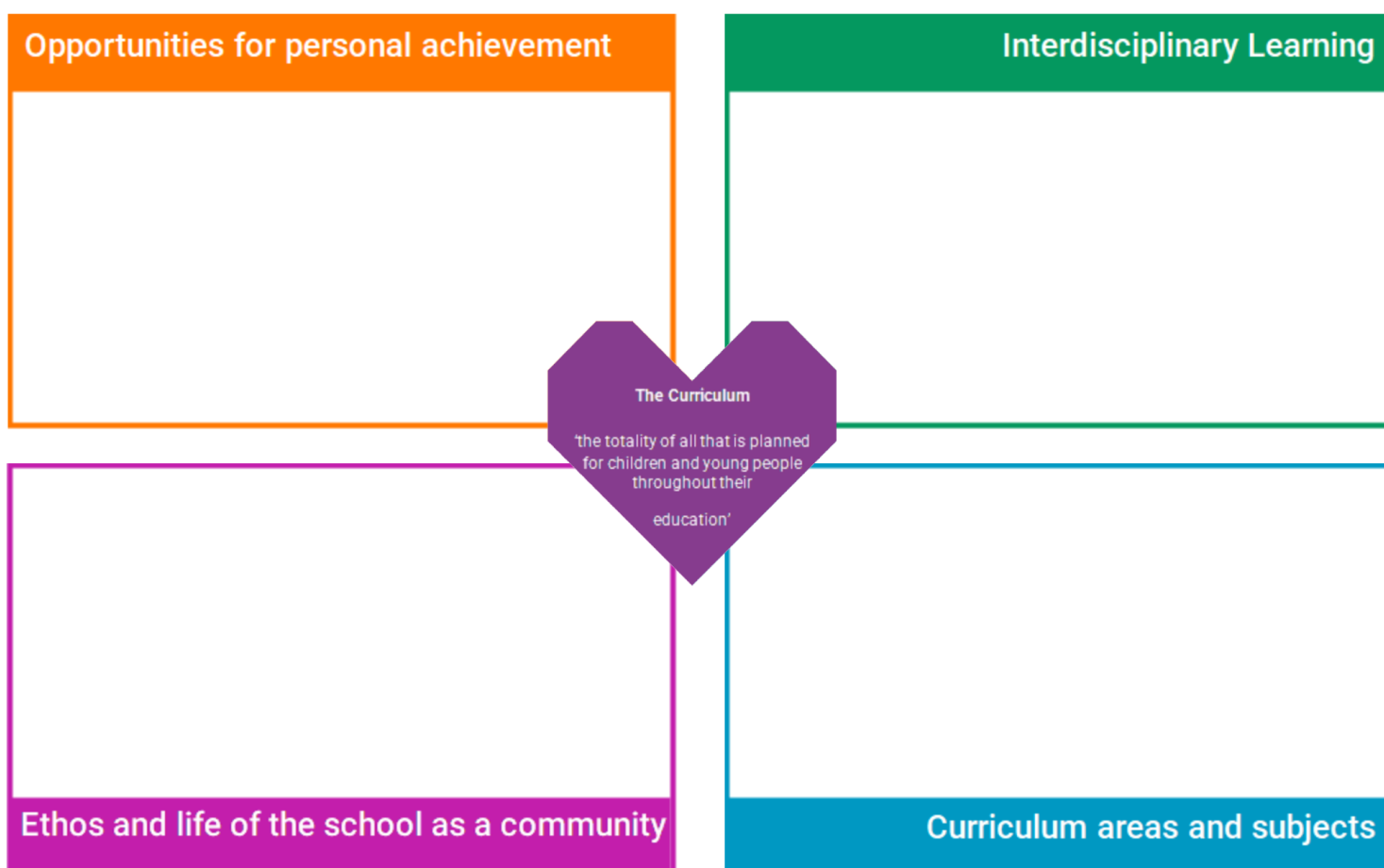
Opportunities for personal achievement:

- Personal achievement provides children and young people with a sense of satisfaction and helps to build motivation, resilience, and confidence.
- The experiences and outcomes include opportunities for a range of achievements in the learning setting and beyond.
- The service offers opportunities for achievement and to provide the support and encouragement which will enable children and young people to step forward to undertake activities which they find challenging.
- ELC Provider works closely with a wide range of partners to help young people access information and opportunities and make their voices heard.

HGIOELC	HSC STANDARDS	NATIONAL STANDARD
2.4 Personalised support 2.6 Transitions 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion 3.2 Securing children's progress	My human rights are respected and promoted. I am respected and treated with dignity as an individual. My care and support adapts when my needs, choices and decisions change. I am encouraged and helped to achieve my full potential.	2.1 - Care Inspectorate quality evaluations are good or better on the theme relating to quality of care and support. 6.2 - The setting will be willing to provide appropriate support, including making any reasonable changes to the care and learning environment, to ensure that children's additional support needs do not provide a barrier to them accessing a full range of experiences and meets their individual needs.
CI FRAMEWORK	**RTA**	
3.2 Leadership of play and learning 4.1 Staff have the right skills, knowledge and values to support children and families 5.2 Children progress and achieve	Wellbeing~ my self, social, emotional and communication development Put the best interests of the child at the heart of decision making	

Interdisciplinary Learning:

- Our curriculum includes space/opportunities that enable children and young people to make connections between different areas of learning.
- Interdisciplinary learning is stimulating, relevant and challenging.
- Revisiting a concept or skill from different perspectives deepens understanding and can make the curriculum more coherent and meaningful for learners.
- We take advantage of opportunities to work with partners who are able to offer and support enriched learning experiences and opportunities for young people's wider involvement in society.

HGIOELC	HSC STANDARDS	NATIONAL STANDARD
1.5 Management of resources to promote equity 3.3 Developing creativity and skills for life and learning	My care is provided by people who understand and are sensitive to my needs and my wishes. I am supported to make informed choices, even if this means I might be taking personal risks.	2.2 - The setting must have a framework to support children's learning that is informed by national guidance and is appropriate to support individual children's development and learning focussed on active learning through play.
CI FRAMEWORK	**RTA**	
2.1 Quality of the setting for play and learning 2.2 Outdoor play and learning 3.4 Leadership and management of staff and resources	My movement and coordination development Promoting my confidence, creativity and curiosity Take a holistic approach to the wellbeing of a child	

Ethos and life of the service as a community:

- There is a positive ethos and climate of respect and trust based upon shared values across the ELC community.
- All practitioners contribute through open, positive, supportive relationships where children and young people will feel that they are listened to.
- Staff promote a climate in which children and young people feel safe and secure.
- Practitioners model behaviour which promotes effective learning and wellbeing within the ELC community.
- We are sensitive and responsive to each young person's wellbeing.

HGIOELC	HSC STANDARDS	NATIONAL STANDARD
1.4 Leadership and management of practitioners 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection 2.5 Family learning 2.7 Partnerships	I experience warm, compassionate and nurturing care and support. I am included in wider decisions about the way the service is provided, and my suggestions, feedback and concerns are considered. I am supported to participate fully and actively in my community.	1.3 - Sustainable staffing structures are in place which meet the recommended adult: child ratios. 3.2 - Children have daily access to outdoor play and they regularly experience outdoor play in a natural environment as part of their funded ELC offer. 5.1 - There is open and regular communication with parents and carers about the work of the setting and families are meaningfully involved in influencing change 5.2 - Parents and carers are supported to engage in their child's learning and development
CI FRAMEWORK	**RTA**	
1.1 Children are safe and protected 1.4 Family learning and engagement 5.1 Children's wellbeing and rights	Establishing positive, loving, nurturing and understanding relationships Work with children, young people and their families on ways to improve wellbeing Believe professionals must work together in the best interests of the child	

Curriculum areas and subjects:

- Our environments enables learners to take part in meaningful learning experiences, that considers the various stages of development in the classroom, providing support and opportunities for challenge.
- Staffs interactions encourage sustained shared thinking and promote life-long learning.
- Adults facilitate experiences that are empowered by child autonomy and a secure play based pedagogy.
- Our curriculum design presents opportunities for learning that includes the 7 principles of curriculum design (Challenge and enjoyment, Breadth, Progression, Depth, Coherence, Relevance, Personalisation and choice.
- A culture of reflective practice is apparent throughout the service and supports continuous improvement practices.

HGIOELC	HSC STANDARDS	NATIONAL STANDARD
1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement 1.2 Leadership of learning 1.3 Leadership of change 2.2 Curriculum 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	I am supported to make informed choices, so that I can control my care and support.	1.1 Care Inspectorate quality evaluations are good or better on themes that relate to quality of staffing, management and leadership. a1.4 - All SSSC registered staff in the setting are achieving a minimum of 12 hours per year of Continuous Professional Learning. 3.1 - Care Inspectorate quality evaluations of good or better on the theme relating to quality of environment 4.1 - The setting uses relevant national self-evaluation frameworks to self-evaluate and systematically identify strengths and areas for improvement.
CI FRAMEWORK	**RTA**	
1.2 Personalised planning and support 1.3 Play and learning 3.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement 3.3 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	My movement and coordination development Advocate preventative work and early intervention to support children, young people and their families Child-centred play pedagogy Clear rationale and shared understanding of the value of play	

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

School Name	Locality	School Category June 23	School Category February 2024	School Category June 24	ELC Category June 2023	ELC Category February 2024	ELC Category June 2024
Abbotswell School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Ashley Road School	Dee	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Broomhill School	Dee	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Charleston School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Culter School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Cults Primary School	Dee	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Ferryhill School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Gilcomstoun School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 1	Category 1
Hanover Street School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Kaimhill Primary School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Kirkhill School	Dee	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Loirston School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Mile End School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3
Milltimber School	Dee	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Skene Square School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
St Joseph's RC School	Dee	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Tullos School	Dee	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2
Greyhope School	Dee	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3

School Name	Locality	School Category June 23	School Category February 2024	School Category June 24	ELC Category June 2023	ELC Category February 2024	ELC Category June 2024
Braehead School	Don	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Cornhill School	Don	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Danestone Primary School	Don	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3
Dyce Primary School	Don	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1
Forehill School	Don	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2
Glashieburn School	Don	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
Greenbrae School	Don	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Kittybrewster School	Don	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2
Middleton Park School	Don	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Riverbank School	Don	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2
Scotstown School	Don	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1
Seaton School	Don	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Sunnybank School	Don	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
St Peter's RC School	Don	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	NA	NA	NA
Woodside School	Don	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2

School Name	Locality	School Category June 23	School Category February 2024	School Category June 24	ELC Category June 2023	ELC Category February 2024	ELC Category June 2024
Airyhall School	West	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Bramble Brae School	West	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Brimmond School	West	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Countesswells School	West	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Fernielea School	West	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Hazlehead Primary School	West	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2
Heathryburn School	West	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 3	Category 2
Holy Family RC School	West	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Kingsford School	West	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Kingswells Primary School	West	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1	Category 2	Category 1	Category 2
Manor Park School	West	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Muirfield School	West	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Quarryhill School	West	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Stoneywood School	West	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Westpark School	West	Category 2	Category 3	Category 3	Category 2	Category 3	Category 3

School Name	Locality	School Category June 23	School Category February 2024	School Category June 24
Aberdeen Grammar School	Secondary	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Bridge Of Don Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Bucksburn Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 1
Cults Academy	Secondary	Category 1	Category 1	Category 1
Dyce Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Harlaw Academy	Secondary	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Hazlehead Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2
Lochside Academy	Secondary	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Northfield Academy	Secondary	Category 3	Category 3	Category 3
Oldmachar Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 1	Category 1
St Machar Academy	Secondary	Category 2	Category 2	Category 2

ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

Quality Improvement Framework

2024/2025

Rationale

Aberdeen City Council aims to improve the educational and life chances of all children and young people. A recent review of inspection outcomes highlighted that some schools need more help than others to secure improvement against the core Quality Indicators (QIs) from How Good Is Our School 4 (HGIOELC for Early Years settings) and a risk based model has been designed to address this variation.

This Quality Improvement Framework exemplifies the standards we want to see in all schools to help guide self-evaluation at school and local authority level. It also provides clarity of expectations and a more proportionate model of support to help accelerate progress. This Quality Improvement Framework will continue to be reviewed on at least a yearly basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

A number of stakeholders hold aligned responsibilities for delivery of the Core QIs and a number of statutory duties support delivery of the core QIs. If is important that everyone understands and is held to account for their contribution in realising improvement against the Core QIs.

Core QIs & Statutory duties	Elected Members	Central Quality Improvement team	School leaders across the Local Authority	School leaders	Middle leaders	Class teacher
1.3 2.3	Scrutinise school inspection outcomes against HGIOS	Establish a self-improving culture across the Local Authority (LA). Validate school self-evaluation and associated S&Q and Improvement Plans. Scrutinise progress against agreed Plans. Align central resource and structures to realise improvement. Support the provision of professional learning to realise improvement. Support school leaders to prepare for school inspections Maintain oversight of core measures to identify emerging risks and issues.	Establish a self-improving culture across the Local Authority Contribute to Local Authority self-evaluation and use self-evaluation to identify and share good practice Share skills and expertise to support the self-evaluation of and improvement of other schools Share experiences of inspection to support school leader colleagues Work across the Cluster/Associated Schools Group to identify and respond to emerging risks and issues Explore any benefits from pooling resource	Establish a culture of self-evaluation at school level by providing regular opportunities for staff, partners, young people and parents & carers to contribute Establish robust self-evaluation systems through the development and implementation of the school Quality Improvement Calendar (QIC) Evaluate the range of QI data gathered to plan and implement change Analyse and act on outcome data through robust accountability structures Build data literacy skills in staff Share plans and improvements with elected members annually.	Establish a culture of self-evaluation at department level by providing regular opportunities for staff, partners, young people and parents & carers to contribute Establish robust systems to help monitor performance across the department against the core QIs through a QIF Critically analyse evidence from the QIC to inform the work of the department and school improvement plan Establish effective systems to gather and analyse outcome data at department levels through robust accountability structures. Build capacity in staff to measure and report the impact of changes being made to enable best practice to be spread	Evaluate own work using robust evidence to help set professional development targets Use data to determine the impact of changes being made at classroom levels Share the impact of changes being made with colleagues at department or whole school level Engage in moderation against agreed standards to drive consistently good practice Participate in school self-evaluation

3.1	Set policy based on local need	Analyse performance by reviewing data linked to QI 3.1 Coordinate the drafting of policies to be presented for approval to Elected Members	Contribute to the development of Local Authority policy Work across agencies to identify and respond to emerging risks and issues	Maintain oversight of wellbeing data to quickly identify and address emerging risks	Maintain oversight of wellbeing data at department level to quickly identify and address emerging risks	Deliver the health and wellbeing curriculum effectively recognising it as the responsibility of all
3.2	Scrutinise performance against agreed key measures	Establish data systems to monitor performance at individual, school and service level Monitor and report performance trends to Elected Members Establish accountability structures and enhance them where required	Collaborate with cluster/ASG colleagues to address the root cause of issues and risks.	Monitor and take action to address performance risks across the school. Establish accountability structures and enhance them where required	Monitor and take action to address performance risks across the department. Establish accountability structures and enhance them where required	Monitor and take action to address performance risks at class level.
Standards and Quality Report	Scrutiny of Local Authority self-evaluation Scrutiny of performance at school level	Lead coordination of Local Authority self-evaluation	Contribute to the development of self-evaluation to inform plans for learners	Lead coordination of the school Standards and Quality Report	Lead coordination of departmental evaluation to inform the school Standards and Quality Report	Inform the content of the Standards and Quality Report
Improvement Plan	Approval of Local Authority Improvement Plan Approval of some school Improvement Plans	Lead coordination of Local Authority Improvement Plans Coordinate the setting of stretch aims for inclusion in the Local Authority Strategic Plan	Contribute to the development of Plans for learning including Locality Plans, the Children's Services Plan and Education Authority Plans	Use the data gathered through self evaluation activities to inform the School Improvement Plan. Publish the approved plan on the school website. Create a parent and child friendly version which when approved should be shared on the school website.	Use the data gathered through self evaluation activities to inform the Department/Faculty Improvement Plan.	Inform and support development of the school improvement plan through active participation in self-evaluation activities. Support delivery of the plan through curriculum delivery.
Local Authority statutory duty for quality of provision	Instruct Officers to address vulnerabilities in inspection outcomes	Amend working practices to realise improvement at Local Authority and school level. Design and deliver an approach to quality improvement that offers sufficient and proportionate levels of support and challenge to schools.	Collaborate with central officers to deliver an approach to quality improvement across the Local Authority that offers sufficient and proportionate levels of support and challenge to schools.	Lead the school to engage positively in Local Authority quality improvement visits and other activities.	Lead the school to engage positively in Local Authority quality improvement visits and activities.	Engage positively in Local Authority quality improvement visits and activities .

3

QI1.3 Leadership of Change – Expectations of Schools and school assurance

HGIOS 4 overview statement (p24)

This indicator focuses on collaborative leadership at all levels to develop a shared vision for change and improvement which is meaningful and relevant to the context of the school within its community. Planning for continuous improvement should be evidence based and linked to effective self-evaluation. Senior leaders should ensure the need for change is well understood and that the pace of change is appropriate to ensure the desired positive impact for learners.

Effective leadership of change depends on a positive culture, effective systems and clear lines of accountability.

Plan for and record ongoing self-evaluation activity

A self-improving system can only be realised through well considered, honest and on-going self-evaluation activity against the Core QIs. The **'How Good is Our'** documents provide a toolkit for use at school level although the principles equally apply to Local Authority quality improvement teams as they evaluate their work.

The virtuous cycle of improvement illustrates the key features of effective evidence based evaluation. It shows how schools and system leaders can empower practitioners to interpret nationally and locally shared aims and apply them in local context.

Key to self-improvement is regular and rigorous, evidence-based, internal and external evaluation to determine:

- How are we doing against the proposed outcomes in the Improvement Plan?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now to maximise the identified outcomes?

School self-evaluation activity should be aligned with the school improvement plan and should be outlined in an agreed School Quality Improvement Calendar. The self-evaluation activity outlined in the Calendar should support the on-going gathering of evidence. An exemplar Quality Improvement Framework and associated Calendar are available in **Appendices A and B.** The development of a short evaluative paragraph or report following each episode of self-evaluation, may make the production of the final Standards and Quality Report more straightforward.

Ensure ownership and accountability

Leadership teams should work in partnership with staff to monitor the impact of improvement plans by following their quality improvement calendar. The findings of self-evaluation activities should be reflected upon with changes made to plans as required. This approach ensures timely changes are made.
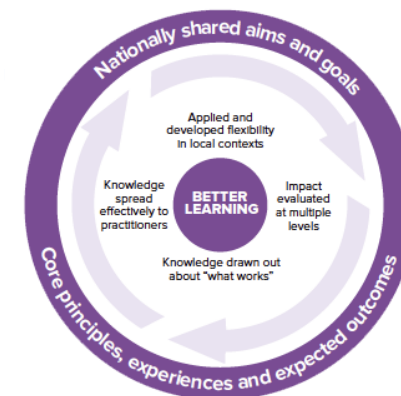
All staff should know the strengths and areas for development for their school and be able to access self-evaluation documents. Opportunities to capture the voice of learners is critical as the UNCRC and The Promise features more prominently in national policy. Schools must ensure learner voice is included throughout the improvement planning process and **HGIOURS** may assist with this process.

Clear lines of accountability for delivery of the school improvement plan and associated self-evaluation should be in place. Schools may find it helpful to establish a School Quality Improvement Framework **(Appendix A)** and must develop a Calendar **(Appendix B).** Excellent leadership of change sees each instance of self-evaluation detailed in the Quality Improvement Calendar triggering the production of a summary paragraph or report to capture the learning and implications to feed back to staff and wider stakeholders. There is an agreed LNCT protocol for Quality Improvement Visits in Schools.

Developing the Standards and Quality Report

Key to self-improvement is regular and rigorous, evidence-based, internal and external evaluation to determine:

- How are we doing against the proposed outcomes in the Improvement Plan?
- How do we know?
- What are we going to do now to maximise the identified outcomes?

National PEF guidance steers consideration of how the school is helping the six priority family types identified by the Scottish Government as being at highest risk of experiencing child poverty and an evaluation of the impact of PEF spend should be included in Standards and Quality Reports. The groups include:

- Lone parent families
- Minority ethnic families
- Families with a young mother (under 25)
- Families with a child under one
- Larger families (3+ children)
- Families with a disabled adult or child

PEF guidance also asks schools to consider what additional steps might be required to close the poverty-related attainment gap for pupils affected by disadvantage for other reasons. As a result, schools should routinely look at the performance of these groups as they draw conclusions for the Standards and Quality Report.

- a protected characteristic (disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, or belief
- sex (gender) and sexual orientation)
- a need for which they require additional support
- being looked after
- having caring responsibilities
- Schools supporting Armed Forces children should also consider the Armed Forces Covenant

A Standards and Quality Report is a statutory document which reflects on the appropriateness of the school vison and values, the achievements of the previous year, outlines the impact of PEF interventions on the poverty related attainment gap, details school performance and identifies next steps based on a range of evidence (including national and local policy) and consideration of performance by group.

The Standards and Quality Report pulls all the school's self-evaluation evidence together into one overarching evaluative document. Exemplar evaluative statements are provided in **Appendix C** to help to support the effective moderation of evaluation gradings and exemplify national expectations. The full range of evaluation evidence across all core Quality Indicators should be considered when compiling the Standards and Quality Report. The Senior Leadership Team should collaborate with all stakeholders to look inwards by analysing a range of data, outwards by learning from colleagues and considering national and international research, and forwards by understanding the key policy changes that require to be prepared for.

School leaders have a legal obligation to publish a Standards and Quality Report on a yearly basis, no later than September and set an Improvement Plan based on the findings.

Developing Improvement Plans

The School Improvement Plan will reflect the unique context of the school and take into account the wider Local Authority context and national direction of travel.

National policy determines that the UNCRC and The Promise should continue to be planned for within School Improvement Plans. Consideration should also be given to the Morgan Review to support planning for those with additional support needs. All schools should be using the CIRCLE framework to support "Getting it Right for Every Child."

Local Outcome Improvement Plans and Locality Plans outline priorities based on multi-agency data. Similarly, the Children's Services Plan provides partnership priorities for children with the Aberdeen City National Improvement Framework Plan outlining the particular priorities identified for improvement across the Education Authority. The National Improvement Framework Plan will be aligned to other Plans for children and help guide the inclusion of local priorities in school improvement plans.

National PEF guidance asks that school teams consider how funding will support the six priority family types and address disadvantage. Improvement work to address disadvantage should be explicit within the Plan. School leaders should also take advantage of opportunities to pool resources to address common risks where thought beneficial.

When developing Plans, the outcome to be realised must be explicitly clear along with mechanisms for measuring or indicating progress. All secondary schools will use the LOGIC Model contained in **Appendix D,** primary schools may use the format if helpful.

Improvement Plans should be completed by working groups and fully consulted upon with all stakeholders. Draft Plans should be shared with the central teams for review by mid June with final version published on school websites by mid September. They should include plans for the use of PEF with clear leads and measures identified. Secondary Schools should agree high level, whole school priorities and Faculties should develop associated Plans. Care must be taken to ensure that Faculty Plans align with the overarching Improvement Plan and ensure that plans translate in the Quality Improvement Calendar.

Self-evaluation activities
Quality Improvement Calendar
Tracking attainment over time
Validation of self-evaluation
Quality Improvement

Schools must produce a single page document for children and young people to ensure it is accessible to them. Progress updates should be provided through parent council meetings or school newsletters across the year.

How the Local Authority will gain assurance on QI 1.3

The Local Authority will:

- Review and agree publication of Standards and Quality Reports
- Review and agree publication of School Improvement Plans
- Review and agree the school Quality Improvement Calendar
- Review and agree copies of learner friendly versions of the documents
- Request confirmation that documents are publicly available
- Validate evaluations through focus groups and classroom visits
- Monitor complaints
- Evaluate the quality of behaviour and relationships across the school
- Quality assure policies and sample Pupil Centred Risk Assessments

The Local Authority may:

- Ask School Leadership Teams to present their improvement journey to Elected Members
- Establish peer review systems for key documentation for some schools
- Keep central records of when school vision and values were last updated
- Keep central records of if the vision and values is relevant given the context of the school and build this into feedback on the Standards and Quality Report
- Retain copies of School Improvement Calendars and seek opportunities for school leaders to present emerging evidence during school engagements
- Request information on particular aspects of self-evaluation planned within the school Quality Improvement Calendar

QI2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection – Expectations of schools and school assurance

This indicator focuses on the wide range of duties required of all staff and partners to ensure that all learners are **safe, well cared for** and **enabled to flourish**. It considers how the **school takes account of statutory requirements** in relation to child protection to ensure **the needs of all learners are met.** Safeguarding all learners require **strong partnerships** to be established between the school and its local community. This includes **well-planned progressive learning opportunities** so that learners can become more **resilient** and develop a **sound understanding of how they can keep themselves safe.** Actions taken at school and central team level enable the Chief Social Work Officer and Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to effectively discharge their statutory duties.

Safeguarding is inextricably linked to all of the core Quality Indicators and also the entitlement to a full and appropriate curriculum. A standard for school and central teams to measure progress against can be helpful and the ACC Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard in **Appendix E** exemplifies such an approach.

Ongoing assurance by schools is best undertaken over the course of the year and should be planned for depending upon the needs of the learners in your school. For example, schools may want to focus on groups on the child protection register if there has been a rise in registration or may want to gain some assurance around some of the safeguarding data, for example bullying, to understand trends and ensure a stronger school response to such incidents. Whatever the approach, it is critical that there is increased scrutiny of those on the Child Protection Register and those who are Care Experienced learners and that everyone is aware of their responsibilities.

An example of how this may look at school level in a single year is detailed below; the focus would change annually based on the local context and this example presumes that the progress of those on the register and those who are looked after are considered as distinct groups during tracking periods:

AUGUST – check that all staff have received updated Child Protection training and completed the behaviour e module and that you have a record of this and that any identified vulnerabilities in knowledge are captured and planned for in the professional learning calendar. Ensure there is a system in place for staff who start part way through the year to complete both child protection training and the e module. Check that all signage/handbooks reflect updated lead responsibilities and that arrangements are in place for very regular tracking of outcomes for those who are on the register or care experienced.

SEPTEMBER – check that learners on a personalised pathway have a full timetable and that effective information sharing is in place to support delivery of an agreed plan. Check that six-weekly reviews are in place and effectively improving outcomes. Review impact of attendance and reducing exclusion procedures. Agree approaches to the roll out of Equally Safe.

OCTOBER – Sample of five learner records to check that all paperwork is stored securely in the Wellbeing App, that access is suitably locked down to only those with named person responsibility and that the quality of planning (including IEPs) have appropriate and routinely reviewed targets which are helping improve outcome for learners. Check that all staff are aware of expectations of them through appropriate access to aspects of the plan they need and that they have the information/support they require.

NOVEMBER – focus group of care experienced young people/those with additional support needs /those who have reported bullying to explore either the quality of the school offer for them or the extent to which they know how to keep themselves safe.

DECEMBER – review the impact of plans for the five learners who have the poorest attendance. This could lead to amendments in attendance procedures or a reshaping of internal support systems.

FEBRUARY – Sample of five learner records (pastoral notes) to check that the language used is suitably respectful and that internal support systems are effectively supporting a proactive response to emerging need

APRIL – review of all safeguarding data to identify emerging risks. Consider how this will inform the School Improvement Plan and curriculum for the following session. Review data for those with protected characteristics.

How the Local Authority will gain assurance

The Local Authority will:

- Request access to updated school policies to check alignment with national and local policy
- Check that all schools are clear on expectations and have systems in place to monitor their internal processes
- Engage with others who support the school community such as Children's Social Work and Community Learning
- Review data routinely to identify any emerging risks and issues
- Sample pastoral notes for a small number of learners prior to an in school engagement
- Identify learners in particular groups for discussion during a school engagement
- Ask school leaders to complete a Microsoft form around statutory duties for analysis prior to a school engagement **(example in Appendix F)**
- Monitor complaints

The Local Authority may:

- Undertake thematic reviews on areas of perceived vulnerability if required

QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment – Expectations of schools and school assurance

This indicator focuses on **ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all learners**. It highlights the **importance of highly skilled staff** who work with learners, and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures learners maximise their successes and achievements (HGIOS 4)

Almost all positive evaluations of all core QIs can be traced back to highly effective Learning, Teaching and Assessment. All activity in a school should improve Learning, Teaching and Assessment to realise improved outcomes for learners. It is our core business and is the foundation to getting it right for every child.

All schools should have a school policy or position statement with regard to Learning, teaching and assessment which is aligned to **The ACC Learning, Teaching & Assessment** Standard included in **Appendix G.** The ACC standard will be used during school engagements.

School teams should consider which aspects of their agreed standard will be a focus for improvement on a regular basis, in response to self-evaluation evidence. Professional learning should be clearly aligned with areas of priority.

An example of how this may look in a single year is detailed below; the focus would change annually based on the local context and classroom visit proformas would be updated in keeping with agreed expectations:

At the beginning of a lesson:
- Learning to be meaningful and relevant, and linked to prior/home learning.
- Learning has a clear purpose (are you consolidating or introducing new knowledge or skills?)
- Learning to be sufficiently challenging with high expectations set
- Learning to be differentiated appropriately and digital resources used to support where appropriate
- All resources to be well organised to encourage independence (including use of support staff)

As the lesson progresses:
- Clear and appropriate purpose (Learning Intention) with Success Criteria supporting learners to evaluate their work
- A range of approaches to questioning – e.g. well planned with reactive open questions that build in complexity or engage learners in their learning
- Feedback should be linked to success criteria. The teacher should constantly be checking for understanding by working the room/ space. Learning activities should be adjusted based on assessment of understanding gleaned by questioning learners
- Opportunities for learners to be given ownership of their own learning and enabled to make choices and influence

Mid lesson:
- Learners work presented well in jotters and work marked appropriately
- Wall displays being used to support learners and to celebrate success (and at a height learners can see)
- An encouraging ethos with positive and respectful relationships between the learners and staff

- Learners understanding what they are learning and why

At the end of the lesson:
- A plenary that links back to success criteria, checks understanding and refers to future or home learning

How the Local Authority will gain assurance

The Local Authority will:

- Check that schools have a locally agreed standard based on Local Authority/Regional Improvement Collaborative guidance
- Check that classroom visit documentation being used by schools supports giving feedback on the areas being developed by the school
- Review attainment data
- Review attainment data following transition to primary or to secondary
- Undertake learning walks
- Check alignment of the in school professional leaning offer with areas identified for improvement

The Local Authority may:

- Meet with focus groups of learners
- Undertake Classroom visits to a department with summary report produced outlining clear next steps
- Undertake Classroom visits to the whole school with summary report produced outlining clear next steps
- Meet focus groups of staff to explore progression in learning and assessment practices (link to QI 3.2)

QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing Equality an Inclusion – Expectations of schools and school assurance

*This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's **approach to wellbeing** which underpins learners' ability to achieve success.*

It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements

All schools should have an overarching policy, standard or strategy on how they are securing improvement in this area and this should be aligned to the Local Authority standard. School teams should consider which aspects of the standard will be further developed on a regular basis in response to self-evaluation evidence, helping shape the approach to the quality assurance of this quality indicator.

An example of how this may look in a single year is detailed below; the focus would change annually based on the local context:

DAILY – Planned opportunities for learners to engage in physical activity each school day including outdoor opportunities all year round (e.g. Daily Mile)

MONTHLY – Review of needs across the school, considering targeted discussions through tracking meetings to ensure individual learners are planned for, supports are reviewed and next steps agreed in a timely manner.

6 WEEKLY – Review flexible pathways to ensure appropriate supports are being considered and where no impact, plans are revisited with all relevant people, including the learner.

TERMLY – All staff have should consider their learning environments to support the wellbeing needs of all learners. Use the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS) to support this process. Review the outcome of this, sharing practice across school which is positive for individuals and groups of learners and identify any support required to address areas of development.

TWICE YEARLY (August and March) – Undertake Health & Wellbeing Surveys including SHINE for both staff and learners and review outcomes, considering training requirements for staff, support needs and key curriculum and pathway developments to plan next steps.

ANNUAL – Review of Positive relationships policy annually, unless there is an identified need to review before then. Review of anti-weapon returns and understanding of mobile phone arrangements

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY FOCUS – Is learning appropriately meeting the needs of all learners?

How the Local Authority will gain assurance

The Local Authority will:

- Check that schools have a local understanding of expectations based on Local Authority standards
- Check that systems are in place to monitor the wellbeing of learners
- Check that systems are in place to monitor compliance with expectations and that action is taken when vulnerabilities are identified
- Check that the learning environment is considered during classroom visits
- Issue a Microsoft form in advance of a Local Authority engagement visit to determine compliance and areas for more detailed exploration
- Review core measures and data sets

The Local Authority may:

- Meet focus groups of support for learning staff to monitor compliance with policy
- Follow a small number of more vulnerable learners over the course of a day during an engagement
- Meet focus groups of learners to determine how the school helps them
- Meet focus groups of staff to explore health and wellbeing as the responsibility of all
- Review the quality of plans for learners

QI 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement – Expectations of Schools and school assurance

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the **best possible outcomes** for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards **over time** is a key feature of this indicator.

All schools should have an agreed approach to raising attainment and achievement which should include robust and regular tracking and an agreed presentation/assessment policy in secondary schools. Approaches should be aligned with the Local Authority standard. School teams should consider which aspects of the standard will be further developed regularly, in response to self-evaluation evidence, helping shape the approach to the quality assurance of this quality indicator.

An example of how this may look in a single year is detailed below; the focus would change annually based on the local context and be included in school quality improvement calendars:

AUGUST – Ensure all staff are aware of their role in raising attainment, the school tracking systems and are confident about expectations for review meetings and timelines for completion of data.

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER – Tracking Meeting with staff including review of interventions for individual learners and data trends identified. Review evidence in classwork with a key focus linked to school improvement plan and individual learners needs. Collate and share findings with whole staff / faculties as appropriate, identifying next steps to address any areas for development and review of current interventions if required.

NOVEMBER – Quality improvement discussion with QIO to verify attainment and achievement data.

JANUARY – Tracking Meeting with staff including review of interventions for individual learners and data trends identified. Sample 2/3 learners per year group to review evidence of learning, interventions, and attainment over time - Collate and share findings with whole staff / faculties as appropriate, identifying next steps to address any areas for development and review of current interventions if required.

FEBRUARY – Quality Improvement Discussion with QIO to verify attainment and achievement data.

MARCH / APRIL – Tracking Meeting with staff including review of interventions for individual learners and data trends identified.

MAY – Quality Improvement Discussion with QIO to verify attainment and achievement data.

JUNE – Systems to track attainment and achievement for the year ahead reviewed and updated where appropriate and linked professional learning offer considered. Consider review of curriculum rationale including the structure and balance of the curriculum.

School leaders are expected to review a range of data and understand the trends in school performance.

How the Local Authority will gain assurance

The Local Authority will:

- Check that staff have a clear understanding of progression
- Review copies of secondary school presentation/assessment policies
- Check the robustness of school tracking and discussion at school based Attainment Reviews
- Undertake initial Attainment Reviews (based on ACEL and SQA data)
- Meet with school leaders to undertake a Post Insight review – September and February
- Ask school leaders to submit attainment documentation linked to:
  - Broad general education
  - Breadth and depth
  - Literacy and numeracy
  - Improving attainment for Care Experienced learners
  - Attainment versus deprivation
  - Partnerships and wider accreditation
- Undertake stretch aims discussions with schools
- Check that school leaders are making full use of:
  - Power BI tools including school profiles
  - PEF tracker
  - SQA Power BI dashboard

Local Authority Assurance system

School Visits

Visits include a range of Officers for example Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning , Quality Improvement Manager, Quality Improvement Officer, Locality Lead Officers, EPS, senior leaders and middle leaders from other schools and a selection of school staff. The frequency of school visits will depend on the level of support required to secure improvement. Primary quality improvement will move from a locality to city wide approach over session 2024/25.

The additional central resource will complement in school arrangements. Approaches taken during the visits may include:

- focus groups (staff, young people, parents and carers, partners)
- the use of Trios in primary, with an increasing focus on challenge. And the use of peer senior leaders in secondary with a focus on building middle leadership capacity.
- learning walks, classroom visits including looking at the quality of feedback and pupil engagement with learning
- exploration of tracking data
- review of documentation
- review of pupil work
- reviewing the environment for learning
- checks of compliance based on earlier submissions

The learning from the visit is pulled together into a report outlining strengths and next steps by either the school or the central team. In some cases, schools are asked to develop a Plan to address the areas identified for action and report progress on a weekly/fortnightly basis.

Local Authority attainment reviews

A range of approaches are taken to support progress against Raising Attainment and Achievement. These include:

- Initial Attainment reviews (based on SQA data)
- Post Insight review
- Asking school leaders to submit attainment documentation linked to:
  - o Broad general education
  - o Breadth and depth
  - o Literacy and Numeracy
  - o Improving attainment for Care Experienced learners
  - o Attainment versus deprivation
  - o Partnerships and wider accreditation
- stretch aims discussions with schools
- review of live tracking data over a year to check progress against stretch aims

- Checking that school leaders are making full use of:
    - o Power BI tools including school profiles
    - o PEF tracker
    - o SQA Power BI dashboard

Levels of support to schools - School leaders will collaborate with central officers to identify the level of support required to secure improvement.

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Validated self or external evaluation has identified each core QI at good or better	Validated self or external evaluation has identified one or more of the core Quality Indicators as satisfactory or below School is currently or expecting to engage with HMIe imminently	Validated self or external evaluation has identified one or more of the core Quality Indicators as weak or unsatisfactory School is currently or expecting to engage with HMIe imminently There are self-evaluated concerns around QI 1.3 or staff cohesion.
Possible features of support	**Possible features of support**	**Possible features of support**
Attainment review/discussion SQUIP review and feedback Support to quality assure internal processes Monitoring of presentations, attendance and exclusions Participation in professional learning visits Encouragement for staff to participate in professional learning visits to other schools to contribute to a self-improving system Support from QAMSOs and Locality Leads	Attainment review/discussion SQUIP review and feedback Support to quality assure internal processes Monitoring of presentations, attendance and exclusions Participation in professional learning visits Encouragement for staff to participate in professional learning visits to contribute to a self-improving system Support from QAMSOs and Locality Leads Mandatory attendance at professional learning Quality assurance visit to participate in school assurance mechanisms that look at each core QI in detail Routine checks on progress	Attainment review/discussion SQUIP review and feedback Support to quality assure internal processes Monitoring of presentations, attendance and exclusions Participation in professional learning visits Encouragement for staff to participate in professional learning visits to contribute to a self-improving system Support from QAMSOs and Locality Leads Mandatory attendance at professional learning At least twice yearly QI visit looking in detail at each Quality Indicator Dedicated team from across the city to help support improvement with very regular checks on progress

APPENDIX A - Example of a School Quality Improvement Framework

SQUIP	A SQUIP which is evaluative and identifies clear priorities which can be achieved and make a difference to learners. Plan evaluative activity to drive forward these identified priorities.
	Working group/Faculty Improvement Plans which detail specific actions with timescales and allocation of responsibilities - linked to school improvement priorities. How will teams be guided to make any necessary changes and how will you check that the changes have been made?
Quality Improvement Calendar	School Calendar and/or Quality Improvement Calendar devised in consultation with staff. This should detail key evaluative activities and when they will take place. How will you ensure that all senior leaders drive the Improvements detailed in the Plan?
	Class visits, peer visits, learning walks – information from these is collated and used with class teachers – clear feedback loop. Clear link made back to professional learning. Clear link made to driving forward a minimum standard as detailed in a learning and teaching policy or framework.
	How will class teachers be held to account and ensure the quality of the universal offer?
	Moderation activity/tracking episodes. Clear report gathered after each whole school episode and shared with all members of staff. Actions agreed.
	Termly attainment review meetings with relevant SLT which focus on measuring progress over time
	School / Faculty QI calendar submission date and checks, School Improvement Plan and Faculty improvement plan monitoring/evaluation timings. Pupil Support Faculty should also have a QI Calendar and Faculty Improvement Plan (with detail on attainment analysis and interventions, attainment analysis to support coursing, tracking positive destinations).
Quality Improvement Activities	ACC QI visits – clear focus and feedback loop.
	Pupil/parent/staff focus groups - linked to key priorities
	Data analysis including behaviour review to support ambitious curriculum development and coursing for young people and any adaptations to timetabling learner pathways. What will you do when patterns in behaviour referral emerge?
	Presentation policy which outlines the standard expected in terms of qualifications young people are being presented for – all staff understand the standard. Young people and parent/carers also understand the standard and that withdrawals will be challenged.
Roles & Responsibilities	Remit documentation for each promoted post in the school linked to agreed action plans and outcomes.
	1-1 system to build in accountability. HT with DHTs, DHTs with PTs/PT PS/PT literacy, numeracy etc. Discussion with a focus on SIP action plans. How will Middle Leaders be held to account for the quality of provision and attainment results in their department?
	Strategic Senior leadership meetings take place once a week. Single issue meetings linked to SIP and delivering key priorities.
	Operational Senior Leadership meetings take place once a week.
	Working groups linked to driving forward identified priorities – each group has a clear action plan and timescale for delivering outcomes.
Professional Learning	Professional learning arrangements linked to clear priorities detailed in the School Improvement Plan. See Teacher **Professional Learning Framework** and **Teacher Leadership Framework**

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APPENDIX B - Example of a Whole School Quality Improvement Calendar

Schools should consider outcomes, which provides clarity of purpose and aids strategic direction. When identifying outcomes, senior leaders should draw on their understanding of the context of their school, strengths, and areas for development, particularly in relation to driving forward attainment for young people. In this secondary example, the school has a clear focus on securing positive destinations for all young people which features evaluative work and operational actions to deliver this outcome. The QA Calendar should look different year on year as new priorities and outcomes are identified. This example doesn't include checks on compliance with safeguarding and child protection undertaken by the school Child Protection Lead.

Month	Outcomes	Activity
Through the session and built in for each year group	• Parent/carers are in receipt of quality information regarding their child's progress • Parent/carers are informed in a timely manner of any areas of concern • Staff have access to CLPL to enable progress against the School and Personal Improvement Plans	• BGE 1 summary report / BGE 1 full report with comments • Senior phase 1 summary report / Senior phase 1 full report with comments • Senior phase Final WG/EG report • All year groups – 1 virtual parents' meeting • Cause for Concern procedures built into tracking and reporting procedures • Provision of CLPL with impact followed up through activities such as PR&D and class visits
Each month	• The progress of Looked After Children (LAC), Young Carers and young people where economic hardship is a barrier is monitored and interventions put in place to secure positive outcomes • Senior Leadership Teams have a sound understanding of the progress being made against priorities identified in the SQUIP • Senior Leadership Teams have a working knowledge of the standard of learning and teaching across the school • Faculty Heads have a clear picture of the standard of learning and teaching in classrooms across their faculty • Class teachers can share good practice and test out pedagogy • Young people are achieving L5 and L6 literacy and numeracy qualifications (in line/above VC) • Children and young people across the ASG benefit from early intervention facilitated through the Partnership Forum	• All staff update Key Case Tracker. House Teams review the information and agree interventions - Key Case tracker checks attendance, exclusion, part-time timetables • Agree evaluative activity linked to the SQUIP - Pupil and staff focus groups on an aspect of learning and teaching, curriculum, wellbeing • Extended SLT Meetings and Staff meetings scheduled as per the WTA • Parent Council has the SQUIP as a standing item – a different theme is explored during each meeting • Staff present progress/seek feedback and ideas to Parent Council • TLCs meet, the aspect of learning and teaching they focus on is derived from the SQUIP, inform staff meetings, CLPL website and in-service staff training • Senior Phase literacy and numeracy tracker update/check. (Check L5 and L6 literacy and numeracy Check young people achieving at the highest SCQF level) • Partnership Forum meetings
Each term	• All staff understand attainment of their pupils in BGE and Senior Phase - Interventions agreed at class, faculty, and school levels • Robust moderation arrangements are in place which support staff judgements on level achieved and the standard within NQs. This means tracking data is accurate • All young people on track to achieve a positive destination • Partnerships with union reps to support collegiate working • Young people have their success recognised and rewarded	• Completion of faculty and whole school tracking data • Faculty Quality Improvement Calendar schedules attainment tracking meetings BGE and Senior Phase. Moderation meetings scheduled • Positive destination planning meeting – House Teams • Feedback on WTA, Calendar and any matters arising from union reps • Colours awards processed. Merit/commendation awards processed

Month	Outcomes	Activity
August	• Staff have a clear understanding of Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures. • Staff have a clear understanding of the UNCRC and the implications of The Promise • Staff understand how to report near misses/incidents and confirm their understanding • A well-planned programme of transition arrangements is in place - Primary/ Secondary transition arrangements are effective for all learners, including those requiring additional support and in line with legislative requirements	• Child Protection and Safeguarding training delivered during the Inservice day - Following training and on a termly basis throughout the year, staff complete a confidence rating on their knowledge of CP and Safeguarding • Staff reminded/agree school policies for supporting young people who exhibit distressed behaviour and confirm their understanding of processes including near miss and incident reporting • New member of staff in receipt of CP training on arrival across the year • P6/7 enhanced transition planning agreed across the ASG - Transition Calendar in place driving outcomes detailed in the ASG Transition aspect of the SQUIP
September	• Young people in the Senior Phase attain well in their SQA examinations. The school is in line with/above its virtual comparator in key measures • Our curriculum is refreshed and provides an increasing range of flexible learning pathways - This is raising attainment by meeting the needs and aspirations of our young people • Parent/carers access materials to help them support their child's learning	• Termly attainment meetings with Faculty PTs with a BGE and Senior Phase focus • Termly attainment meetings work through collated whole school tracking data. Example: Working Grade collation by NQ • SQA Co-ordinator issues bespoke SQA Calendar detailing operational deadlines • Curriculum planning meetings with Faculty PTs, NESCol and other providers • Planning for Success parental materials uploaded to website
October	• Parent/carers have a sound understanding of the range of learner pathways available and can support their child to make an informed choice	• Learner pathways website refreshed prior to the beginning of the course choice process. DYW virtual parental events scheduled to support learner pathways work • Initial P7 transition visit – wellbeing activities • Initial SQA presentations letter issued to parent/carers
November	• Collated whole school report indicating strengths and areas for development - All staff in receipt of feedback which is noted in My GTCS and helps inform PR&D • S3 SNSA data used to support teacher judgements on level achieved	• Class Visits senior phase • S3 SNSA completed
December	• Young people as they progress into S3 can personalise their curriculum within the 8 curricular areas	• S2 Personalisation & Choice/Learner Pathways actions
January	• Young people in the Senior Phase can prepare for an exam diet in more formal examination conditions. Young people are clear on their progress and next steps in learning. • Young people as they progress into S2 can personalise their curriculum within the 8 curricular areas.	• Senior Phase Assessment Weeks • S1 Personalisation & Choice/Learner Pathways actions. • P7 enhanced visits
February	• Young people as they progress into the senior phase choose a relevant curriculum which allows them to achieve the highest level of SCQF qualifications and achieve a positive destination. • Parent/carers have a sound understanding of the range of learner pathways available and can support their child to make an informed choice.	• Pupil Feedback to support final push to SQA examinations for senior phase • House Team meetings with young person and parent/carer as appropriate – additional interventions agreed for senior phase pupils. • Learner Pathways event for parent/carers

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Month	Outcomes	Activity
March	• Young people make well informed course choices based on their prior learning/attainment. These choices fulfil the standard set by the school's presentation policy. These choices maximise attainment gains for the individual pupil, choices made are at the highest SCQF level based on the young person's prior attainment.	• S4/5/6 Pathways Planning days with PTs of PS and SLT. Final checks that coursing is appropriate for everyone. • Pupil leadership opportunities – applications deadline
April		• P7 into S1 Class lists – first draft to feeder primaries
May	• Young people in S1-S3 make progress over time as detailed in CfE levels. Assessment evidence is valid and reliable based on robust moderation arrangements • Collated whole school report indicating strengths and areas for development. All staff in receipt of feedback which is noted in GTCS and helps inform PR&D	• S3 CfE literacy and numeracy levels are submitted to the LA • S3 CfE literacy and numeracy levels are moderated and checked against SNSA data • BGE Class Visits • PR&D meetings – link back to 2 x class visits. Celebrate success and guide professional learning • Change of timetable
June	• A draft SQUIP is submitted to LA detailing clear and achievable priorities arising from effective evaluative activities • All members of the school community have a shared understanding of the priorities for the year ahead • Systems to track attainment and achievement for the year ahead refreshed • Celebration of the achievements of our young people – affirmation of school vision, values and ethos	• Whole school SQUIP, Calendar and WTA in place. Agreement on key working groups. Remit devised for each working group which addresses outcomes in the SQUIP • Faculty Improvement Plans (FIPs) completed. Faculty Quality Improvement Calendar completed • P7 Transition Visits • New S1 tracking set up – use of P7 CfE levels and SNSA data. Used to inform BGE literacy and numeracy tracker • Tracking systems set up • Agree Partnership Forum meeting schedule • Prize Giving
July		

Appendix C Examples of Evaluative Statements to support evaluative writing.

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change - Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Approaches to Leadership	SLT need to work collegiately with staff across the school and local authority. Senior Leaders need more effective approaches to leading and managing change.	The SLT use caring and inclusive leadership styles and have an enthusiastic team working together to improve the life chances of all their learners.	We are ambitious for the children. With staff, SLT have implemented a number of initiatives designed to equip children with the skills and attributes they need to succeed in the future	We are committed to ensuring that we achieve the highest possible standards and success for all learners.	Sector leading
Vision and Values	Our vision, values and aims should reflect national expectations and be relevant to the unique context of the setting.	The core values are becoming more apparent in the everyday life of the school.	The vision, values and aims have children's wellbeing as a core feature and are central to the drive for improvement across the school and nursery.	Our vision evolves through ongoing reflection and debate across the school and community. As a result of this active collaboration the school and community have ownership of the vision, values and aims.	
Senior Leadership	Senior leaders should consult more widely to reflect the views of all stakeholders. Importantly, we should ensure a clear strategic overview of improvement priorities and effective procedures to evaluate impact.	Staff are beginning to have stronger sense of purpose and are keen to participate in improvement activities which will help the school to move forward.	The strong leadership of the Head Teacher and SLT has enabled the school and wider community to develop and promote their vision.	Senior leaders provide strong leadership which has enabled our school and wider community to develop, promote and sustain an aspirational vision which underpins our continuous improvement.	
Teacher Leadership	Middle leaders need to be more involved in contributing to and leading school decision-making and dialogue linked to delivering the school's vision, values and aims.	Staff are beginning to have stronger sense of purpose and are keen to participate in improvement activities which will help the school to move forward.	Staff report that the vision, values and aims provides them with a clear sense of direction and common shared purpose. As a result of this most of the school community having a shared understanding of what the school is trying to achieve.	All staff show commitment to shared educational values and professional standards.	
School context	The school has not taken appropriate account of the social, economic, and cultural context in which children and families live when prioritising its work.	Some staff understand the social, economic, and cultural context well, however this needs to be more consistently understood by all staff.	Staff have a sound understanding of the social, economic, and cultural context in which children and families live. This helps them to deliver the school's vision, values and aims.	These are shaped by our clear understanding of the social, economic, and cultural context in which children, young people and their families live alongside our awareness of current policy and practice.	
Impact	There is a need for the community to develop an appropriate and motivating school vision, values and aims to underpin all its work. This will bring a greater sense of coherence to the life of the school, helping all stakeholders to develop a common understanding about the school's core aspirations.	The senior leadership team use the vision, and values of the school to evaluate improvements. This requires to be more fully established with the wider staff group.	The Head Teacher and staff use the updated values and aims increasingly well to inform and evaluate improvements.	Through effective leadership at all levels, our school community works together to turn the shared vision into a sustainable reality.	

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change - Strategic planning for continuous improvement

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Culture for change	There is a need for senior leaders to provide clear leadership and direction in relation to improving the school's curriculum pathways.	The Head Teacher is beginning to develop a culture where a greater number of staff contribute to and at times lead school improvement priorities.	The SLT provide a culture where most staff feel confident to contribute to, and at times lead on, school improvement. Staff across the school are empowered to develop the curriculum within their specialist areas.	Senior leaders create conditions where staff feel confident to initiate well-informed change and are committed to collective responsibility in the process of change.	Sector leading
Effective evaluation to plan change	Most staff are at the early stages of engaging in self-evaluation. There is a need for a more effective whole school approach to identifying and agreeing required improvements	In the last two years many new initiatives and processes have been put in place. We should now evaluate these and reflect on progress before making further changes.	The SLT has a clear direction for improvement of the school, with high expectations of both staff and children. This aspiration contributes strongly to enhancing the nurturing climate and inclusive ethos across the school.	We ensure proposed changes demonstrate the interconnectedness of the school and community in improving learning and outcomes for children and young people.	
Management of change	Senior leaders need to maintain more regular professional dialogue about improvement priorities with middle leaders.	The Head Teacher has guided the strategic direction of improvements and the pace of changes is well-managed most of the time.	The Head Teacher have very effectively guided the strategic direction of improvements for learners and the pace of changes is well-managed.	Senior leaders effectively guide and manage the strategic direction and pace of change.	
Achieving change	We are at the early stages of working with stakeholders to develop a core group of school values. Whilst a number of possible values have been identified, the school needs to continue with its plans to explore these further.	The Head Teacher and senior leadership team need to develop, and articulate, a clear, strategic vision for change which identifies appropriate priorities. Analysis and use of evidence is required to ensure a much stronger focus on setting priorities with measurable impact.	The Head Teacher has rightly identified the need to continue to monitor and measure the impact of change and improvements.	We take good account of assessment of risk to ensure we follow through on strategies for achieving change.	
Collegiate learning	The majority of middle leaders are beginning to manage change more effectively within their departments and faculties.	The majority of PTs are empowered to lead curriculum areas. teacher leadership skills should continue to be developed and used more effectively to improve the school. Staff benefit from the developing culture of collegiate working.	The Head Teacher empowers members of staff to take various leadership opportunities across the school. We need to extend collaborative leadership opportunities for all staff, linked to evidence-based improvements.	We protect time for professional dialogue, collegiate learning, and self-evaluation, so that all members of our school community can contribute to our plans for continuous improvement.	

QI 1.3 Leadership of Change - Implementing improvement and change

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Summary statement	Staff across the school have not received sufficiently clear leadership and guidance around a number of key strategic issues. There is considerable scope for professional learning to have a higher profile.	The Head Teacher requires to promote further a culture of consultation and shared decision making.	Teachers and support staff are encouraged and empowered to embrace leadership. There is an increasing sense of collective responsibility to improve outcomes for all children.	Staff at all levels take responsibility for implementing change and promoting equality and social justice across all their work.	Sector leading
Looking outward	The school requires to be more outward looking by visiting a selection of high-quality settings to observe, reflect on and then implement good practice as appropriate.	The Head Teacher encourages staff to look outwards and to develop their practice by sharing approaches with other schools and colleagues.	Staff work with colleagues in other schools to enhance an outward focus. To develop this further there is now a need for staff to extend their research and include practitioner enquiry to support improvement.	Senior leaders in our school community promote and support innovation, creativity and practitioner enquiry which lead to positive change.	
Equity	A PEF Plan is in place. Senior leaders and staff should ensure that there is rigour in the way they evaluate ongoing work. This needs to have a positive effect on young people's attainment and close the attainment gap.	We have set out clear plans for the use of PEF with the consultation of stakeholders.	Now that a collaborative approach amongst staff is becoming embedded, we need to adopt a brisker pace of change.	We work collaboratively to develop a clear rationale and choose appropriate approaches to effectively facilitate change leading to greater equity for all learners.	
Planning for Self-evaluation	Moving forward, senior leaders should work as a team with all staff to ensure that improvement planning is based on effective self-evaluation. It should provide clear strategic direction for curriculum development and improving learning and teaching.	Self-evaluation practice is needed to be developed and deepened to provide clearer analysis of the school's strengths and the areas they need to improve to ensure a much stronger focus on setting priorities which can provide measurable impact.	Senior leaders now need to increase the rigour in quality assurance and the evaluation of new initiatives. In doing so, we will gain a more accurate picture of how well understood and effective new initiatives and processes are across the school and wider community.	We continually reflect on and develop our practice taking account of our self-evaluation and vision for continuous improvement.	
Self-evaluation including all stakeholders	Staff have taken initial steps to improve approaches to learning and teaching. The full impact of this work is not yet clear. It would be beneficial for staff and young people to create together expectations of what it means to be an effective learner and teacher.	Staff engage in a variety of self-evaluation activities and where practice is positive, learners voice is visible. Young people and parents should have more opportunity to reflect on the school through a broader range of evaluation activities.	Children show confidence in sharing positive developments through the school improvement journey w all. Staff should continue to encourage children to lead and reflect on improvements further, e.g. with the wider community.	Staff, learners, and partners engage regularly in critical and creative thinking. As a result, children and young people have developed increased capacity to respond and adapt to change.	
Professional learning	There is scope to align our professional development needs and interests more closely with improvement priorities. A few members of staff are undertaking professional enquiry and collaborative practice.	Staff are positive about CLPL opportunities provided. Senior leaders need to ensure that time allocated to whole school CLPL is used effectively to inform improvement. Most opportunities are linked to targets within the school improvement plan.	Staff participate in a wide variety of professional dialogue opportunities. To enhance an outward focus, there is now a need for staff to extend their research and include practitioner enquiry to support improvement further.	Practitioner enquiry and creative approaches are integral to the thinking and practice of staff, pupils, and partners.	
Impact of planning for improvement	A school improvement plan is in place which targets appropriate areas of improvement. The plan has very few or no measurable targets. This makes it difficult to evaluate the progress of school improvement over time.	Senior leaders' analysis of departmental evaluations is needed to inform future improvement priorities. Faculty PTs and senior leaders need to evaluate improvement plans regularly and critical reflection should take place.	Further work is also needed to ensure new initiatives and processes have an impact on children's progress and learning.	We have effective strategies in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of changes on outcomes for learners and the work of our school.	

QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment - Learning and engagement

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Summary statement	There is a need to improve the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the school.	Learning and teaching is an important priority for the school and work is ongoing in this area.	The school should develop further its approaches to learning, teaching and assessment to ensure all children receive an appropriate level of pace and challenge to maximise their progress.	Examples of outstanding learning and teaching practices are evident which are impacting positively on outcomes for children and young people. The existing collaborative approaches mean that the school is ideally places to spread this practice more widely.	Sector leading
Culture, ethos and relationships	Although there are some caring and supportive relationships across the school, all staff would benefit from professional development to improve their approaches to promoting positive behaviour.	Most staff create a positive and caring ethos to support and nurture young people. This is underpinned by the school's core values of ambition and respect.	The school has a welcoming ethos which is underpinned by shared values and these are demonstrated by all members of the school community almost all of the time.	Very positive relationships between staff and young people, and between the young people themselves, underpin all aspects of learning in the school. This culture of mutual respect enables almost all learners to demonstrate the shared values of the school.	
Learner engagement	In a few lessons young people have the opportunity to lead their learning by deciding which topic they will learn about. However, most young people are not yet aware of their strengths and next steps in their learning.	The majority of children are positive about the ways in which they learn and most children are aware of how target setting supports their learning.	Most learners engage positively when learning activities are planned well and matched appropriately to their needs. Young people have a clear understanding of the purpose of their learning and what is expected of them.	Our children and young people are eager and active participants who are fully engaged, resilient, highly motivated and interact well during activities. They understand the purpose of their learning and have opportunities to lead this.	
Pace, challenge, and relevance to learning	Planned learning requires a greater focus on the relevance of learning activities. All staff would benefit from support in understanding how to pace learning appropriately for groups and individual learners.	Teachers across all departments need to use a variety of engaging and creative teaching approaches and ensure that tasks and activities provide appropriate pace, support, and challenge for all young people.	In a few lessons, young people would benefit from more pace and challenge in their learning.	Learners' experiences are appropriately challenging and enjoyable and well matched to their needs and interests. In almost all lessons young people understand the purpose and relevance of their learning.	
Learner use of digital technology	Some children are developing skills in the use of digital technologies to support their learning. There is scope to introduce children to a widening range of learning through digital technologies and for teaching to be enhanced through its increased use.	Most children are confident when using digital technology to consolidate and support their learning in literacy. A greater opportunity to use digital tools to enhance learning experiences across the curriculum is required.	Young people use digital technology to support and enhance their learning in most classes. Children speak positively about the regular access they have to technology across an increasing number of curricular areas. Pupils should be provided greater opportunity to lead learning within this area.	The learners exercise choice, including the appropriate use of digital technology across all aspects of the curriculum, and take increasing responsibility as they become more independent in their learning.	
Learner Leadership	The children across the school are developing aspects of leadership and the senior leadership team are aware that there now needs to be a stronger focus on including the pupil voice in all aspects of the school.	There is a growing evidence of the contribution of pupil voice. Children are developing skills relevant to leadership and citizenship through opportunities to contribute to the life of the school. Children can identify some skills they are developing through these experiences.	Most children report that the school listens well to their views. They speak positively about the ways in which their voice is heard through a range of committees. The majority of children consider that their views are acted upon.	Learners contribute effectively to the life of the school and wider community in a range of well-planned activities. They know that their views are sought, valued, and acted upon.	

QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment - Quality of teaching

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Summary statement	Staff need to raise expectations of what young people can do and are able to achieve.	Examples of strong and effective practice should be shared across the school. Most lesson activities are teacher-led with learners being too passive	Teachers successfully ensure that children's learning is motivating and meaningful. This includes using the outdoor environment well to deliver a variety of learning.	Our teaching is underpinned by our shared school vision and values. We use a wide range of learning environments and creative teaching approaches.	Sector leading
Range of teaching approaches	In most classes learning is too teacher led and children and young people are passive in their learning and require opportunities to lead their learning.	The majority of lessons are overly teacher led which results in young people being too passive in their learning.	Teachers should continue to increase the range of teaching approaches to ensure that young people experience a variety of ways to learn.	We use a wide range of learning environments and creative teaching approaches.	
Digital technology used to enhance learning	Children are provided with few opportunities to engage with digital resources to enhance learning.	Teacher presentations were enhanced by visual resources displayed on the interactive whiteboards.	In the majority of classes, teachers use digital technologies well to enhance teaching.	Learning is enriched and supported by our effective use of digital technologies across the whole school.	
Delivery of learning, explanations, and instruction	In the majority of lessons tasks are too teacher directed and not challenging children's understanding or capacity to learn.	Most teachers deliver well-structured lessons on a whole class basis, with clear explanations and instructions. Children need to be given regular opportunities to become more independent and to lead their learning.	In most classes, children participate willingly in a variety of tasks. Almost all teachers provide clear explanations and instructions.	In all lessons, teacher explanations and instructions are clear. They share what is to be learned and how children can achieve success.	
Questioning	Teacher questioning could be more challenging with the use of higher order thinking skills to extend learning. This would also support children in applying learning in new and unfamiliar situations.	In a minority of lessons, teachers demonstrate skilled use of questioning to support children to develop higher order thinking. This practice should be shared further across the school.	Most teachers use questioning very well to promote higher order thinking.	We use skilled questioning and engagement to promote curiosity, independence, and confidence and to regularly enable higher-order thinking skills in all learners.	
Purpose and relevance of learning	Whilst there are a few positive examples, children are still not completely clear about what they are learning in classes. They cannot yet clearly explain how they might achieve a positive outcome in a task.	All teachers should continue to ensure the purpose of learning is made explicit by relating it to skills for learning, life, and work. Tasks should focus on skill development or stimulating thinking and problem-solving in learners.	Most children understand the purpose of their daily tasks. A few older children can articulate well how their numeracy and literacy skills help them in real life situations. However, children are not yet confident to talk about skills for learning, life and work.	Children have an increasing number of opportunities to learn and apply new skills in a variety of real-life contexts. Pupils work individually, in pairs and collaborate well in groups.	
Differentiation of learning	Lessons need to be differentiated more effectively to ensure learning is appropriately challenging and meets individual needs. There are missed opportunities during lessons, where teachers could extend and develop the breadth and depth of children's learning.	In a few classes, the majority of learners' experiences are matched to their needs and interests. Improved differentiation is required to ensure appropriate levels of challenge and support are in place for all children.	In the majority of lessons, staff effectively plan differentiated activities and tasks, which meet the needs of all learners. Staff should consider how they plan for composite classes to ensure appropriate pace, challenge, and support.	We observe learners closely to inform appropriate and well-timed interventions and future learning.	

Feedback for learners	Most young people are not yet aware of their strengths and next steps in their learning. Feedback provided by teachers needs to focus more on what young people can do well and what they need to do to improve.	A few teachers provide a range of verbal and written feedback and where this is most effective it helps children understand their progress.	In the best examples of feedback, staff frame this well to support children to have a clear understanding of their next steps in learning. There are positive examples of children making use of targets and peer and self-assessment to take forward their learning.	Teachers provide support and challenge through a range of feedback strategies, both verbal and written. Across the school these include ongoing feedback and discussion with young people in class, as well as after homework exercises and assessments.	

QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment - Effective use of assessment

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Summary statement	The school is at an early stage of gathering and using assessment information. It is important to develop a framework of assessment to make improved links with children's next steps in learning.	In key areas of the curriculum, assessment evidence is overly geared towards narrow requirements of a pre-defined check-up or written test. Much remains to be done to ensure that children are aware of their strengths and next steps in learning.	There is evidence of developing practice in the BGE where departments are revisiting their courses to reflect national standards. This, however, is not yet consistent.	Assessment is integral to our planning of learning and teaching.	Sector leading
Assessment Approaches	In a few lessons, teachers use effective questioning well to develop young people's thinking. This practice should be shared more widely across the school. The school should consider how to make planning more directly linked to children's needs, progress, and achievements.	Following guidance from the school's assessment position statement, teachers should use a range of formative and summative approaches, including standardised assessments, to assess children's progress in literacy and numeracy throughout the year. There is scope to develop the use of holistic assessments, where children apply their skills across a range of curricular areas, to demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Across the curriculum, a range of assessment approaches are being used effectively to capture the progress being made by learners. In the BGE, this could be developed further to ensure assessment evidence is robust and reliable and demonstrates breadth, challenge, and application of learning.	We use a variety of assessment approaches to allow learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes, and capabilities in different contexts across the curriculum. Children are able to effectively review how successful they have been. Teachers use questioning effectively to check understanding and build on prior learning.	
Impact of assessment on planning	Teachers now need to develop further their approaches to assessment across the curriculum. This will help provide accurate information on how well young people are progressing in all areas of their learning.	In a few classes, there is evidence of assessment information gathered being used to plan and adapt learning. Assessment information should now be used more effectively by teachers across the school to better plan and differentiate learning experiences and activities.	In the best practice, assessment is integral to teachers' planning of learning and teaching. The majority of teachers identify clear key assessment tasks at the outset of a teaching block to offer children appropriate experiences to apply their learning in meaningful contexts. Teachers should continue to develop a shared understanding of high-quality assessment and ensure consistency in implementing assessment approaches.	Our assessment evidence is valid and reliable. At key milestones, our assessments provide reliable evidence which we use to report on the progress of all children and young people.	
Moderation	Teachers are at the early stages of engaging in national benchmarks and moderation activities within the school.	A planned strategic approach to moderation in partnership with associated primary schools has been developed to support staff to agree standards in literacy and numeracy. This should be extended into all areas of the curriculum.	Teachers are developing their confidence in using National Benchmarks to support their professional judgement. They need to continue to engage in moderation activity with schools beyond the local area, in order to improve further their shared understanding of national standards and expectations.	Across our learning community we have shared expectations for standards to be achieved and have robust arrangements for moderation across stages and across the curriculum.	

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QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching & Assessment - Planning, tracking and monitoring

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Planning for learning	The school has a variety of formats for teaching plans w hich are updated regularly. The plans make some links to resources and programmes for individual children and describe the learning to be covered.	Teachers plan using the experiences and outcomes for all curricular areas. A progression framew ork for numeracy and mathematics provides a clear pathw ay for learners.	Teachers plan appropriately to effectively meet the needs of children. Their termly plans clearly identify the planned learning and relevant assessments. Teachers plan collaboratively to ensure progression across experiences and outcomes.	Teachers plan appropriately over different timescales to meet the needs of learners across all areas of the curriculum.	Sector leading
Planning w ith the learner	In a few lessons young people have the opportunity to lead their learning by deciding w hich topic they w ill learn about. Teachers need to develop further their approaches to planning to take increased account of w hat young people can do and w hat their interests and aspirations are.	Children are involved in the planning process through identifying w hat they w ould like to learn w ithin a given context.	Most learners are involved in planning learning in most curricular areas.	Learners are fully involved in planning learning.	
Tracking and m onitoring arrangements / processes	Arrangements for tracking and monitoring of young people's progress lacks rigour and provides little useful information. There is a need for senior leaders to develop an overview of children and young people's progress across the curriculum to ensure that appropriate and timely interventions can be planned to improve attainment.	Current arrangements for monitoring and tracking progress allow children who are off track to be identified and appropriate interventions to be put in place. There is a need for a w hole school approach to how teachers monitor and track children's progress in line w ith national guidance.	Teachers have regular, planned opportunities to discuss w ith school leaders, individual children's progress, including those w ho face barriers and challenges. They use information and data effectively to plan next steps for most children. They now need to ensure that approaches to planning and assessment are used to support all children's learning, including those requiring additional challenge, across all areas of the curriculum.	As a result of our manageable processes to monitor and evaluate learners' progress we have clear information on their attainment across all curriculum areas. Teachers have planned meetings w ith the Head Teacher to discuss the progress in learning, pastoral needs and next steps for individual children. This dialogue successfully supports the ongoing self-evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching w ithin the school.	
Im pact of tracking and m onitoring, including those w ith additional challenges	Individualised programmes based on children's prior learning, w ith clearly defined targets w ill make learning more meaningful for children. This approach w ill also help w ith monitoring and tracking to ensure all children make appropriate progress in their learning.	Interventions in place are review ed and any further action required to support children's learning is considered. This is helping teaching staff feel w ell supported by senior leaders to address any barriers to learning in their class. There is scope to ensure these meetings inform subsequent planning of learning, teaching and assessment more effectively to secure greater pace and challenge across the school.	Support staff and the support for learning teacher provide additional assistance for a number of children in each class. Children w ho face additional barriers to learning, particularly in literacy, are supported through a range of planned interventions. This is having a positive effect on improving children's progress in reading and spelling.	There are rigorous conversations between school staff focused on the progress of individual young people, as w ell as monitoring the progress of groups of young people facing additional challenges. Staff know children's strengths and needs very w ell. They use this know ledge very effectively to plan appropriate learning experiences. They meet children's needs w ell through suitably differentiated tasks and activities.	

QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion - Wellbeing

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Summary statement	Work is required to change structures and procedures across pastoral care and learning support. These are required to provided helpful clarity in aligning our work more closely with local and national priorities of wellbeing, inclusion, and equality.	Within our setting there is a welcoming and friendly ethos. Children and families are asked for their views. Parents' suggestions are sought and there is increased use of this feedback to help evaluate the service and to make improvements.	Everyone in the school community shares the responsibility for creating a positive ethos and a climate of respect and trust. All staff recognise that positive relationships and nurturing principles are central to developing a whole school approach to wellbeing.	As a result of our approach to ensuring the wellbeing of all children and young people and their families, we are improving outcomes for children, young people, and their families. Our school community has a shared understanding of wellbeing and in the dignity and worth of every individual.	Sector leading
Wellbeing of all refer to Wellbeing indicators	Currently, at all stages, young people's understanding of the wellbeing indicators is not well enough developed. We must now ensure that all young people have opportunities to self-assess and reflect on their own sense of wellbeing over time.	We are at the early stages of developing a shared understanding of wellbeing amongst young people and staff. Senior leaders recognise that there is scope to extend the use made of the wellbeing indicators across all aspects of school life. Young people need to be familiarised with these.	Almost all children know and understand the language of the wellbeing indicators and reflect regularly on their own wellbeing. They are confident teachers are sensitive and responsive to their needs. Children feel comfortable sharing concerns with an adult in school who knows them well.	We know and can demonstrate that all of our children and young people feel safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. All staff and partners feel valued and supported.	
Quality L&T for all	We need to develop a coherent personal social health education programme that helps children and young people to understand equality and diversity. There is need to review the provision for delivering physical education to ensure this is, high quality.	We need to review our approach to providing universal support to ensure that all young people have regular opportunities to discuss their learning and development with a key adult.	Staff are using an increasing range of strategies, often outwith the classroom environment, to enable children to access their learning. Teachers should continue to monitor closely the effectiveness of these strategies to ensure that all children benefit as intended.	Our learners' benefit from the high-quality education which we provide for all children and young people.	
Relationships of all	All staff need to work closely to ensure they maintain high expectations of children and young people and consistently promote positive behaviour across the school.	Caring and positive relationships are evident across the school, reflective of the revised school vales which underpin the school's work.	Young people report that relationships on the whole are consistently respectful and trusting, with a growing sense of equality and fairness.	Relationships across the school community are very positive and supportive, founded on a climate of mutual respect within a strong sense of community, shared values and high expectations. All staff and partners are proactive in promoting positive relationships in the classroom, playground and wider learning community.	
Children's individual needs and rights	Currently, across classes and within learning areas designated for additional support, the school is not meeting the needs of all young people. At present, the learning experiences within the zones are too variable.	Staff have systems and processes for identifying young people's needs and their barriers to learning. This helps the majority of young people receive support; however these are not yet systematic or rigorous enough to ensure that all young people are provided with the support they require to attain and achieve.	The school has a strong commitment to acknowledging the rights and responsibilities of the individual and the importance of respect for others. Staff and young people in the Justice and Peace group are working to secure rights-based accreditation for the school.	We consider each child and young person as an individual with his/her own needs, risks, and rights. We ensure children and young people are active participants in discussions and decisions which may affect their lives.	

QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion – Fulfilment of statutory duties

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Statutory duties and requirements	Further work is required with all staff to ensure there is a clear understanding of statutory duties and to develop guidance which supports this area.	The senior leadership team are aware of their responsibilities to ensure that practices reflect national guidance and legislation. Arrangements are being developed to ensure that the rights of young people with protected characteristics are being met.	The headteacher has a good understanding of legislative requirements. She ensures that school staff comply with legislation and guidance relating to wellbeing, equality, and inclusion. She ensures all staff all staff are aware of their responsibilities and have undertaken appropriate professional learning.	We comply and actively engage with statutory requirements and codes of practice. Our staff, learners, parents and partners know what is expected in these areas and are involved in fulfilling statutory duties to improve outcomes for children and young people.	Sector leading

QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion – Equality & Inclusion

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Summary statement	Practice across the school is inconsistent regarding staff's role in 'getting it right for every child' and of understanding young people's barriers to learning. This results in a few young people's needs not being met sufficiently well.	Our learners are developing their understanding and acceptance of difference, e.g. through gender neutral approach to social dance, the provision of a gender-neutral toilet and the establishment of an LGBT+ group. We must continue to develop approaches to equalities, including all protected characteristics.	All staff have good awareness of individual children and their families. Most Staff promote equality and inclusion. We ensure that every individual has equal opportunities, to make the most of their talents and abilities. Knowledge of children's needs is having a positive impact on their wellbeing and inclusion.	We ensure inclusion and equality leads to improved outcomes for all learners. All learners are included, engaged and involved in the life of the school.	Sector leading
Inclusion and appropriate support	We should continue to develop strategic approaches to supporting all young people with barriers to learning, including those who are facing significant challenges in their lives. We will develop more collaborative approaches to supporting young people and providing clarity of roles and responsibilities for all staff.	Teachers are at the early stages of helping children to make the connections between learning conversations and individual learning plans.	Teachers identify promptly, children who have barriers to learning and require additional support. Children are supported effectively through individualised learning plans.	All children and young people feel very well supported to do their best. Learners, parents and carers, staff and partners feel that they are treated with respect and in a fair and just manner.	
Equality including support and challenge of discrimination	As a result of an increase in reported incidences of prejudice-based bullying, staff recognised the need to address this and to promote a more inclusive approach for all across the school. Young people are beginning to discuss issues relating to protected characteristics in PSD lessons and this is leading to a reduction in the number of incidences.	Children are not confident in their ability to recognise and challenge discrimination, should they become aware of it. Teachers need to ensure that the curriculum offers sufficient, explicit opportunities for children to develop greater awareness of diversity and discrimination.	Children learn about the importance of respecting differences in a variety of ways. They are developing an understanding of equalities through the rights-based approach to learning. The majority of children feel that other children treat them fairly and with respect.	We understand, value and celebrate diversity and challenge discrimination. In our school age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation are not barriers to participation and achievement.	

QI 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement - Attainment in literacy and numeracy

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Raising attainment over time across all curricular areas	Senior leaders have identified correctly the need to urgently introduce a robust monitoring and tracking system.	Overall attainment across our school is satisfactory and is weak in some areas. Staff need to ensure children experience a broader curriculum to support wider attainment.	Our data demonstrates that attainment has fluctuated in some areas of the curriculum. However, overall, there is an improving pattern in levels of attainment across numeracy, reading and writing.	Across all curriculum areas we have raised attainment continuously over time and/or maintained consistently high standards of attainment for all learners.	Sector leading
Learners Progress from prior levels over time	At present, we cannot evidence progress over time for young people in the BGE.	Staff are at an early stage in using and analysing data to both support their judgement of achieving a level and to identify effective interventions to raise attainment.	We evaluate accurately children's progress from prior learning, and this is showing an improving picture.	Learners make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment.	
Effective and shared use of assessment to make judgements about learning	Staff have identified correctly the need to develop the approaches to assessment. There is a need to develop further moderation opportunities within and beyond the school to support staff make more reliable judgements.	In order to ensure greater consistency and reliability of staff professional judgement in achieving a CfE level, teachers should now engage further with a variety of moderation activities and National Benchmarks.	Analysis of the attainment of different cohorts of children, as they move through the school, is needed to provide additional useful information to support senior leaders and teachers to identify any patterns of attainment or gaps in learning for different groups of children	Our staff make effective use of assessments and their shared understanding of standards to make confident professional judgements about how well children and young people are learning and progressing.	
Tracking systems and interventions	Staff need support from the leadership team now to use collated data effectively to help them close identified gaps in learning to raise attainment.	Senior leaders have begun to track attainment in literacy and numeracy. This is not yet sufficiently systematic or robust to enable them to make full use of the information collected or to have an accurate overview of attainment over time.	We use a range of accurate data to monitor children's progress over time. Where we have taken steps to address practice, improvements have been made. We do not yet monitor and track children's attainment across other curricular areas.	A robust tracking system together with effective interventions ensures continuous progress for learners across the curriculum and at all phases in their education, including points of transition.	
Attainment of individuals and groups over time	Staff are unable to demonstrate the progress of children as they move through the school based on robust evidence.	The majority of learners are making satisfactory progress over time with a significant number making good progress in numeracy and reading in the middle of the school.	For children with additional barriers to their learning, robust evidence provided by the school shows that most are attaining appropriate to their individual level of needs and making good progress from prior levels of attainment.	The attainment of individuals and groups has improved consistently over time.	

QI 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement - Attainment over time

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Progress from prior levels	The school needs to focus more clearly on raising attainment, in particular for those children who are the most vulnerable.	A few children at the early level and at the beginning of the first level could be making better progress in their learning in literacy and numeracy.	A few learners across stages of our school exceed national standards in aspects of literacy and numeracy. A few learners could be attaining more.	Learners make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.	Sector leading
Raised attainment in literacy & numeracy	There is an urgent need to underpin teachers' judgements with robust and reliable assessment information. The analysis of data from tests, the SNSAs, holistic assessments and teacher's professional judgement have not yet been used to inform targeted interventions to raise attainment.	Overall attainment in reading and mathematics across our school is satisfactory and is weak in writing. However, attainment in writing for those learners in P5 who have achieved the first level is satisfactory.	Overall, children's attainment in literacy and numeracy is good. Children's attainment in reading is very good with most making very good progress.	We have raised attainment in literacy and numeracy for all learners.	

QI 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement - Overall quality of learners' achievement

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Learner Achievements	There is scope to develop a more systematic approach to recognising and celebrating all young people's progress and contributions to school and community life.	The head teacher has taken positive action to provide increased opportunities for wider achievement for all children.	Children's achievements from within school are celebrated at assemblies and through displays.	Overall, our learners are successful, confident, exercise responsibility and contribute to the life of the school, the wider community and as global citizens.	Sector leading
Development of learner skills	Staff need to work with partners to extend the range of awards that young people gain. This will support further the recognition of their skills and achievements.	Learners are encouraged to complete learner profiles, and this is being established more fully across the school community.	All children are invited to nominate themselves for a committee role though a voting system. This process helps children to become aware of their own skills. Senior pupils are developing leadership skills through responsibilities.	Learners are personally and socially adept and have achieved a range of skills and attributes through a wide range of activities.	
Learners taking ownership of individual learning pathways	An effective system of tracking and monitoring is required to assess progression in young people's skills. It would also support them in meeting the needs of those at risk of missing out and building on each individual's achievements.	The Head Teacher records children's wider achievements to ensure all have opportunities and do not miss out. We need to track wider achievements more rigorously to ensure they achieve a range of skills and attributes through a wide range of activities.	In order to help the children to fully recognise, celebrate and acknowledge their own successes and those of others, staff need to develop systems to track and record individual and collective achievements and share these in more consistent ways.	As learners move through their learning pathways, they take increasing responsibility for ensuring they continue to add value to their achievements	

QI 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement - Equity for all learners

	Weak	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Systems which promote equity	The leadership team and staff demonstrate a good awareness of children who may face barriers in their learning due to socio-economic circumstances. However, their progress in learning requires to be tracked in a more robust and rigorous way.	Staff need to use and analyse the data available to class teachers further to help identify ways in which they can reduce such barriers to learning and raise attainment further.	The school needs to identify clearly any attainment gap and ensure that planned interventions are evaluated to show their effectiveness in raising attainment for targeted children.	We have effective systems in place to promote equity of success and achievement for all our children and young people.	Sector leading
Raised attainment of the most disadvantaged learners	Clear interventions need to be put in place for targeted children with the impact of these being monitored closely.	Staff within the school are committed to reducing any gap in attainment as a result of children's socio-economic circumstances.	The staff know the children and families very well and understand the socio-economic context of the local area. Using the school's allocation of PEF, targeted interventions are reducing barriers to children's attainment and achievement.	We have raised the attainment of all our learners and in particular our most disadvantaged children and young people.	
Positive Destinations	The percentage of young people leaving at the end of S4 for a positive destination has been significantly much lower than the virtual comparator school	there is a need to ensure that carefully considered plans are in place so that all young people leave school having attained literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 4 or better.	Senior leaders are committed to ensuring that no child misses out on learning experiences due to financial barriers. Initiatives, such as ensuring all children have access to excursions and PE kit, are leading to more children feeling included and involved.	All our learners consistently move into sustained positive destinations when they leave school.	

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Appendix D – Exemplar formats

PROGRESSION

Resources and Context

Resources are what we need to make improvement progress – in a school setting, this really means the lead and team that will be involved.

Context is the impetus to focus on this area. This could be HMIe priority, stakeholder feedback, qualitative or quantitative evidence etc.

Outputs

Activities

This is what an improvement plan often contains – 'activities' to drive improvement, or things that will get done

Outputs

The output is the end result of the activity – the culminating product or document that concludes the activity

Outcomes

Time 1 | Time 2 | Time 3

It is important to create measurable outcomes or targets to help the school to be sure that the activities/outputs are having an impact.
It may be helpful to first determine the measurable outcomes you want to achieve and then agree what activities and outputs will achieve these outcomes.

Your Logic Model may end up looking a bit like this.

The Dashboard brings together the outcomes described in each of the logic model pages to form one page where measurable progress can be gathered and monitored. This example shows three outcomes per QI, although this isn't necessarily the number that will suit each school context.

Appendix E – Aberdeen City Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

▶ Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection

- We have clear, appropriate, and up to date policies and procedures in place
- All staff take part in regular professional learning to ensure they can confidently respond to any child protection or safeguarding issue

- All staff partners, learners and parents know how to raise a child protection or safeguarding concern
- Approaches to safeguarding and child protection are an important part of our self-evaluation and improvement activities

▶ Arrangements to ensure wellbeing

- The ethos and vision of the school strongly promotes equality
- All learners feel well supported to help themselves and are fully involved in decision making

- We have well embedded systems in place to promote wellbeing across all aspects of school life
- Through the curriculum we use approaches to promote resilience and responsible citizenship which are sensitive and responsive to the individual

▶ National guidance and legislation

- All learners are safe and feel safe in school
- We ensure there are strong, robust, and proactive responses that reduce the risk of harm to learners
- All staff are confident in identifying indicators which may suggest that a child or young person is suffering or is at risk

- Staff can confidently implement ACC Policies and Guidance
- Senior Leaders comply with their child protection duties under legislation
- Our record keeping for all safeguarding matters is maintained to the highest standards

Professional Standards — Engaging Online

ABERDEEN CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Proudly working together as one team to keep children, young people and communities safe, healthy and thriving.

Sidebar tabs: Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection | Arrangements to ensure wellbeing | National guidance and legislation

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2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

▶ Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection

We have clear, appropriate and up to date policies and procedures in place

- Our child protection and safeguarding arrangements are aligned to National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland (2021) and ACC Child Protection & Safeguarding Guidance, One page overview and reviewed at least once a year
- School Business Continuity Plans are in place and address matters relating to emergencies and security incidents to ensure that pupils will be properly cared for and protected should they occur
- ACC Anti Bullying Policy and the Anti-Weapon Policy provide procedural and operational guidance for schools to follow to ensure a consistent approach
- Where necessary, a Person-Centred Risk Assessment is completed so that adequate measures are in place for staff to maintain the security of pupils who pose a higher risk to themselves and those around them
- Attendance monitoring procedures are in place and supported by various policies e.g. Children Missing from Education Policy, Runaway Child Procedure

All staff take part in regular professional learning to ensure they can confidently respond to any child protection or safeguarding issue

- All staff have access to ACC Child Protection & safeguarding Guidance
- All new staff, volunteers and students complete the mandatory corporate ACC Learn modules 'Essential Child Protection, For All Staff Members' and 'Introduction to GIRFEC' within 1 week of their appointment.
- Full education specific service training should be provided within 12 weeks of appointment and thereafter refreshed on a yearly basis
- Senior Leaders have been trained in safeguarding matters to a high level, acting as models of best practice e.g. Prevent Training

All staff, partners, learners and parents know how to raise a child protection or safeguarding concern

- ACC Child Protection and Safeguarding posters are visible within all education settings and on websites, identifying designated safeguarding leads and appropriate contact information
- The above is shared with parents frequently through school newsletters
- The above is referred to regularly with children and young people

Approaches to safeguarding and child protection are an important part of our self-evaluation and improvement activities

- Schools include safeguarding and child protection as part of the self-evaluation process, linking improvement activities to the relevant and appropriate Quality Indicators and looking for any trends in safeguarding data which indicates a need for improvement

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2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

▶ Arrangements to ensure wellbeing

The ethos and vision of the school strongly promotes equality

- We understand, value, and celebrate diversity and challenge discrimination
- In our school age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation are not barriers to participation and achievement and we demonstrate this by engaging with e.g. LGBT Youth Charter, Supporting transgender young people in schools, Promoting race equality and anti-racist education

All learners feel well supported to help themselves and fully involved in decision making

- Learners are active participants in decision making that affects their learning
- All learners have access to a named person to help them with personal issues, whenever they need it
- Learners feel able to raise a complaint relating to their wellbeing, including where this relates to school practice and procedures
- Learners are confident their views will be taken seriously and acted upon

We have well embedded systems in place to promote wellbeing across all aspects of school life

- All staff are confident in their roles and responsibilities in supporting and delivering Health & Wellbeing across the curriculum
- Policies for pastoral care are clear, appropriate, and implemented

Through the curriculum we use approaches to promote resilience and responsible citizenship which are sensitive and responsive to the individual

- Through our Health & Wellbeing Curriculum both discrete and across the wider life of the school, we promote opportunities to problem solve, build resilience, and strengthen interpersonal and personal skills
- Learners are provided opportunities to lead aspects of school life and develop responsibility e.g. Play Leaders, Young Ambassadors, Digital Leads
- Staff build learning opportunities which meet the needs of individual learners

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2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Standard

▶ National guidance and legislation

All learners are safe and feel safe in school

- Learners have an opportunity to regularly reflect on the wellbeing indicators, receiving timely support when concerns are raised
- School security systems are in place and annual review of these are undertaken with HT and H&S colleagues e.g Business Continuity Plans, Fire Safety Risk Assessments
- The Anti-Weapon Policy focuses on prevention, and includes training, promotion, and written agreements with pupils and parents
- All staff are confident in identifying indicators which may suggest that a child or young person is suffering or is at risk

We ensure there are strong, robust and proactive responses that reduce the risk of harm to learners

- We have a clear Anti-bullying policy that aligns with respectme guidance and ACC Anti-bullying policy
- School Risk Assessments are clear, developed based on ACC guidance, in partnership with all relevant staff, shared with all stakeholders and reviewed termly

Staff are confident implementing ACC Policies and Guidance

- Annual review of staff training needs is undertaken in relation to Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Appropriate recording of relevant information through SEEMIS wellbeing application
- All concerns about children and young people are taken seriously, responded to appropriately and acted upon immediately. All sensitive matters are treated with dignity and respect

Senior Leaders comply with their child protection duties under legislation

- One aspect of the role of the Co-ordinator is to oversee the timely delivery of Child Protection training, ensuring accurate records are kept of this professional learning and evaluations of training are undertaken to ensure continuous improvement
- The Child Protection Coordinator should adhere to the principles of information sharing set out in the Data Protection Act 1998
- Safeguarding and Child Protection are the responsibility of all. However, in most cases the Child Protection Co-ordinator will receive concerns from children, staff, students, and volunteers and take action to safeguard children

Our record keeping for all safeguarding matters is maintained to the highest standards

- Designated staff oversee the safe and secure storage and management of information by ensuring that sensitive information is only stored in the SEEMIS Wellbeing App which is only open to those with Named Person responsibilities

Appendix F – Exemplar safeguarding form

QI Visit

This form is to be used when visiting schools to collate information linked to QI 2.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection & QI 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion – Fulfilment of Statutory Duties . The form is to be completed in discussion with HT/SLT by QIO/QIM during school visit.

1. Name of School *

Lochside Academy

2. Please state which month/year your Relationships Policy was last updated. *

Currently being updated. Jo Campbell is the lead. Promoting positive relationships working

3. Child Protection & Safeguarding annual training has been completed by all staff. *

○ Yes
○ No

4. Child Protection Coordinator signage is up to date and visible in all main areas of the school. *

○ Yes
○ No

5. Child Protection & Safeguarding School Policy has been updated/reviewed this session. *

● Yes
○ No

6. Child Protection & Safeguarding School Policy – Appendix 2 'Child Protection & Safeguarding Checklist' has been updated this session. *

○ Yes, RAG rated termly.
○ Yes, RAG rated annually.
● No, not updated yet for this session.

7. What are the arrangements regarding Child Protection and Safeguarding training for staff joining your setting throughout the year? *

Catch up sessions for new staff as needed.

8. How many learners are currently on the Child Protection Register? *

0

9. How many Looked After Children are current on roll? *

9

10. How many learners have CSPs? *

0

11. How many learners have a Child's Plan? *

25

12. How many learners have an IEP? *

118

13. How often are Child's Plans/IEPs reviewed? *

IEPs reviewed termly. Child's plan as needed.

14. Tracking system in place for attendance/lateness? *

● Yes
○ No

15. HT/SLT to share systems for tracking attendance. (HSLO involvement/ pupils currently being monitored through 'Managing Pupil Attendance Policy'. Notes linked to ongoing attendance issues.) *

A new system and policy is being worked through at the moment. Promoting through certif

16. Number of learners who have received ATT3 this session? *

0

17. Number of learners who have received ATT4 this session? *

0

18. Number of learners who have received ATT5 or ATT6 this session? *

0

19. Number of exclusions this session to date? *

46

20. Please state when you last updated the school's Health & Safety Policy. *

Updated in August 2021. Currently in the process of it being updated.

21. Please state when you last updated the Business Continuity Plan. *

Updated in February 2022. Currently in the process of it being updated.

22. How often are workplace health & safety checks conducted? (See 'School Health & Safety Policy' exemplar on SharePoint.) *

Working through this just now. Currently in the process of being updated.

23. Fire Evacuation Record up to date. *

● Yes
○ No

24. Do you have an appropriate number of staff members first-aid trained? (Fewer than 25 employees = 1 first-aid trained, 25-50 = at least one first-aid trained, more than 50 = at least one first-aid trained for every 100 employed). *

9

25. Do you have a process in place to monitor first-aid training update requirements ?

Record of dates of last training and when there is the need to update. This will then be arran

26. Number of staff members first aid trained in ELC? *

9

27. Do staff follow the Administration of Medicines policy/procedures when managing medicines? *

● Yes
○ No

28. Describe the process. (Regular check of register/documents/dates/storage/training needs etc..) *

Talked through with the nurse yearly. The medicines are checked with parents contacted as r

29. Number of learners currently accessing a flexible pathway? *

○ 1
○ 2
○ 3
○ 4
○ 5
○ 0
● 100

30. Do you have any learners in ELC who are currently accessing a flexible pathway?

○ Yes
● No

31. ELC – How many notifications have you submitted to Care Inspectorate via the Eforms system?

0

32. ELC – Have any of these notifications trigged the duty of candour?

○ Yes
● No

33. What is your Care Inspectorate SAT score?

● Low
○ Medium
○ High

34. Do you have a system in place for recording compliments & complaints? *

○ Yes
● No

35. ELC – Do you have a system in place to ensure all ELC staff are SSSC registered (termly check) and all teaching staff have GTCS registration?

● Yes

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Appendix G – Aberdeen City Learning, Teaching and Assessment Standard

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Standard

▶ Learning and Engagement

- We are ambitious for all our learners and strive to create a positive learning environment
  - Collaborative and inclusive relationships (online dialogue)
  - Positive relationships policy (guidance on online safety – Safer Schools, Cybersafe Scotland, UK Safer Internet Centre)
  - Vision and Values
  - Learning environment (engaging, scaffolding, interesting...)
  - Balance of synchronous (real time) and asynchronous teaching and learning

- Our learners are engaged, resilient and highly motivated
  - Well-planned activities take account of prior learning
  - Well-planned activities take account of mental health and wellbeing (greater emphasis on Creativity, HWB and Expressive Arts)
  - Resilience, e.g. Growth Mindset, BounceBack!, The Compassionate, Connected Classroom
  - Learning is relevant

- We ensure learning is appropriately paced, challenging and enjoyable, and is matched to individual needs
  - Knowing our learners and understanding their home circumstances
  - Planned differentiation
  - Support and challenge

- We make appropriate use of a range of resources and supports - including digital technologies - to meet the needs and interests of all our learners
  - Effective use of support staff to support wellbeing
  - Quality questioning
  - Relevance
  - Support services and partner agencies
  - Proportionate use of digital technologies
  - Parent Partnerships

- We support all learners to develop strategies and skills which will enable them to take increasing responsibility for their learning
  - Planning
  - Learning conversations
  - Skills development, including ACC Skills Framework, Developing the Young Workforce, SDS
  - Family learning activities which focus on life skills, e.g. cooking, baking, gardening, making/DIY, budgeting (virtual shopping), etc.

- We plan opportunities for learners to take the initiative, apply critical thinking and demonstrate deep learning
  - Higher order thinking skills
  - Critical thinking, e.g. Philosophy for Children
  - Opportunities for learners to plan and organise their learning

- We create opportunities for all learners to contribute effectively to the life of our setting and wider community
  - Consider the context of the setting
  - Connections with other community members, e.g. businesses, church etc.
  - Awards and programmes
  - Extra-curricular activities
  - HGIOURS
  - Learning shared with families
  - Provide opportunities for learners to share achievements, linking to existing rewards or schemes where possible
  - Community connections, e.g. letters/art work to care home residents/elderly neighbours, FaceTime with family members/friends

- We seek, value and act upon the views of all our learners
  - Pupil participation groups
  - Pupil Voice
  - Learner conversations
  - Regular audits of wellbeing
  - Learner Participation in Educational Settings (3-18), National Improvement Hub

Sidebar tabs: Learning and Engagement | Quality of Teaching | Effective Use of Assessment | Planning, Tracking and Monitoring

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Standard

▶ Quality of Teaching

- Our vision and values are shared with our school community
  - Created through collaboration with stakeholders
  - Relevant to school context
  - Reviewed regularly
  - Evident in the curriculum rationale and associated offer

- Our lessons are planned with explicit success criteria and as a result, learners understand the purpose of their learning and how to achieve success
  - Learning intentions and success criteria evident in every lesson and understood by learners
  - Learning intentions and success
  - Evidence of co-constructed suc...
  - Planned and effective differentia...
  - Appropriate pace and challeng...
  - Timely interventions to support...
  - Learning environment well organised and resources accessible to all

  [highlighted note] When setting digital tasks, success criteria should be explicit to provide clear focus for learners who will be working independently. This also allows learners flexibility in when they complete tasks.

- We use a range of teaching approaches, including digital technologies, to ensure appropriate pace and challenge
  - Both teacher and learners know where learners are on their journey and can identify next steps
  - Account is taken of prior learning
  - Learning intentions and success criteria are shared and known
  - We give clear explanations and instruction and check that all learners understand
  - Teaching is relevant and timely to promote deeper learning
  - Learning is flexible and adaptive based on learners needs
  - Opportunities for pupil led activities
  - Co-operative learning opportunities are planned
  - Direct teaching in groups, whole class as appropriate
  - Scaffolding and modelling used to support learners
  - Digital technologies are used to add value to the learning

- We use skilled questioning to promote deeper understanding and to develop higher order thinking skills
  - Culture of trust within the learning environment
  - Questions are relevant and timely promoting deeper understanding
  - Learners are encouraged to question each other and the teacher
  - Teachers have the confidence to reflect and move on
  - Questioning is multi layered to maximise impact

- We use a range of feedback approaches to ensure learners know their strengths and next steps in learning
  - AifL is used to support future learning
  - Feedback is
    - routinely shared with learners throughout the lesson
    - used to inform the learning and next steps
    - of high quality and linked back to the learning intention and success criteria
    - supportive of learner progress
    - kind, specific and helpful

- We observe learners closely to inform future teaching
  - Observations are
    - targeted
    - purposeful
    - well timed
    - planned
    - used to inform future learning and ensure pace and challenge

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Standard

▶ Effective Use of Assessment

- Assessment is integral to our planning. Milestones, benchmarks and national standards are embedded in success criteria and in our classroom dialogue
  - Assessment is for Learning
  - Quality success criteria
  - Learner friendly benchmarks
  - Learning conversations
  - Assessment is ongoing and timeous

- We assess learners' progress by engaging with learners and making interventions as required
  - Working the classroom: class, group, individual
  - Effective interventions e.g. Support for Learning, specialist resources, PSA deployment

- We use a variety of assessment approaches to allow learners to demonstrate breadth, depth and application of learning
  - High quality questioning
  - Approaches to assessment

- National standards are shared with and understood by our learners. They provide a focus for learning conversations so that our learners have an understanding of their progress and can identify next steps
  - Teacher : teacher, teacher : learner and learner : learner dialogue
  - HGIOURS (part 1) (part 2)
  - Learner friendly benchmarks

- We work with colleagues to share standards and build confidence in making professional judgements on CfE levels/SQA grades (moderation)
  - Professional reading
  - Moderation activities e.g. using Google Slides, Google Meet with school/ASG/LA colleagues
  - Progression frameworks

- Our professional judgements are based on a range of assessment evidence, such as day-to-day learning, home learning and planned assessments
  - Peer assessment
  - Self-assessment
  - SNSA
  - Refreshed milestones
  - Adapted curricula
  - Summative assessment
  - Formative assessment
  - Insight
  - Alternative assessment methods
  - Intervention resources, e.g. TextHelp, ReadingWise etc.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Standard

▶ Planning, Tracking and Monitoring

- We plan to meet the needs of all learners across all areas of the curriculum
  - We plan appropriate pathways based on learners' needs
  - We use all current pupil information to support planning for learners
    - tracking data
    - assessment evidence
    - wellbeing information
    - tracking system
    - IEP as necessary
  - We seek pupil views and involve them in reviewing and planning learning

- Tracking is used effectively to secure improved outcomes for all
  - All staff have access to and make effective use of the data available to improve outcomes for all learners
  - All teachers have well developed skills of data analysis which are focussed on improvement
  - Trackers are updated as part of regular tracking discussions and feature on the Quality Assurance calendar
  - Tracking data is used to measure progress and the impact of interventions
  - Trackers are accessed regularly to support meaningful learning conversations
  - We identify learners who are facing additional challenges and use tracking data to plan and evaluate interventions

- Evidence is used to monitor progress and inform next steps to secure improvement for all
  - Effectiveness of interventions is evaluated regularly through planned professional dialogue.
  - All staff engage in classroom observations providing challenging, robust and honest evaluation of learning
  - Learner attainment is monitored regularly to ensure interventions are timeous and appropriate
  - Through professional dialogue, all staff reflect on their practice

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Consultation Reports: Proposed Catchment Area Changes for Hazlehead Academy, Greenbrae School and Scotstown School
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/196
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	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   To report to the Committee on the outcomes of two recent statutory public consultations, on proposals to make changes to the school catchment areas for (1) Hazlehead Academy and (2) Greenbrae School and Scotstown School.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

2.1   Notes the decision of Council on 13 December 2023, to construct a new 1600 pupil campus on the current Hazlehead Academy playing fields to provide secondary school provision for the Hazlehead and Countesswells Associated School Groups;

2.2   Agrees to implement changes to the existing Countesswells and Hazlehead secondary school catchment areas, as defined within Map 2 in the consultation report at Appendix 1 of this report, to create a new catchment area which will be served by the new Hazlehead Academy, with effect from 1 August 2027; and

2.3   Agrees to implement changes to the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, as defined within Map 2 in the consultation report at Appendix 2 of this report, with effect from 1 August 2024;

3.   CURRENT SITUATION

Hazlehead Academy Consultation

3.1   At its meeting of 21 November 2023, the Education and Children's Services Committee instructed 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.

3.2 At its meeting of 13 December 2023, Council approved in principle the recommended option within an outline business case to construct a new 1600 pupil campus on the current Hazlehead Academy playing fields, to provide secondary school provision for Hazlehead and Countesswells ASGs (Associated School Groups), subject to the outcome of a statutory consultation.

3.3 To fulfil the committee instruction, a public consultation was carried out from 26 February to 22 April 2024.

3.4 A full summary of the responses received during the consultation, along with officers' responses to the issues raised, are contained within the Consultation Report at Appendix 1. The report also contains a copy of Education Scotland's response to the proposal.

3.5 With relation to Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, and having considered all of the information received during the consultation process, officers have reviewed the original proposals to merge the existing secondary school catchment areas for Hazlehead, Countesswells and Kingswells, to form a new catchment area to be served by the planned replacement building for Hazlehead Academy, and have concluded that the proposals are appropriate, and that there is no reason to change them.

3.6 It is recommended that the proposed changes to the catchment areas should be implemented from 1 August 2027. It is anticipated that the new school building will be open to pupils from the end of 2027, and making the changes to the catchment areas from 1 August that year will ensure that new S1 pupils from Kingswells are able to join the school from the start of the new school session (as this would be their zoned school), and transfer to the new building along with all other pupils as soon as it opens. If necessary, temporary arrangements would be made to ensure there is sufficient additional space in the existing building to accommodate the higher pupil numbers, until the transfer to the new building is complete.

3.7 If the proposals for the new catchment area for Hazlehead Academy are accepted, officers will continue to monitor the situation and the numbers of pupils living within Countesswells on a regular basis, and any requirements for additional education provision to be established to serve the needs of the growing community will be brought forward for further consideration as the need arises.

3.8 In summary, it is recommended that the decision to establish a new replacement building for Hazlehead Academy is confirmed, and that the existing catchment areas for the Countesswells ASG and Hazlehead ASG should be merged, to form a new single catchment area to be served by the replacement Hazlehead Academy building, with effect from 1 August 2027.

Greenbrae School / Scotstown School Consultation

3.9   At its meeting of 12 September 2023, the Education and Children's Services Committee instructed the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a public consultation on a proposal to alter the school catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, so that they aligned with the city boundary and no longer extended beyond it into Aberdeenshire.

3.10   To fulfil this instruction, a public consultation was carried out from 19 February to 15 April 2024.

3.11   A full summary of the responses received during the consultation, along with officers' responses to the issues raised, are contained within the Consultation Report at Appendix 2. The report also contains a copy of Education Scotland's response to the proposal.

3.12   With relation to Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, and having considered all of the information received during the consultation process, officers have reviewed the original proposals to alter the school catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, and have concluded that the proposals are appropriate, and that there is no reason to change them.

3.13   In summary, it is recommended that the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School should be changed, so that they align with the city boundary and no longer extend into parts of Aberdeenshire, and that the changes should take effect from 1 August 2024.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   A proposal to make changes to the catchment area of a school 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.

5.2   Both public consultations have complied with these requirements of the 2010 Act. As the proposals do not refer to the proposed closure of any school, any decision to implement them by this Committee cannot be called in by Scottish Ministers. A complaint may be made to Scottish Ministers under section 70 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 where it is alleged that an Education Authority has failed to comply with obligations placed upon it by the 2010 Act. In such instances, if satisfied the Authority is in default the Scottish Ministers may make an order requiring that the statutory duty be carried out.

5.3   Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of every education authority to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education and further education. Section 28 of the 1980 Act provides that in the exercise and performance of their powers and duties under the Act, education authorities shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of suitable instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   A decision to combine the catchment areas for the Hazlehead and Countesswells ASGs is likely to result in an increase in the number of children from Countesswells travelling farther distances to reach their school at Hazlehead, compared with their travel distance if a new secondary school at Countesswells was to be established. These increased journey distances and journey times may have a small negative impact on the local environment, although sustainable methods of travel to school will be encouraged and supported where possible.

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	No significant risks identified			
Compliance	Risk that the Council is seen to make significant changes to schools	All aspects of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 have been complied with. Regard has been had to statutory duties set out in	L	**Yes**

	without considering the views of stakeholders. Risk of successful legal challenge for failing to comply with statutory duties.	the 2010 Act set out above and the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. Prescribed legal processes have been followed.		
Operational	Risk that citizens' views are not taken into account when introducing changes to catchment areas	All aspects of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended have been complied with and stakeholders have had the opportunity to comment on proposals. The consultation reports provide an account of the factors taken into consideration by officers which led to the recommendations to proceed with the implementation of changes to catchment areas.	L	**Yes**
Financial	No significant risks identified			
Reputational	Risk that citizens' views are not taken into account when introducing changes to catchment areas	All aspects of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended have been complied with and stakeholders have had the opportunity to comment on proposals. The consultation reports provide an account of the factors taken into consideration by officers which led to the recommendation to proceed with the implementation of changes to catchment areas.	L	**Yes**
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			

8.   OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes 6 to 8 in the LOIP. Clarifying school catchment areas, and ensuring that pupil rolls at the schools concerned are maintained at manageable levels, will assist in the delivery of quality learning and teaching, which will ultimately lead to improved outcomes for young people.

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	A 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, 21 November 2023 & Finance and Resources Committee, 22 November 2023: *Outline Business Case: New Secondary School Provision for Hazlehead and Countesswells* - RES/23/366

10.2   Education Operational Delivery Committee, 12 September 2023: *School Estate Plan Annual Update* - RES/23/282

11.   APPENDICES

11.1   Appendix 1 – Consultation Report: New Hazlehead Academy Campus and alteration of existing secondary school catchment areas for Hazlehead, Countesswells and Kingswells

11.2   Appendix 2 – Consultation Report: Alteration of Catchment Areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

CONSULTATION REPORT

New Hazlehead Academy Campus and alteration of existing secondary school catchment areas for Hazlehead, Countesswells and Kingswells

This Consultation Report has been compiled in response to a public consultation carried out from 26 February to 22 April 2024, relating to the Council's plans to build a new secondary school to replace the existing Hazlehead Academy. The consultation focused on a proposal to make changes to the existing Hazlehead and Countesswells secondary school catchment areas, which also include Kingswells, to create a new catchment area which would be served by the proposed new school.

The document summarises the feedback received on the proposal set out below and Aberdeen City Council's response to the written comments submitted by interested parties, in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Proposal:

To merge the existing secondary school catchment areas for Hazlehead, Countesswells and Kingswells, to form a new catchment area to be served by the planned replacement building for Hazlehead Academy

Maps illustrating the proposed changes to the school catchment boundaries are included at Annex A of this report.

1.   METHODOLOGY

This consultation was conducted in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. All requirements of the legislation have been met.

2.   INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 Public Events

Three public consultation events were held during the consultation period to allow consultees the opportunity to discuss the proposals with officers. The details of these events and the number of people who attended each one are shown below.

Date & Time	Venue	Attendees
Wednesday 20th March 2023, 7pm to 8pm	Kingswells School	32
Thursday 21st March 2023, 7pm to 8pm	Countesswells School	20
Tuesday 26th March 2023, 7pm to 8pm	Hazlehead Academy	11

2.2 Comments Received

156 online questionnaire responses were submitted via the Council's consultation portal, and one response was submitted using a paper version of the online questionnaire. Eight written responses were also received via email, including a submission from Kingswells School Parent Council.

Overall, 75 respondents indicated that they were in support of the proposal, whilst 81 respondents indicated that they were not.

2.3 Issues Raised

The main issues raised in the online and written responses to the consultation and at the public meetings, are summarised below.

Comments from respondents who indicated that they were in agreement with the proposals included:

- **Benefits of the new school:** Some of the respondents mentioned the benefits of having a new school building with better facilities, more space, and a modern design. They also hoped that the new school would help improve educational outcomes.

- **Preference for Hazlehead over Bucksburn:** Some of the respondents from Kingswells expressed their preference for their children to attend Hazlehead Academy over Bucksburn Academy. They cited reasons such as shorter travel distances, easier co-ordination with family life and work, and having access to better facilities at the new school.

- **Concerns about the capacity and size of the new school:** Whilst expressing their overall support for the proposals, some of the respondents expressed concerns about the capacity and size of the new school, given the projected growth of the population in the catchment areas. They wondered if the new school would be able to accommodate all of the pupils without overcrowding or compromising the quality of education.

- **Need for infrastructure and transport improvements:** Some of the respondents who supported the proposal also highlighted the need for infrastructure and transport improvements to support the new school, especially for the pupils coming from Countesswells and Kingswells. They suggested that the Council should provide safe and accessible footpaths, cycle paths, bus

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services, and link roads to connect the new school with the surrounding areas. They also requested that the new school should have a public swimming pool, as the closure of the Hazlehead pool was regretted by many.

Issue of school name and identity: Some people suggested that a new name should be considered for the school to reflect the merged catchment areas, if the changes go ahead. They believe that a new name would help to foster a sense of community and belonging among students from all areas, and promote a fresh start for the new school. This point was also raised in the response from Kingswells School Parent Council.

Comments from respondents who indicated that they were not in agreement with the proposals included:

- **Concerns about the size of the school and its capacity to accommodate all pupils**: Many people including Kingswells School Parent Council expressed concerns that the proposed school would not be large enough to accommodate all pupils from the merged catchment areas. They suggested that the school may quickly reach capacity, leading to overcrowded classrooms and strained resources, which could negatively impact the quality of learning and teaching. Others were concerned that the planned size of the school is too large, and that this will be detrimental to the quality of learning and teaching due to the high numbers of pupils attending the school. They asked whether teaching and management staff numbers would be sufficient for the number of pupils at the school.

- **Concerns about the safety and practicality of transportation to the new school**: Many people raised concerns about the safety and practicality of travelling to the new school. They pointed out that there are no safe walking or cycling routes to the school from certain areas, and questioned whether school transport would be provided.

- **Disappointment about the change in plans for a secondary school in Countesswells**: Several people expressed disappointment about the change in plans for a secondary school at Countesswells. They felt that the original plan to build a secondary school in Countesswells should be pursued, as it would provide a more local and sustainable solution for the growing community.

- **Concerns about the impact on children's education and wellbeing**: Several people expressed concerns about the impact of the proposed changes on children's education and well-being. They were worried that the disruption caused by changing catchment areas could negatively impact children's mental health, academic performance, and social relationships.

- **Concerns about the reputation and performance of Hazlehead Academy**: A small number of people raised concerns about the reputation and perceived performance of Hazlehead Academy. They were worried that the school has a poor reputation for academic achievement, behaviour and discipline, and that merging the catchment areas could exacerbate these issues.

- **Concerns about the impact on traffic and the local community**: Some people expressed concerns about the impact of the proposed changes on traffic and the local community around the site of the school. They worry that the increased number of students and staff traveling to the new school could lead to increased traffic congestion, safety risks, and disruption to the local community.

- **Concerns about the rezoning of Kingsford School**: A small number of respondents had concerns that the proposal would result in children who attend Kingsford School and who live in <u>Sheddocksley</u> no longer being included in the catchment area for Hazlehead Academy.

- **Questions around the timing of the proposed changes**: Some respondents, including Kingswells School Parent Council, were concerned that if the proposed changes to catchment areas were only to be implemented once the new school building has opened, this could result in children from Kingswells requiring to move from Bucksburn Academy to the new school part way through an academic year, which could impact negatively on their education.

2.4 Education Scotland Report

An essential element of the statutory consultation process is the involvement of Education Scotland, whose report is provided as Annex B of this Consultation Report.

In their report, His Majesty's Inspectors agreed that there are educational benefits to the proposal, noting the growing pressures on pupil numbers at Bucksburn Academy and Hazlehead Academy, and acknowledging that the proposed new school would help to address these pressures. The report authors also highlight the benefits to pupils of an enhanced learning environment, with digitally enhanced and accessible learning spaces, which the new school would provide.

The report also noted that a significant number of respondents to the consultation were not in support of the proposals, citing concerns about the size of the proposed new school, and that its capacity may be exceeded within a few years of it opening. The questions raised by stakeholders about school transport arrangements, the potential for the school being given a new name, and what may happen if the new school construction does not run to schedule, were also referred to in the Education Scotland report.

The report suggested that the Council should consult Bòrd na Gàidhlig with reference to the changes which may impact on Gaelic Medium Education at Hazlehead Academy, and that it should continue to liaise with parents and other stakeholders as plans and designs for the new school develop, and to help address the concerns which were raised during the consultation. It also recommended that the Council reviews travel arrangements to ensure that there are safe routes to school for all pupils within the school's catchment area.

3. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD AND CONTAINED WITHIN THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

3.1 Size and capacity of the new school

In response to concerns raised by stakeholders that the school may not be large enough for the number of pupils likely to be attending in the future, if the proposed changes to the catchment area are approved, officers have carefully analysed the available data and recent trends with regard to house building and pupil numbers in this area of the city, and continue to be confident that the proposed new school will be sufficient to accommodate all pupils from the proposed catchment area for the foreseeable future.

There are many factors which have the potential to influence future pupil numbers, and officers will continue to monitor these closely over the coming years, to determine if and when any further secondary school provision may be needed to serve the growing community at Countesswells in particular. Any developments or requirements for further work on this will be provided to Committee members via annual updates to the School Estate Plan.

In terms of the concerns regarding the large size of the new school building potentially having a detrimental impact on learning and teaching, officers provided assurance in the public meetings that the school would be well managed by a staff and management team of sufficient size for the number of pupils attending, and that there would be no detriment to individual pupils' educational experiences. Whilst the proposed school would be the largest in Aberdeen City, there are examples of other similarly sized schools in other parts of Scotland which operate successfully. These include, for example, Inverurie Community Campus, Oban High School, Williamwood High School (East Renfrewshire) and the new Perth and Kinross High School, which is due for completion this summer.

3.2 Transport and travel to the new school

It is acknowledged that arrangements for safely travelling to the new school would need to be carefully considered and clearly communicated to pupils and parents, if the proposals are accepted. As plans for the new school building take shape, work will also be undertaken to establish safe and sustainable routes to school, and officers will work with the relevant Council departments to put clear plans in place, which will be shared with the school communities well in advance of the new school opening.

3.3 Requests to revert back to plans for a new school at Countesswells

The commitment to provide a new secondary school within Countesswells was based on a planned rate of housing construction for this new community which unfortunately has not been achieved to date. This means that the numbers of families and therefore the number of children living in Countesswells is much lower than had been anticipated by this point of the development, and based on progress so far, the rate at which those numbers are likely to continue to grow over the coming years is now also much lower than had been originally expected.

Any new secondary school would require to be built with a capacity of at least 1000 pupils, to help make the project viable but also to ensure that the school can run efficiently and be sufficiently staffed to provide high quality learning and teaching. Currently, there are only approximately 50 secondary school aged children living in Countesswells (of varying ages). If a new school was to be constructed at Countesswells, this would also be attended by pupils living in Kingswells, as and when they reach secondary school age. This would generate a further 50-60 pupils per year who are eligible to attend the new school. Based on these numbers, it would take several years before there would be sufficient numbers of pupils attending the school to make it viable. Running a school with very low pupil numbers would also risk impacting negatively on the quality of learning and teaching that it could provide.

It is likely that house building at Countesswells will continue over the coming years, and that in the long term more families will move in to the area, although the precise rate at which this will happen is less clear. If the proposals for the new catchment area for Hazlehead Academy are accepted, officers will continue to monitor the situation and the numbers of pupils living within Countesswells on a regular basis, and any requirements for additional education provision to be established to serve the needs of the growing community will be brought forward for consideration as the need arises.

3.4 School Performance and impact on children's education and wellbeing

The most recent process of inspection for Hazlehead Academy concluded in July 2023, when HM Inspectors acknowledged both the improvements made by the school, and their confidence in the school's continued capacity for improvement. In relation to performance, data suggests that attainment at Hazlehead Academy is ahead in a number of measures, with young people performing ahead of the virtual comparator in key areas such as literacy and numeracy at Levels 4, 5 and 6.

The measure of *Attainment for all* also shows a three-year picture of improvement for the school, which is often in line with or ahead of the virtual comparator.

As part of the local authority quality improvement processes, officer teams visited Hazlehead Academy in March 2024, and observed "highly positive relationships" evident across the school. Further, the team noted "*Hazlehead Academy's values of confidence, ambition, inclusion and respect are evident through attitudes and behaviours in classrooms and in corridors*."

3.5 Impact on traffic and the local community

The concerns raised by stakeholders about the impact on the road network around the Hazlehead Academy site, as a result of the proposed increase in size of the school, has been noted by officers. If the proposals are accepted, this will be considered as part of the planning application for the new school, and any requirements for improvements to road safety as part of that assessment will need to be implemented prior to the new school building opening. The new school campus design will be exemplar in terms of reducing carbon emissions and will also provide pupils, staff and the wider community with the opportunity for more greener active travel. The design will include elements to encourage sustainable methods of travel to school, including the provision of shower and changing facilities for staff, secure cycling storage, Electrical Vehicle (EV) charging points and infrastructure for future conversion of further spaces to EV. Design measures will be incorporated into the proposals to enhance accessibility through carefully designed walking and cycle routes within and around the site, enabling active travel as a priority over vehicle drop off.

3.6 Consideration of a new name for the school

Officers have noted that a number of respondents to the consultation felt that consideration should be given to renaming the school, to reflect the changes to its catchment area, if the proposals are approved. Whilst renaming the school is not under consideration at this time, it will remain under review, as the project to design and develop the new school building progresses.

3.7 Impact on Sheddocksley and Kingsford School

Feedback received during the consultation from parents of pupils at Kingsford School included some concerns about the possibility of Sheddocksley no longer being included in the catchment area for Hazlehead Academy, if the proposed changes go ahead. The proposed changes to the catchment area do not impact on Sheddocksley or Kingsford School, which would remain part of the Hazlehead Associated Schools Group regardless of whether the proposals are accepted or not. In response to the concerns raised, a message was sent out to all parents at the school in April 2024, to confirm that there are no plans to remove Sheddocksley from the catchment area for Hazlehead Academy.

3.8 Consideration of timing for the proposed changes

Officers acknowledge and understand the concerns raised during the consultation by some parents about the possible timing of a move to the new school building, especially for new S1 pupils living in Kingswells. If the new building were to open part way through a school year, this could mean these pupils beginning their S1 year at Bucksburn Academy, before then moving to the new building at Hazlehead when it opens, which would be disruptive to their education.

Having considered this, officers have confirmed that should the proposed changes to the catchment area be accepted, it would be recommended that the changes should take effect from 1 August 2027. This would allow arrangements to be made for pupils from Kingswells to transfer to Hazlehead Academy from the start of the school session in August, even if the new building is not due to open until later in the year. This would enable them to be a part of the school community from the beginning of the school year, and move to the new building along with their peers at Hazlehead once it opens. If necessary, arrangements would be made to ensure there is sufficient additional space in the existing building to accommodate the higher pupil numbers, until the transfer to the new building is complete.

3.9 Contingency plans for potential delays to the build

Some consultees who spoke to HM Inspectors raised questions about contingency planning, if the new school is not completed according to the planned schedule. Whilst the possibility of unexpected delays to a complex and large scale construction project such as this one cannot be ruled out entirely, the project will be carefully planned and programmed to avoid as far as possible such delays impacting on the target completion date. Contingency planning will be an essential part of the overall project planning process, and the priority will be to minimise any impact on learning and teaching. Robust governance and project reporting arrangements will track progress and ensure project timelines are adhered to, any risk of slippage will be assessed and escalated accordingly. Engagement and communication with the school community will continue throughout the duration of the project to ensure the successful delivery of the new school campus.

3.10 Gaelic Medium Education

Officers have made contact with Bòrd na Gàidhlig to share with them plans for the new school and proposed changes to the catchment area.

4.   COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSALS

Following the conclusion of the consultation period, Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, requires the Council to review the relevant proposal, having had regard to any written representations that have been received by it during the consultation period, any oral representations made to it at the public meetings held in March, and Education Scotland's report.

In terms of Section 10(2) (e) of the said Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Consultation Report is required to contain a statement explaining how the Council complied with its duty under the above Section 9(1) of the Act.

With relation to Section 9(1) of the 2010 Act and having considered all of the information received during the consultation process, officers have concluded that the proposed changes to catchment area for Hazlehead Academy remains appropriate, and that there is no reason to change this.

5.   RECOMMENDATION

In summary, it is recommended that the Education and Children's Services Committee agrees to implement the proposed changes to the catchment area for Hazlehead Academy, as defined within the maps at Annex A, with effect from 1 August 2027.
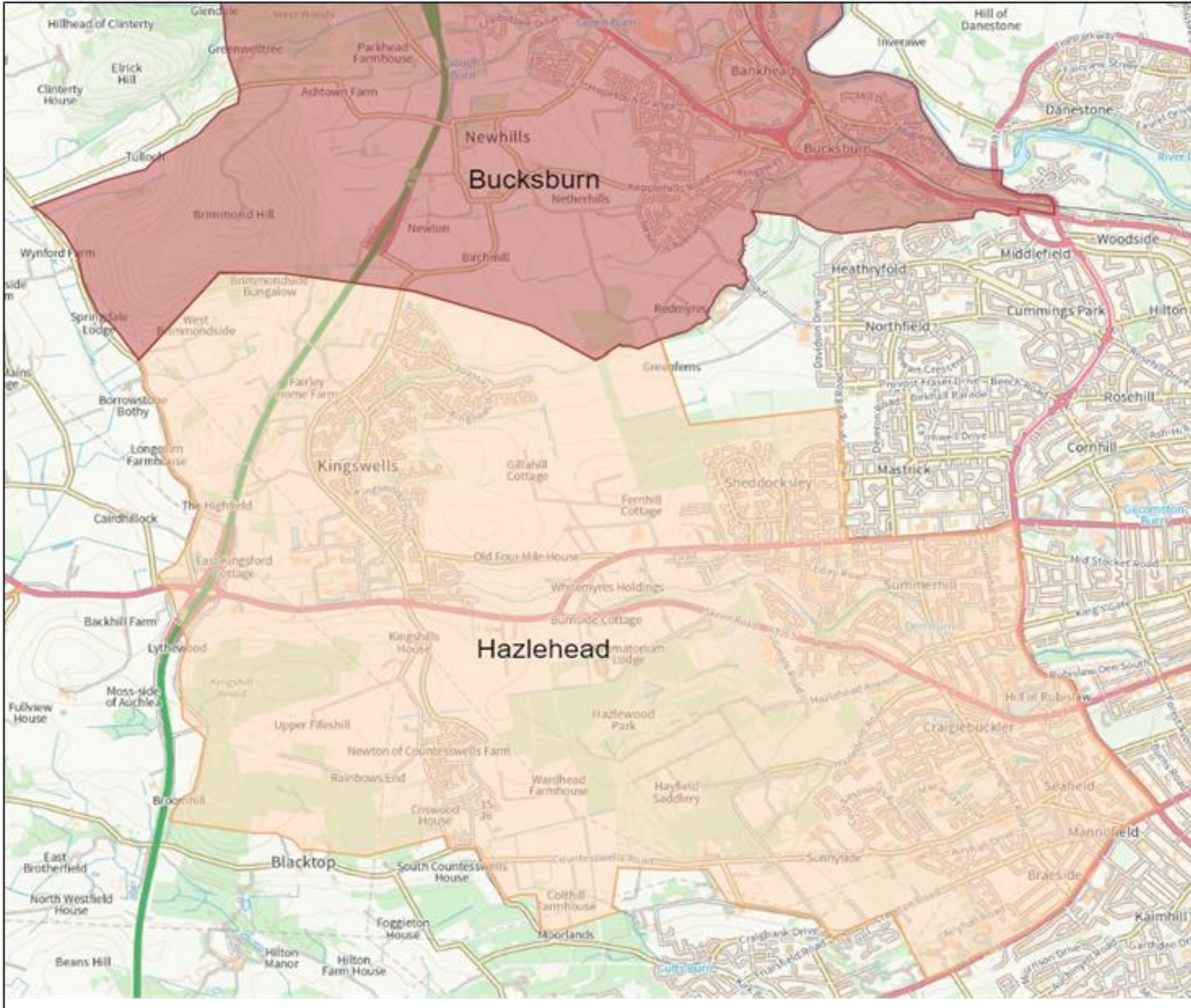
Eleanor Sheppard
Executive Director - Families & Communities
May 2024

Map 1: Current Catchment Areas
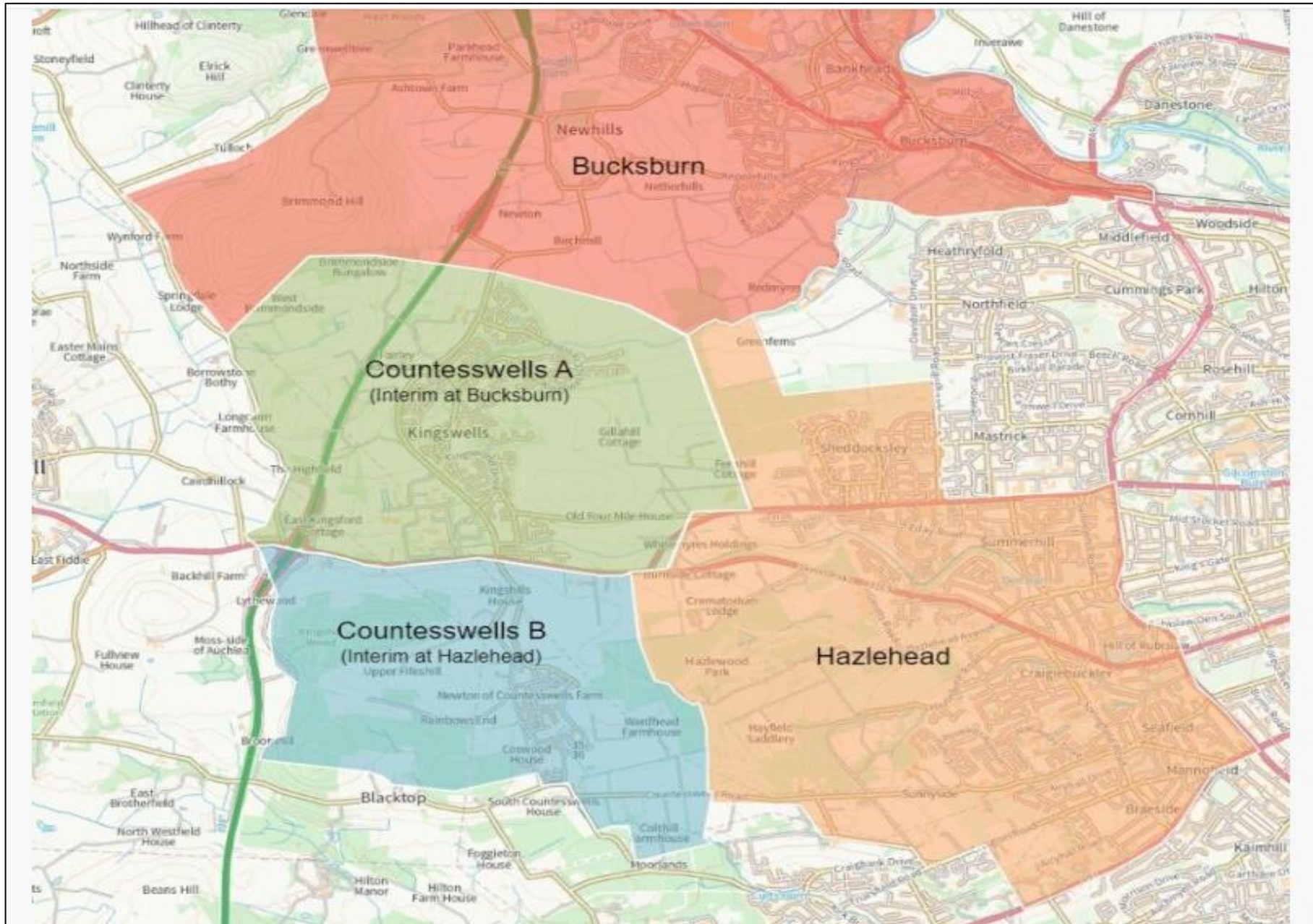
Map 2: Proposed Catchment Areas

REPORT FROM EDUCATION SCOTLAND

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Aberdeen City Council to build a new Hazlehead Academy Campus and alter secondary school catchment areas for Hazlehead, Countesswells and Kingswells.

May 2024

10

1. Introduction

1.1   This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal by Aberdeen City Council to build a new Hazlehead Academy Campus and alter secondary school catchment areas for Hazlehead, Countesswells and Kingswells. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council's consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act.

1.2   HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;

- any other likely effects of the proposal;

- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and

- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3   In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meetings held on 20, 21 and 26 March 2024 in connection with the council's proposals;

- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and

- visits to the site of Countesswells School, Kingswells School, Hazlehead Academy and Bucksburn Academy, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1   Aberdeen City Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

2.2   The public consultation ran from 26 February until 22 April 2024. Copies of the proposal were made available to stakeholders and on the council website. Three public meetings were held in Countesswells School, Kingswells School and Hazlehead Academy. These were attended by 63 stakeholders in total. An online survey gathered 156 responses, most of which were from parents. Six email written comments were also received. In addition, notes were gathered from a discussion at

Kingswells Parent Council about the consultation. Of the online survey responses, 75 agree and 81 disagree with the proposal. Most parents from Kingswells and Countesswells Schools and the majority of parents from Bucksburn and Hazlehead Academies who completed the survey disagree with the proposal. The proposal is a change to the council's original plans to build a new secondary school in Countesswells. The council state this is due to a reduction in housing developments in the area. Stakeholders acknowledge a change in the speed of housing developments. However, many are concerned that the number of children in the area may grow faster than council predictions. Therefore, that the capacity of a new Hazlehead Academy may be exceeded within a few years of it being built. A minority of respondents questioned whether two smaller schools, at Hazlehead and Countesswells, would still be better than one larger school.

2.3   During the public meetings, and in their written and online responses, stakeholders raised a number of other queries. Several stakeholders expressed concern about how large the new catchment area for Hazlehead Academy will be if the proposal is agreed. Stakeholders asked questions about school transport arrangements and whether the new school should still be called Hazlehead Academy. A few parents are worried about the potential additional costs of young people moving secondary school, such as buying a second school uniform. Several stakeholders queried what will happen if the new build does not run to schedule. A few stakeholders suggested wider school catchment changes. It may be helpful for the council to provide further information in its consultation report to help address questions and queries. For example, showing the full current catchment areas for both academies and information about the contingency plans for any delay in the build.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1   HM Inspectors agree there are educational benefits to this proposal. There are growing pressures on the school roll at Bucksburn and Hazlehead Academies. Increasing the capacity of Hazlehead Academy and adjusting the catchment area to include Kingswells School will help to address these issues. The proposed new school should also provide an enhanced learning environment, such as having more digitally enabled and accessible spaces. It also provides the opportunity to expand the area available for the two city-wide provisions that are held in the school. These are for Gaelic Medium Education and the Scottish Football Association programme. The council should confirm that the proposed arrangements take account of there being suitable and sufficient capacity for immersion education for Gaelic. This would be for the city-wide catchment area that has been established. In so doing, they should consult Bòrd na Gàidhlig as required by the 2010 Act on a change of arrangement for Gaelic.

3.2   Almost all stakeholders, that met with HM Inspectors, agree that a new school building would be of benefit to young people attending Hazlehead Academy. Children and young people are clear about the need for the new school to be welcoming and inclusive. They suggest that a new school should include aspects such as quiet spaces for those who may struggle to learn within larger classes and adequate outdoor space for both sports and socialising with friends. Staff at Hazlehead Academy who spoke to HM Inspectors are positive about the opportunities that a new school building would open up, such as increased space to support young people with additional support needs (ASN). Extending the catchment of Hazlehead Academy may increase the numbers of young people who have barriers to learning and require additional support to reach their potential. If the proposal is agreed the council will need to ensure the that there is the correct level of accommodation and staffing to support this and to meet the duties in the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act. A few stakeholders are concerned about safety and noise, given the proposal for the new school to be built near the existing school. Stakeholders would welcome the council providing further details about the school design. All stakeholders, who spoke to HM Inspectors, would like to be consulted on the designs for the new school should this proposal be accepted.

3.3   Children at Kingswells School, who spoke to HM Inspectors, have mixed views about the proposal to rezone their school from Bucksburn Academy to Hazlehead Academy. Those who have

older siblings who are currently at Bucksburn Academy are not sure if they would prefer to go to the same school as them, or move with their friends. They are aware that the council state that if the proposal is accepted then all young people from the Kingswells catchment already attending Bucksburn Academy will be able to continue to do so. Also that their younger siblings will be able to choose to go to Bucksburn Academy. Young people and their parents are clear that for young people to be able to do this, the school transport currently used to get to Bucksburn Academy would need to continue.

3.4   Parents who spoke to HM Inspectors at Kingswells School raised concerns about the travel arrangements to school if this proposal is agreed. There are active travel routes for young people to use between Kingswells and Hazlehead. These include crossing a busy roundabout and main roads. Parents are aware that part of the Kingswells area will be eligible for free school transport. They would like the council to consider widening the eligible areas to include the whole village. They also questioned if public transport could be improved to support young people getting to school and attending out of school activities. If the proposal is agreed the council will need to review the travel arrangements to make sure there are safe routes to school for all young people.

3.5   Headteachers and staff at all four schools, that met with HM Inspectors, are confident in delivering effective transition arrangements for young people moving from primary school to either of the secondary schools. The headteacher and staff at Hazlehead Academy are also confident they can provide effective transition from the existing school building to a new school site. Stakeholders, that spoke to HM Inspectors, are concerned about arrangements if the new Hazlehead Academy opens part of the way through the school year. In particular, they are worried that young people could start S1 at Bucksburn Academy and then move to Hazlehead Academy. HM Inspectors agree this may be stressful for the young people, as well as challenging for both academies. HM Inspectors suggest that, if possible, this should be avoided by the council.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree there are educational benefits to this proposal. If it is agreed, the change to school catchments and a new, larger Hazlehead Academy will help to address secondary school capacity issues in the area. The new school should provide an enhanced learning environment. It also offers the opportunity to provide more suitable accommodation for the city-wide programmes which run at the school, and for those young people with ASN. However, the council will need to continue to liaise with relevant stakeholders to address their concerns. This includes the potential for longer term capacity issues across the wider area, travel and transition arrangements. If this proposal is agreed, the council will need to work with Hazlehead and Bucksburn Academies to ensure the transition for those at Kingswells School is well supported and straightforward. The council should continue with their plans to involve stakeholders in the design and development of any new school.

HM Inspectors
May 2024

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CONSULTATION REPORT
Alteration of Catchment Areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School

This Consultation Report has been compiled in response to a public consultation carried out from 19 February to 15 April 2024, on proposals to make changes to the school catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School in Aberdeen City, so that two 'dual zone' areas extending into parts of Aberdeenshire, are removed.

The document summarises the feedback received on the proposals set out below and Aberdeen City Council's response to the written comments submitted by interested parties, in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Proposals:

To alter the school catchment area for Greenbrae School, so that the northern edge of the catchment area aligns with the Aberdeen City boundary, and so that the catchment area no longer includes land within Aberdeenshire;

And:

To alter the school catchment area for Scotstown School, so that the northern edge of the catchment area aligns with the Aberdeen City boundary; and so that the catchment area no longer includes land within Aberdeenshire.

Maps illustrating the proposed changes to the school catchment boundaries are included at Annex A of this report.

1. METHODOLOGY

This consultation was conducted in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. All requirements of the legislation have been met.

2. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 Public Event

A public consultation event to discuss the proposals was arranged on 13 March 2024, at 7.00pm at Bridge of Don Academy. It was not attended by any members of the public.

2.2 Comments Received

Twelve responses to the consultation were submitted to the Council, by email or via the Council's online consultation portal. These included a response from Bridge of Don Community Council.

Overall, eight respondents indicated that they were in support of the proposal, whilst two respondents indicated that they were not.

2.3 Issues Raised

The main issues raised in the written responses to the consultation, are summarised below.

Comments from respondents who indicated that they were in support of the proposed catchment area changes, focused on concerns about Scotstown School not having sufficient pupil capacity. Each of these respondents who provided a comment felt that the proposed changes to the catchment areas would help reduce the risk of the school becoming overcrowded.

One of the respondents who stated that they were not in agreement with the proposal, highlighted a concern about the availability of nursery places, as their perception was that the proposed changes would remove options for 8am to 5pm Nursery provision.

In its response to the consultation, Bridge of Don Community Council queried whether there would be any changes to secondary school catchment areas, as a result of the changes proposed for the two primary schools, as there was a concern that the changes could mean that children attending the same primary school may be living in different secondary school catchment areas, and would be unable to attend the same secondary school as their friends.

2.4 Education Scotland Report

An essential element of the statutory consultation process is the involvement of Education Scotland, whose report is provided as Annex B of this Consultation Report.

In its report, Education Scotland noted that the proposed changes to the school catchment areas would assist with more accurate forecasting of school rolls, which would support the Council in managing staffing levels, pupil numbers and class sizes.

It was also noted that the proposed changes would help provide clarity for parents and children about future school enrolment.

HM Inspectors met with some children and staff at the affected schools to discuss the proposals, all of whom were in support of the proposed changes.

In summary, the report states that HM Inspectors agree with the educational benefits of the proposed changes which were set out by the Council. It was also suggested that the Council provides more information in its consultation report on future plans relating to secondary school catchment areas for this part of the city.

3. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD AND CONTAINED WITHIN THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

3.1 Concerns around Nursery provision

In relation to the concerns raised by one respondent about Nursery provision being removed, the proposed changes to the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School affect primary school (P1 to P7) provision only, and the availability of nursery places would not be affected by the proposals.

3.2 Secondary school catchment areas

This consultation focused only on proposed changes to primary school catchment areas, and no changes to secondary school catchment areas are proposed at this time. As part of the Council's School Estate Plan, a review of the secondary school provision for Oldmachar, Bridge of Don and Grandhome is expected to begin later in 2024, and this will provide an opportunity to propose bringing the Oldmachar Academy catchment area boundary into line with the City / Shire boundary line, along with any other changes to catchment areas which may become necessary as a result of the review of secondary provision.

In the meantime, any child would be able to make a placing request to attend a different secondary school to the one they are zoned to, if they wished to do so.

Officers have made contact with Bridge of Don Community Council to explain the above and to clarify the situation regarding secondary school catchment areas.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSALS

Following the conclusion of the consultation period, Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, requires the Council to review the relevant proposal, having had regard to any written representations that have been received by it during the consultation period, any oral representations made to it at the public meeting held on 13 March, and Education Scotland's report.

In terms of Section 10(2) (e) of the said Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Consultation Report is required to contain a statement explaining how the Council complied with its duty under the above Section 9(1) of the Act.

With relation to Section 9(1) of the 2010 Act and having considered all of the information received during the consultation process, officers have concluded that the proposed changes to catchment areas remain appropriate, and that there is no reason to change these.

5.   RECOMMENDATION

In summary, it is recommended that the Education and Children's Services Committee agrees to implement the proposed changes to the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, as defined within the maps at Annex A, with effect from 1 August 2024.

Eleanor Sheppard
Executive Director - Families & Communities
May 2024

Map 1: Current Catchment Areas
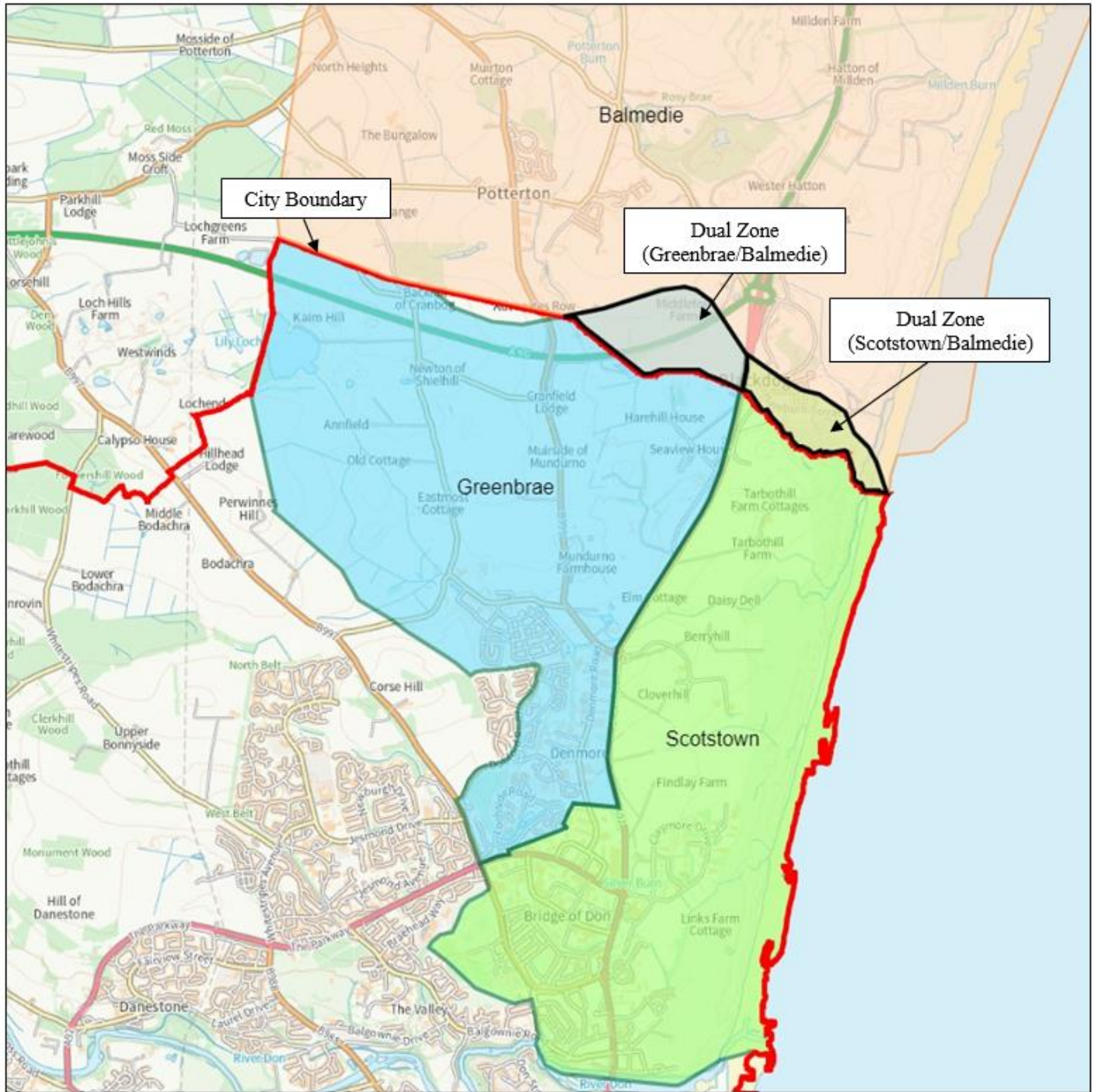
Map 2: Proposed Catchment Areas

REPORT FROM EDUCATION SCOTLAND

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Aberdeen City Council to alter the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School.

April 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal by Aberdeen City Council to alter the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council's consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children in the council area;

- any other likely effects of the proposal;

- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and

- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 13 March 2024 in connection with the council's proposals;

- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and

- visits to the site of Greenbrae School and Scotstown School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Aberdeen City Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

2.2 The public consultation ran from 19 February to 15 April 2024. The proposal was published on the council website, available in a range of council buildings, and a copy sent to relevant consultees. The council held a public meeting on 13 March 2024. No members of the public attended. The council received 10 responses to an online consultation questionnaire and two responses by email. Most stakeholders agree with the proposal. A few people commented that it should help to address potential capacity issues in the future. A few stakeholders raised queries in relation to nursery provision in their local area and secondary school catchment boundaries.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1   The council set out a short educational benefits statement highlighting the impact of the proposal, if approved. HM Inspectors agree that the proposed changes will assist the council to more accurately forecast the size of the school roll in Greenbrae School and Scotstown School. This will support the council to manage better teacher staffing levels, pupil numbers and class sizes. The proposed changes will also provide clearer information for parents and children about future primary school enrolment locally.

3.2   All staff and children that HM Inspectors met with support the proposal. They agree that it is sensible to alter the catchment areas for Greenbrae School and Scotstown School so that they align to the council boundary. No parents took up the opportunity to speak with HM Inspectors.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree with the limited educational benefits set out by the council arising from this proposal. If approved, this will assist the council to more accurately forecast school rolls and more effectively manage pupil numbers and staffing levels. It will also enable the council to provide clearer information for parents and children about future primary school enrolment in the area. Although outside the scope of this proposal, in finalising its consultation report it may be helpful for the council to provide more information about future plans in relation to secondary school catchment areas.

HM Inspectors
April 2024

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Easter in the City Programme 2024
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/189
EXECUTIVE 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 Easter in the City programme 2024 and seeks delegated authority to design and deliver a programme for the upcoming school holiday periods (autumn 2024 and spring 2025). The summer 2024 programme is currently live and evaluation on the impact of the programme will be reported to committee following delivery.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

2.1 note the high level evaluation of the Easter in the City programme;

2.2 instructs the Interim Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to design and deliver a programme for the autumn (2024) and spring (2025) holiday periods using the budget allocated by Council; and

2.3 instructs the Interim Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning to report to Committee on the impact of the summer, autumn (2024) and spring (2025) programmes following delivery.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 An Easter 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, art 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 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 Easter 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 20 March at 12pm and 96% 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 49.7k reach (number of times customers saw the posts on their social media channels). Across the entire campaign we saw 211 likes and 152 shares/retweets. The Easter in the City webpages had 29,744 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 508 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 3529 bookable opportunities. 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 football, beach days, scrambling and included lunch, as well as shorter activities such as dance and art. Figures from the ACC booking system showed over 98% 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 bookings showing participation statistics as follows:
- 28% of children and young people were from lone parent families
- 36% of children and young people were from ethnic minority families
- 14% of children from families with a disabled adult or child (or those with additional support need)
- 10% of children from families with a young parent (under 25)
- 12% 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 delivered by the We Too, Early Intervention services and Sport Aberdeen. 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 programmes.

easter in the City 2024

4,037 bookable opportunities (508 universal spaces)

9.6/10 enjoyment rating from our children and young people

28% of attendees were from lone parent families

36% of attendees were from ethnic minority families

12% of children and young people were from families with a child under 1 year old

10% of attendees were from families with a young parent (under 25)

14% of attendees were from families with a disabled adult or child (or those with additional support need)

32% of attendees were from large families (3+ children)

Total number of meals offered: 2,200

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

3.12   Officers are extremely grateful to all partners listed in para 4.1 who helped deliver a varied and high-quality Easter in the City programme.

3.13   In addition to the Easter in the City activities programme, an Easter 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 Easter in the City programme- that were taking place during the school

holiday, as well as find out more information on free and paid for available activities and discounts with local providers. This webpage was visited 2,124 times since its launch in March 2024, an increase of 290 views from the previous holiday programme page for autumn 2023.

3.14 It is proposed that the Chief Officer – Education and Lifelong Learning be given delegated authority to design and deliver similar programmes for autumn (2024) and spring (2025) and report on the impact of the programmes to the Education and Children's Services Committee following delivery of each programme.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Costs for the Easter in the City programme were met from the resource allocated at Full Council. The total cost of delivery of the Easter 2024 programme was £27,322.96.

Partner	Total Cost
Sport Aberdeen	£ 9,107.96
ASV	£1,000
Techfest	£400
Kidsize	£2,000
Transition Extreme	£2,460
We Too	£2,155
Community Groups – Russell Anderson Foundation, Early Intervention Aberdeen, Middlefield Youth Hub, King's Foundation (VicTorry Camp), Kincorth Community Hub Development Group, Tillydrone Community Campus with Shazam Theatre Company SCIO, Barnardo's Scotland, Denis Law legacy Trust (Streetsport), Team Jak Foundation, Middlefield Community Project, Ukrainian Hub Aberdeen, Sheddocksley Baptist Church, Stockethill Church of Scotland, Station House Media Unit, The FACEYOUTH Skill Club and Tullos Community Garden	£10,000
Cleaning	£200(TBC)
TOTAL	£27,322.96

4.2. There is £100,000 within 24/25 budget to fund the Summer, Autumn (2024) and Easter (2025) programme.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified. Good use has been made of outdoor space where feasible to do so.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not fully using the opportunity to support those in our priority groups	Priority access is given to those identified as being at risk of poverty in keeping with national guidance and local intelligence	L	**Yes**
Compliance	Risk of not complying with national guidance	Continuing to provide a priority group exclusive programme, in addition to the universal offering, actively increases the opportunity for priority families to participate.	L	**Yes**
Operational	Risk that parents and carers are unclear of how the national policy will impact on opportunities available to their child.	Communicate the parameters of the national guidance clearly with families. Monitor uptake carefully to determine any remedial action required.	L	**Yes**
Financial	No significant risks identified			
Reputational	Risk that reduction in the number of spaces offered through the programmes will lead to reputational risk	Pivoting from full-week activities and focusing exclusively on part day and full-day activities will allow for participation opportunities to be maximised within the	L	**Yes**

		available budget and delivery constraints.		
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement Build on the success of the Summer of Play, extending these learning experiences at least into school holidays, including the Spring and October holidays.	The provision has been extended to include spring, summer and October to allow young people the opportunity to extend their learning experiences into the school holidays through a variety of activities.
Council Delivery Plan 2022/23 - Commit to closing the attainment gap in education while working with partners across the city.	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.
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	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.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy - 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026 1.1 Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty.	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.

1.3 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups.	
Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026 Mitigating the causes of immediate and acute poverty Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups Poverty affecting those with protected characteristics and in specific communities 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026 Ensuring that families receive the parenting and family support they need 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 Improving health and reducing inequalities. Increasing children's knowledge and understanding of their own physical and mental wellbeing and take an early intervention and prevention approach. As corporate parents we will ensure 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in	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. 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: - children and young people from lone parent families - children and young people from ethnic minority families - children from families with a disabled adult or child (or those with additional support need) - children and young people from families with a young parent (under 25) - children and young people from families with a child under 1 year old - children and young people from larger families (3+ children) 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. 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. 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.

education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026	
Improving education outcomes for care experienced children and young people.	
Supporting attainment of balance of care where children are able to remain more often at home and or with kin.	

Regional and City Strategies	
Regional Cultural Strategy	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.
Prevention Strategy	
Children's Services Plan	
National Improvement Framework Plan	

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to In the City Programmes 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 Easter in the City Programme

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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APPENDIX A- Easter 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	10 Things to do on your visit (Trail)	Families	Throughout holiday
Sport Aberdeen	Family swimming sessions	All ages	6
	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.	0-4 years	4
Family Learning	Fun filled family session, including; golf, crafts & outdoor fun and Easter egg hunt	Families	4
Artists Assemble (Creative Learning)	Artists Assemble	10-15 years	Full week
Tech Fest	Sociable science drop-in sessions at local school.	All ages	1

Targeted offer for Priority Groups

Provider	Event Description	Ages	Sessions
	Multi Active Day (AM or PM)	5-12 years	10
	Boccia and a bite - family lunch and play (Sport Aberdeen)	Families	5
	Multi Active Day Adventure Aberdeen	8-11 years	1
Sport Aberdeen	Scrambling/sandboarding	8-15 years	2
	Forest Adventure	5-7 years	1
	Young family Stay and Play session	Family (under 1 and siblings)	2
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
Make Lunch (Sheddocksley Baptist Church) Activities and lunch	1 hour of fun interactive holiday club activities followed by 1 hour of a hot meal around tables.	Primary School Age	4
Easter at Tullos Garden in partnership with Family Learning	Session offering egg painting, making daffodil windmills, making our own cress heads, and a visual Easter egg hunt. Also funday session.	Families	2
VicTorry Holiday Club (King's Church Aberdeen)	Holiday club- games, fun and lunch	P1-7	2
Transition Extreme	Skate and scran multi activity session	8-14 years	2
	Climb and Dine	5-14 years	6
Tillydrone Community Campus with Shazam Theatre Company SCIO	Drama and games workshop	8-12 years	5
Denis Law legacy Trust (Streetsports)	Variety of outdoor sports activities	8-18 years	16
Music School	Musical activities at Muirfield Primary School	5-11 years	1
Russell Anderson Development School (RADS)	Fun sporting activities	7-11 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	4
Intensive learn to swim	Intensive learn to swim classes are the perfect way to learn to swim.	5-10 years	3 days
FACEYOUTH	Games, crafts and creative skills.	5-18 years	10
Kidsize Holiday Club	Multi-activity holiday clubs with games, crafts and outdoor play	5-12 years	5

Additional Support needs specialised sessions

Provider	Event Description	Ages	Sessions
Sport Aberdeen	ASN Stay and Play sessions	5-12 years	6
Kincorth Community Hub	DANCE with Jen	Primary School Age	1
We Too	Relaxed Bowling at Codonas	3+ years	2
	Relaxed Mini Golf – Codonas	3+ years	2
	Relaxed Nerf Wars @ Innoflate	5+ years	1
	Lego & Board Games	5+ years	1
	Relaxed Tubing at Aberdeen Snowsport	5+ years	2
	Relaxed Ice Skating at Linx Arena	3+	1
	Relaxed Sensory Messy Play	5+ years	1
	Relaxed Bowling	3+ years	2
Early Intervention	ASN Easter Bonnet Decorating / Special Guests Meet & Greet Mad Hatter	4-10 years old	1
	ASN Easter Arts & Crafts and Therapy Dogs at Pets Corner Hazelhead	4-10 years old	2
	Music Session ran by a music therapist	5-8 years	2
	ASN Faries & Pirates Stay & Play with Bouncy Castle	Primary school aged children	1
	ASN Easter Wonka Chocolate Experience/ Special Guests Meet & Greet	4-10 years	1
	ASN Easter Party Hosted by Love Rara Children	Primary school aged children	2
	ASN Animal Assisted Therapy Pony & Pygmy - Lego & Duplo	primary school age & younger siblings	2

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Free School Meals Annual Update
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/180
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Paul Tytler
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   This report presents the annual update on Free School Meals (FSM).

2.   RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

2.1   Notes the progress in Free School Meal provision and actions to continue increasing uptake;

2.2   Instruct the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to progress the implementation of the school meals pre-order app for all Secondary Schools in the city; and

2.3   Instruct the Chief Officer, Corporate Landlord to report on the impact of the pre-order app in the next annual update report on Free School Meals.

3.   CURRENT SITUATION

3.1   The trend data for primary and secondary schools is available in Appendix 1.

3.2   The trend data shows that the universal entitlement to free school meals for those in Primary 1 – 5 has triggered a sharp rise in the number of primary children registered.   The slight dip in the percentage of eligible primary children (from 77.2% in 2022/23 to 77.1% in 2023/24), is due to the changes in the primary demographic across primary 6 and 7.   7,632 free school meals were taken by pupils in P1-5 on census day, this is the highest number recorded in the city.

3.3.1   Registrations for primary pupils continues to be above the national average, this is now a three year trend.   This suggests that our arrangements to encourage registrations have been successful.   Registrations are likely to increase further over the next year as children in P6 and P7 in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment will qualify from February 2025.   Although the exact

number of children who will become eligible is hard to determine, it is thought to be around 1000.

3.3.2 The proportion of all Primary Pupils present on the survey day taking lunches, either free or paid for, has risen from 65.4% in 2023 to 66.4% in 2024. At Secondary level, there is a slightly higher year-on-year increase, with 37.6% of those present taking free or paid for lunches in 2024, in contrast to 35.1% in 2023. Both of these outcomes are ahead of those in 2022 and represent a consecutive three year improvement trend. In 2022, the comparative figures were 62.3% and 34.1% respectively.

3.4 Over the last 5 years the number of young people of secondary school age registered for free school meals has risen steadily, this rising trend is likely to be partially due to amended registration arrangements and changes in family circumstances. The percentage of young people of secondary school age who are registered for free school meals is now, for the first time, in keeping with the national average suggesting that arrangements for encouraging registration have worked well. 1983 secondary pupils are now registered for free school meals, this is nearly double the number registered in 2018/19.

3.5 After an increase in secondary uptake over 2022/23, the number of young people taking up their free school meal on survey day has fallen slightly. The dip in Secondary registration is thought to be partially attributable to a greater number of pupils in S4-6 registered and present (whom are known to be less inclined to take FSM based meals than S1-3 pupils).

3.6 Registration levels across primary and secondary schools are now both more closely aligned with national outcomes which, given what is understood of the relative levels of child poverty in the City, indicates that the reach of FSM provision is being extended and now encompasses a greater majority of pupils who would be eligible for FSM.

3.7 Direct year-on-year comparisons around FSM uptake have a natural variance taking differing pupil profiles and attendance levels on the survey day into account. Based on the survey sizes, this statistical variance might account for +/- 2-3 percentage points between years so the 3-year averages for Secondary are probably more useful to reflect on.

3.8 Having reviewed the data, it was clear that more work needed to be undertaken to understand low secondary uptake. In order to better understand the challenges in Secondary Schools with uptakes being lower than we would wish, a survey has been undertaken with form groups of pupils at each secondary school to gather information directly from our young people on why they are choosing to eat elsewhere.

3.8.1 There were 1261 responses received and of those, 304 (24%) identified that they did not have enough time to queue for food in the canteen as the biggest reason for them choosing to either bring their own food or to eat elsewhere.

3.8.2 We asked our young people if they would be more likely to get their food from the school canteen if they could pre-order food on a mobile phone app for easy

collection. Of the 1261 responses received, 313 (25%) said Yes that they definitely would, with 374 (30%) saying Yes that they maybe would, and a further 197 (16%) saying they did not know. 219 (17%) said No, they didn't think so and only 158 (12%) saying No, they definitely wouldn't. This gives the Catering Service confidence that by introducing such an app, that it would have a positive impact on meal uptakes in Secondary Schools, both free and paid moving forward.

3.8.3 A pre-order app is available as a bolt-on module for the ParentPay system referenced in 3.10 below. A quotation was sought from ParentPay for the implementation of this module in all 11 Secondary Schools, the cost totalling £13,915.

Changes made over the last year

3.9 The Scottish Government announced on 16 May 2024 the School Meal Debt Fund 2024/25. Discussions are underway about making a claim for funding to clear the current level of debt, which as of 1st April 2024 was £27,596.92.

3.10 The Council has implemented ParentPay, a cashless catering and kitchen management system across our school estate. This will help improve data on uptake and one early benefit of the new system that has influenced debt level positively is that a new debt management process is implemented directly through the system. This gives key services (Schools and Catering) ownership of stages of the process and has resulted in a far lower debt value than was held within the old Accord Card system. Further benefits are:

- o **Convenience:** Parents can pay for school-related costs, like meals, trips, and uniforms, from their own home, whenever they want.
- o **Security:** ParentPay removes the need for children to bring cash to school, lowering the chance of loss or theft and anonymity for those in receipt of Free School Meals via the benefits route.
- o **Transparency:** Parents can see their payment history and account balance, helping them to track their spending and plan their budget.
- o **Alternative payment options:** For customers who cannot make online payments, the PayPoint service lets them pay in local shops.
- o **Real-time access to data:** The system provides real-time data on meal choice, uptake, and income, which was not available with the previous system. This data is very useful for future meal planning and waste reduction.
- o **Improved reporting:** The real-time data allows for more prompt and precise reporting to Council Committees.
- o **Enhanced management of pupil allergens:** A new level of resilience is in place for managing pupil allergens, protecting young people from harm.

These benefits contribute to a more efficient, secure, and data-driven catering management system for the Council.

3.11.1 The FSM/School Clothing Grant applications have now been merged into one, which allows parents to quickly determine if they will be eligible based on initial questions. Those identified to be eligible and not claiming their entitlements are contacted to encourage registration.

3.11.2 We continue to allow parents to be auto-awarded FSM/School Clothing Grants through Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction claims unless they opt out. Each school has been provided with a list of pupils who the local authority believes are automatically entitled to free school meals. Initially, these families will not be auto-awarded the benefit as we require them to apply and provide information about their bank, so that School Clothing Grant payments can be made. Many families in poverty, often change between banks and we need to be sure that their account details are valid so that any payment can be accessed by the family.

3.11.3 From 1st June 2024, any family that is on the auto-award list, but has not applied, will be auto-awarded Free School meals only. A communication will be sent to the family notifying them of the auto-award. This will include details of any entitlement to School Clothing Grant with an invitation to apply where necessary.

3.11.4 Design work is underway for the food pod at St Machar Academy. This project will now link with wider developments in the playground, with installation of the food pod planned for the Easter holiday in 2024.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no new financial implications arising from this report. The cost of the app will be met from existing resources.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no new legal implications arising from this report.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

7.   RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	n/a	n/a	L	Yes

Compliance	n/a	n/a	L	Yes
Operational	There is a risk that families will experience food poverty	We will continue to monitor effectiveness of systems and processes to maximise registrations and uptake of free school meals; improved debt management and debt eradication.	L	Yes
Financial	There is a risk of reduced income due to fewer school meals being paid for	Improved debt management and Scottish Government Grant funding and monitoring of impact on budgets	L	Yes
Reputational	n/a	n/a	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	n/a	n/a	L	Yes

8.   OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:- As a Council, it is a key priority that we invest in our children's futures, to ensure that they achieve positive destinations and are given the best opportunities in life Caring for young people - Review the cost of the school day, to make sure no child is missing out on opportunities because of their financial situation
Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 1 – 20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/ or not be able to heat their home by 2026.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of all Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes 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**.** |

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with the Chief Officer on 28 May 2024.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	n/a

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS
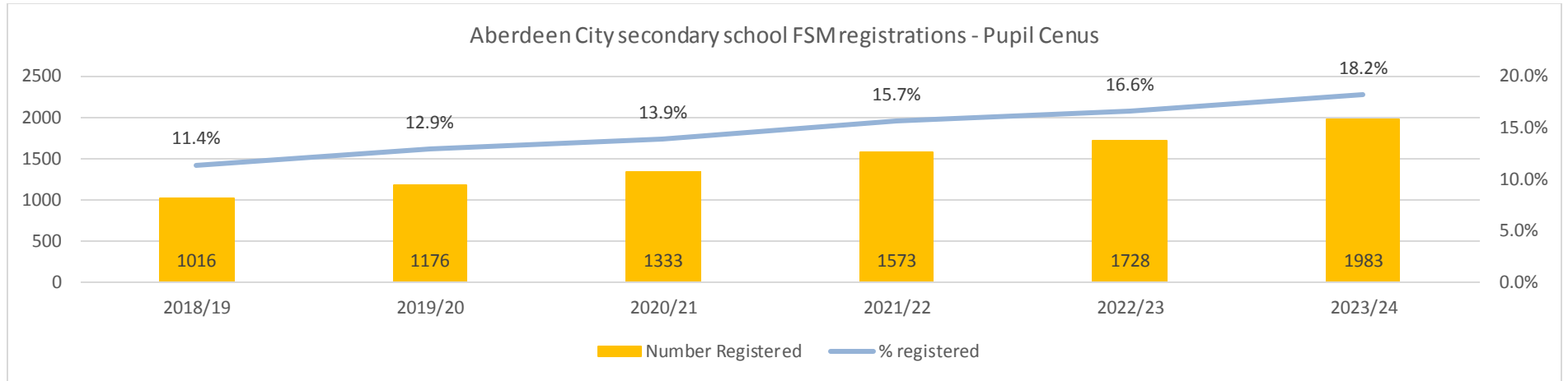
10.1 Free School Meals Annual Update CUS/23/172

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – Free School Meals uptake data

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Aberdeen City secondary school FSM registrations - Pupil Cenus

Secondary	Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Aberdeen Secondary Level	Number Registered	1016	1176	1333	1573	1728	1983
Aberdeen Secondary Level	% registered	11.4%	12.9%	13.9%	15.7%	16.6%	18.2%
Scotland Secondary Level	% Scotland registered	14.0%	15.3%	17.0%	17.6%	17.8%	18.3%

What does this data tell us?

Over the last 5 years the number of young people of secondary school age registered for free school meals has risen steadily, this rising trend is likely to be partially due to amended local registration arrangements and changes in family circumstances.

The percentage of young people of secondary school age who are registered for free school meals is now, for the first time, in keeping with the national average. 1983 secondary pupils are registered for free school meals, this is nearly double the number registered in 2018/19.

Aberdeen City primary school FSM registrations - universal (P1-5) and income related entitlement (P6 and 7) - Pupil Census

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
% registered (line)	50.0	50.2	51.5	65.0	77.2	77.1
Number Registered (bar)	7001	6987	7191	9151	11248	11676

Legend: Number Registered, % registered
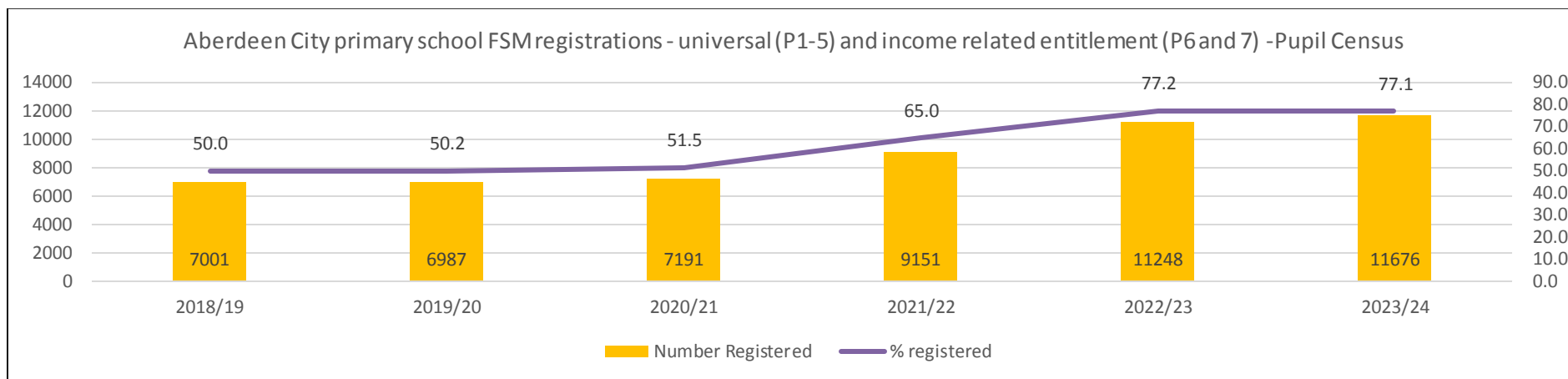
	Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Aberdeen Primary Level	Number Registered	7001	6987	7191	9151	11248	11676
Aberdeen Primary Level	% registered	50.0%	50.2%	51.5%	65.0%	77.2%	77.1%
Scotland Primary Level	% Scotland registered	52.7%	53.2%	54.1%	64.9%	76.3%	76.4%

What does this data tell us?

The universal entitlement to free school meals for those in Primary 1 – 5 has triggered a sharp rise in the number of primary children registered. This is likely to increase slightly over the next year as children in P6 and P7 in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment will qualify from February 2025. Although the exact number of children thought likely to be eligible from February 2025 is hard to determine, it is thought that around 1000 further children will become eligible.

The slight dip in the percentage eligible (from 77.2% in 2022/23 to 77.1% in 2023/24, is thought most likely due to the changes in the primary demographic.

Income related entitlement - % of P6 and 7 primary school roll registered for free meals (timeseries) - Pupil Census

Legend:
— Income Related Entitlement % school roll registered for free meals
······· Linear (Income Related Entitlement % school roll registered for free meals)

Data points:
- 2019: 13.5
- 2020: 13.3
- 2021: 18.6
- 2022: 17.0
- 2023: 20.2
- 2024: 19.1
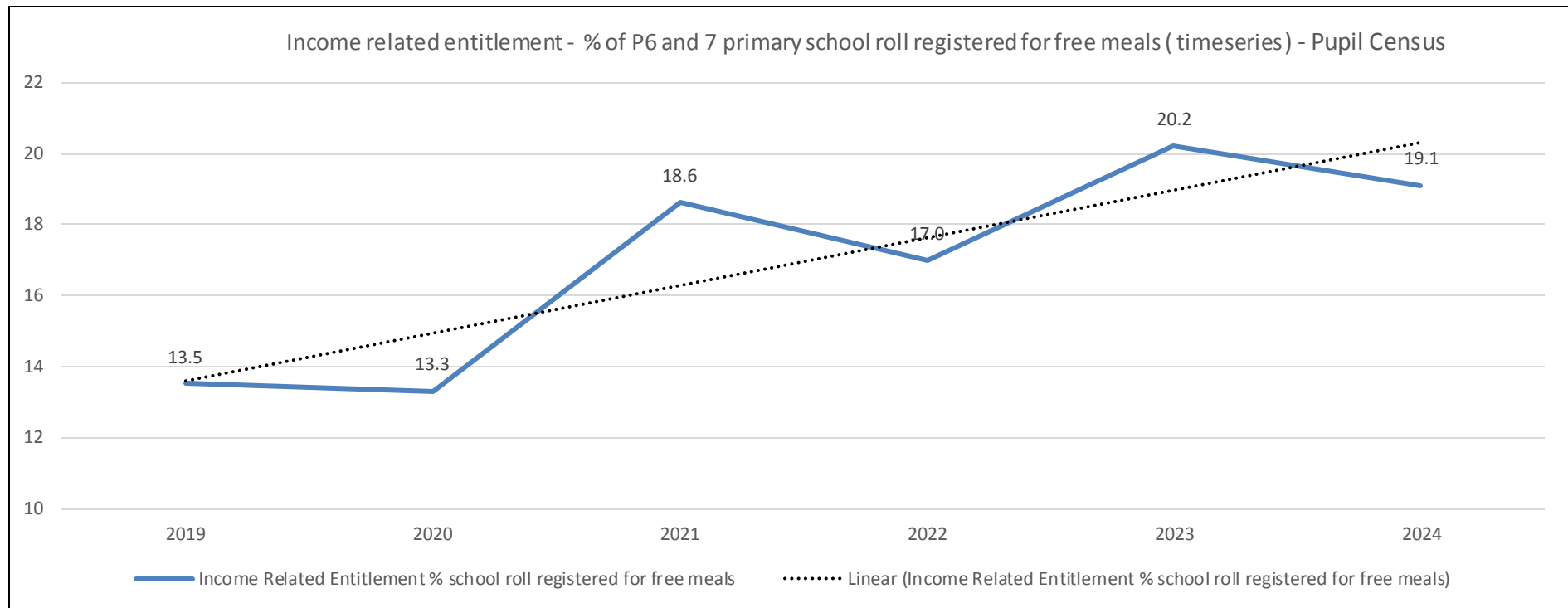
What does this data tell us?

The dip of 1% point from 2023 to 2024 is most likely as a result of increasing numbers of children in schools who are not entitled to claim free school meals. Longer term data shows that there is a rising trend in registrations.

Universal and Income related Entitlement - % of all primary school roll registered for free meals (timeseries) - Healthy Living Survey

- School roll registered for free meals: 51.1 (2020), 65.0 (2021), 76.9 (2022), 77.1 (2023), 76.8 (2024)
- Linear (School roll registered for free meals)

% uptake of Primary school free meals by category of entitlement and all P1-7 (pupils registered and present) - Healthy Living Survey

- Universal Entilement % Present and registered who took free meals: 72.2 (2020), 69.3 (2022), 72.4 (2023), 74.7 (2024)
- All P1-7 % Present and registered who took free meals: 69.6 (2020), 69.6 (2022), 70.4 (2023), 74.5 (2024)
- Income based Entilement % Present and registered who took free meals: 71.3 (2020), 74.2 (2022), 72.3 (2023), 70.3 (2024)

Primary Schools - Free School Meal Provision Aberdeen City – Healthy Living Survey									
Year	Universal Provision Range	Universal Provision		Deprivation related Provision across Primary 6 and 7			All Primary (P1-P7)		
		School roll registered for free meals	% Present and registered who took free meals	% School roll registered for free meals	Number of free meals taken	% Present and registered who took free meals	School roll registered for free meals	Number of free meals taken	% Present and registered who took free meals
2024	P1-5	100.0	74.7	19.1	515	70.3	76.8	8147	74.5
2023	P1-5	100.0	72.4	20.2	554	70.4	77.1	7875	72.3
2022	P1-5	100.0	69.3	17.0	468	74.2	76.9	7032	69.6

What does this data tell us?

7,632 free school meals were taken by pupils in P1-5 on survey day, this is the highest number recorded. The data shows an overall improving picture in terms of take up, although the uptake among P6 &7 is impacted by the changing demographics across our school populations.

% uptake of Secondary school free meals by income related entitlement (pupils registered and present) - Healthy Living Survey
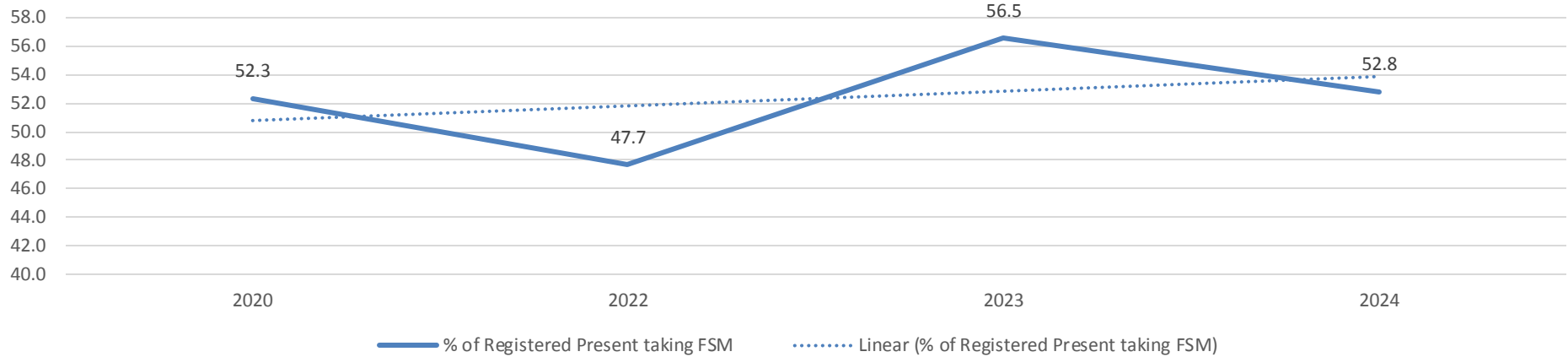
Secondary Schools - Free School Meal Provision Aberdeen City – Healthy Living Survey		
Year	Deprivation related Provision	
	% School roll registered for free meals	% Present and registered who took free meals
2024	15.6%	52.8%
2023	17.7%	56.5%
2022	15.9%	47.7%
What does this data tell us?		

The dip in Secondary registration is thought to be partially attributable to a greater number of pupils in S4-6 registered and present (whom are known to be less inclined to take FSM based meals than S1-3 pupils). In addition, this is thought partially attributable to changes secondary school demographics.

School Meals Served

Year	Primary Pupils Universal Provision	Primary Pupils Income Related Registered	Total Primary Pupils Registered	Secondary Pupils Registered	Special School Pupils Registered	Totals
2018	6225	895	7120	1016	33	8169
2019	6151	1056	7207	1176	66	8449
2020	6075	1046	7121	1333	67	8521
2021	8034	1117	9151	1573	76	10800
2022	10388	860	11248	1728	140	13116
2023	10777	899	11676	1933	130	13739

What does this data tell us?

This data is from the Council's facilities management team and reflects the actual meals provided on one day, which shows an overall improving trend in terms of uptake.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/181
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Louise Beaton
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to report on the progress and outcomes of the improvement activities and actions in the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24 and to seek committee approval for an updated Delivery Plan for 2024-26, in line with our statutory duties to prepare and publish a plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

2.1 Notes the report on the progress and outcomes of the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24;

2.2 Welcomes the opportunity to work in partnership with Scottish Childminding Association to deliver Programme for Scotland's Childminding Future (PSCF), a National Partnership Programme on Childminder Retention & Recruitment, in Aberdeen.

2.3 Approves the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 and instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to deliver the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan in line with statutory guidance and Best Start: Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare Plan for Scotland 2022-26;

2.4 Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to work in partnership with the Health Determinants Research Collaborative (HDRC) to align the planned Early Learning and Childcare longitudinal study research with the next statutory consultation with Parents and Carers in June 2025; and

2.5 Instructs the Chief Officer Education and Lifelong Learning to report on the progress and outcomes of the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26, and to prepare an updated Delivery Plan for 2026-28, in June 2026, in line

with our statutory duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

3.   BACKGROUND

The National Context

3.1   Since August 2021, all three and four year-olds, and eligible two year-olds have been entitled to receive up to 1140 hours of funded ELC per year. This has meant more funded hours, more choice of where children can go to access their ELC entitlement and more flexible models of ELC are available to support families.

3.2   We have a statutory duty to prepare and publish an Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan every two years.

Best Start: Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare Plan for Scotland 2022-26

3.3   The new Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare Plan for Scotland 2022-26 was published by Scottish Government in October 2022. It outlines the Scottish Government vision and priorities for the next four years; its approach to policy design and delivery; and next steps. The priorities outlined in the Plan are:

Priority 1: Realising the benefits of the expansion to 1140 hours of funded Early Learning and Childcare for children and families.

Priority 2: Progressing the expansion of our childcare offer, including building a future system of school age childcare and a new early learning and childcare offer for one and two year olds.

Priority 3: Ensuring that the delivery of our priorities is supported by a sustainable, diverse and thriving sector and profession.

Priority 4: Ensuring that our ambitions are underpinned by fair funding and outcomes frameworks, robust data and organisations that work together to support good outcomes for children and families.

3.4   The delivery principles which underpin Early Learning and Childcare continue to be:

- Quality
- Flexibility
- Accessibility
- Affordability

3.5   Our Aberdeen City Council Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 dovetails with the National Strategic Plan.

Local Context

3.6   Aberdeen City Council successfully delivered the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme in keeping with the Aberdeen City Council Delivery Plan

approved by the former Education and Children's Services Committee on 16 November 2017.

3.7   In line with our statutory duties, the Early Years team consulted with parents and carers and future parents in November 2021 and again in June 2023, to seek their views to inform our Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Delivery Plans.

Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24

3.8   The Aberdeen City Council Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan for 2022-24, was presented and approved by the former Education Operational Delivery Committee on 14 June 2022 (OPE/22/084).   The Plan included improvement activity and improvement actions to be undertaken over the next 2 years and took account of national policy documentation available at the time.

3.9   A mixed model of ELC provision is offered across the city. We currently deliver ELC:

- In 53 Local Authority settings, including 3 stand alone ELC settings: At the multi-agency Links Hub; and at our 2 Outdoor Nursery provisions at Duthie and Hazlehead Parks;
- In 41 Funded Provider ELC settings;
- At our Gaelic Medium Unit based in Gilcomstoun Primary School; and
- Through 62 Funded Provider childminders.

3.10   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 ELC. The Early Years team consulted with parents and carers in June 2023. The consultation received a total of 664 responses after 3 weeks (+210 (46%) from 2021).

3.11   Key headline data is below:

- 79.4% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the range of ELC providers and models within their local area (Associated School Group (ASG)) (+7.4% from 2021).
- 75.8% have been able to secure a funded ELC place in their local area/ASG.
- 80.6% of respondents were able to secure their first choice of ELC provision.
- 88.4% of respondents were satisfied with the location of their ELC provision. (+5.4% from 2021).
- 76.8% of respondents were satisfied with the times ELC services are available (+9% from 2021).
- 87.1% of respondents stated that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their child's experience of ELC to date (+ 4.7% from 2021).
- 73.6% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the snacks and meals their child is offered whilst attending ELC (+4.8% from 2021)
- The majority of respondents, at over 95%, identified Early Learning and Childcare as having a positive impact on their child's development with:

- 87% identifying improved social skills;
  - 81% seeing an improvement in their child's communication skills;
  - 71% identifying improved creativity;
  - 68% identifying improved fine motor skills;
  - 64% identifying improved emotional development;
  - 63% identifying improved physical development;
  - 62% identifying improved listening skills;
  - 60% identifying improved literacy development; and
  - 60% identifying improved numeracy development.

- 39.8% of respondents stated that they had more time for other responsibilities as a result of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (-11.4% from 2021).
- 29.2% of respondents indicated that they had more money/disposable income as a positive impact on their family (-9.5% from 2021).
- 24.1% are now considering a return to work or study (-4.4% from 2021).
- 24.1% stated improved wellbeing/respite as a positive impact from the expansion of ELC (-2% from 2021), with 18.9% of respondents finding they now have more time to themselves (-5.4% from 2021).
- 73.3% of respondents stated that they are aware that Aberdeen City Council offers Eligible 2's ELC placements.

3.12 The full analysis of the responses has been used to inform the refresh of the ELC Delivery Plan in 2024. Critically, responses do not indicate a need to amend our approach to the provision of a mixed model of ELC across the city.

3.13 Work has been undertaken between 2022 to 2024 to monitor demand across the city and in individual Associated School Groups (ASGs). This is in order to meet the needs of families and to achieve best value. As a result some ELC models have been amended, as approved by Education and Children's Services Committee in January and November 2023 (reports CFS/23/003 and CFS/23/301 respectively). We will maintain a mixed model of ELC across Associated School Groups (ASGs) to ensure families continue to have choice.

3.14 Key highlights from our Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24 Review of Improvement Activity and Actions for 2022-24 include:

- Ensuring a good mix of 8am-6pm all year round ELC provision and 9am-3pm term time provision across all ASGs. Our ELC Funded Providers also continue to offer fully flexible funded ELC across the city meeting the needs of families who require wrap around care and additional hours;
- Reviewing of Local Authority ELC delivery models to meet demand and maximise resources;
- An upward trend of improvement in inspection evaluations, including Very Good and Excellent evaluations at a number of ELC settings;
- Participation in Collaborative Improvement process which has validated our own self-evaluation and endorsed our long-term ambition;
- Delivering a highly successful Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Learning festival which took place in February 2024. Over 500

practitioners from across the city, from both Local Authority and Funded Provider ELC settings attended. The event included opportunities for collaborative working as well as three keynote speakers;

- Working in partnership with ABZworks to provide 12 week internship placements for various groups of people looking to return to work or indeed start off their career. Recent internships included LTU (long term unemployed), Care experienced young people and parents who wanted to return to work;
- Continuing to grow our own workforce by offering Modern Apprenticeship opportunities;
- Increasing the number of ELC staff undertaking accredited qualifications through annual Workforce Development and Expansion funding opportunities; and
- Increasing the uptake of ELC provision for Eligible 2 year olds.

3.15   The full report can be found at Appendix A.

Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26

3.16   The Local Authority has a statutory duty under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 to prepare and publish an Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan to set out the strategic direction for the delivery of ELC in the city.

3.17   The Plan has to respond to local need and reflect the diversity of communities in Aberdeen.

3.18   The 2024-26 Delivery Plan will follow on from the 2022-24 Delivery Plan and includes the views of key stakeholders, including parents, carers, staff voice and Community Planning partners.

3.19   A one-page infographic has been produced (Appendix B) which sets out the proposed direction of travel for the next two years. It was shared widely with key stakeholders, including ELC staff, Funded Providers and Community Planning partners, to show how the ELC Delivery Plan 2024-26 (Appendix C) will set out:

- How will we deliver ELC?
- How will we ensure quality?
- How will we communicate, engage and consult?
- How will we support and develop our workforce?

3.20   The underpinning principles continue to be that ELC should be:

- High quality
- Flexible
- Accessible
- Affordable

3.21   Based on our consultation with parents and carers, and our engagement with key stakeholders, including staff voice, triangulated via staff survey, Collaborative Improvement and ELC Learning Festival, we suggest that our key

priorities for development over the next 2 years continue to be:

- Workforce Support
- Transitions
- Community Partnerships
- Family Support

3.22 Improvement activity and actions for the next 2 years are detailed in the Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 in Appendix C.

3.23 Within the Delivery Plan 2024-26 is an action to increase the number of childminders in the city by 25 per year. The Programme for Scotland's Childminding Future (PSCF), a National Partnership Programme on Childminder Retention & Recruitment was launched on 5 June 2024. This aims to grow the childminding workforce across Scotland by 1,000 and support the retention of existing childminders. Aberdeen City Council is one of 16 Local Authority areas delivering the programme, in partnership with Scottish Childminding Association. A start-up grant of £750 will be available for newly registered childminders who complete the programme to help set up their new business.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Aberdeen City Council, as primary guarantor of quality and key enabler of flexibility and choice, is funded via GAE from the Scottish Government to deliver ELC. Ringfencing of a specific grant to deliver ELC was removed from April 2024.

4.2 Officers continue to work with finance colleagues to ensure that our plans work towards realisation of a sustainable ELC provision.

4.3 Reciprocal arrangements are in place via a Cross Boundary Agreement with Aberdeenshire Council. This means that an equal number of ELC places will be provided by each neighbouring Local Authority. For example, if Aberdeen City Council provide more funded ELC places than Aberdeenshire Council, the additional places will be recharged to Aberdeenshire Council in line with the Reconciliation and Payments part of the Cross Boundary Agreement on a quarterly basis. This ensures equity and Best Value for both Authorities, whilst offering flexibility and choice to families from both Authorities.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The expansion of ELC has brought a number of duties on the Local Authority under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014:

- The provision of 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare for eligible two year olds and all three and four year olds.

- Aberdeen City Council will retain the statutory responsibility for ensuring that funded ELC entitlement is available to all eligible children in the city.
- Aberdeen City Council will continue to be the primary guarantor of quality and key enabler of flexibility and choice, ensuring that there is a range of options for all families in the city.
- 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 ELC delivered locally.
- Aberdeen City Council is responsible for preparing and publishing an Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan every 2 years.

5.2   The ELC Delivery Plan helps us to manage the actions necessary to continue to deliver and develop high quality ELC in the city.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   No negative environmental impacts have been identified. A cornerstone of the ELC expansion programme was the investment in outdoor learning, and this is keenly reflected in the establishment of two new outdoor nurseries at Duthie Park and at Hazlehead. Both have an outdoor focus in their education and provision, but each will offer unique and varied experiences for children, families, staff and the wider communities. The establishment of the two new outdoor nurseries is a first for Aberdeen city and a pioneering provision for the Early Years sector. Across all ELC settings, good use is also made of outdoor and green spaces where practicable and 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	Risk of not meeting statutory obligations around 1140 hours.	Mitigated through delivery of the Expansion Programme and subsequent monitoring of supply and demand of ELC places.	L	**Yes**
Operational	Risk of not attracting enough new	Mitigated through the ongoing activities being undertaken to support workforce	L	**Yes**

		development as outlined in ELC Delivery Plan 2024-26.		
Financial	Risk of building a financially unsustainable model.	Care has been taken to redesign ELC around improving quality rather than simply doubling to reflect the additional hours and a more sustainable staffing model has been put in place.

Officers continue to monitor supply and demand in order to meet demand and maximise resources. | M | **Yes** |
| **Reputational** | Risk of not delivering on legal obligations | Mitigated through delivery of the Expansion Programme and ongoing monitoring of supply and demand of ELC places. | L | **Yes** |
| **Environment / Climate** | No risks identified | N/A | N/A | N/A |

8.   OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The proposals within this report support the delivery of Policy Statement "Work with the Scottish Government to deliver free Early Learning and Childcare for families on the lowest incomes".

The provision of free Early Learning and Childcare has the potential to be transformational for many families, but especially for those with the lowest incomes in the city. |
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	

Prosperous Economy - 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026	The Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 will continue to have a positive impact on this priority theme and will help to deliver the LOIP. The workforce has increased significantly in order to deliver the increase in ELC provision and will not be detrimentally impacted by the proposals contained within this report. 63 Aberdeen City Council employees retrained as Early Years Practitioners over 3 cohorts of a Retraining Programme, gaining an SVQ Level 3 qualification. We have also recruited 110 Early Learning and Childcare Support Workers. In addition, we have introduced a Modern Apprenticeship 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 currently have 34 Modern Apprenticeships positions in ELC settings across the city. Most recently, the Early Years Team have worked in partnership with ABZworks to provide 12 week internship placements for various groups of people looking to return to work or indeed start off their career. Recent internships included LTU (long term unemployed), Care experienced young people and parents who wanted to return to work. On successful completion of the programme, the participants are encouraged to seek a career in ELC. They are guaranteed an interview for ELC Support Worker posts or Modern Apprenticeships, and, if recommended by school staff, can be placed on the relief ELC Support Worker pool. These internships have been a great success and will continue for as long as funding allows. There will be ongoing opportunities to join the Early Learning and Childcare workforce in Aberdeen and to retrain, to upskill and for career progression.
Prosperous People - 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain	The Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare has contributed positively to supporting positive destinations.

a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026	We have introduced a Modern Apprenticeship 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 currently have 34 Modern Apprenticeships positions in ELC settings across the city.
95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026	Our work in partnership with families and communities including through a Peep offer in all settings as part of a partnership Family Support offer will support children to reach their expected milestones. It will also increase the number of parents and carers who have awareness of how to support their children's learning and development at home.

Furthermore, every child who attends Early Learning and Childcare over a lunchtime period receives a minimum of one free meal per session attended as part of their statutory entitlement, as well as a portion of milk and fruit or vegetables daily via the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme.

Early Learning and Childcare can improve long term outcomes for children and families. |
| Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes | The provision of high quality Early Learning and Childcare will help to deliver the LOIP.

The increase in funded ELC will 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.

Furthermore, every child who attends Early Learning and Childcare receives a minimum of one free meal per session attended as part of their statutory entitlement, as well as a portion of milk and fruit or vegetables daily via the Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme. |
| | |
| **Regional and City Strategies** | The proposals within this report support the Strategic Development Plan by supporting the workforce. The |

Strategic Development Plan Children's Services Plan National Improvement Framework Plan	provision of high quality Early Learning and Childcare will: 1. Support families to take up employment and training opportunities; 2. Develop the Young Workforce; and 3. Support business to recruit and retain staff. The Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 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.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to the provision of Early Learning and Childcare has been reviewed and no changes are required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare Plan for Scotland 2022-26 (Scottish Government: October 2022)

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2022-24 – Report on Review of Improvement Activity and Actions
11.2 Appendix 2 – Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 Infographic
11.3 Appendix 3 – Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Delivery Plan 2022-24

Report on Review of Improvement Activity and Actions – June 2024

Our vision is to provide ELC which is accessible, affordable, is of high quality and is available up to 50 weeks of the year. Provision will be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of individual children, parents/carers and the wider community and will support parents to work, train or study, especially those who need routes into sustainable employment and out of poverty.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles inform our practice. All ELC provision across Aberdeen City will:

• Capitalise on intergenerational support;

• Offer a level of personalisation to ensure maximum gains for children;

• Be nurturing, inclusive and offer a holistic service to children and families in keeping with GIRFEC;

• Feel owned by the community;

• Fully utilise outside space to promote wellbeing;

• Be staffed by skilled practitioners who have opportunities to develop their skills further through a suite of professional learning suited to their needs and situation; and

• Be quality assured across a locality by one skilled practitioner who will have a key role in supporting parents to fully capitalise on the local offer.

Key Themes for Development

Based on the outcomes of our Evaluation of the Expansion of ELC (2022), our consultation with parents and carers in 2021, and our engagement with key stakeholders, including staff voice, the key themes for development over the past 2 years were:

• Workforce Support

- Community Partnerships
- Transitions
- Family Support

The ELC Delivery Plan 2022-24 detailed planned improvement activity and actions. Progress under each of these has been reviewed and are detailed in the following pages:

How will we deliver Early Learning and Childcare?

Improvement Activity	What we said we'll do	By Who	Evidence of Impact	RAG Status
Maintain a mix of Local Authority and Funded Provider delivery models across all Associated School Groups (ASGs)	Continue to monitor demand across the city and in individual ASGs.	Early Years Team	Families are able to access a range of delivery models within their ASG. % of first choice applications.	
	Ongoing consultation and engagement with families to establish any changing patterns in-service usage.	ELC Locality Lead Officers		
	Continue to monitor uptake with Funded Providers.	Funded Providers	ELC Parent and Carer Consultation.	

What we did?

There are currently 53 Local Authority ELC settings and 41 Funded Provider ELC settings. There are also 63 Funded Provider childminders working in partnership with Aberdeen City Council to deliver the funded ELC entitlement, with a range of flexible options, for 3-5 year old and Eligible 2 year old children across the city. A map has been produced which shows a visual of the location of our ELC provision across the city and ASGs:

Early Learning and Childcare provision

The Early Years Team continue to monitor demand across the city and in individual ASGs. This is in order to meet the needs of families and to achieve best value. We know from parent and carer feedback that while a large majority of respondents (79.4%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the range of ELC providers and models within their local area/Associated Schools Group (ASG); and (75.8%) were able to secure a funded ELC place in their local area/ ASG, some delivery models are more popular than others and there are slight changes in

demand across each ASG. At the time of the ELC Parent and Carer Consultation in 2023, term-time, full-day and fully flexible placements were most popular. For half day placements, morning places continue to be more highly sought after than afternoon places, with afternoon placements the least popular out of all the delivery models.

Alongside feedback from parents and carers, detailed work on capacities has been undertaken in 2022 and 2023. It showed that we have an oversupply of 'afternoon' places available. Officers have taken this learning into account in planning delivery models for 2023/24 and 2024/25 and these have been amended accordingly in order to meet demand and fully maximise resources.

The full ELC offer across each ASG ensures a good mix of 8am-6pm all year round ELC provision and 9am-3pm term time provision. Our ELC Funded Providers also offer fully flexible funded ELC across the city and can meet the needs of families who require wrap around care and additional hours.

All Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) ELC providers who request to enter into partnership with Aberdeen City Council come into partnership.

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 ELC. The Early Years team consulted with parents and carers again in June 2023. The consultation received a total of 664 responses after 3 weeks (+210 (46%) from 2021).

Key headline data is below and the full report is published on Aberdeen City Council website:

- 79.4% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the range of ELC providers and models within their local area (Associated School Group (ASG)) (+7.4% from 2021).
- 75.8% have been able to secure a funded ELC place in their local area/ASG.
- 80.6% of respondents were able to secure their first choice of ELC provision.
- 88.4% of respondents were satisfied with the location of their ELC provision. (+5.4% from 2021).
- 76.8% of respondents were satisfied with the times ELC services are available (+9% from 2021).
- 87.1% of respondents stated that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their child's experience of ELC to date (+ 4.7% from 2021).
- 73.6% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the snacks and meals their child is offered whilst attending ELC (+4.8% from 2021)
- The majority of respondents, at over 95%, identified Early Learning and Childcare as having a positive impact on their child's development with:

  o 87% identifying improved social skills;
  o 81% seeing an improvement in their child's communication skills;
  o 71% identifying improved creativity;

- o   68% identifying improved fine motor skills;
- o   64% identifying improved emotional development;
- o   63% identifying improved physical development;
- o   62% identifying improved listening skills;
- o   60% identifying improved literacy development; and
- o   60% identifying improved numeracy development.

- 39.8% of respondents stated that they had more time for other responsibilities as a result of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (-11.4% from 2021).
- 29.2% of respondents indicated that they had more money/disposable income as a positive impact on their family (-9.5% from 2021).
- 24.1% are now considering a return to work or study (-4.4% from 2021).
- 24.1% stated improved wellbeing/respite as a positive impact from the expansion of ELC (-2% from 2021), with 18.9% of respondents finding they now have more time to themselves (-5.4% from 2021).
- 73.3% of respondents stated that they are aware that Aberdeen City Council offers Eligible 2's ELC placements.

Continue to offer all children attending ELC regular and routine access to high quality learning outside.	Ongoing development of Duthie Park and Hazlehead Outdoor Nurseries.	Outdoor Manager	Provision of and evaluations of professional learning.	
	Provision of professional learning (including at Duthie and Hazlehead Outdoor Nurseries).	ELC Locality Lead Officers	Evaluations from Quality Improvement Visits.	
	Opportunities for staff to visit Duthie Park and Hazlehead Nurseries to engage in professional dialogue and observe practice.	Outdoor Manager ELC	Number of staff engaging in visits.	
	Promotion and Quality Assurance of Outdoor Learning across all ELC settings.	Locality Lead Officers	Number of childminders participating.	

	Childminders – Promoting environmental and community work.	Childminders		

What we did?

Outdoor ELC

A cornerstone of the ELC expansion programme was the investment in outdoor learning, and this is keenly reflected in the establishment of two new outdoor nurseries at Duthie Park and at Hazlehead. Both have an outdoor focus in their education and provision, with each offering unique and varied experiences for children, families, staff and the wider communities. The establishment of the two new outdoor nurseries is a first for Aberdeen city and a pioneering provision for the Early Years sector.

Outdoor ELC provision at both Duthie Park and Hazlehead is now fully up and running, with both receiving Very Good evaluations following Care Inspectorate inspections in 2023.

Across all ELC settings, good use is also made of outdoor and green spaces where practicable and feasible to do so. To further support practitioners in their outdoor practice, several training opportunities have been offered such as sessions on woodwork and creativity, which were delivered by Pete Moorhouse in May 2022. Furthermore, our outdoor practitioners at Hazlehead Outdoor Nursery were empowered to deliver focus workshops during an Outdoor Expo to staff across the city in November 2022, showcasing and utilising their outdoor pedagogy skillset to support colleagues to develop their practice around natural resources, creative materials, den-building and woodwork. The feedback from the session was overwhelmingly positive, centred around the value of professional collaboration and motivation to improve experiences and outcomes for learners.

Certificate in Outdoor Practice

In 2023/24, Aberdeen City Council has been the first Local Authority in Scotland to pilot the innovative, 12-month training programme *Certificate in Outdoor Practice: Developing excellence in wellbeing, play and learning outdoors*. This has been created and delivered by Outdoors Thinking, with the aim to empower educators to enact effective early childhood outdoor pedagogies in their work setting and build their identity as outdoor specialists. This is strongly linked to our delivery plan drivers of workforce support and high quality professional learning, our LOIP stretch outcomes around children's wellbeing, development and progress and national framework outdoor play priorities.

The participant study group is made up of twenty practitioners from select Local Authority and Funded Provider settings across the city and from a variety of roles and levels of experience. The blended approach of experiential in-person learning, online discussion and guided study, coaching and small-scale action research has already had tremendous impact on the wellbeing and outcomes for both children and staff. Ongoing evaluation of the programme can be found in the link.   Once participants have completed the course (September 2024) we plan to

develop ways that they can share their learning and practice with other colleagues and feed into future professional development opportunities.

To continue this work around outdoor practice professional development, an audit has been completed in February 2024 inviting feedback from practitioners across the city to inform future training needs. This information will be used to shape the training offer for the next academic session.

Case Study - Links ELC and Hub

In January 2024, an initial consultation took place with outdoor nurseries after discussion with staff, children and families that indicated outdoor learning was an area of development within the setting:

- 10% of families attend parent voice and input their thoughts and ideas to the outdoor learning plan development plan.
- Children shared their views "Little people big voice".
- Through further consultation we gathered data that informed our decision to make outdoor learning a priority as 87% of children attending Links ELC and Hub have limited access to outdoor learning .
- In line with World Health Organisation advice that children should have 3 hours outdoor play per day, this informed our promise and commitment to provide this opportunity.
- Through staff observations, questionnaires and Continuous Review and Development (CRD) the setting recognised that **most** of our practitioners identified having gaps in understanding and confidence when delivering curriculum outdoors. This informed our offer of learning, and this was shared with Outdoor ELC Lead (expert) where Manager and Lead created a robust plan and timeline of support. This included support with planning and ordering resources, role modelling practice, 1-1 outdoor learning focus supervisions, to date over 100hours of support, signposted to relevant training, allotment action plan, continues to monitor and mentor.
- Almost all staff have spent the day at the outdoor nurseries with a focus from their supervisions to upskill and bring back findings to embed in Links ELC and Hub.
- Both Senior Early Years Practitioners (SEYPs) from Links have spent a week at outdoor learning provisions to be able to better support Early Years Practitioners.
- Outdoor Lead has spent a week at Links ELC and Hub further delivering guidance and support.
- 2 Early Years Practitioners (EYPs) have been identified as 'Outdoor Champions' with delegated responsibility for outdoor environment and allotment.

Childminders

Local childminders have worked in partnership with Aberdeen City Council and NHS Health Improvement Fund to manage green spaces and improve the health and wellbeing of children, families and communities, working together to grow flowers, fruit and vegetables. A recipe book has been produced through the Planting and Growing Project. This links with Curriculum for Excellence, Realising the Ambition and Health and Social Care Standards. The Project, which was recognised as part of a number of community projects which won a Green Workplace Award at Aberdeen City Council Star Awards in 2022, commenced in 2021 and is still going strong.

Play on Pedals

Funding has been secured from Cycling Scotland to deliver the Play on Pedals initiative in Aberdeen. Play on Pedals is an early years resource that links into the national Bikeability Scotland training programme. The scheme aims to give all pre-school children the opportunity to learn how to ride a bike before starting school.

Aberdeen City Council started delivering this initiative in 2017 in the Bridge of Don and Oldmachar ASGs. We are delighted to now roll out Play on Pedals to around 30 ELC settings across the city, further enhancing our outdoor learning offer. One or two members of staff from each of the ELC settings have participated in Cycling Scotland training to become a Play on Pedals Instructor. Over a 6-8 week period, the children are taught the skills to ride a pedal bike, through the use of balance bikes, games and play within safe off-road environments. They will work in small groups of up to 6 together with a trained Play on Pedals Instructor. The games link to the Curriculum for Excellence.

Increase the number of childminders to promote choice	Monitor demand for childminders. Target recruitment activity according to demand and in priority regeneration areas. Devise new systems for childminders applications in partnership with Legal Services. Continue to evaluate and improve the support afforded to funded provider childminders.	Early Years Team Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) ELC Locality Lead Officers	Monitor application process. Secure current numbers of funded providers. Increase in the numbers of Childminders and Funded Provider Childminders across the city. Increase in the numbers of Childminders Funded Provider Childminders in priority regeneration areas.	

What we did?

Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) work in partnership with Aberdeen City Council to recruit, support and retain childminders. As at June 2024, there are a total of 114 Childminders in the city.

During 2022-23, SCMA supported 25 people to start the process of registering as a childminder. Of those, 12 are now registered, with the others at various stages of the registration process.

During 2023-24, SCMA supported 26 people to start the process of registering as a childminder. Of those, 7 are now registered, with the others at various stages of the registration process.

Approximately 25% of childminders (29) currently deliver funded Eligible 2 placements.

Three new childminders entered into partnership with Aberdeen City Council to deliver funded ELC entitlement bringing total number to 63.

During 2023-24, Scottish Childminding Association started undertaking Quality Assurance of our Funded Provider Childminders in line with the National Standard, further strengthening our long established and valued partnership with the national organisation.

| Increase uptake for eligible 2 year old children | Monitor demand for eligible 2 places.

Secure places at Local Authority and Funded Provider ELC settings including childminders.

On-going collaboration with multi-agency partners to identify eligible 2s. | Early Years Team

All ELC settings

Scottish Childminding Association | Monitor application process.

Families are able to access delivery models within their ASG which meet their needs and any change in demand.

Increase in % of eligible 2 year old children taking up their ELC entitlement. | |

What we did?

The application process for Eligible 2 places has been refined, streamlined and is now online, bringing it into line with the application process for ELC places for 3-5 year olds at Local Authority ELC settings. This has enabled us to better monitor the volume of applications and demand for places.

The Scottish Government have introduced the Data Pipeline project which gives Local Authorities access to data identifying possible eligible families. Aberdeen City Council signed up to this project in 2023 and families in the city have been sent information, via flyer and incorporating a QR code, about the Eligible 2's service and how to apply. We continue to monitor application numbers to gauge the impact this has had. The number of children allocated an Eligible 2's place has increased by 12% from 183 in 2022/23 to 205 in 2023/24. Population projections suggest that we have increased % of eligible population from 31.66% to 38% in the same period.

We also work in partnership with multi-agency partners, for example Health Visitors, to identify Eligible 2 children and we continue to receive a number of applications for discretionary placements which are considered on a case-by-case basis.

2022/23 Eligible 2s – May 2023

Funded Providers	102
Childminders	26
Local Authority	55
Out of Authority children	0
Total ACC	183
eligible population projections*	578
% of eligible population placed	31.66%

2023/24 Eligible 2s - May 2024
(NON VALIDATED)

Funded Providers	136
Childminders	25
Local Authority	44
Out of Authority children	0
Total ACC	205
eligible population projections*	540
% of eligible population placed	38.00%

Provision of top up hours to support families to study and work	Identify capacity for selling hours. Promotion of top up hours. Pilot in one or two ASGs	Early Years Team ELC Settings	Uptake of top up hours. Income generated.	Closed

initially.				

What we did?

Following our 2021 ELC Consultation with parents and carers, we explored the possibility of offering top up hours to support families to study and work. As a result of identifying capacity for selling hours, we deduced that hours available for selling were predominantly in the afternoons, the least favoured option by the majority of parents and carers. Therefore this was not pursued but instead led to a review of ELC delivery models in order to meet demand and maximise resources.

How will we ensure quality?

Improvement Activity	What we said we'll do	By Who	Evidence of Impact	RAG status
Deliver a comprehensive Quality Assurance programme	Alignment of Quality Improvement visits with school Quality Assurance calendar for all ELC providers, including the work of triogroups supporting Local Authority settings across the city. Implementation of robust Quality Improvement Framework for Local Authority and Funded Provider settings incorporating reference to national guidance documents such as Realising the ambition - Being me. Identification of areas for targeted support, pre and post inspections.	ELC Locality Lead Officers	Improved evaluations from HMIe and Care Inspectorate	

What we did?

Overall, there has been an upward trend of improvement in inspection evaluations, with almost all ELC settings improving in at least one Quality Indicator following reinspection.

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.

There has been significant collaboration with officers and Head Teachers to work on improvement through a Collaborative Improvement model. Following a three-day visit in November 2023 which involved visits to ELC settings and focus groups, 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 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. It has also provided a central monitoring role to allow wider team support for individual schools to provide quality teaching and learning.

| Support and enhance smooth transitions | Review transition processes with early in person transition and early engagement with staff, where practicable.

Pilot some more creative transition processes within Local Authority ELC settings. | ELC Locality Lead Officers

ELC Settings | Feedback from children, parents/carers and staff.

Increased wellbeing of children – using Leuven Scale to evaluate this in observations.

Reflective dialogue on transitions with practitioners during visits and ASG meets.

Increase in the number of children meeting developmental milestones. | |

What we did?

An audit of current transition arrangements has been carried out and actions identified to ensure consistency across LA and Funded Provider settings.

Child's Planning support system

Through the child's planning support system, an enhanced transition may be coordinated to support children make the move from ELC to Primary one. This ensures the continuity of care and learning as well as opportunities for professionals/parents to meet and discuss the model that best meets the needs of the child. It may also include a member of staff moving with the child for the initial settling in period.

Request for Assistance

Request for Assistance (RfA) applications increased by 36% between 2022/23 and 2023/24:

Number of RfA applications received in 2022/23 – 30
Number of RfA applications received in 2023/24 – 41

In around 70-75% of cases, additionality (by way of an extra member of staff) is provided to enhance ratios to provide support for the child identified as in need of additional support, but also to support the wider staff team within the ELC setting. Other supports offered include input from Autism Outreach Team and training to upskill staff and increase capacity and confidence across ELC teams.

Deferred Entry Applications

	2022/23 Pilot	**2023/24**	**2024/25**
August to December	138	142	208
January and February	150	170	183
Total	288	312	391

The change in eligibility dates for automatic deferrals has led to a sharp increase in children deferring entry to P1. Aberdeen City Council piloted the change in 2022/23 this saw 288 children defer entry into P1. By 2024/25 this had risen by 36% to 391.

Work in partnership with families and communities including through a Peep offer in all settings as part of a partnership Family Support offer	ELC and Peep colleagues will work together to ensure that at least one member of staff from each ELC setting has been Peep trained and support will be given to staff when delivering Peep sessions. Monitor uptake to identify if there are any barriers preventing these from taking place in order to remove them. Liaise with colleagues from Family Learning to ensure that settings are maximizing Family Support sessions offered.	ELC Locality Lead Officers / Peep Family Learning Team	Increase in the number of children meeting developmental milestones. Increase in the number of parents and carers who have awareness of how to support their children's learning and development at home. Improved relationships with families.	

What we did?

Peep

The Peep offer has been aligned to Quality Framework. Meetings have taken place with the Peep Co-ordinator to look at ways of increasing the Peep offer across the city. The plan includes videoing a current Peep session in a LA setting to share in the fortnightly communications. Links to How good is our Early Learning and Childcare and Quality Framework for Daycare of Children are also being created.

Work is underway to deliver joint Peep sessions within the Tillydrone Campus. There will be input from two Funded Provider ELC settings, Aberdeen City Library Service and Riverbank School staff.

Every Child a Library Member (ECALM)

Aberdeen City Libraries (ACL) encourages children to become library members from birth and does not charge children for reservations, nor are there penalties for the late return of items borrowed on a child's card. The Scottish Government ECALM initiative is supported in Aberdeen and mechanisms are being investigated by which all children may be registered as library members at enrolment in ELC and/or Primary 1. We are delighted to report that 1051 children aged 0-5 became library members in 2023-24.

Bookbug

Bookbug is the Scottish Government funded gifting programme which ensures every child in Scotland receives a free bag of books at key points between birth and 5. The programme is managed nationally by Scottish Book Trust, delivered in Aberdeen by ACL, and a key element in our early years offer. The Bookbug Explorer bag is gifted to every child aged 3 years – 3 years 11 months in the ante pre-school year and the Bookbug Primary 1 bag to every child in Primary 1. ACL is responsible for the delivery of the bags to schools and ELC settings and for providing support to practitioners around gifting the bags to encourage parental engagement.

In 2023 - 2728 Explorer bags and 2215 Primary 1 bags were delivered
In 2024 - 2156 Explorer bags were delivered.

| Support and upskill ELC Teams to provide a fully inclusive offer. | Build capacity and confidence through observations, shadowing and training. | Early Years Team ELC Locality Lead Officers Autism Outreach Team VSA Additional Support Needs Advisory Project (ASNAP) | Increased staff confidence. Reduction in Requests for Assistance. | |

What we did?

VSA ASNAP (Additional Support Needs Advisory Project) has been commissioned by Aberdeen City Council to support the Funded Provider ELC settings to meet the needs of all children. ASNAP offers specialised support to Funded Providers, for example through observations, mentoring and training. This means that children, with Additional Support Needs (ASN), can take up their Early Learning and Childcare entitlement in a Funded Provider setting in a pattern to suit the needs of their families.

 The Service:

- Supports local ELC Funded Providers to facilitate the inclusion of children with Additional Support Needs;
- Assists staff with the development of strategies that will support the child / children they are working with;
- Delivers training to staff in settings which ASNAP has supported, to ensure the sustainability of inclusion; and
- Offers training as part of the annual ELC Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) offer.
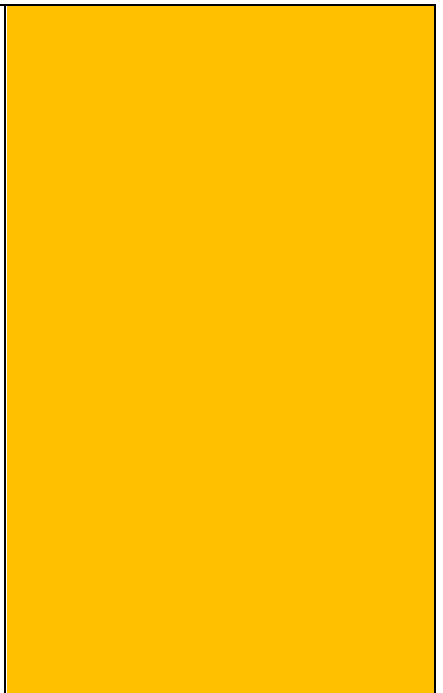
Referrals had been received to observe and support children in ELC settings. Nearly 50% of ELC Funded Providers have been supported by ASNAP over the past two years. A resource pack and online training materials have been further developed and promoted. This has resulted in greater awareness and uptake of the service.

The online training course has been rolled out (following pilot in 3 ELC settings) and feedback rating is a very high 9.2 out of 10. Behavioural strategies used in the training sessions indirectly benefit all children and staff in ELC settings, not just the children who are identified as in need of additional support. The ASNAP service is delivered in response to demand from ELC settings and Quality Assurance visits from ELC Locality Lead Officers.

In order to maintain support for children with ASN in ELC settings with an emphasis on early intervention, awareness raising and upskilling staff to manage the emotional and behavioural support needs of children, training will continue to be promoted and delivered online and in person. The feedback to date has been extremely positive.

ASNAP is a valued service and remains the first point of referral for our ELC Funded Providers requiring support to facilitate and sustain the inclusion of children with ASN.

From the ELC Learning Festival, ELC Locality Lead Officers identified a training need around ASN from Practitioner feedback. Following this, ASNAP were commissioned to offer various training sessions for Local Authority staff, as well as work on a pilot programme to support staff with their inclusive practice in a selected Local Authority provision.

| Offer opportunities for collaboration locally and cross-boundary to increase capacity and maximise resources | Work in partnership across ASGs and Authorities where appropriate. | ELC Locality Lead Officers Northern Alliance | Staff will have access to relevant and meaningful learning opportunities which will upskill them to continue to be able to provide the most current best practice.

This will be evidenced by both internal quality assurance and external inspection reporting ensuring that settings are meeting the national standard. | |

What we did?

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 by Collaborative Improvement Team (CIT). Networking opportunities are provided through the management and leadership programme and are highly valued by participants. Opportunities for other staff to network are in the early stages of implementation.

How will we support and develop our workforce?

Improvement Activity	What we said we'll do	By Who	Evidence of Impact	RAG Status
Create positive pathways into careers in ELC and provide access to funding for accredited qualifications	ELC Locality Lead Officers will use the ABZworks platform to link with ELC employers and training providers to promote positive pathways into ELC careers. Continue to offer Modern Apprenticeship opportunities in Local Authority ELC settings, building this role into our staffing model in a variety of settings that deliver different models of ELC.	Early Years Team ELC Locality Lead Officers ABZworks Training Providers	Increase in number of applicants for vacancies. Increase in applicants for Foundation Apprentice in Early Years course. Supply staff moving into permanent posts providing continuity for children and staff.	
	Partnerships with local training providers to widen the offer of the Foundation Apprenticeship Children and Young people in Aberdeen City Council secondary schools. Collaborating with People and Organisation to create an internal 'Introduction to ELC' course to be available to young people in secondary schools.		Increase in the number of staff attaining accredited qualifications across all levels. Number of young people accessing the 'Introduction to ELC' course. Supply staff reporting increasing confidence.	
	Offer Workforce Development and Expansion funding annually to support workforce, across the city, to undertake accredited qualifications and meet Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) registration requirements. Additionally, supporting staff to gain qualifications above what is required to allow for further career progression.			

	Promote grants for those undertaking qualifications to support routes out of poverty and maximize funding available.			
	Development and expansion of supply pool support workers in order to create additional pathway into the sector, supporting their progression into permanent posts in order to complete qualifications. Development of professional learning opportunities for supply staff to enhance understanding of the sector and opportunities for progression.	ELC Locality Lead Officers	Increase in number of relief Early Year Practitioners Increase in number of relief Support Workers On going adverts and recruitment	

What we did?

	2023/24		2022/23	
	Applied	Successful %	Applied	Successful %
BA Degree	68	76	65	85
Professional Development Award (PDA)	6	83	3	100
Social Services Children & Young People) SSCYP 2	10	90	4	100
SSCYP 3	38	84	25	100
SSCYP 4	10	40	0	0
Play 2	0	0	5	100
Play 3	5	100	3	100

Play 4	0	0	1	100
Bolt On	2	100	1	100
Units	0	0	6	100
Total	139	78	113	91

Workforce Development and Expansion

2023/24 saw an increase in applications for Workforce Development and Expansion Funding across all the majority of qualifications. We anticipate that 2024/25 will see similar increases as our workforce expands and candidates seek to progress their professional learning and meet SSSC Registration requirements.

Aberdeen City Council introduced a Modern Apprentice role into the ELC staffing structure. The aim of this is two-fold: firstly to grow our own workforce; and secondly to support our Funded Providers with a pipeline of suitably qualified practitioners. Aberdeen City Council works in partnership with three local training providers to offer a positive pathway for young people to develop their experience working in an ELC environment while gaining an SVQ3 Health and Social Care (Children and Young People). As an employer, we have 34 modern apprentice positions in our local authority ELC settings. This is a rolling programme and once candidates have completed their qualification the opportunity becomes available for another prospective modern apprentice. Candidates who complete their qualification are able to apply for internal opportunities in the ELC workforce and to support the transition into a permanent post we have developed a system in which the modern apprentices current line manager can endorse the candidate to join our ELC Casual Workers list without interview. Since the start of the programme in August 2021 we have had 30 candidates who have successfully completed the programme and have moved onto either further study or employment.

Internship Placements

The Early Years Team have worked in partnership with ABZworks to provide 12 week internship placements for various groups of people looking to return to work or indeed start off their career. Recent internships included LTU(long term unemployed), Care experienced young people and parents who wanted to return to work. On successful completion of the programme, the participants are encouraged to seek a career in ELC. They are guaranteed an interview for support worker posts or Modern apprenticeships, and, if recommended by school staff, can be placed on the relief support worker pool. These internships have been a great success and will continue for as long as funding allows.

Following the Collaborative Improvement visit in November, an induction for new ELC managers was recommended. Education Scotland have offered Aberdeen the opportunity to be part of a four-day training that they have developed around Pedagogical Leadership. Members of the central team will also attend and co-deliver which will ensure this training can be part of the induction for all new managers in the future.

A highly successful Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Learning festival took place on 13th February 2024. Over 500 practitioners from across the city, from both Local Authority and Funded Provider ELC settings attended. The event included opportunities for collaborative working as well as three keynote speakers. Feedback has been extremely positive and has informed the professional learning programme for 2024/25. Participants were also given the opportunity to volunteer to be part of focus groups to drive future developments.

From feedback gathered from the ELC Learning Festival, the following themes were identified as key areas for CLPL from Early Years staff: Outdoor Training, Transitions, Additional Support needs, Planning & Tracking. These areas will inform training opportunities for the next

delivery plan.

How will we communicate, engage and consult?

Improvement Activity	What we said we'll do	By Who	Evidence of Impact	RAG Status
Regular engagement and consultation with parents and carers	Statutory consultation with parents and carers every 2 years Regular engagement across ASGs	Early Years Team / Autumn 2023 Locality Lead Officers	Consultation Report ASG Feedback	🟩
What we did? Statutory ELC Consultation with parents and carers was undertaken in June 2023. Report shared widely with key stakeholders and published on Aberdeen City Council website.				
Regular engagement and consultation with all Partners and Key Stakeholders	Regular engagement city-wide and across ASGs	Early Years Team ELC Locality Lead Officers	Feedback from Partners and Key Stakeholders	🟧
What we did? A stakeholder engagement exercise was undertaken with Aberdeen City Council ELC workforce in August 2023 which received over 100 responses. Feedback has been addressed via meetings with ELC teams, at training sessions and the Aberdeen Learning Festival held in February 2024. Locality Lead Officers offer a variety of ongoing engagement opportunities, for example regular informal and formal QA visits, fortnightly ELC updates and ASG meetings. In addition, ELC Locality Lead Officers are available for ongoing, responsive support as required.				
Provision of accurate and up to date	Communicate key information through social media channels.	Early Years Team / Webmonitor	Number of views and shares	🟩

	Maintain and update ELC pages on Aberdeen City Council website			
information on ACC communication channels.				

What we did?

Key information shared via Aberdeen City Council social media channels (Facebook and X (formerly Twitter)) include: information on ELC application process and timelines; information on Gaelic Medium provision; information on childminders and blended ELC offer; details of Parent and Carer consultations; national guidance from Scottish Government and Care Inspectorate; CPL and training opportunities; Parent Club Scotland posts signposting families to ideas and resources; and local good news stories.

Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2024, the Early Learning and Childcare pages of Aberdeen City Council website have received 36,108 views. These include: How to apply for ELC; how to apply for Eligible 2's place; ELC Delivery Plan; expanding ELC; Parent and Carer consultations and update on changes to ELC delivery models. The Family Information Service received 2,778 views during the same period, signposting visitors to a variety of ELC provision and family support services.

On X, our social media posts providing parents and carers with information on how to apply for an ELC place in January and February 2024, attracted just under 6,000 views.

Ongoing promotion of ELC models, options and Gaelic Medium provision	Promote all ELC models across the city. Promote Gaelic Medium provision. Promote blended ELC offer. Ensure Early Learning and Childcare Information for Parents and Carers booklet is maintained, updated and accessible.	Early Years Team	Evidence of uptake Increased uptake of Gaelic Medium provision Increased uptake of blended ELC offer	

What we did?

We have promoted all ELC models via our Guide to ELC which is updated annually and published on Aberdeen City Council website.

We have had social media campaigns to specifically promote uptake of Gaelic Medium provision and blended ELC offer. We continue to promote, advertise and deliver Gaelic Medium provision, however uptake continues to be low. Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2024, information on the Gaelic Medium provision received 44 views on the Aberdeen City Council website.

In 2022/23 9 new children applied for and were offered the Gaelic Unit – 2 late applications were placed on waiting list.

In 2023/24 5 new children applied for and were offered a place – this represents a significant reduction in uptake.

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Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Delivery Plan 2024-26

Principles for ELC

- High Quality
- Affordable
- Accessible
- Flexible

How will we deliver ELC?

- Offer a mix of Local Authority and Funded Provider Delivery Models across all ASGs
- Via outdoor ELC to both provide an offer and build capacity across all settings
- Increase the number of childminders to promote choice
- Increase uptake for Eligible 2's

How will we ensure quality?

- Deliver a comprehensive Quality Assurance programme
- Build capacity through digital offer and face to face opportunities
- Support and enhance smooth Transitions
- Work in partnership with families and communities including through a PEEP offer in all settings as part of a partnership Family Support offer

How will we communicate, engage and consult?

- Regular engagement & consultation with parents and carers
- Regular engagement & consultation with all Partners and stakeholders
- Via digital communication
- Ongoing promotion of ELC models, options and Gaelic Medium provision

How will we support and develop our workforce?

- Create positive pathways into careers in ELC and provide access to funding for accredited qualifications
- Deliver high quality professional learning for all
- Offer opportunities for collaboration locally and cross-boundary to increase capacity

Key Themes for Development

- Workforce Support
- Transitions
- Community Partnerships
- Family Support

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Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Delivery Plan

2024-26

Introduction / Executive Summary

Aberdeen City Council has a statutory duty, under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, to prepare and publish an Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan, every 2 years, to set out the strategic direction for the delivery of ELC in the city. The Plan will respond to local need and reflect the diversity of communities in Aberdeen. The 2024-26 Delivery Plan follows on from the 2022-24 Delivery Plan and is informed by the outcomes of a Parent and Carer Consultation and engagement with key stakeholders including staff.

Background

The National Context

Since August 2021, all three and four year olds, and eligible two-year olds have been entitled to receive 1140 hours of funded ELC per year. This means more funded hours, more choice of where children can go to access their ELC entitlement and more flexible models of ELC are available to support families.

Deferred Entry

In August 2023, new legislation was implemented which means that all families with eligible children can now choose to defer their start date for primary one and be automatically entitled to access funded ELC for a further year. The new legislation supports families to make decisions based on the best interests of their child, without the financial barrier of ELC costs. Aberdeen City Council welcomed the opportunity to be one of 10 pilots across Scotland to implement this automatic deferral from August 2022.

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Best Start: Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare Plan for Scotland 2022-26

The Strategic Early Learning and School Age Childcare Plan for Scotland 2022-26 was published by Scottish Government in October 2022. It outlines the Scottish Government vision and priorities for the next four years; its approach to policy design and delivery; and next steps. The strategic priorities outlined in the Plan are:

Priority 1: Realising the benefits of the expansion to 1140 hours of funded Early Learning and Childcare for children and families.

Priority 2: Progressing the expansion of our childcare offer, including building a future system of school age childcare and a new early learning and childcare offer for one and two year olds.

Priority 3: Ensuring that the delivery of our priorities is supported by a sustainable, diverse and thriving sector and profession.

Priority 4: Ensuring that our ambitions are underpinned by fair funding and outcomes frameworks, robust data and organisations that work together to support good outcomes for children and families.

The delivery principles which underpin Early Learning and Childcare continue to be:
- Quality
- Flexibility
- Accessibility
- Affordability

Our Aberdeen City Council Early Learning and Childcare Delivery Plan 2024-26 dovetails with the Strategic Plan.

The Local Context

Aberdeen City Council welcomed the opportunity to expand services in recognition of how the expansion of ELC could help reduce the poverty related attainment gap and improve long term outcomes for children and families. As a result of the ELC Expansion Programme Aberdeen City Council has implemented the delivery of the increased entitlement of 1140 hours from August 2021 and offers a mixed delivery model of ELC provision in the city:

- In 53 Local Authority settings, including 3 stand alone ELC settings: At the multi-agency Links Hub; and at our 2 Outdoor Nursery provisions at Duthie and Hazlehead Parks;
- In 41 Funded Provider ELC settings;
- At our Gaelic Medium Unit based in Gilcomstoun Primary School; and
- Through 62 Funded Provider childminders.

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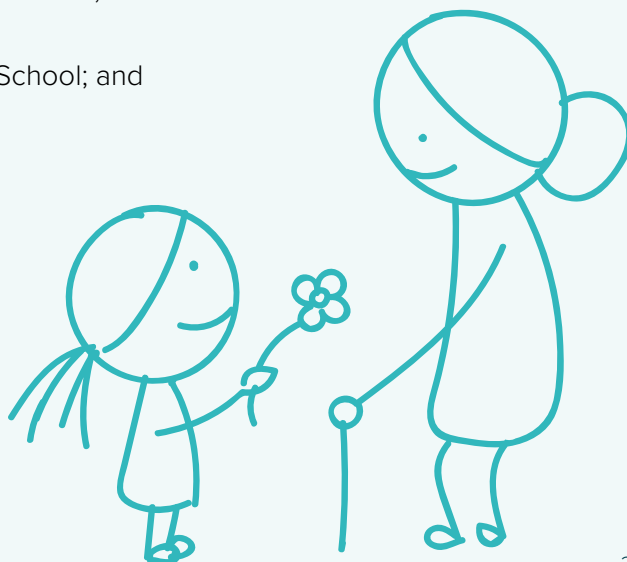
In June 2023 we consulted with parents, carers and future parents and carers to seek their views to inform and to help develop the next Delivery Plan. The consultation received a total of 664 responses after 3 weeks (+210 (46%) from 2021).

Key headline points include:
- 79.4% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the range of ELC providers and models within their local area (Associated School Group (ASG)) (+7.4% from 2021).
- 75.8% have been able to secure a funded ELC place in their local area/ASG.
- 80.6% of respondents were able to secure their first choice of ELC provision.
- 88.4% of respondents were satisfied with the location of their ELC provision. (+5.4% from 2021).
- 76.8% of respondents were satisfied with the times ELC services are available (+9% from 2021).
- 87.1% of respondents stated that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their child's experience of ELC to date (+ 4.7% from 2021).
- 73.6% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the snacks and meals their child is offered whilst attending ELC (+4.8% from 2021)
- The majority of respondents, at over 95%, identified Early Learning and Childcare as having a positive impact on their child's development with:

    o 87% identifying improved social skills;
    o 81% seeing an improvement in their child's communication skills;
    o 71% identifying improved creativity;
    o 68% identifying improved fine motor skills;
    o 64% identifying improved emotional development;
    o 63% identifying improved physical development;
    o 62% identifying improved listening skills;
    o 60% identifying improved literacy development; and
    o 60% identifying improved numeracy development.

- 39.8% of respondents stated that they had more time for other responsibilities as a result of the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (-11.4% from 2021).
- 29.2% of respondents indicated that they had more money/disposable income as a positive impact on their family (-9.5% from 2021).
- 24.1% are now considering a return to work or study (-4.4% from 2021).
- 24.1% stated improved wellbeing/respite as a positive impact from the expansion of ELC (-2% from 2021), with 18.9% of respondents finding they now have more time to themselves (-5.4% from 2021).
- 73.3% of respondents stated that they are aware that Aberdeen City Council offers Eligible 2's ELC placements.

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Vision for Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) in Aberdeen City

Monitoring of supply and demand, consultation with parents and carers and engagement with key stakeholders validates the vision set in the 2017 Delivery Plan.

Our vision is to provide ELC which is accessible, affordable, is of high quality and is available up to 50 weeks of the year. Provision will be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of individual children, parents/carers and the wider community and will support parents to work, train or study, especially those who need routes into sustainable employment and out of poverty.
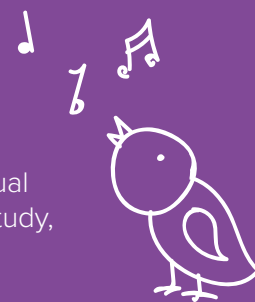
Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles will be used to inform our practice. All ELC provision across Aberdeen City will:

- Capitalise on intergenerational support
- Offer a level of personalisation to ensure maximum gains for children
- Be nurturing, inclusive and offer a holistic service to children and families in keeping with GIRFEC
- Feel owned by the community
- Fully utilise outside space to promote wellbeing
- Be staffed by skilled practitioners who have opportunities to develop their skills further through a suite of professional learning suited to their needs and situation
- Be quality assured across a locality by one skilled practitioner who will have a key role in supporting parents to fully capitalise on the local offer.

Key Themes for Development

Based on the outcomes of our Evaluation of the Expansion of ELC (undertaken in 2022), our consultation with parents and carers, and our engagement with key stakeholders, including staff voice, triangulated via staff survey, Collaborative Improvement and ELC Learning Festival, we suggest that our key priorities for development over the next 2 years continue to be:

Workforce Support

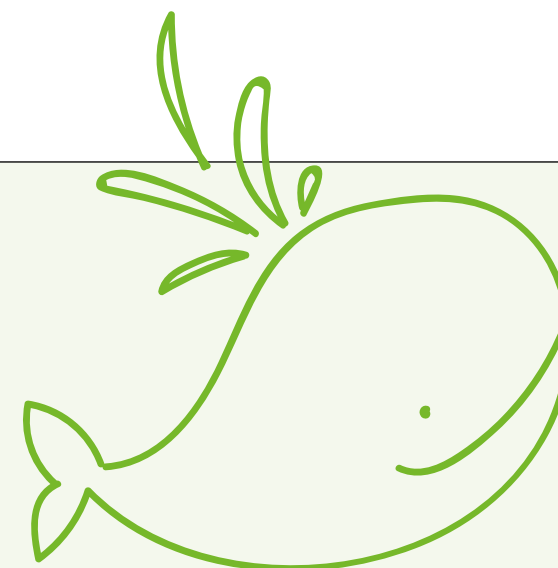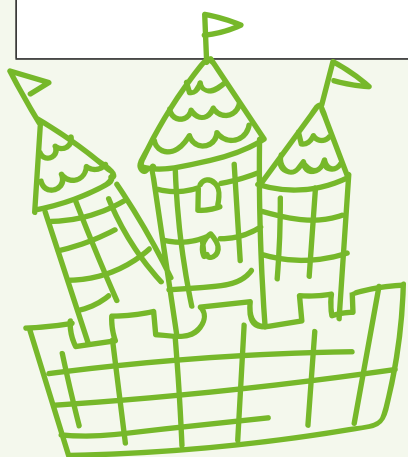**Transitions**

Community Partnerships

Family Support

Improvement activity and actions for next 2 years are detailed in the following pages.

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How will we deliver Early Learning and Childcare?

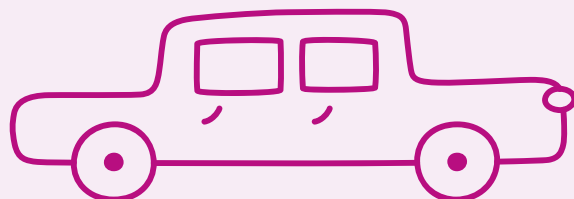| Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By whom / By when	Evidence of Impact
Maintain a mix of Local Authority and Funded Provider delivery models across all Associated School Groups (ASGs) to meet the needs of all children and families	Continue to monitor demand across the city and in individual ASGs. Ongoing consultation and engagement with families to establish any changing patterns in service usage. Continue to monitor uptake with Funded Providers.	Early Years Team ELC Locality Lead Officers Funded Providers Scottish Childminding Association	Families are able to access a range of delivery models within their ASG. % of first choice applications. ELC Parent and Carer Consultation.
Continue to offer all children attending ELC regular and routine access to high quality learning outside	Ongoing development of Duthie Park and Hazlehead Outdoor Nurseries. Provision of professional learning (including at Duthie and Hazlehead Outdoor Nurseries). Opportunities for staff to shadow at Duthie Park and Hazlehead Nurseries. Promotion and Quality Assurance of Outdoor Learning across all ELC settings. Childminders – Promoting environmental and community work.	Outdoor Manager ELC Locality Lead Officers Outdoor Manager ELC Locality Lead Officers Childminders	Provision of and evaluations of professional learning Evaluations from Quality Improvement Visits Number of staff engaging in job shadowing. Number of childminders participating.

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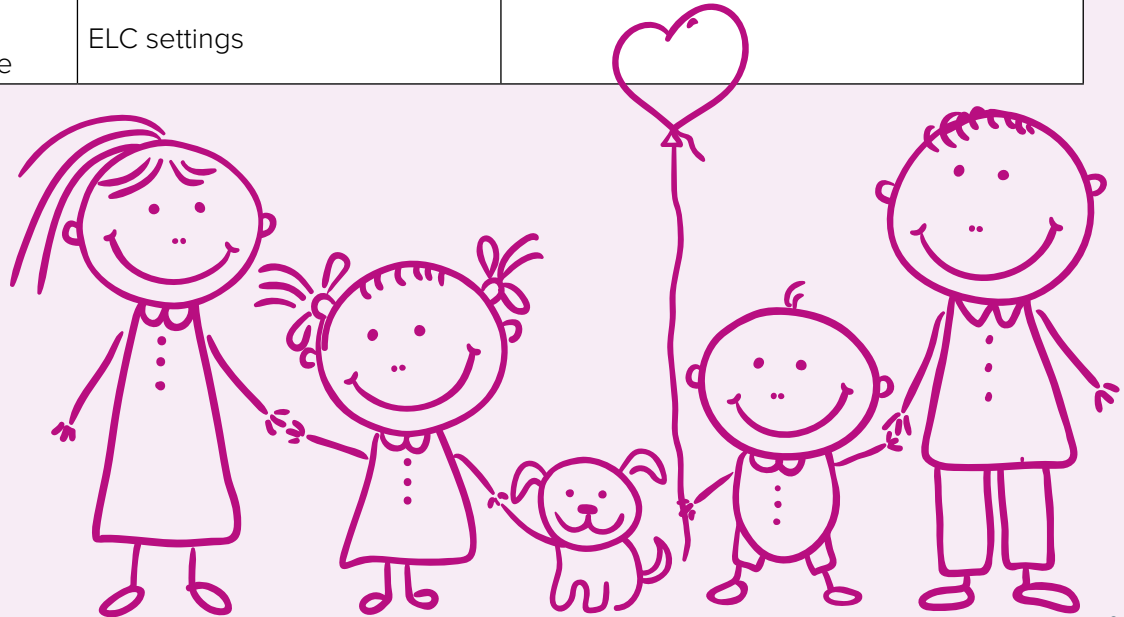|			
Increase the number of childminders to promote flexibility and choice	Monitor demand for childminders. Target recruitment activity according to demand and in priority regeneration areas. Work in partnership with Scottish Childminding Association to deliver Programme for Scotland's Childminding Future (PSCF) - a National Partnership Programme on Childminder Retention & Recruitment – to recruit 25 new childminders per year in Aberdeen. Continue to evaluate and improve the support afforded to funded provider childminders.	Early Years Team Scottish Childminding Association ELC Locality Lead Officers	Monitor application process. Secure current numbers of funded providers. Increase in the numbers of Childminders and Funded Provider Childminders across the city. Increase in the numbers of Childminders and Funded Provider Childminders in priority regeneration areas.
Increase uptake for eligible 2 year old children	Monitor demand for eligible 2 places. Send quarterly mailshots using information from Data Pipeline Project to target eligible families. Secure places at Local Authority and Funded Provider ELC settings including childminders On-going collaboration with multi-agency partners to identify eligible 2s.	Early Years Team All ELC Settings Scottish Childminding Association	Monitor application process. Families are able to access delivery models within their ASG which meet their needs and any change in demand. Increase in % of eligible 2 year old children taking up their ELC entitlement.

How will we ensure quality?

Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By whom / By when	Evidence of Impact
Deliver ELC in accordance with National Standard for ELC	Regular self-evaluation by ELC Settings. Quality Improvement Visits.	ELC Locality Lead Officers ELC Managers ELC Settings	Improved evaluations from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate
Deliver a comprehensive Quality Assurance programme	Alignment of Quality Improvement visits with school Quality Assurance calendar for all ELC providers, including the work of trio groups supporting Local Authority settings across the city. Implementation of robust Quality Improvement Framework for Local Authority and Funded Provider settings incorporating reference to national guidance documents such as Realising the Ambition - Being me. Identification of areas for targeted support, pre and post inspections.	ELC Locality Lead Officers	Improved evaluations from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate
Support and enhance smooth transitions	Ongoing review of transition processes with early in person transition and early engagement with staff, where practicable. Pilot some more creative transition processes within Local Authority ELC settings. Regular communication and engagement with parents and carers.	ELC Locality Lead Officers ELC Managers ELC Settings	Feedback from children, parents/carers and staff. Increased wellbeing of children – using Leuven Scale to evaluate this in observations. Reflective dialogue on transitions with practitioners during visits and ASG meets. Increase in the number of children meeting developmental milestones.

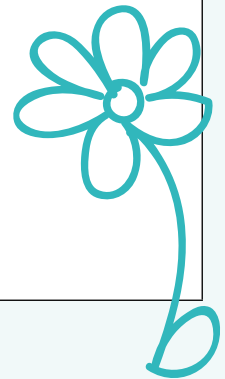|			
Work in partnership with families and communities, including through a Peep offer, in all settings as part of a partnership Family Support offer	ELC and Peep colleagues will work together to ensure that at least one member of staff from each ELC setting has been Peep trained and support will be given to staff when delivering Peep sessions. Monitor uptake to identify if there are any barriers preventing these from taking place in order to remove them. Liaise with colleagues from Family Learning to ensure that settings are maximising Family Support sessions offered. Support language and literacy development via promotion of Bookbug Programme, Curriculum Resources & Information Service (CRIS) and encouraging library membership.	ELC Locality Lead Officers Peep Family Learning Team Aberdeen City Libraries	Increase in the number of children meeting developmental milestones. Increase in the number of parents and carers who have awareness of how to support their children's learning and development at home. Improved relationships with families. Increase in the number of families engaging with Aberdeen City Libraries.
Provision of free healthy meals and snacks as part of ELC offer	Every child will receive a minimum of one meal or substantial snack per ELC session, consistent with Setting the Table nutritional guidance. Provision of milk and healthy snack via Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme	ELC settings Catering Service Early Years Team ELC settings	

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How will we support and develop our workforce?

Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By whom / By when	Evidence of Impact
Create positive pathways into careers in ELC and provide access to funding for accredited qualifications	ELC Locality Lead Officers will use the ABZworks platform to link with ELC employers and training providers to promote positive pathways into ELC careers. Continue to offer Modern Apprenticeship opportunities in Local Authority ELC settings, building this role into our staffing model in a variety of settings that deliver different models of ELC. Partnerships with local training providers to widen the offer of the Foundation Apprenticeship Children and Young people in Aberdeen City Council secondary schools. Collaborating with People and Organisation to create an internal 'Introduction to ELC' course to be available to young people in secondary schools. Offer Workforce Development and Expansion funding annually to support workforce, across the city, to undertake accredited qualifications and meet SSSC registration requirements. Additionally, supporting staff to gain qualifications above what is required to allow for further career progression. Work with Employability Team to promote grants for those undertaking qualifications to support routes out of poverty and maximise funding available. Development and expansion of supply/relief pool support workers in order to create additional pathway into the sector, supporting their progression into permanent posts in order to complete qualifications. Development of professional learning opportunities for supply/relief staff to enhance understanding of the sector and opportunities for progression.	Early Years Team ELC Locality Lead Officers ABZworks Training Providers Employability Team	Increase in number of applicants for vacancies. Increase in applicants for Foundation Apprentice in Early Years course. Supply staff moving into permanent posts providing continuity for children and staff. Increase in the number of staff attaining accredited qualifications across all levels. Number of young people accessing the 'Introduction to ELC' course. Supply staff reporting increasing confidence.

Deliver high quality professional learning for all	Understand the needs of current staff through questionnaires and findings of inspections or quality assurance visits.		Staff will have access to relevant and meaningful learning opportunities which will upskill them to continue to be able to provide the most current best practice. This will be evidence by both internal quality assurance and external inspection reporting ensuring that settings are meeting the national standard.
	Develop resources for CLPL both internally and utilising external resources.		
	Bespoke CLPL delivery for localities, delivered by ELC Locality Lead Officers.		
	Continue to grow our online CLPL platform via an accessible platform for access to materials that can be used flexible and in collaboration with others.		
	Provide tutorial sessions based on content provided online to facilitate further collaboration and discussion for ELC practitioners sector wide.		
	Induction for new ELC managers following Collaborative Improvement recommendation.		
	Uptake of Education Scotland offer for Aberdeen to be part of a four-day training that they have developed around Pedagogical Leadership. Members of the central team will also attend and co-deliver which will ensure this training can be part of the induction for all new managers in the future.		
	Promote and facilitate collaborative working within ASG's.		
	Build on Managers sessions with focus on priority themes to continue to upskill and support ELC staff and collegiate sharing sessions to share good practice.		
	Offer networking and professional learning opportunities for ELC Support Workers.		
	Build capacity through both digital offer and face to face opportunities.		

Support and upskill ELC Teams to provide a fully inclusive offer	Build capacity and confidence through observations, shadowing and training. Ongoing rollout and delivery of CIRCLE training resource. Delivery of ASNAP training. Provision of advice, guidance, support and training from Educational Psychology Service.	Early Years Team ELC Locality Lead Officers Autism Outreach Team VSA ASNAP Educational Psychology Service	Increased staff confidence. Reduction in Requests for Assistance.
Support the health and wellbeing of staff	Regular 1-2-1 and Team meetings. Regular network meetings.	ELC Managers ELC Locality Lead Officers	Reduction in absence and staffing shortages. Staff report improved wellbeing.
Offer opportunities for collaboration locally and cross-boundary to increase capacity and maximise resources	Work in partnership across ASGs and Authorities where appropriate.	ELC Locality Lead Officers	Staff will have access to relevant and meaningful learning opportunities which will upskill them to continue to be able to provide the most current best practice. This will be evidence by both internal quality assurance and external inspection reporting ensuring that settings are meeting the national standard.

How will we communicate, engage and consult?

Improvement Activity	This is how we'll do it	By whom / By when	Evidence of Impact
Open and regular engagement and consultation with parents and carers	Statutory consultation with parents and carers every 2 years. Regular engagement across ASGs.	Early Years Team / Summer 2025 Locality Lead Officers	Consultation Report. ASG Feedback.
Regular engagement and consultation with all Partners and Key Stakeholders	Regular engagement city-wide and across ASGs – in person and via digital platforms. Termly meetings offered and themed focus groups.	Early Years Team ELC Locality Lead Officers	Feedback from Partners and Key Stakeholders.
Provision of accurate and up to date information on ACC communication channels	Communicate key information through social media channels. Maintain and update ELC pages on Aberdeen City Council website.	Early Years Team / Webmonitor	Number of views and shares.
Ongoing promotion of ELC, delivery models, options and Gaelic Medium provision	Promote all ELC models across the city. Promote Gaelic Medium provision. Promote blended ELC offer. Promote ELC as Early Learning AND Childcare. Ensure Early Learning and Childcare Information for Parents and Carers booklet is maintained, updated and accessible.	Early Years Team	Evidence of uptake. Evidence of uptake of Gaelic Medium provision. Evidence of uptake of blended ELC offer.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	2nd July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Healthy Weight
REPORT NUMBER	CFS/24/188
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1, 1.1.2

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report seeks approval to progress work to increase the number of children and young people who are of a healthy weight by taking a whole system approach.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee:-

2.1 note the work undertaken to learn from published research and local data;

2.2 endorse the proposed whole systems approach;

2.3 instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to update Members on the output of the event noted in paragraph 3.17 through a Service Update; and

2.4 instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to report progress within one calendar year.

3. **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1 The Children's Services Annual Report was presented to Committee in February 2024 (CFS/24/046). The report highlighted a concerning rise in the number of children and expectant mothers who were not of a healthy weight and noted the importance of addressing these issues timeously to prevent poor health outcomes in the longer term.

3.2 The Committee instructed that Officers give the area due consideration and report back to Committee. This has afforded officers time to engage and

collaborate with partners, most notably Public Health, and review relevant policy and literature to determine how best to respond.

3.3 The Scottish Government has a commitment to halve childhood obesity by 2030. Plans to achieve this are set out in A healthier future: Scotland's diet and healthy weight delivery plan. This national documentation outlines 5 outcomes to be achieved:

- Children have the best start in life - they eat well and have a healthy weight

- The food environment supports healthier choices

- People have access to effective weight management services

- Leaders across all sectors promote health diet and weigh

- Diet-related health inequalities are reduced

This national publication will help inform our local next steps.

What does our local data tell us?

3.4 Public Health data suggests that 124,521 adults are overweight in Aberdeen City along with 12.4% of children in Primary 1. Given these statistics, this group of Primary 1 children could be the first generation to live shorter lives than their parents. If not addressed, the number of adults who are overweight/obese is set to considerably increase, as will the cost associated with obesity (see figure below). Nationally and locally, levels of obesity are most prevalent across SIMD 1 and 5.
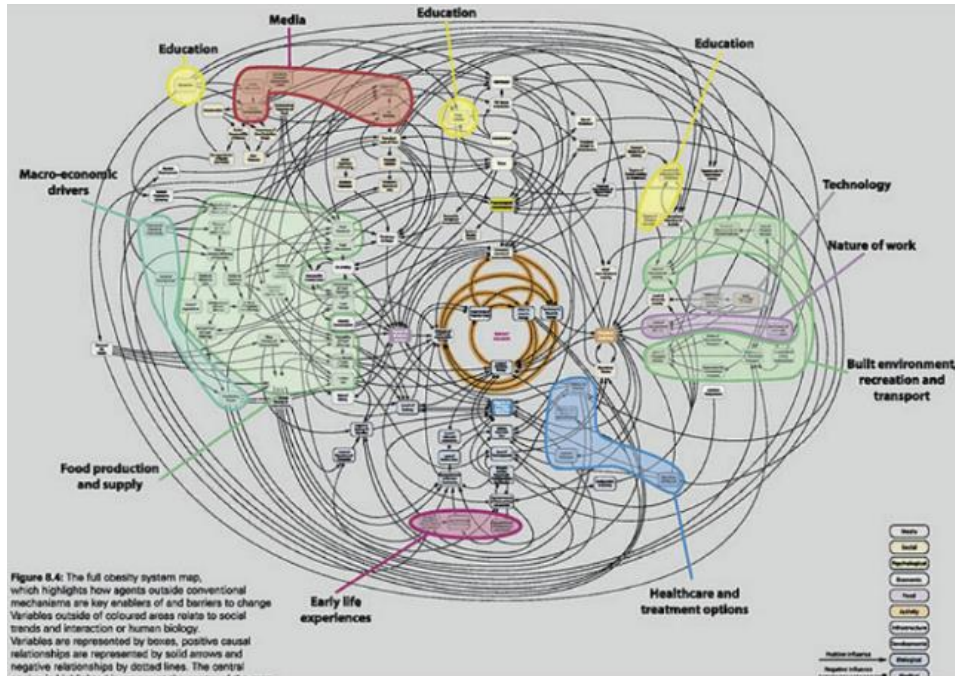

Source: Frontier Economics analysis based on Nesta projection of obesity rates up to 2030
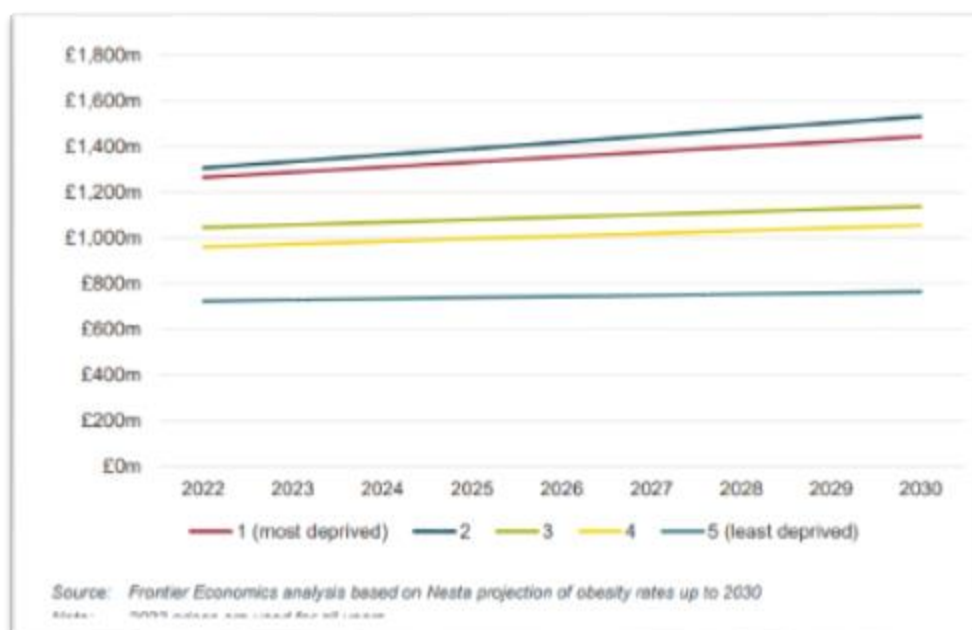
What does the research tell us?

3.5 A review of recent research tells us that the current rise in obesity began in the 1980s. It is not caused by people becoming less active or lacking in motivation, it is exacerbated by environments that are extremely abnormal in promoting and sustaining obesity. The most significant change over the last 40 years has been the dramatic rise in high energy, high fat, very high sugar

and ultra-processed food and how 'normalised' easy access to these "poor" calories has become.

3.6 In addition to environmental influences on obesity, there are many further influences as outlined in the systems map of the outcome of obesity, created by the UK Government Office for Science in 2007. As such, we need to explore how best to address complex problems and not take a simplistic view.


Figure 8.4: The full obesity system map, which highlights how agents outside conventional mechanisms are key enablers of and barriers to change. Variables outside of coloured areas relate to social trends and interaction or human biology. Variables are represented by boxes, positive causal relationships are represented by solid arrows and negative relationships by dotted lines. The central cluster is highlighted to emphasise the centre of the map.

All of the influences noted by the UK Government Office for Science were then further organised in the Foresight Report.
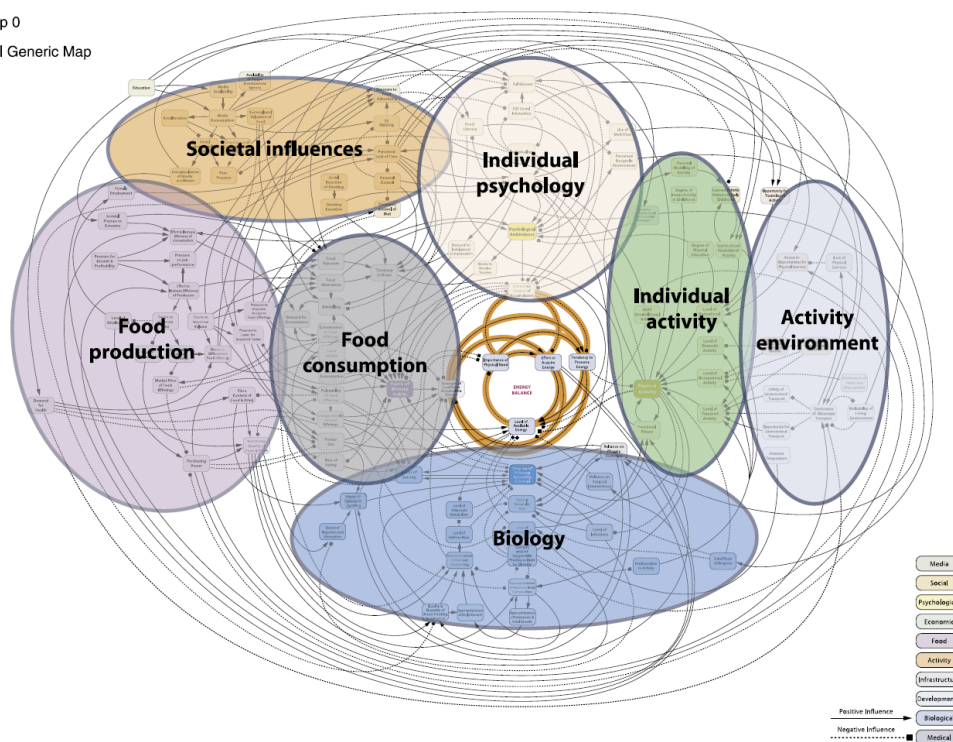
This further organisation gives a sense of how cross cutting the levers to addressing levels of obesity are. There will be a need to engage Clusters from across the Organisation and from the Community Planning Partnership in our work.

3.7 The Human Learning Systems report explores how complex problems can best be addressed. It tells us that outcomes in people's lives aren't "delivered" by organisations (or by projects, partnerships or programmes, etc). Outcomes are created by the hundreds of different factors in the uniquely complex system that is each person's life. As a result, we can't hold one single person/organisation responsible for outcomes.

3.8 The report highlights the need to build on what is working well and accept that you can't control everything or indeed predict the future. As a result, there is a need to fully capture all of the activity currently being delivered which contributes to the obesity agenda in order to identify any gaps in provision. Human Learning Systems concludes that there is a need to involve those who are involved in the system to generate solutions, focus on relationships, experiment and learn, and have 'good enough' plans to refine over time as you learn. This learning will be built into our plans.

3.9 Public Health Scotland has recently published recommendations on ' A systems based approach to physical activity in Scotland. The key messages are not dissimilar for those from Human Learning Systems. The document suggests a 6 Phase whole systems model to address obesity (see figure).
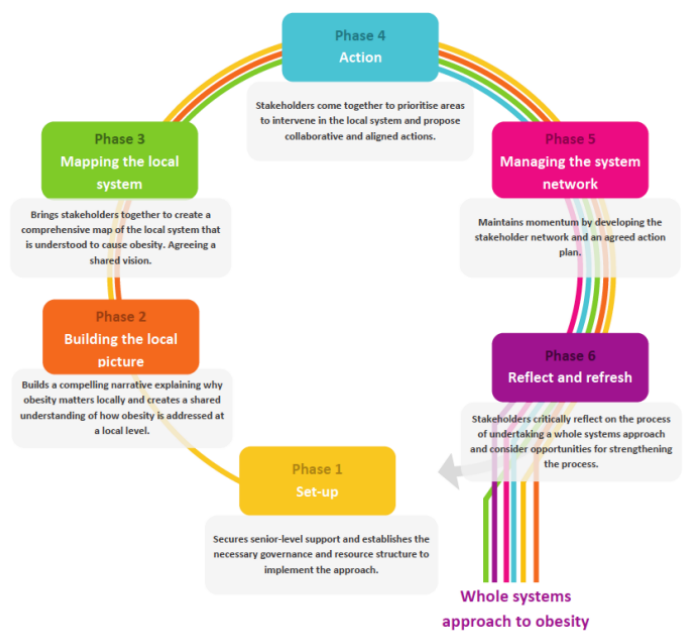
3.10 The document outlines that strong senior leadership is required to offer the best chance of achieving a sustained impact on the obesogenic environment and making a measurable dent in population rates of obesity. As a result, work on obesity has been added to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

3.11 The City of Amsterdam has shown that taking a local, 'Whole Systems Approach' to tackling obesity can succeed. A whole systems approach targets actions at multiple causes of the obesogenic environment at the same time, and recognises the complexity of the problem. Amsterdam was one of the few cities in the world to reverse childhood obesity rates in 2015 within three years having recognised obesity as a slow epidemic.

3.10 To realise the change, those in Amsterdam utilised evaluation across the Dahlgren-Whitehead framework below. Starting from the individual level (age, sex and hereditary factors) they focused on care for children who were overweight and obese and on first 1000 days of life approach.

3.11 Then, at the individual lifestyle factor level, they focused on neighbourhoods, communities, training for professionals, targeting schools and improving digital facilities.

3.12 The level of living and working conditions, so the environment level, was tackled from many angles including through a focus on the healthy food and work environment.

3.13 Finally, on the general socio-economic, cultural and environmental level, they acknowledge the importance and role of national policy and approach of the food industry. A 'Health in all policies' approach was adopted so that all policy levers were utilised to support the healthy weight agenda. As a result, a range of changes were made to policies concerning the build environment (for example, pavements being wider, more cycle lanes and less lifts in buildings) changes to retain food policy and the banning of marketing aimed at children for unhealthy food products. There will be a need for us to consider how a range of strategies and plans (such as local Transport Strategy) actively contributes towards reducing and preventing obesity.

3.14 From reading a range of research and best practice, there are some principles for tackling childhood obesity to take into account. These include:

Design for maximum impact. There is a need to utilise universal and preventative interventions and recognise the value of a harm reduction

approach, for example breastfeeding is known to reduce the chances of childhood obesity. Physical activity is secondary to calorie consumption

Make healthy choices easier. There is a need to make uptake and participation easier and also consider how health cues can be given. It is important to look for marginal gains and not exclusively focus on education. There are a range of sources who collate best evidence based practice including Obesity Action Scotland

What does this mean for Aberdeen City?

3.14   It is clear that this issue cannot be addressed by taking a simplistic view. There will be a need to understand the complex influences on families in order to know how best to progress. A period of engagement with families will be built into our plans.

3.15   It is proposed that the 6 Phase whole systems model to address obesity from A systems based approach to physical activity in Scotland be utilised to guide our approach, with the Amsterdam evaluation framework used to help us focus on all influences.

3.16   Work on Phase 1 (set up) has been completed. The Children's Services Board will champion work from a children's perspective, with an improvement project being driven by the Health and Social Care Partnership to drive work from an adults' perspective.

3.17   Officers intend to engage with a range of Community Planning Partners and communities over the summer holiday period to secure their commitment to taking a whole systems approach. This early engagement will be important given that the levers available to support healthy weight sit across a range of Clusters and organisations. The need for a Council wide response has already been discussed at the Officer led Council Strategy Board.

3.18   Following engagement at individual organisation/community level, it is proposed that a multi-agency event be held in late August 2024 to conclude Stage 2 (building the local picture) and begin work on Stage 3 (mapping the local system). The event will allow attendees from communities, across the Council and wider Community Planning Partnership to reach agreement on the influences on childhood obesity in the city and generate a broader understanding of the policy levers available to help address the issue. In addition, the event will help us start to map the current activity helping to support healthy weight. Taking this approach will enable us to ensure that we build on what is already working well, more easily identify gaps for action, start to articulate our common ambition and take decisions on what to prioritise first.

3.19   It is proposed that the output of the late August event, alongside an indicative Plan, be reported to Committee through Service Update with a further update on progress presented to Committee within one calendar year.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Our Local Public Health Team has identified 3 members of staff to work alongside a Local Authority Officer to help drive the work forwards.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   No legal implications have been identified.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   No negative environmental impacts have been identified, although the work may lead to recommendations on changes to policy governing the obesogenic environment.

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	Not addressing obesity will lead to serious long term health needs for our citizens which will add considerable demand on Community Planning Partners (CPP)	Early Plan in place to address the rise in levels of obesity as a CPP	L	**Yes**
Compliance	Risk of not aligning with national policy	The Plan reflects national policy.	L	**Yes**
Operational	Risk that we take a simplistic view, implement the easy options but make no impact on those we serve.	We plan to take account of the complexity of the issue by working closely with communities.	L	**Yes**
Financial	Risk that we don't have sufficient resource to meet the needs of those with health needs arising from obesity	The CPP is taking preventative steps to address obesity	L	**Yes**

		now that the issue is known.		
Reputational	Risk that we don't take action now that we know there is an issue.	Mitigated by reporting back within a year.	L	**Yes**
Environment / Climate	No risks identified at this point.			

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement The cross cutting nature of work on obesity could impact on a range of Partnership Priorities including those within: • An Active City • Supporting people with the cost of living crisis • Building a greener and more sustainable city • Keeping our city moving • Empowering communities	Taking the approach advocated in the report will enable the joining up of all priorities to support a reduction in levels of obesity.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
LOIP stretch outcome 3: *95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026* **LOIP stretch outcome 10:** *Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026*	Taking the whole systems approach will help us scale up the interventions into CPP policies and strategies.
Regional and City Strategies Prevention Strategy Children's Services Plan Local Outcome Improvement Plan	The approach being advocated prioritises prevention and is aligned with our key CPP plans.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

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

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	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/193
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1.1

1.   **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To share with members the introduction of the Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill and its implications for services in Aberdeen City.

2.   **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Committee:-

2.1   note the report and the intentions of the Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence (LDAN) Bill; and

2.2   instruct the Chief Officer, Children's Social Work & Family Support/CSWO to provide an update on progress of the Bill as appropriate.

CURRENT SITUATION

3.1   **Background**

3.1.1   In December 2023 the Scottish Govdernment commenced a consultation on the LDAN Bill. The consultation closed on 21 April 2024. A response led by the Health and Social Care Partnership, involving key Council services including but not restricted to Education and Children's Social Work was submitted.

3.1.2   The Consultation Paper was co-designed with people with lived experience and sought views on who the Bill should apply to as well as proposals on overarching themes such as:
- inclusive communications,
- data,
- mandatory training in the public sector;

3.1.3   In addition specific proposals were made in relation to the themes of:
- health and wellbeing,
- social care, education,

- transport.

3.1.4 The Bill is a significant piece of legislation that will have implications for many Council services. It also will have implications for the Health and Social Care Partnership. In view of this it is the intention for the Bill to be considered on a collaborative and integrated basis. Inevitably there will be changes to the Bill as it progresses through the parliamentary process and colleagues will be tracking these to inform our planning for this major piece of legislation. At this stage, the Scottish Government has not set out a clear timeline regarding the drafting of a Bill and the subsequent parliamentary process.

OVERARCHING THEMES

3.2   Statutory strategies

3.2.1 There is currently no formal or legislative requirement for national strategies specifically aimed at neurodivergent conditions or learning disabilities.

3.2.2 What can the LDAN Bill do? The Bill proposes to take a broad approach while recognising there will always be a need for distinct policies. A broad approach will recognise the whole person and the way that services and support are delivered. The Bill could:
- Require the Scottish Government to produce a national strategy.
- Require public bodies, such as health and social care partnerships and local authorities, to produce local strategies which are reviewed on a regular basis.
- Make sure that people with lived experience are involved.

3.2.3 **Mandatory training in the public sector** – The Bill contends in order to improve services, reduce stigma and deliver improved outcomes there needs to be greater awareness and understanding of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities across public bodies. There is an existing duty in England for all health and social care service providers to provide training appropriate to their role on autism and learning disabilities. People with lived experience strongly supported this suggestion.

3.3   Inclusive communication

3.3.1 The use of inclusive communication is vital in allowing neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities to know and exercise their rights, to live independently and to participate fully in life. People with lived experience highlighted a need for a better understanding of communication needs, and more use of alternative formats, including easy-read editions.

3.3.2 Experience from the COVID pandemic saw positive moves to be more inclusive in public messaging. There is a desire to build on this. The Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to work towards - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation - advancing equality of opportunity - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

3.3.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? The Bill could provide a strong focus on how public authorities can meet the communication needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities. The Bill could:

- Provide a right to request alternative means of communication.
- Provide for people to request access to a practitioner with specialist training.

- Provide better access to easy-read versions of public facing communications and documents.
- Ensure local and national strategies include how the specific communications needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities have been met.

3.3.4 The Bill recognises the need to further consider if existing complaints systems meet the needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities.

3.4 Data

3.4.1 The lack of data can restrict evidence-based policy making, and disrupt planning. It is important that neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities are visible in data collection in relevant areas, for example in employment data. Those with lived experience highlighted other areas including health and wellbeing where improved data collation is required but with a need to ensure neurodivergent people have the right to access their own data.

3.4.2 What can the LDAN Bill do? The Bill could:

- provide a legal basis for data collection to better understand and respond to the circumstances and needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities. If a Commission/Commissioner is created, their functions could include collecting and analysing data.
- Impose duties on public bodies to collect data on neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities and make returns to the Scottish Government.
- Give consideration to the development of a programme to ensure that when someone with a learning disability dies, a review happens to identify why they died and share the learnings. This would seek to reduce health inequalities and the number who die prematurely.

3.5 Independent advocacy

3.5.1 We know that neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities often don't know what rights they have, and can struggle to access them. People with lived experience highlight a need for greater access to independent advocacy in a range of settings, including health, social care, education, employment, benefits and housing. The Mental Welfare Commission published a report in 2023 on the provision of advocacy. This proposed introducing a consistent approach and definition of independent advocacy. If a Commission is created, it should be responsible for ensuring the provision of independent advocacy.

3.5.2 What can the LDAN Bill do? The Scottish Government is examining how to improve rights through independent advocacy along with the creation of a National Care Service. There is a desire to ensure any approach is consistent and takes a cross Government perspective to deliver a holistic approach. Given this the Bill does not propose a right to independent advocacy. However as the

right to advocacy currently applies only to the State Hospital, Health Boards and local authorities the Bill could:

- make regulations around the provision of independent advocacy for neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities.
- place a duty on all public bodies to ensure neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities are given information about advocacy and how to appoint their own independent advocate.
- identify and gather evidence on specific circumstances where a right to independent advocacy could make a difference.

SPECIFIC THEMES

3.6 Health and wellbeing

3.6.1 Neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities experience poorer health outcomes than the general population. This results in below-average life expectancy (on average 20 years lower), and increased rates of death by preventable conditions. The life expectation for people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD) is even lower.

3.6.2 Poor health impacts on the ability an individuals' opportunities to be active in communities, access employment and maintain relationships. Action is required to ensure neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities share the benefits of our health services, including preventative health screening programmes aimed at the whole population. The Scottish Government is currently rolling out annual health checks for people with learning disabilities, with everyone eligible to be offered a check by March 2024.

3.6.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? It is hoped the Bill can create the conditions for neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities to access health care services. The Bill could:

- impose statutory duty for local strategies to improve the health needs of neurodivergent and learning disability populations.
- legislating for an Accessible Information Standard which would be applicable to NHS Scotland organisations.
- Place a duty on Health Boards, HSCPs and Local Authorities to ensure a person's "passport" is able to follow them through whichever care pathways they need.
- delivery of annual health checks for people with learning disabilities and those with autism

3.7 Mental health and capacity law

3.7.1 Current mental health, capacity and adult support and protection legislation can, in certain circumstances, apply to autistic people and people with learning disabilities. There is recognition that the term "mental disorder" is seen by many as stigmatising and offensive. Those with lived experience have strongly articulated that people with learning disabilities and autistic people should not fall within the definition of 'mental disorder', as life-long conditions cannot be 'treated'.

3.7.2 What can the LDAN Bill do?
A short-term piece of work is being prioritised under the Mental Health and Capacity Reform Programme that will consider the current definition of mental disorder within the Mental Health Act. This will include consideration of whether learning disabilities and autism should continue to fall within the definition, along with updating the language of the definition. If legislative change is required the LDAN Bill may make those changes.

3.8 Social care

3.8.1 People with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people are more likely to require care and support needs than the general population. In 2021, a report by the Fraser of Allander Institute concluded more needed to be done to deliver social care and support for adults with learning disabilities. The Independent Review of Adult Social Care also set out proposals for reform including access, eligibility and assessment.

3.8.2 Those with lived experience highlight a need for better signposting and awareness of what social care support is available, and a programme of monitoring and evaluating how well their needs are met. The Scottish Government is already working to deliver a National Care Service Charter of Rights and Responsibilities, establishing a complaints and redress process, and developing a consistent approach to inclusive communication.

3.8.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? The Bill intends to:
- Require Integration Authorities and local authorities to set out how they and services they commission support their workforce to take better account of the needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities.
- legislate for a mandatory training requirement.
- legislate for neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities to be able to request access to alternative means of communication.

3.9 Housing and independent living

3.9.1 Appropriate housing for neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities enables them to live safe and independent lives. Unsuitable housing can have a negative impact on mobility, mental health, and employment opportunities. Good-quality and timely housing advice and support services are consequently recognised as being important to enable independent living.

3.9.2 There is an acknowledged limited supply of specialist supported housing. In 2018, a report by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission found many disabled people lived in homes that did not meet their needs. Those with lived experience report getting homes adapted appropriately can be a lengthy process. Neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities are unlikely to know their housing rights, and there is a need for clear and accessible information. The Scottish Government is progressing initiatives to better protect and uphold rights around housing and independent living.

3.9.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? The LDAN Bill intends to bring a focus on how public authorities' duties around housing and independent living can best meet the needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities. This could include:

- The introduction of specialist advocacy services for housing support.
- Require strategies produced by local authorities to set out how independent living principles are embedded into allocations policies, to ensure real choice and control.
- Require Local Housing Strategies to set out how the needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities are met.
- Require Integration Authorities to set out how housing, care and health services are integrated; to support people to live independently.
- Introduce a statutory requirement for training for professionals working in health, social care and housing services.
- Consider improvement to data collection on housing and independent living.

3.10 Complex care - Coming Home

3.10.1 We know that some people with learning disabilities who have complex care needs spend longer in hospital than is medically necessary often due to a lack of appropriate community support. We also know that some people are living in out of area placements even though they did not choose to. The Scottish Government has already committed to changing this approach via the Coming Home programme.

3.10.2 There are recognised barriers to delivering the Coming Home Programme. Staffing challenges across health and social care being key. The Scottish Government is working to address these including proposals to introduce a Dynamic Support Register to improve planning and monitoring, a National Support Panel to provide professional advice to health boards and other bodies, and a peer support network for health and social care professionals.

3.10.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? It is proposed the Bill will strengthen the Dynamic Support Registers and the processes around them. This is to ensure greater visibility and consistency of practice for people with learning disabilities and complex care needs at a national level. The Coming Home Implementation Report sought to improve accountability for people with learning disabilities and complex care needs. A National Support Panel would:
- work with Integration Authorities and partners, to provide support and expertise.
- provide checks and balances to ensure that people with learning disabilities are receiving the best care in the most suitable environment
- ensure the voice of families and individuals was captured and heard.

3.11 Relationships

3.11.1 Neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities can face barriers which make it difficult for them to enjoy healthy and fulfilling lives. Loneliness, social isolation, and poor mental health are often reported. Research indicates that autistic people experience a high incidence of sexual violence, physical violence and bullying. A 2020 survey in Scotland showed social isolation is a reality for many people with learning disabilities. It is estimated that between 40% and 60% of parents with a learning disability have their children removed from their care.

3.11.2 Those with lived experience have identified the need for support to assist making and maintaining relationships. They highlighted the increased risk of

mental health issues among those with LGBT identities but also a continuing emphasis to eliminate violence towards women, girls, and people assigned female at birth. The limited support available to neurodivergent parents was flagged with an ask for more support when interacting with schools and health professionals.

3.11.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? Various initiatives are already underway and making progress, however, there are still challenges to overcome. The Bill identified ways it could support this by:

- Access to Independent Advocacy where a parent with learning disabilities is at risk of their child being taken into care or where a neurodivergent person or person with learning disabilities disclose gender-based violence or abuse.
- Better data collection in relation to gender-based violence affecting women with learning disabilities and the number of parents with learning disabilities where a child has been removed from their care.
- Inclusive communications where there is a risk of a child being removed from parental care or where there is a disclosure of gender-based violence/abuse providing information in an easy-read format as well as access to support from someone who has specialist training.
- Neurodivergent and Learning Disabilities Strategies would require local authorities to set out how a multi-disciplinary/Whole Family Approach is being implemented to support parents as well as how RSHP education is delivered. In addition local authorities would be expected to set how services will promote inclusion in communities. If the Act extends to include Police Scotland there would be an expectation that people with learning disabilities are provided with specialist support to report gender-based violence and abuse.
- The Bill proposes to explore whether a new or existing body should investigate cases of child removal from parents with learning disabilities.

3.12 Access to digital technology

3.12.1 Digital access has become increasingly important to the way we live. Learning and employment opportunities, as well as transactions in areas of life rely more and more on digital access. The technology also helps us all keep in touch with family, friends and community. Neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities are at particular risk of being digitally excluded. There is a need for awareness and training in terms of how to use technology safely, and developments must consciously consider those who are digitally excluded.

3.12.2 What can the LDAN Bill do? The Bill could:

- ensure digital skills training and support is available to people with learning disabilities.
- gather data on individuals with learning disabilities and neurodivergent needs accessing/using technology

3.13 Employment

3.13.1 As well as providing an income, employment contributes to independent living, and helps people feel valued. We know many neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities face barriers to securing employment. In 2016,

the Scottish Government committed to halving the Disability Employment Gap, which stands at 31.9 percentage points.

3.13.2 There is a lack of robust data on employment rates for people with learning disabilities, but it is estimated the employment rate is as low as 7%, and 16% for autistic people. Those with lived experience often feel excluded from the world of work. They want support to find work and hold down a job. Workplaces are often poorly adapted to the needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities with a lack of clarity on what reasonable adjustments look like and what employers can be expected to do.

3.13.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? It is not proposed the Bill will include legislative change in this area. The Equality Act 2010 provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality for all. The power to legislate on equalities matters is limited as this is a reserved matter.

3.13.4 The Scottish Government is simplifying the employability system through the implementation of No One Left Behind. Additionally work is underway to help reform workplace culture and promote inclusivity, understanding and acceptance. The Fair Work Action Plan incorporates actions on tackling the gender pay gap and the disability employment gap. Investment of almost £1m has been committed to improve the recruitment and retention of disabled people.

3.14   Social Security
3.14.1 Social security is a human right, and essential in tackling inequality. As noted neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities are less likely to be in employment and more likely to need social security support. The latest full year data estimated the employment rate for disabled people aged 16 to 64 at 50.7%, while for non-disabled people the rate was 82.5%.

3.14.2 Those with lived experience highlighted the limit of 16 hours of work per week before social security benefits can be taken away made it difficult to find employment. Additionally being repeatedly re-assessed for benefits was undignified and stressful. Social security rules and processes were considered complex and should be simplified with communication clearer. The key social security benefits that neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities rely on are delivered by the UK Government.

3.14.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? The Bill recognises that many of the concerns raised by those with lived experience are reserved matters. The Bill however could:
- Require Social Security Scotland to report on how its communication strategies take account of the needs of people with learning disabilities and neurodivergent people.
- explore whether there should be a statutory requirement for training on learning disabilities and neurodivergence for some Social Security Scotland staff.
- explore how current data reporting could be disaggregated further.

3.15 Justice

3.15.1 The term 'justice' refers to both the civil and criminal justice systems. Several reports highlight an increased likelihood of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities coming into contact with the criminal justice system, both as victims and witnesses, and as offenders. Work is being progressed to address issues for younger people, including the incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scots Law. The Youth Justice Improvement Board is looking at children's rights within the youth justice system, and some areas are developing youth courts. The Scottish Children's Reporter has developed a disability toolkit that allows for the identification of additional needs in the children's hearing system.

3.15.2 Individuals with lived experience recommended the Scottish Prison Service report publicly on neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities held in prison. They also suggest Police Scotland and other public bodies should provide disability awareness training to staff.

3.15.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? It is acknowledged a lot is happening across the justice system that could be positive for neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities. Trauma-focused work is a key theme. The Bill could bring together a national strategy to deal with neurodivergence and learning disabilities in justice. The Bill could:
- Place a duty on public bodies to identify neurodivergence and learning disabilities when people come into contact with the criminal justice system.
- Provide better access to easy-read versions of communications/documents.
- Provide for neurodivergent people to request access to alternative means of communication.
- Extend the requirement for mandatory training for staff in the civil and criminal justice systems.
- A requirement to identify needs would allow for better information to be provided to the Crown Office to inform decisions about Diversion from Prosecution (DfP).

3.16 Restraint and seclusion

3.16.1 Neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities can have negative experiences where restraint or seclusion is used inappropriately. This can happen in places like schools, hospitals and care settings. It is not acceptable for anyone to be subject to the misuse of restrictive practices.

3.16.2 Several Acts set out offences regarding the use and misuse of restraint in certain settings, and the Mental Welfare Commission has published guidance. The Scottish Government is developing new rights-based non-statutory guidance on the use of restraint in schools. If necessary, legislative options will be considered. For adults, the Mental Health and Capacity Reform Programme will scope work to reduce the use of coercion and restrictive practices.

3.17 Transport

3.17.1 Travel can help people enjoy a fulfilling life, and reduce social isolation. Neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities face barriers in accessing travel/transport. This includes the need to prevent bullying and harassment so that disabled people could feel safe using public transport. A

report in June 2023 set out the challenges around transport specifically for neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities, which include: reliability; behaviour of others, cuts in services and anxiety.

3.17.2 The Connected Scotland report heard that people wanted better and more accessible information about services and timetables, the removal of physical barriers at stops and stations and on vehicles, as well as greater awareness and training for transport staff.

3.17.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? A wide ranging programme of work is underway to make improvements for disabled people when travelling. This work is being informed and influenced by people with lived experience. The Bill could explore:
- Requiring Regional Transport Partnership's (RTP) to set out how the needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities are considered and met.
- requiring RTP travel strategies to set out how staff are being trained in disability awareness, with specific training on neurodivergence and learning disabilities.
- extending the mandatory training requirement to transport staff in Scotland.

3.18 Education

3.18.1 Concerns have consistently been raised that neurodivergent children and young people, and children and young people with learning disabilities are not having their right to education fulfilled and are not fulfilling their potential. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 sets out rights, duties and obligations pertaining to children and young people with additional support needs (ASN). The Morgan Review of Additional Support for Learning concluded that implementation was inconsistent, and some children and young people were not getting the support they needed. The Morgan Review made several recommendations on key themes including resources, workforce development and support, and leadership and strategic planning.

3.18.2 The Morgan Review noted that there was minimal requirement for focus on additional support for learning as part of Initial Teacher Education (ITE). Probationary teachers reported that they felt ill prepared in terms of knowledge, understanding and practice skills. The report highlighted concerns about both ITE and Continued Professional Development, and recommended nationally specified practice and skills development for all teachers.

3.18.3 What can the LDAN Bill do? ASN legislation was independently reviewed in 2020, and was not found to be deficient. However, there was a gap between the policy intention and its implementation. Whilst a robust action plan is in place, the Bill could:
- require education authorities and schools to include an articulation of how the specific needs of pupils with neurodivergent and learning disability needs have been considered and are being met.
- require the statutory Children's Services Plan Annual Report to include specific consideration of children and young people who are neurodivergent or who have learning disabilities.
- Explore the need to legislate for a) the training requirements for student teachers and ELC practitioners; and, b) the need for mandatory training for

teachers, practitioners on learning disabilities and neurodivergence as part of their CPD.

- seek to better understand all neurodivergent children and their educational outcomes. Data could be collected and published to enable reporting on the attainment gap and to understand the size of this population.

3.19 Transitions to adulthood

3.19.1 There is evidence that the planning and support for disabled young people making the transition to young adult life could be improved. In February 2023 an independent literature review was published on the experiences of young disabled people which found that many suffer stress and uncertainty during their transition to adulthood. Some contributing factors were inadequate planning, changes in support, a lack of clear information, and poor collaboration between services. In October 2023, the Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People Committee noted its concern on the poor experiences of transitions for many disabled young people, and recognised the need for improvement.

3.19.2 What can the LDAN Bill do? Recognising the work already underway the Bill is not proposing new legislation in this area. However, the proposals around inclusive communications and mandatory training for professionals have relevancy as does the need for data collection to better understand how neurodivergent young people and young people with learning disabilities experience the transition to young adult life.

3.20 Implications for Aberdeen City

3.20.1 The Consultation on the LDAN Bill recognises that in many areas there is significant work already taking place at a national and local level to improve the outcomes for neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities. At a local level this includes but is not restricted to; implementing the learning from the Morgan Review; improving transition planning for young people; monitoring and reporting on the use of restraint and seclusion; and how young people with neurodiverse needs are supported in the justice system.

3.20.2 The Bill also proposes to deliver new duties and responsibilities which the local authority and the Health and Social Care Partnership will be required to deliver on. At this stage of the Bill these cannot be fully planned for. Inevitably the Bill will require amendments to key strategies and potentially require new strategies to be developed. While Aberdeen City has an existing Autism Strategy this will require significant revision to take account of the changes the Bill outlines.

3.20.3 Positive and close collaboration exists between Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and Council colleagues to support neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities. There are effective existing mechanisms which capture the local lived experience voice of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities. It is the shared intention of both agencies to build on this ensuring a joined up and integrated approach to future engagement in respect of the Bill and ultimately to the delivery of any new legislation.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising out of this report. The financial cost of delivering on the aspirations of the LDAN Bill is likely to be significant. The LDAN Bill notes an intention to deliver preventative and enabling support to reduce subsequent demand. The Financial memorandum that will accompany the Bill will be published during the Bill's passage through the Scottish Parliament.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising out of this report, although the Bill proposes some significant legislative changes.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant related risks	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	The local authority has existing duties to support and meet the needs of neurodivergent people and people with learning disabilities.	Inspection activity by the Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland supports the delivery of high quality services. This is in addition to internal data collation and self improvement activity.	L	Yes
Operational	Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people who have additional support needs is central to the delivery of GIRFEC – Getting it Right for Every Child.	Delivery of GIRFEC at a local level is overseen by the Children's Services Board. Regular audit work provides for assurance on compliance and where improvement is required.	L	Yes
Financial	There are no significant related financial risks from this report at this stage. As noted in the Financial Implications, should a Bill proceed to become law, there	N/A	L	Yes

	could be significant financial implications to the Council and other partners such as the HSCP.			
Reputational	Failure to deliver on the aspirations of the LDAN Bill 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	There is active work ongoing from staff across Council Services and the HSCP to consider and plan for the Bill as it progresses through the Parliamentary process.	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	Ensuring the effective planning for neurodivergent children and young people and children and young people with learning disabilities has a direct relevance to the delivery of the following statements contained within the Council Delivery Plan: • Ensure local services identify young people with mental health problems and help them get early support and help. • Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems • Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce "out of authority" placements.

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Ensuring the effective planning for neurodivergent children and young people and children and young people with learning disabilities has a direct relevance to the following stretch outcomes in the LOIP: 4. 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026 5. 90% of children and young people will report that they feel mentally well by 2026. 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. 7. 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.

	8. 25% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.
Regional and City Strategies	Ensuring the effective planning for neurodivergent children and young people and children and young people with learning disabilities is central to the planning for Education and 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	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to the Bairns Hoose report presented to Committee in February 2024 has been reviewed and no changes required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	Not required.

10.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education & Children's Services Committee
DATE	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Edge of Care Pilots
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/197
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne and Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne and Graeme Simpson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1.5

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The Education & Children's Services Committee of 4th July 2023 asked for an update report on the progress of the 'Edge of Care' Pilots being delivered in Lochside and Northfield Academies and the proposed next steps.

(This report should be read in conjunction with the Family Support Model report before Committee on 2 July 2024.)

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee:-

2.1 Notes the progress and learning captured by the Edge of Care Pilots.

2.2 Notes that multi-agency intensive support continues to be provided to young people who are on the edges of school and care, and that opportunities to expand the 'pilot' model will be considered within the Family Support Model.

2.3 Instructs the Executive Director Families and Communities to incorporate the learning from the Edge of Care Pilots within the developing Family Support Model.

3. **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1 **BACKGROUND**

3.1.1 In June 2022, colleagues from Council services (Education; Children's Social Work, Community Learning and Youth Services) participated in 2 workshops to explore potential new ways of working to support improvement in the long-term outcomes of those young people deemed to be on the 'edge of care', who have among the poorest outcomes of all groups.

3.1.2 The Promise (2020) committed "Care experienced children and young people will receive all they need to thrive at school. There will be no barriers to their engagement with education and schools will know and cherish their care experienced pupils." p71 -72 Promise

3.1.3   The Promise states "Scotland must work to build a country that cares, made up of services that work to meet the needs of children and families and stand ready to be accessed where they are needed, when they are needed".

3.2   KEY THEMES

Five key themes were identified for exploration through the pilots. These were:

- *How can we organise ourselves differently to build stronger relationships with each other?*
- *How can we improve our shared use of data to identify and track those at greatest risk to inform decision making and the development of this pilot?*
- *How can we remove rigid thresholds and have a clearer understanding of the needs of children and families and swifter access to available resources?*
- *How can we improve our collective ability to hear the voices of children, young people and families more clearly and share information more effectively with each other?*
- *How do we ensure greater continuity of staffing and support the wellbeing of those consistent staff more effectively?*

High level learning against the 5 key themes is detailed below.

3.2.1   Governance is important, and having multi-agency oversight is critical in building shared accountability and problem solving. There was high value in including colleagues from Skills Development Scotland and staff linked to employability services.

3.2.2   Having established links to senior staff across the system is important to support the effective flow of information, particularly links to senior leaders and PT Guidance in secondary schools.

3.2.3   Temporary staffing arrangements hamper progress. Staff on temporary contracts sought permanent employment. This impacted on relationships with families but did provide an opportunity to remove hard boundaries around roles and this was a helpful consequence.

3.2.4   Gathering information about need once, and preventing the young person/family from having to retell their story was viewed positively by families.

3.2.5   Multiple data systems used by multi-agency partners are a barrier to having an accurate chronology.   The use of real time data aids planning for children, young people and families.

3.2.6   Staff reflection time for multi-agency teams is important and supported more confident and holistic decision making. The voice of children and families should always be more dominant than that of professionals.

3.2.7   Co-location helped the multi-agency team secure the most appropriate supports at the right time.

3.2.8   Co-design with children, young people and families is of critical importance.

3.2.9   The qualitative data can be as important as the quantitative data to help measure progress over a shorter time period.

3.2.10 Relationships are really important. For many families there is a lack of trust in professionals. Established relationships were found to either prevent escalation of situations or enable much quicker de-escalation.

3.2.11 Our children, young people and families tell us that they value access to all year-round support.

3.2.12 Social work staff, Youth work and Family Learning staff receive supervision. There is a need to support their wellbeing, professional development and adherence to individual service guidelines. Although formal supervision is not undertaken within education, colleagues were supported by line managers. In addition it was recognised wellbeing sessions for the whole team along with a protected reflective space supported mental wellbeing to aid the impact of vicarious trauma.

3.2.13 The range of interventions offered through the pilot was extensive, with delivery partners including a range of statutory services, wider partners and Council ALEOs.

Number of Young People -Type of Interventions
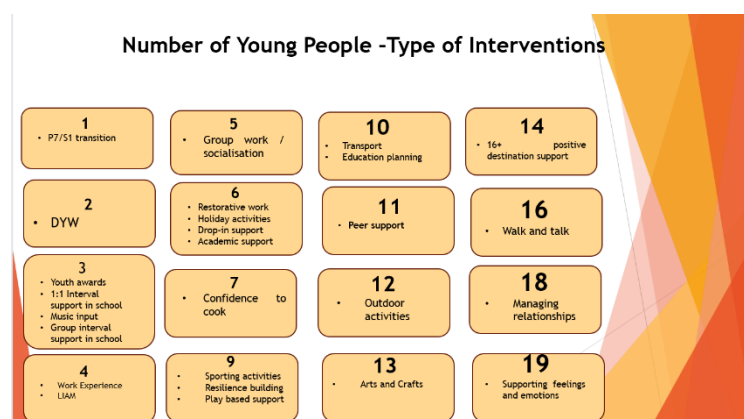
## 3.3   The Impact of the Pilots on Children, young people and families

3.3.1   There has been a reduction in the level of risk for the young people supported through the pilot. This is evidenced through increased engagement with services, and a reduced number of Vulnerable Persons Database reports and school exclusions.

3.3.2   Those supported through the pilots have engaged more positively with services they may previously have struggled to connect with. Powerfully, there is feedback from children and families saying that they have wanted to engage with the family centric supports available.

3.3.3   There has been no escalation into the children's hearing system and some examples of young people moving back to being supported by the universal services.

3.3.4 Appendix A provides three Case Studies that outline the impact the Pilot has had on the young person and their family.

3.3.5 Across both ASG's (at the end of term 3) the total number of young people supported and engaged through the pilot is 43. Of those, 30 are care experienced and 26 are open to social work (some of these young people are also care experienced).

3.3.6 Of the 21 young people in foster care or kinship, 19 have remained in the care placement. 2 young people had been removed from their CSO, 1 young person had returned home to parents from kinship care and 3 young people had been removed from the Child Protection Register.

3.4   Quantitative data

3.4.1 Graph 1: Average attendance

The average attendance for young people involved in the pilot has increased. Attendance with the pilot team has also increased.
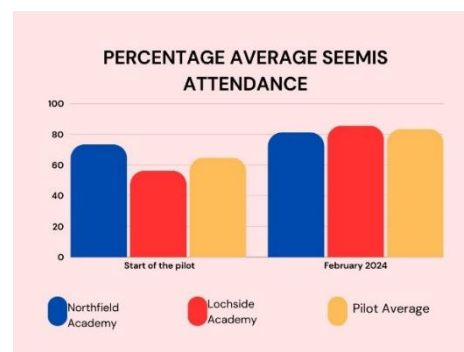

3.4.2 Graph 2: Number of Exclusions

For Lochside Academy there was a reduction in the number of exclusions for those young people on the pilot. There was a marginal increase for Northfield. It should be noted that the young people have changed over time and so this impacts on exclusions recorded. There has however been an overall reduction in the level of exclusions.
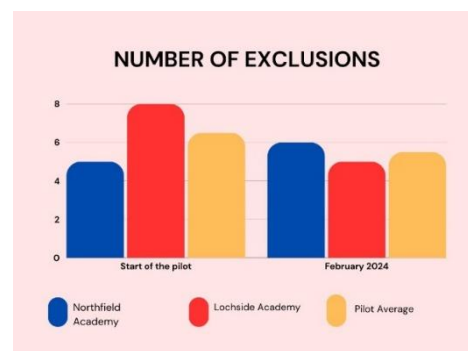
3.4.3 Graph 3 Number of Vulnerable Person Database Reports

The pilot tracks the number of Vulnerable Persons Data report (VPD's) received from Police Scotland for each young person on the Pilot. Data indicates a reduction in the number of VPD's received. This links with the increase in attendance and impact of reducing exclusions.

Refinement on our data VPD reporting will assist to better demonstrate impact.
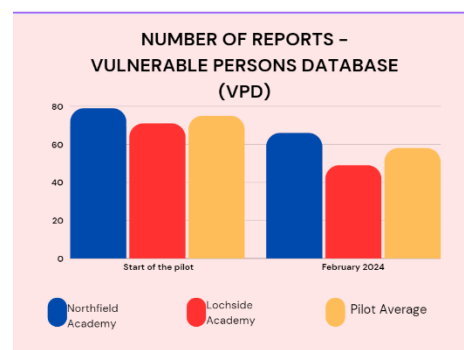
3.4.4 Graph 4: Reasons for Referral to Pilot

Graph 4 shows that most of the young people had multiple vulnerabilities at the point of referral which were impacting on their home life, school life and place in their community. The majority of young people identified 3 or 4 reasons for their involvement in the pilot evidencing the complexity of challenges facing many families.
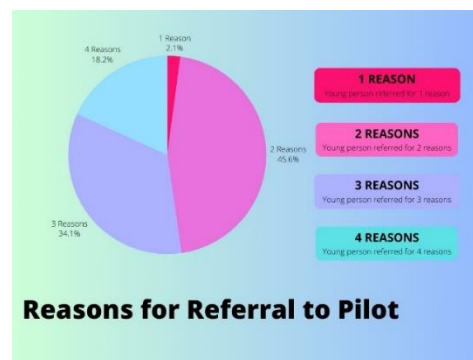
The challenges identified were wide ranging including low self-esteem, family issues, behavioural concerns in the school and wider community and poor school attendance.

3.4   Key Learning from our direct engagement with families

3.4.1   The case studies in Appendix A articulate significant and often transformational change for young people and their families. These "successes" will inform our Family Support model as well as how the Edge of Care pilot will feature within this.

3.4.2   No child, young person or family has refused the support. Children/young people happily engaged and shared concerns about what they would like to achieve. Transferable skills are being developed to help them to better access learning. The value of work taster sessions has been highlighted.

3.4.3   Creating a welcoming environment so young people feel safe, listened to and feel things will be done is important. Wellbeing is improving and supporting young people's readiness to learn. Food is important.

3.4.4   There are signs of positive improvements in family relationships due to increased engagement of children / young people with activities / curriculum, reduced financial strain and opportunities opening up to access community interaction making them feel less isolated.

3.4.5   Parents/carers are happy to have the additional support in place as they feel that they and their children benefit.

3.4.6   Time has been invested in supporting team members to consider how contact is made with families, how they introduce the support and how they continue to engage helps. Interventions need to be tailored to individual needs.

3.4.7   Families have been supported to access weekly community connection sessions, financial support, support to access health and joint working with their child. These connections have been helpful and built a sense of community.

3.5   Impact of the Pilot on key stakeholders

3.5.1   As part of our evaluation of the Pilots, regular feedback is sought from key stakeholders - education and social work staff who had wider responsibilities for the young people. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive however there were also a few areas where it is felt the pilot could be strengthened. These

have been captured and will inform the next steps in the future of the pilot and the wider development of our Family Support Model.

3.5.2 The key benefits identified include:

- Having agencies collocated within the school has promoted improved communication and partnership working which has directly benefited young people.
- Stronger relationships between home, school and the team around the child.
- It has enabled professionals who have much more limited contact with the family "to see the bigger picture".
- Improved understanding of each others' roles and resources.
- Ability to come together in a responsive and timely manner.
- Accessing wider supports and liaising with agencies beyond the pilot.
- Connecting and building relationships with parents has improved a sense of all "pulling in same direction", directly benefiting young people's engagement.

3.5.3 "I would say the project has been life changing for the young person. To have someone like the pilot member of staff, based within the young person's school and as an ongoing presence, offering emotional support has made a huge difference. The young person has gone from non-attendance to pretty regular attendance (there is a still a way to go) at a pace that feels comfortable".   Child's Social Worker

3.5.4 Areas for further consideration and improvement include:

- How do we make this approach affordable and sustainable?
- Having staff on temporary contracts does not promote resilience or the importance of relational practice.
- How can more communities benefit from this type of support?
- A mental health worker within the team would strengthen the offer, alongside a stronger connection with the Educational Psychology Service.
- What should we call this approach – a desire to move away from Edge of Care Pilot?

3.6   Was our Hypothesis correct?

3.6.1 The hypothesis that by working on an integrated basis we can build stronger relationships with each other has been strongly evidenced over the course of the pilot. As you would expect there have been issues and myths/assumptions to be worked through. These still arise from time to time. Although all staff involved in the pilots came from a background of working with children, young people and families, they recognised that despite this commonality the restrictions of their respective professional disciplines and boundaries were at times a barrier to effective interagency working.

3.6.2 Staff have invested time to thinking through key issues – ensuring a common understanding about use of language, clarity on roles and responsibilities and how they can grow as a 'team'. This time is enabling them to safely and effectively explore how they can 'blur the boundaries' of professional roles/disciplines, ensuring a child led and relational approach. It is felt that there

is an increased appetite for risk without escalation and evidence of families being less inclined to identify staff by their role but by the support they provide.

3.7   Families in the need of statutory intervention

3.7.1   One of the key identified outcomes for the pilot was to build effective scaffolding around young people and their families to mitigate the risk of them becoming dislocated from their family, school and community. The Pilots recognised there was a gap in the continuum of support for young people with an escalating profile of risk, need and vulnerability. Looking at the needs of the young people across both pilots, a clear distinction can be drawn between the needs of both communities.   The level of deprivation and generational trauma within some families in the Northfield community is significant, highlighting the inextricable link between child poverty and vulnerability.

3.7.2   70% of the young people involved in the pilots are open cases to Children's Social Work. The % for the Lochside Pilot is noticeably lower. Awareness of this has enabled thinking as to which young people would benefit most from inclusion in the pilot. It also recognises that a 'one size' approach will not work.

3.7.3   It is highly encouraging that to date none of the young people who have engaged in the pilots have required to be accommodated out with their family.

3.7.4   The risks faced by a very small number of children involved in the pilots required their names to be placed on the Child Protection Register (CPR). Over the course of the Pilot, the additional support offer along with wider multi-agency intervention has enabled their names being removed from the CPR.

3.8   HIGH LEVEL ANALYSIS / NEXT STEPS

3.8.1   The Pilots have been operational since November 2022. Our evaluation of their impact indicates that they have largely been positive. There are indicators that the pilots are having a positive impact on the lives of the young people and families. This can be seen through a range of quantitative and qualitative data which indicates improvements in relation to levels of 'engagement/inclusion' and 'achievement'. (see Appendix A).

3.8.2   The learning and feedback from young people and families indicates that the 'pilots' offer valuable support to young people and families who have an escalating need and risk profile. Adopting a whole family approach has been essential. It also recognises that levels of need and risk are not static. How we support families move up and down the continuum of support without experiencing multiple changes of people supporting them, continues to be an area to work through.

3.8.3   Feedback from staff working in the pilots, strongly supports the value of a collocated and integrated approach to delivering enhanced support to young people and their families. Adopting a relational approach is central to the support offer. Staff have been able to build meaningful relationships with young people and families who had become wary and distrusting of professionals. However for many families change takes time and period of progress can be interspersed with period of regression. Consequently perseverance and tenacity are key elements to the skill set of staff.

3.8.4 Support being available all year round is considered important. Feedback from the young people and families speaks positively of this and the connection staff maintain during holidays. This provides a context to strengthen family relations and for the young people to experience different opportunities with different young people than their normal peer group. It enables progress to be maintained preventing regression.

3.8.5 The shape and delivery model of the pilots needs to be iterative to reflect the needs of the community. Accordingly the size and shape of each Edge of Care Pilot team will vary also recognising that need is not static. Through necessity staff have at times had to work across Pilots and while this can work for a time limited basis it is also important that funding for the Pilots enables staff to be recruited on a permanent basis. Re-aligning the priorities of the Looked After Children Attainment Fund and the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund will enable us to deliver more certainty to the structures.

3.8.6 The Edge of Care Pilots have positively contributed to the outcomes being experienced by young people and their families. As such this type of support is essential to support young people with complex needs who are on the edges of school and care to prevent them being accommodated outwith their family network.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Scottish Government has committed to investing £500m of the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF) to support to scale innovative family support practice and build capacity across the system. The central aspiration of the fund is to ensure that the aims of The Promise are met to ensure that families receive the right help, at the right time and in the right place and to reduce the number of children who are looked after outwith their family network.

4.2 Annual funding will be distributed to each Children Service Planning Partnerships (CSPPs) to build capacity for whole system change and to scale up and drive holistic whole family support services.

4.3 Aberdeen City Council's share of this funding is £1.025m for the 2024/25 year. At this stage it is unclear whether Plan 24-30, due to be published on 20 June 2024, will have any bearing on future funding allocation. There is a strong push for funding to be multiyear as opposed to annual.

4.4 The Local Authority receives £280K Scottish Attainment Challenge annual funding for Looked After Children.

4.5 Delivery of the Pilots within our Family Support Model will be met from the available funding of the WFWF and Scottish Attainment Funding for Looked after Children.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications from this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant related risks	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	All Local Authorities are expected to fully implement the findings of the Independent Care Review – The Promise. In doing so funding is targeted to support children to remain at home where it is safe to do so. .	The CS Board will have oversight of developing and implementing our Family Support Model. The "Edge of Carte Pilot" will form a key stand of this model.	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. Children's Social Work and Police Scotland have lead responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse or where children's behaviour poses a concern to others. While this duty is currently being fulfilled the environment in which these investigations occur does not fulfil the requirements of the Bairns Hoose standards nor best meet the needs of the children and young people.	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. The intention of the Edge of Care pilots is to mitigate the risk of children being accommodated outwith their family network. The cost of doing so is significant. The cost of a residential placement is circa £300k pa. The cost of a Fostering Placement is between £50-75K pa. Delivery of the Edge of Care pilot is expected to reduce this spend.	One of the core principles of delivering the Edge of Care Pilot is that by intensive in house support this will support children to remain within their family network and reduce the likelihood of children being placed out with their family and city.	L	Yes

Reputational	Failure to deliver on The Promise 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.	Aberdeen City's balance of care is at odds with comparative LA's. This will impact on the outcome of future inspections.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified.	N/A	N/A	N/A

8.   OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN
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	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	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: • Ensure local services identify young people with mental health problems and help them get early support and help. • Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems • Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce "out of authority" placements.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	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: 5. 90% of children and young people will report that they feel mentally well by 2026. 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. 7. 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026. 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	I confirm that an impact assessment is not required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	Not required.

10.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11.   APPENDICES

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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APPENDIX A – CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1 - Pupil A

Highlights

- **Achieved 1 National 4 qualifications and on track to achieve a further 2**
- **Removed from CSO**
- **Reduction in police reports**
- **18 month involvement in pilot**
- **Increased engagement with professionals to support move to positive destination**
- **Improved home circumstances – Parent shared this as a result of support from team**

From the start, pupil A and mum were supported to share the story of their journey from their perspective. This included where they felt things had gone wrong, where they felt they hadn't been listened to and what they needed.

Pupil A had struggled over an extended period of time following a family bereavement, had become involved in negative behaviours in the community accumulating a number of charges in 2021 and disengaged with education. 'A' had not been in school since the start of the academic term 21/22 but had started to engage with 2 professionals to access input for literacy and numeracy. This engagement was sporadic with pupil A saying they did not want to return to school.

Targets were set with pupil A once the relationship had been built. This was about what they wanted to achieve with the support from the team around them.

A relationship was built with one member of the team and this led to increased engagement with pupil A attending almost all sessions with their key workers. They have engaged with workers from Sport Aberdeen who have links to the pilot, so building up their curriculum and developing strategies and approaches to support them back into school. Pupil A demonstrated increased motivation for learning, seen through their ask to have "earlier sessions to help them to get better at getting up for when they come back into school".

With the support of the team around him, Pupil A has been able to express his frustrations and talk about how they feel to the extent that they were supported to engage with CAHMS following a referral supported by school and social work. Over the period of time where Pupil A was attending, their engagement fluctuated but settled again which is as a result of the strength of relationships built.

Through discussion with the team it was also highlighted that there could be a role for youth work given the young person's needs. This relationship was established and Pupil A is being supported to access work experience and link with SDS to consider next steps beyond school.

Initially all sessions with the young person took place out with the school building in where they felt most comfortable. Gradually over time, they returned to the school setting to undertake employability National 4. They have achieved National 3 Maths and English and is working towards completing National 4 through working with a 3rd sector organisation. They also managed to engage in a college link course, supported to attend a key person in the team around him. Although after 1 term, they felt the course was not for them, they had built up confidence to attend without support and managed the classroom environment and work with peers.

The relationship with Mum was built through weekly contact with a member of the team developing the education plan. Mum has built trust and therefore has been able to open up and share other worries e.g. financial, which we have been addressed by connecting her with other supports. Mum has an increasing number of positive relationships with members of the team.

Through the weekly operational meetings, family learning was able to provide information on support for mum that could then be further explored through the family resource worker who held the relationship. This then supported additional funding and gifts for Christmas which relieved some of the financial pressures. There was also signposting and support in relation to ongoing financial support.

Pupil A and mum were supported throughout the school holidays with check ins from the family resource worker and continued sessions with the 3rd sector organisation and Sport Aberdeen

There has also been a reduction in risk taking behaviours in the community and police reports with 3 police concern reports for academic session which is a reduction from 9 in the year prior to the pilot. Due to the support in place for Pupil A and the engagement with professionals, they were removed from their CSO with voluntary social work involvement initially. There is now no involvement from social work.

Case Study 2 – Pupil B

Highlights

- **Stayed on for S5**
- **Increased access to the curriculum**
- **4 National 4 qualifications**
- **Increased confidence and reduced anxiety**
- **College place secured after S5**
- **Increased attendance**

Pupil B lives with their grandparents and described the current home as a safe space. Their poor attendance at school was impacting on relationships at home. The grandmother was frustrated by pupil B leaving school when they were overwhelmed, and their younger brother held similar resentment pupil B could leave school but he had to attend.

Pupil B was referred to the Pilot following concerns from school and social work that their attendance at school was adversely impacting their academic achievement and future. Their anxiety at being in school was the biggest barrier to their attendance and their inclusion in their community and wider world. Their friendships tend to be mostly on-line gaming.

At the beginning of the academic year 2022/23, they did not feel able to return to their existing classes and their timetable was reduced to English and Employability. They could manage to attend some English classes, but their Employability classes were more problematic. Pupil B was not attending and if they did, they often left the class and went home. They were not able to attend a Pet Therapy session organised by their social worker. Their anxiety meant they could not interact at all, and they left the session without any engagement despite really wanting to participate

Through discussion with the operational team, it was agreed that the most appropriate person to link in with Pupil B and their Gran (carer) was the Family Resource worker (FRW) due to her particular skill set and personality. She linked in with them alongside their Guidance teacher to get a better understanding of what they felt the barriers to school were and what their hopes would be. Pupil B made the decision that they wanted to work with the FRW.

Since starting the Pilot Project in November 2022, they have worked on the Let's Investigate Anxiety Management (LIAM) with their FRW. This looked at the impact of anxiety on them and better coping strategies for managing anxiety. This helped them access more of the curriculum.   Work also focused on looking at Pupil B's strengths and they were able to say being 'clever' was a strength of theirs.

Pupil B achieved Nat 4 Maths, Nat4 English, Nat4 Employability and Nat 4 Science in S4. As part of the employability course, a work experience was found with the help of DYW at Northfield Academy at a dog groomer's. Pupil B was supported with this initially and gradually was able to attend themself. They really enjoyed the work experience.

Pupil B and their grandmother arranged to visit the NESCOL open day supported by the FRW, to explore whether they wished to continue with their education post 16. Pupil B has a lot of potential academically but lacked confidence. With the support of their worker, Pupil B was able to talk to the school's career advisor (Skills Development Scotland) to explore their options for post 16. They then decided to return for a 5th year due to the support in place.

Pupil B's grandmother has described their worker as a 'comfort blanket' in school and support for gran around understanding Pupil B's anxiety and support meant that there was less stress within the family. Family Learning have also met with gran to support her to find a network in her community. At present, gran does not feel she needs this but is aware support is available.

The weekly operational meetings with the multi-agency team provided insight from all agencies and as the team are based within the partnership area of the school, key links and relationships were built with both SDS and DYW to explore opportunities for Pupil B.

The FRW continues to provide check ins for person B and gran through the holiday periods to maintain the relationship and also support the transition beyond school.

Case Study 3 – Pupil C

Highlights

- **Increased self esteem**
- **Reduced anxiety**
- **Engagement in wider achievement activities**
- **Increased social engagement**
- **Increased attendance in school and mainstream classes**

Pupil C is an S4 pupil who was referred in April 2023 as their anxiety was impacting their attendance and achievement in class. Pupil C would often seek support from Guidance and the Youth team. They disclosed to pilot workers that they had been bullied at school since S1 and found school difficult and stressful. They had stopped taking some subjects due to their anxiety.

Pupil C was supported to complete the Let's Investigate Anxiety Management (LIAM) Programme. The relationship built with the pilot worker meant that they felt able to share some details of family dynamics which through further discussion led to them being able to better understand and manage their anxiety. Pupil C said that they ''Hadn't cried about things for a while and the sessions were helping''.   They also

started to attend lessons and were more confident with their learning. Pupil C said they felt more able to let teachers know when they needed support.

During the course of the LIAM sessions, it became evident that Pupil C had low self-esteem and they shared that they wanted to make more friends. They also loved drama and so were supported to access a Studio 22 space at a drama group run by APA. A tour was organised over the summer holidays to meet the director of the drama groups. A Studio 22 space was then found with Aberdeen Performing Arts Drama groups for Pupil C to start in August 2023 to help improve their self-esteem and widen their social circle. Summer activities including a NuArt tour also helped them to engage with their wider community and 'get them out of their bubble' as they described it.

Feedback from their mum is that they are loving the group and feedback from director is that Pupil C, 'throws themself into the activities' and challenges themself. Pupil C has told the pilot worker that they have made new friends and will be signing up for the next group with support of Pilot Project to access the free Studio 22 space.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	2 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Family Support Model
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/191
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne, Graeme Simpson and Jacqui McKenzie
REPORT AUTHOR	Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report seeks approval to progress a period of co-design to shape the provision of multi-agency family centric support for families facing complex challenges in Northfield.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

2.1 note the work undertaken to date to learn from published research and local data

2.2 approve the high level Development Plan available in Appendix A; and

2.3 delegate authority to the Executive Director Families and Communities to design and recruit a change management team to drive, monitor and report on the development of the Family Support Model.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 The Children's Services Annual Report was presented to Committee in February 2024 (CFS/24/046). The Report outlined the need to consider how best to deliver family centric approaches to support families facing complex challenges living in Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1.

3.2 The Report highlighted the considerable variation in outcomes at ward level signalling a need to ensure that our approaches reflect the unique context of each community and the complexity of individual families, rather than presume that centrally designed supports will meet needs.

3.3 It was proposed that a new approach to support families with complex and multi-faceted challenges be designed and tested to inform our longer term

approach. Officers have identified that the wider Northfield area would have a high proportion of families living in SIMD 1 and that outcomes across a range of multi-agency data sets are of concern. Given poor outcomes and recent education inspection findings, it is thought that the Northfield community should be focussed upon initially.

3.4 The Children's Services Board has established a sub group to help shape work on our Family Support Model. The Sub Group has looked carefully at current data and has undertaken a literature review to ensure that our planning benefits from national learning and research. The Sub Group has also considered the learning from our established Fit Like Hubs and Edge of Care Pilots.

3.5 Initial analysis suggests that the poor outcomes for those families living in SIMD 1 can be partially attributed to the increasing complexity of challenges families are facing now. There is considerable evidence that 'fitting' families into a generic list of pre-designed targeted and specialist interventions is not supporting families to thrive, moreover it could be argued that these pre-designed interventions are creating long term persistent demand which is financially unsustainable. There is also evidence that the current threshold and eligibility driven approach is doing little to build autonomy, in some cases levels of need are being escalated as families need to 'get worse' to access the supports and help they need.

3.6 As a result, families who require the intervention of specialist services tend to require this support for a very long period of time, this support often spans child and adult services and rarely has a clear exit point. This strongly suggests that supports should have been put in place at an earlier stage, or that services should be less rigid in their pre-determined response. The inextricable link between the needs of children and their parents is also clear signalling a need to take a whole family approach.

3.7 The ultimate aim of our planned work should be to shift the focus from reactive and risk-based services to upstream and preventative approaches. This will help to improve the level of autonomy families experience and longer term outcomes and also help shape Council and the Community Planning Partnership's approach to the delivery of more preventative services.

3.8 Appendix A contains a skeletal Development Plan, based on the findings of the Independent Care Review (2020) and other relevant literature. The research highlighted the importance of partnership working, shared culture and leadership, holistic and person-centred practice, locality-based service delivery, and effective use of data and resources for improving outcomes for children and families. These areas have been built into the Development Plan.

3.9 We intend to explore some quite different approaches to the delivery of services and intend to keep the scalability and sustainability of the model at the forefront of our minds whilst taking a test and learn approach. Governance and accountability will be key, as will the need for robust evaluation to evidence the impact of the changes being made.

3.10   The Tackling Child Poverty and Social Justice Directorate of Scottish Government are keen to work in partnership with a small number of Local Authorities who are keen to tackle child poverty through public service reform. Scottish Government wants to foster genuine collaboration and learning and support scale through a national learning programme. The core principles and characteristics of the Scottish Government aspiration is outlined below.

CORE PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTERISTICS:

PERSON LED NOT SERVICE DRIVEN
- Meaningful conversations with individuals and their families – asking "what matters to you" and importantly what matters to you right now"?, but about opening up wider opportunities for people - the ability to look to the future with optimism etc?
- Understand more – assess less – trauma informed culture
- Person defines their needs and context – also sets the pace and the scope – encourages user voice and agency

PULL NOT PUSH
- Our systems are complex for people to navigate – a core principle of the approach is to pull support towards people don't refer or signpost whenever possible
- If specialist intervention is needed the key/case worker holds on to the relationship and maintains continuity
- Move to outreach vs in-reach
- Target resources towards need and prevention ahead of crisis

EMPOWER LOCAL DECISION MAKERS
- Operational teams pull for advice not permission
- Empower front line staff to make decisions on the support and resources required on the job
- Recognise, understand and build on the assets of individuals and localities

NO WRONG DOOR
- Use a tell us once and a trauma informed approach
- Strong relationships, trust and understanding at the centre of service provision
- Access to the right person at the right time, in the right place
- An integrated system – strong partnerships – less emphasis on referrals more on relationships
- Provide the same access to person-led holistic services whichever avenue a person approaches a service through

AS LONG AS IT TAKES
- Build trusting relationships
- Ensure continuity over the long term
- Don't give up on people
- Embed the capability and wellbeing approach

3.11   The ambition of our intent and close alignment of our planned work with the Scottish Government core principles, have resulted in Aberdeen City Council being invited to become a national Pathfinder. Pathfinder status will provide access to national expertise and a network to share learning.   This is thought to be of significant value to the Council.

3.12   Following submission of a successful funding bid and the draft Delivery Plan, Scottish Government has agreed to provide £320,000 in change management resource, on a pro rata basis for this financial year and again for the 2025/26 financial year. This resource will help the Council secure a Project Lead, help establish a resource to focus on data and evaluation and also provide sufficient resource to ensure that positive engagement with families and co-design drive our approach.

3.13   Following Committee approval of the skeletal Delivery Plan, it is proposed that the Executive Director Families and Communities design and recruit a change management team to drive the development of the Family Support Model forward. This will ensure that this key area can be progressed at pace.

4.   **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1   There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.   Resource has been secured from Scottish Government to support the project

5.   **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 All legislative requirements will be taken into account as the project is further developed. Taking a family centric approach will ensure that Human Rights legislation is at the heart of this transformational project.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk of not changing our local system to reflect changes in national policy.	Taking a test and learn approach will ensure that changes are made in light of emerging data.	L	**Yes**
Compliance	Risk of not complying with legislation	The project will take account of all legislative duties.	L	**Yes**
Operational	Risk that there is insufficient resource to drive the project.	Securing additional change management resource from The Scottish Government mitigates this risk.	L	**Yes**
Financial	Risk that we don't have sufficient resource to test new approaches.	The resource from Scottish Government and partnership Whole Family Wellbeing funding will help enable the project.	L	**Yes**
Reputational	Risk that we don't prioritise those in greatest need.	Mitigated by prioritising a community with a high proportion of families living in SIMD 1.	L	**Yes**
Environment / Climate	No risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN**</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>**Impact of Report**</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>**Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement**

Recognise that citizens and communities – rather than the City Council - are best placed to say what services they require and how these are provided and seek to give greater control over appropriate services and facilities to local communities.</td>
<td>Voice will feature strongly as we develop our Family Support Model. Funding has been secured to employ an officer to capture lived experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan**</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>**LOIP stretch outcome 4:** *95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026*

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

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.

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

LOIP stretch outcome 8: 30% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026

LOIP stretch outcome 9: 95% of our children with disabilities will experience a positive transition to adult services by 2026</td>
<td>This project could make a positive contribution to all stretch outcomes for children and families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Regional and City Strategies**

Prevention Strategy</td>
<td>The project prioritises prevention and sits at the heart of our</td>
</tr>
</table>

Children's Services Plan	Children's Services Plan.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

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

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Family Support Model
Development Plan

April 2024

Contents

1 Introduction

The Community Planning Partnership has committed to the continued development and delivery of a local model of Family Support in order to address the findings of the Independent Care Review (2020), (The Promise) to shift our focus to upstream activity and improve the short and long term outcomes of those we serve. This commitment is clearly articulated in the Children's Services Plan 2023-26.

Considerable progress has been made in shaping our local model of Family Support to date. This has included establishing a number of tests of change across all Sub Groups reporting to the Children's Services Board, giving further consideration to the data we collect, developing Version 2 of our Request for Assistance process, the establishment of two Edge of Care Pilots and work on a neurodevelopmental pathway to name a few examples. The Children's Services Board has been taking a test and learn approach in order to respond as flexibly as possible.

One of the greatest presenting challenges is how to ensure that the model can pivot at pace as needs change and in response to changing factors that can restrict fluid access to services (such as available finance and staffing resource). Thresholds and eligibility criteria ensure that those most in need of support access the targeted and specialist services available within the funding envelope available, however, this can also make taking an upstream approach more challenging.   This lack of upstream approach is thought to be impacting on poorer outcomes for some communities in the city and there are indications that the approach will be unsustainable in the future

2 Context and Background

The Children's Services Board has reviewed the current context to identify areas for further consideration. Some of the areas for consideration will be used to directly shape our Model of Family Support, some to help inform further enquiry whilst others may help shape an associated evaluation framework.

How effective is our Partnership working?

Partnership working is well established in Aberdeen through the Community Planning Partnership at a City level and developing at a Locality and Neighbourhood level. The city wide Local Outcome Improvement Plan and North, South and Central Locality Plans identify high level priorities for improvement which Community Planning Aberdeen work together to achieve through its thematic Outcome Improvement Groups and community based North, South and Central Locality Empowerment Groups and Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships.
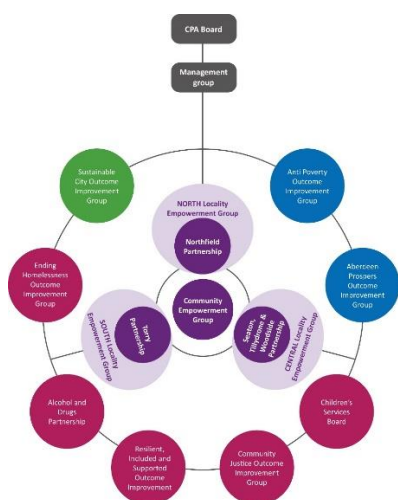
The Community Planning Partnership has experienced considerable success in enabling partnership working in a project environment and there is evidence of improvement across many outcome areas.

However, there is a need to build on the strong foundations in place in order to deepen partnership working at an operational level to deliver improved outcomes for all communities (of interest or smaller geographical area, e.g. street or tenement block), families and individuals.

A deliberate shift to regarding Locality Plans as the overarching plans for area based improvement would support greater joint working between public services at an operational level and with communities. A maturing of the current locality planning model would build relationships between practitioners, local people and community groups to strengthen our collective understanding of the needs of people and drive a more integrated response.

Underneath the current Community Planning Aberdeen formal structure, the landscape is cluttered with a number of different partnership groups who do not have aligned priorities and have different reporting and evaluation mechanisms. This results in confusion for everyone. See Appendix 1 for example of some of the different groups identified as part of the review of locality planning in 2020.

A more integrated approach to locality planning will help reduce the number of groups, the number of meetings attended and duplication of effort for community partners. Resources will be targeted to specific projects and outcomes will be routinely measured through regular evaluation.

> *How can we use the developing model of Family Support to improve the alignment of partnership working at community level?*

How effectively is our partnership working improving outcomes?

Despite our collective focus on addressing poverty and poverty related outcomes, the recent Children's Services Board Annual Report concluded that improvement is not being experienced equally across all communities. The report outlined the need for a particular focus on improving outcomes for our most deprived communities (families living in SIMD 1). The Children's Services Board has concluded that the generic provision of city wide services is not effectively helping families address the very complex issues they are experiencing at the earliest stage.

There is considerable variation in outcomes across the three city localities, and considerable variation in what matters most to those living in the three localities. The distinct differences in experiences, outcomes and priorities has guided a review of Locality Planning arrangements to realise a greater focus on empowering residents within each Locality.

Outcomes at targeted community/ward level are even more variable, which could suggest that some of the city wide changes being put in place by Community Planning Partners are negatively impacting on outcomes for those most in need.

> *How can we improve our use of data to understand the impact of changes being made in real time at community level?*

How effectively does our current system prevent risk from rising?

Families across the city continue to face a range of challenges, particularly those stemming from poor adult mental health and the needs associated with the cost of living crisis. There is a need to be more curious around how best to meet the needs of families, rather than taking a siloed approach to children only.

We know that all children, young people and families are different and also know that the events of the last few years have increased levels of need at family and community level. There is a range of data suggesting that needs are more multi-faceted now. Given the considerable variation in needs, it is exceptionally challenging to design a set of services that will meet the needs of all given the considerable variability in personality, motivation and need. Needs are often not predictable (or fully understood at the point of referral) meaning it can be hard to seamlessly match a person to an intervention (or seamlessly from intervention to intervention) in a way that feels bespoke to the individual and helps reduce levels of risk and vulnerability

There is evidence that some people engage with a very high number of services over a number of years. Sadly there is also evidence that some of those who access a high number of interventions and services over a number of years, experience minimal positive impact on their lives.

Case Study 1	**Child A** born to parents with enhanced vulnerability. Dad has involvement with Justice Social Work and mum has poor mental health. Child was discharged from hospital to parental care and their name was placed on Child Protection Register. Following an incident of domestic abuse the child was accommodated with foster carers. Despite efforts to support parents a return home was not achievable and a plan for adoption pursued. At the age of 27 months child was placed with adopters.	CSW Support (0-3mths) - £200 pw Foster Care (3 – 27mths) – £85k p.a. CSW support (3-27mths) £400 pw Adoption Placement - £55k Legal Cost - £15k Adoption Support (28 – 40mths) £75pw Adoption Allowance - £200pw **Total CSW (0 – 40mths) - £445k** Midwife - £46pw Perimental support - £23pw Health Visitor - £128pw Nursery Nurse - £15pw **Total Health cost** - £6,300 (approx)

| Case Study 2 | **Child B** was on and off the Child Protection Register for the first 6 years of his life. He was accommodated with foster carers. From aged 6 – 11 he experienced 6 different foster carers and was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Aged 12 his needs required him to be placed in a residential school where her remained until 18 years of age. | CSW Support (6 years) - £60k
Foster Care (6 years) - £510k.
Pupil Support AssistantSupport (6 years)- £55k
CSW Support (6 years) – £120K
Residential School (6 years) - £1.7m
CSW support (6 years) - £60k
Throughcare (6 years) - £40k
Total CSW - £2.55m

School Nurse - £72pw
Total Health Cost - £2,880 (approx) |

We know that the despite the cost, the provision of care is not a guarantee of positive outcomes. The Independent Care Review (ICR) in their complimentary report "Follow the Money" details the cost to the public purse of supporting individuals with care experience beyond their life in care. The ICR report highlights care experienced young people are more likely to:

- leave care with poorer school qualifications
- not end up in a positive destination
- experience unemployment
- be imprisoned
- experience poor mental health
- have their children removed from their care
- die prematurely.

Is our current approach building dependency?

Does the use of thresholds inadvertently compound the issues being faced by families?

Is there a better way of supporting individuals in keeping with their hopes, needs and priorities to let them live autonomous and better lives more quickly?

Our Fit Like Hubs, established during the pandemic, have ensured that families can access early and preventative support. There is clear evidence that engagement with services realises
- Parents feeling supported to manage their anxieties and worries
- Parents/carers and children and young people feeling listened to and heard
- Strengthened family relationships
- Improved child mental health and wellbeing.

Those accessing the service tell us that it feels like a bespoke service and that it is the first time support has 'felt right'. As a result we have the confidence in our ability to deliver high quality, rights based integrated services that adapt based on what children and families tell us they need. Ensuring a poverty first and trauma informed approach the Fit Like Hibs have enabled families to maximise their income claiming benefits they are entitled to and seek practical support at times of difficulty. This is evidenced by a growing number of families who self-refer to the Fit Like Hubs.

Our data and evaluation of the Fit Like Hubs has consistently demonstrated that support delivered in a non-stigmatising and trauma informed manner will often enable families to feel held and their needs de-escalated to Universal/community based supports mitigating an escalation into Children's Social Work or CAMHS. However, there is also more recent evidence of the Hubs restricting access to those deemed most in need. This recent introduction of a 'threshold' has the potential to lessen the impact of the Hubs. Do we need to embed the person centred approach taken by the Hubs across all staff working in our communities rather than commissioning an additional service?

Our Edge of Care pilots provide evidence that empowering staff to think creatively and consider the needs of families more holistically provides more positive outcomes for young people and families. Since the start of the pilots the number of children who have entered the care system within the target areas has reduced significantly. Staff work closely with Fit Like hub staff to ensure families receive the correct level of support from partner agencies.

In the first year of the pilot none of the children identified for the Edge of Care Pilots required to be accommodated out with their family. Staff were able to engage with young people who had disengaged from education supporting them to achieve academic qualifications boosting self-esteem and confidence. None of the young people or their parents "disengaged" from support and their evaluation reflected this type of support being offered was better suited to the needs of their children. The second year has built on this success but challenges around temporary funding impacted on staff retention and the span of activity. There is clear evidence that permanent resources require to be put in place.

Resources are finite, how can we do more with less?

With finite resources, Community Planning Partners tend to design services based on commonly recurring needs. Taking this approach has resulted in what could be best described as a menu of reasonably fixed interventions which are available only to those who demonstrate that they are most in need. People who are not deemed to have the highest level of need may feel that things have to get worse before they can access support. There is emerging evidence from case reviews of the very real risks evident in those who do not meet thresholds for intervention suggesting that we are inadvertently introducing risk.

The total cost of supporting one single person who routinely accesses specialist services is well in excess of £1m.

Is there a way of supporting people more flexibly at the point of need arising to prevent harm and reduce cost in the longer term?

Can we afford to put in place additional person centred services, or do we need to overhaul our working practices at community level to maximise the impact of our contacts with families in order to build a more sustainable model?

A review of data from across different data zones in the city, highlights the considerable difference in outcomes at community level. We can conclude that scrutinising city wide benchmarks are now of less value given the variation at community level.

How should we measure success?

What does this mean for our use of resources?

How effective is our relational working?

Given that the needs and wants of families are varied and complex, and that the menu of interventions available are not bespoke to individuals, a best fit approach tends to be applied with people accessing the range of different services/supports most likely to address their needs. This means multiple connections with multiple people and these connections generally take place over a long period of time. This can restrict the quality of relationships the person has with individual services and can lead to people having to experience frustrating long waits which can elevate risk further.

> *How could we organise ourselves better to help the person build a relationship with a key individual who would help them navigate supports in the longer term?*
>
> *Would this improve the person's recovery and lead to better outcomes?*

How effectively do we share information?

Families access a wide range of services from the Council and wider Partnership. An emerging need may present itself to one single service, but not be apparent to others. The impact of that need may manifest itself in other family members, for example children and young people.

The vast majority of learning reviews for children and adults identify the lack of effective information sharing as a barrier to improving outcomes for the individual. Some real risks have been identified for those who do not quite meet thresholds of intervention.

> *How could the use of a better flow of information help us intervene earlier?*

A range of individuals who may already have contact (or touchpoints) with individuals was identified from across Council clusters and the Integrated Joint Board. Undertaking this process highlighted the very high number of contacts and relationships we expect those in need to establish and maintain.

Some who are vulnerable will find establishing a high number of relationships exceptionally challenging. Families tell us that they don't want to tell their story repeatedly, but our system guides the retelling.

> **How do we prevent families from having to repeatedly tell their story?**

3. Literature Review

The considerations identified guided a review of a range of research and current best practice papers to see what could be learned to inform our next steps.

LITERATURE REVIEW - CELCIS

Scottish Government commissioned The Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS) to undertake research to help inform decision making about how best to deliver children's services in Scotland in light of the proposed introduction of the National Care Service, and its commitment to Keep the Promise of the Independent Care Review (2020).

The commissioned research study aimed to answer the question, *"What is needed to ensure that children, young people and families get the help they need, when they need it?"* The CELCIS research presents a valuable opportunity to reflect on how best to provide an upstream response to children and families in order to ensure that they get the help they need, when they need it.

The research concluded that transformational reform programmes can help address risk based practice centred on crisis management and can help address shifts in funding towards early help and preventative services. Implementation, however, can be prolonged, complex and challenging. Cross-party political support for transformational reform programmes is important, thus enabling continuity of support should there be electoral change. There is a need for us to be bold in our ambition and ensure that we have widespread support for the changes being tested.

The Rapid Evidence Review highlighted the need to establish a clear theory of change and a carefully constructed evaluation framework in advance of testing the success of accelerated upstream approaches. A clear theory of change will require to be developed prior to testing.

Figure 1: Components model of integration

A range of components as outlined in figure 1 were identified as being critical, and these components should be considered as we develop our model of Family Support.

A shared culture with committed leadership at all levels was noted as a significant facilitator in the success. Leaders need to drive change and connect with those implementing change. Operationally, the workforce needs time to build new relationships across different professional peer groups and have the support from and confidence of leaders, including managers, to develop new shared ways of working which take years, not months.

Supporting and supportive relationships with children and families and across professionals are vital and take time. Holistic practice is critical. There is a need to look at the needs of children and families in the round.

The crucial level of service delivery was identified to be at the locality level. It is characterised by co-located, multi-agency staff working flexibly together to listen to and meet the needs of children, young people and families before they require more specialist and statutory support and that these localities ideally comprise 40,000-60,000 people. There is a need to accelerate our work to develop stronger locality working and think about how and who is best placed to directly establish trusting relationships with those in need to help them navigate the system.

The children's health and social care system and services alone cannot tackle wider economic and societal challenges. Other departments, such as housing and social security departments, need to listen to the circumstances that children and families are experiencing and actively consider how decisions can play their part in responding to their needs. The relationship between services, and those who support people in need to navigate them, requires to be carefully considered. CELCIS found that changes within 16 of the 25 outcome indicators were significantly associated with the level of deprivation within a local authority area, and changes within 9 of the indicators were associated with the population density of the authority area. Local data suggests a need to focus our testing of new approaches in SIMD 1 given the considerable gap in outcomes evident there.

Figure 3 lists the features that support integration.

The extensive and recently published research provides a clear steer to:

- Strengthen locality working and implement this approach over the long term
- Focus on relationships (with people who need our help and between professionals)
- Take a whole family approach in partnership with others
- Consider the components (figure 1) and features (figure 3) in our planning.

Figure 3: Features of Integrated Children's Health and Social Care Systems

The final summary CELCIS report concluded that any change to the structure and delivery of children's services must focus on creating the optimal conditions needed to enable success in improving the lives of the children, young people and families who need the support of services.

The CELCIS study identified a range of elements that contribute to developing these optimal conditions:

- Supportive, trusting and consistent relationships between children, young people and families, and the practitioners who support them.
- A focus on realising rights and improving the participation of children, young people and families in decisions which affect their lives.
- Local, high quality and long-term funded service provision that is non-stigmatising and responsive to the wide range of needs of children and young people, families and communities.
- A sufficient and skilled workforce who have manageable workloads and receive the support they need from leaders at all levels.
- Some functions being led at a national level, including development and implementation of national policy and guidance, workforce planning and data infrastructure to support local service delivery.
- Structures which actively enable the workforce to provide the help and support that children, young people and families need, and to work together in partnership seamlessly across service and system boundaries.
- Effective and wide-reaching measures to combat the poverty faced by many children and families.
- A simplified and aligned legislative and policy landscape.
- An approach to planning and implementing change that acknowledges the complexity of human relations and systems, makes the best use of existing evidence but also pays attention to emerging learning. The approach needs to use both technical strategies and innovation to overcome barriers and achieve sustainable outcomes, being supported by people skilled in complex change, sufficiently resourced and with a long-term commitment.

LITERATURE REVIEW - HUMAN LEARNING SYSTEMS

The "how to" guide to Human Learning Systems was written in response to the authors' feeling that there is something fundamentally wrong with how we currently plan and organise public services.

Scotland has been increasingly developing policy and legislation which puts choice and control in the hands of its citizens. There is a strong drive to change how people are empowered to take control.

The task of planning and organising public service is called "public management". The most common current way of doing public management is known for the 3Ms: "Markets, Managers and Metrics". Evidence strongly suggests that if public service wants to help people create good outcomes in their lives – then using the Markets, Managers and Metrics approach of New Public Management makes this much harder (and more expensive) than it should be. Human Learning Systems (HLS) introduces the idea of using "Learning as Management Strategy", as the best alternative.

Learning as Management Strategy comes from one simple truth – real outcomes in people's lives aren't "delivered" by organisations (or by projects, partnerships or programmes, etc). Outcomes are created by the hundreds of different factors in the unique complex system that is each person's life. We can see this clearly in the systems map of the outcome of obesity, created by the UK Government Office for Science in 2007.

Figure 1. Systems map of the outcome of obesity
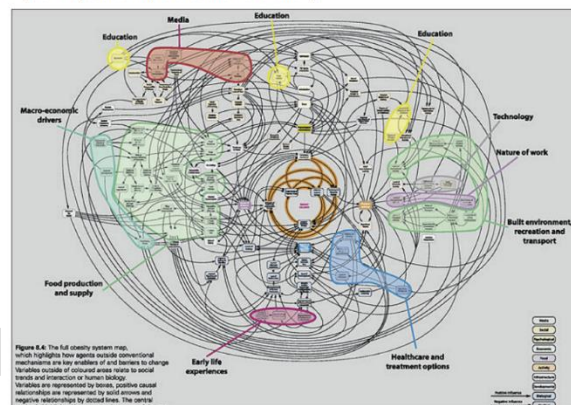
Because each person's life is a unique, unpredictable and ever-changing complex system that creates outcomes (both good and bad), the work required to create outcomes is a continuous learning process and relies on the person having a clear voice in how they are empowered to overcome presenting challenges.

This involves public-facing workers creating a learning relationship with each person being served, a relationship in which everyone develops an understanding of the elements of that person's unique life, which currently creates a particular outcome.

Figure 2. The management of complexity

Image credit: Virpi Oinonen www.businessillustrator.com

Taking a Human Learning approach sees everyone explore and experiment with how that life, embedded as it is within a whole set of social relationships, might produce different outcomes through exploration and experimentation, learn together with those people what will make a positive difference to them by essentially stepping away from how we have previously allocated support.

This guide illustrates that our services are set up to 'receive' referrals from people who all behave in the same way (and respond positively to support from a pre-set

menu of interventions) and that this approach is not going to realise improved outcomes given the complexity of people's lives.

Human Learning Systems guides us to be far more person centric in order to understand their complex lives and be guided by them on what will make the greatest difference. This would see taking a test and learn approach being rolled out at individual level and be quite different from approaches currently being utilised.

LITERATURE REVIEW - THE LIBERATED METHOD

There is a clear evidence base that approaches taken to public services over the last 80 years have not worked. People with a lot of problems need a lot of services and needs are increasing. The author cites that the recovery community have transformed themselves from destitute and destructive to thriving citizens contributing to their communities by being provided with enabling support rather than having to navigate services. This more person centric approach is described as the transformation required to public services.

The paper outlines the transformational journey that Gateshead has undertaken in taking a person centred approach to improving outcomes for individuals. Gateshead has successfully moved from thinking about efficiency to efficacy and can demonstrate that taking this approach has both realised significant savings and most critically improved outcomes for people.

The paper explores the rationale for person centred approaches by looking at how a focus on service efficiency results in poorer services that are more detached from what people actually need and want. The author strongly argues that moving from 'buttoning down' (where access to services is restricted by raised thresholds and eligibility criteria) to 'freeing up' (where we encourage the creativity and connection of caseworkers with individuals) realises positive change.

Gateshead established case workers who were deployed, with a carefully managed case load, to work alongside those in need to help build the agency they required to take control of their own lives, essentially people were, and continue to be helped to make the changes they feel compelled to make intrinsically. It is argued that Services should be bespoke by default, enabling, not intervening, so that the person is supported to generate the conditions they need to make and maintain the changes they feel motivated to make.

This would see people in need of help being asked, '**what matters to you?**' rather than, '**what's the matter with you?** A considerable cultural shift in approach. This would present a significant shift in approach as outlined below.
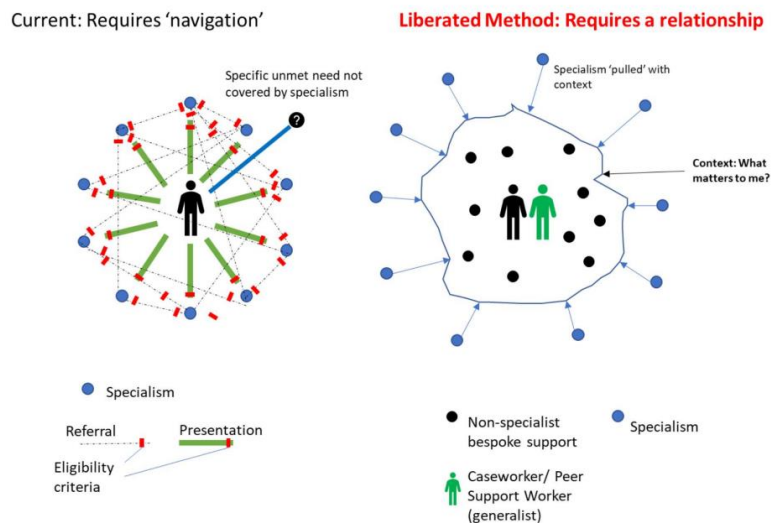
There is a strong and compelling evidence base through case studies that this person centred approach more effectively supports people to take control and lead better lives. The paper provides a potential blueprint for a test of change that has the potential to transform ways of working.

LITERATURE REVIEW - Wider determinates of health

Wider determinants are a diverse range of social, economic and environmental factors which impact on people's health and long term outcomes. They're also known as social determinants.

These factors are influenced by the local, national and international distribution of power and resources which shape the conditions of daily life. They determine the extent to which different individuals have the physical, social and personal resources to:
- identify and achieve goals
- meet their needs
- deal with changes to their circumstances

The Marmot review, published in 2010, raised the profile of wider determinants of health by emphasising the strong and persistent link between social inequalities and disparities in health outcomes. Social inequalities are widely considered as the 'causes of the causes'. For example, as long as social inequalities persist, health inequalities are likely to persist through changes in disease patterns and behavioural risks.

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Addressing the wider determinants of health has a key role to play in reducing health inequalities. Several studies have concluded that wider determinants have a greater influence on health than health care, behaviours or genetics. It's therefore an important aspect of public health in terms of informing preventative action and reducing inequality. Alongside the Marmot review, the [Dame Carol Black review](#) also highlighted the huge economic costs of failing to act on the wider determinants of health.

There are considerable opportunities to be realised as a result of the new Aberdeen City Council Organisational Structure being aligned to the wider determinates of health.

Summary of learning from the literature review

Both Human Learning Systems and the Liberated Method guide more flexible and person centric approach, with the Liberated Method presenting evidence of how case workers have supported those in need to be liberated from the system and in charge of their own destinies.

The case worker has a clear role, they establish a relationship and help people navigate the system, and the system needs to have permission to flex in response to what matters to individuals, rather than simply offering support from services with a pre-set menu. This model has the person in need of support being in control, and those who provide services relinquishing power. The CELCIS research and learning from the Independent Care Review both advocate the need to take a person centred approach.

> **We conclude that we need to not think about designing services, but establish relationships and make the services flex around needs.**

Human Learning Systems references that taking a Public Management approach is more expensive than taking a person centred approach. The Liberated Method provides strong compelling evidence that this is the case. The CELCIS research and learning from the Independent Care Review both advocate the need to take a person centred approach. The Promise, 'Follow the Money' report, concludes that taking a person centred approach will cost less than maintaining the reactive system we have.

> **We conclude that we need a relational person centred approach to release resource.**

The Liberated Method provides a strong evidence base on how to establish strong relational workers through the establishment of case workers, Gatehead cited that confidence in caseworkers grew with quick wins such as the immediate fixing of a cooker or purchase of winter boots.   The CELCIS research strongly advocates taking the time to build relationships with families, and across professionals.

We conclude that we need to find a way to free up budget to enable a timely response by Case Workers and consider who our case workers are?

The CELCIS research provides a clear steer on how to design and implement changes to genuinely improve outcomes. The three visuals below will be used to support more detailed planning.

Figure 1: Components model of integration

3. Family Support Model

Our working vision

The family support model is based on a vision of empowering residents within each locality, building trusting and consistent relationships with them, and providing flexible, responsive and more aligned and connected multi-agency support that meets their needs.
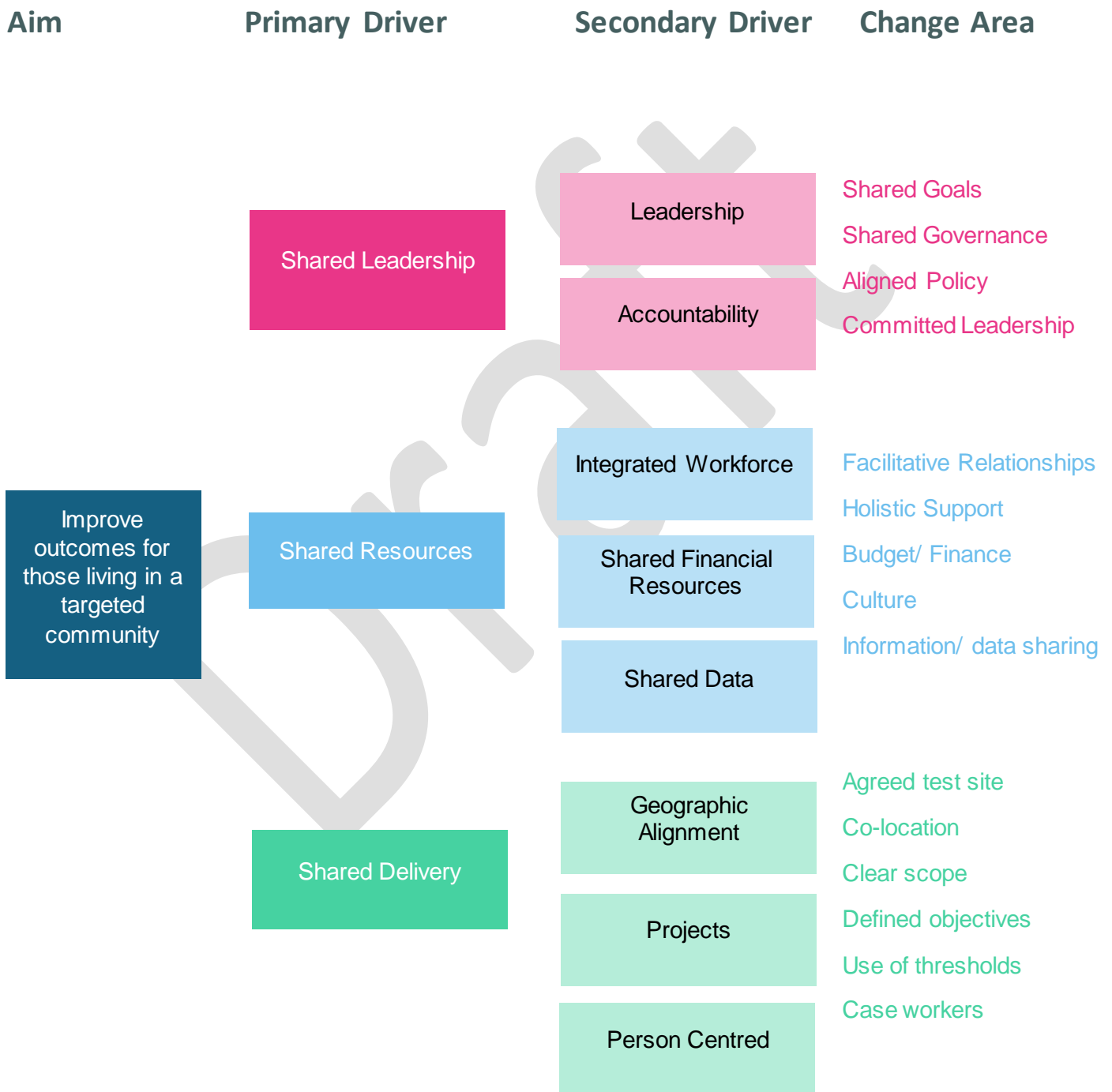
The Principles of Family Support from the Independent Care Review will be used to further shape and test this working vision.

4 Theory of Change

The CELCIS research outlines the need for a clear theory of change.   This high level theory of change will guide the setting up of the project with more detailed planning undertaken through a co-design stage when the project is initiated.

Aim	Primary Driver	Secondary Driver	Change Area
	Shared Leadership	Leadership	Shared Goals Shared Governance
		Accountability	Aligned Policy Committed Leadership
Improve outcomes for those living in a targeted community	**Shared Resources**	Integrated Workforce	Facilitative Relationships Holistic Support
		Shared Financial Resources	Budget/ Finance Culture
		Shared Data	Information/ data sharing
	Shared Delivery	Geographic Alignment	Agreed test site Co-location Clear scope
		Projects	Defined objectives Use of thresholds
		Person Centred	Case workers

5 Development Plan

Primary Driver	Secondary Driver	Change Area	Key Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Success measure
Shared Leadership	Leadership	Shared Goals	Family Support Model Development Plan and funding bid	Eleanor Sheppard	April 2024	Funding in place
			Agreed working vision statement		May 2024	Working vision in place
			Agreed evaluation framework		August 2024	Evaluation framework in place
		Committed Leadership	Schedule of engagement with Scottish Government	Project team	June 2025	Calendar of engagement in place
			Visits (virtual) with best practice local authorities.	Project team	July/August 2024	Learning taken into account and informs the project.
	Accountability	Shared Governance	Establishment of new Oversight Board	Eleanor Sheppard	June 2024	Governance arrangements in place.
		Aligned Policy	Review of relevant policies and of Locality Plan priorities	Project team	July/August 2024	Current legislative and policy context fully embedded
			Communications Plan	Project team	August 2024	Agreed Communications Plan in place

| Primary Driver	Secondary Driver	Change Area	Key Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Success measure
Shared Resources	Integrated Workforce	Facilitative Relationships	Recruitment to key posts	Eleanor Sheppard and Project team	July 2024	Project Lead and supporting roles recruited to
			Workforce development programme for test staff cohort	Project team	August/September 2024	Programme in place
		Holistic Support	Scope of project to be agreed	Project team	September/October 2024	Scope in place which aligns with the evaluation framework.
		Culture	Team building sessions for test staff cohort	Project Lead	August/September 2024	Calendar of events in place.
	Shared Financial Resources	Budget/ Finance	Identification of resources to support delivery	Children's Services Board	July 2024	Quantified commitment from the Children's Services Board in place.
			Identification of key personnel to join the new Oversight Board	Children's Services Board	July 2024	
	Shared Information and Data	Information/ data sharing	Data sharing arrangements in place	Project Lead	September 2024	All required agreements in place.
Shared Delivery	Geographic Alignment	Agreed test site	Agree test site based on analysis of data	Children's Services Board	May 2024	Northfield identified as test site.
		Co-location	Identify location to support co-location	Children's Services Board	July 2024	Co-location sites identified
	Projects	Clear scope	Use Scottish Service Design principles to support the Co-Design of	Project Lead and Project team	By October 2024	Calendar of co-design opportunities in

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Primary Driver	Secondary Driver	Change Area	Key Actions	Responsibility	Timescales	Success measure
			the scope with community, ward members and professionals			place and well attended. Sharpened scope in place
		Defined objectives	Use Scottish Service Design principles to support the Co-Design of defined objectives with community, ward members and professionals	Project Lead and Project team	By November 2024	Defined objectives in place. Refined evaluation framework in place.

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APPENDIX 1 Mapping of Locality Planning Groups and wider partnership forums, community groups and community councils

Carried out as part of Phase 1 Review of Locality Planning - June to November 2020
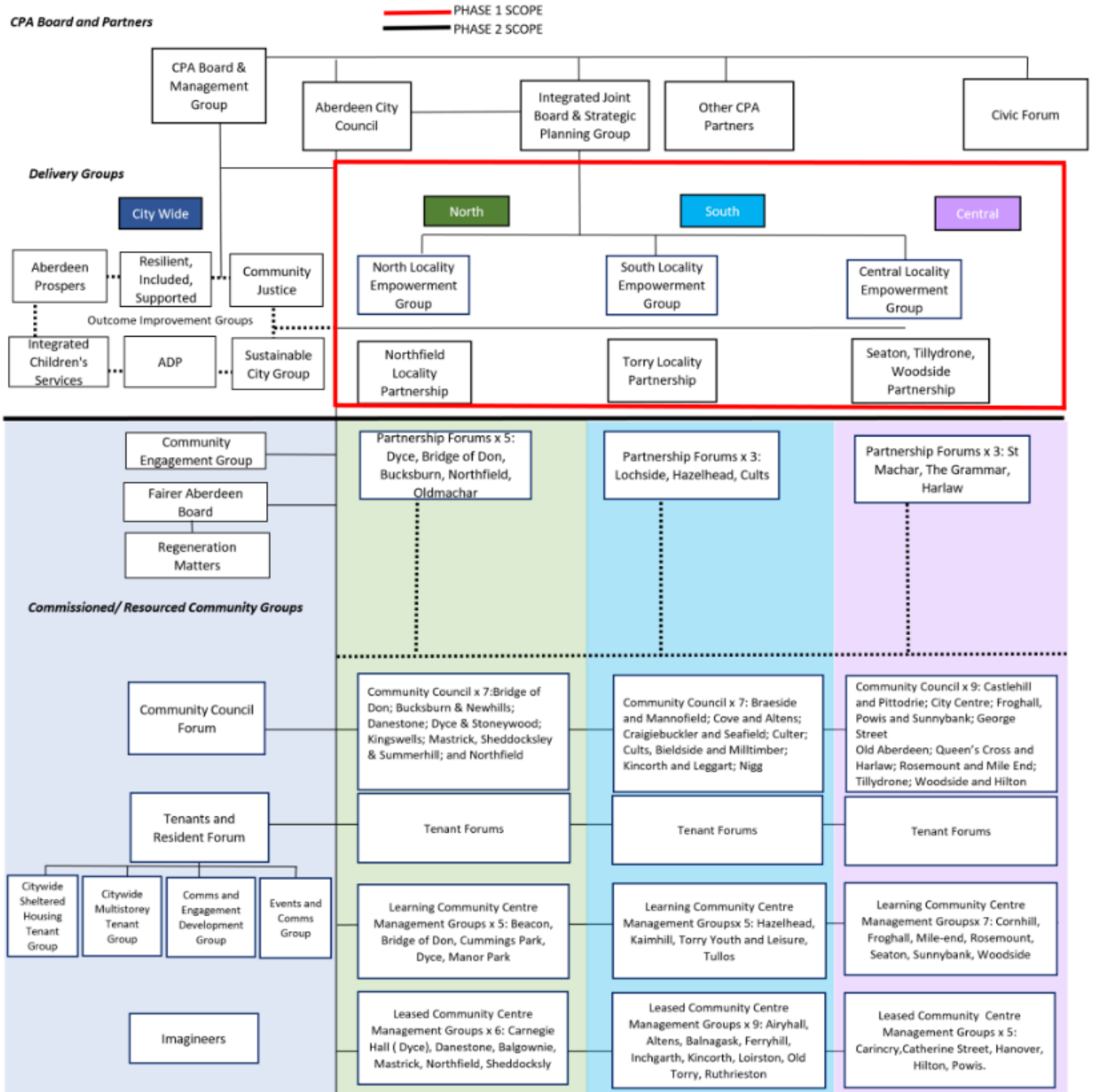
Note that Education and Children's Services currently use different localities from North, South and Central.

Don	Dee	West
Dyce	Lochside	Northfield
Bridge of Don	Grammar	Hazelhead
Old Machar	Harlaw	Bucksburn
St Machar	Cults	